

The challenge
was issued eons ago,
from light-years away.

And only you can meet it.

STARCROSS™

The first INTERLOGIC™ science fiction mindbender.

INFOCOM™

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STARCROSS

All it takes is one final command. Then the surge of power, the thrust—and thousands of miles of empty space go racing into the background...

Rocketing through the Asteroid Belt, you still get the thrill of first flight. But as you settle into your seat and look around, you feel that slight insinuation of total aloneness with its tinge of unease. The ship's computer has taken over the functions of navigation and routine maintenance. You watch the sophisticated mass detector as it unceasingly scans your vicinity for uncharted mass. To assuage the tedium of your long trip, you consider browsing through the compact tape library—a compendium of the knowledge and culture of humanity. But the drone of the ship's systems gradually lulls you, and you close your eyes and relax into a deep sleep.

The year is 2186. Humanity has established colonies on the Moon, Mars, and several of the larger asteroids. Earth's sky is dotted with space habitats, and the spaceways hum and zoom with activity. But as always, there is the urgent need for energy to power this advanced civilization. Based on theories which began as early as the 1970's, it has been determined that quantum black holes can provide an inexhaustible source of power. These phenomena resulted from the Big Bang, and are extremely rare; there is approximately one 5mm-diameter hole found per year.

Finding and harnessing a single black hole can make a man's fortune. It is a lonely business, fraught with the known and unknown hazards of the space frontier. You've equipped your ship, the mining vessel STARCROSS, with the best equipment you could afford. You've got a good mass detector to spot the hole, and

the right magnets to bring its charges under control and haul it back to a containment tank at the base on Ceres. You've put everything into this venture, and though you've tried before, you somehow sense that this time will be different.

Suddenly the strident jangling of the alarm jolts you to attention. Your heart pounds as you stop the noise and see that the mass detector is registering a massive bulk in your vicinity. Pushing the button for the navigation chart print-out, you eagerly pinpoint the position of the mass. You hope that this is your long-anticipated chance of discovery, little realizing that your quest has taken an unexpected turn.

Pre-flight

Loading STARCROSS

To load STARCROSS, follow the instructions on your Reference Card.

The copyright notice and the serial number will appear, followed by a description of the starting location of the game.

Whenever you see the prompt (>), STARCROSS is waiting for you to type in your instructions. When you have finished typing in your instructions, press the RETURN key. STARCROSS will respond and then the prompt (>) will reappear.

Next to the prompt (>), try typing the following:

GET OUT OF THE BUNK

and press the RETURN key. STARCROSS responds with this:

YOU ARE ON YOUR OWN FEET AGAIN.
Read the RULES AND STRATEGIES section for further directions and hints.

Talking to STARCROSS

When you play an INTERLOGIC game, you talk to it in plain English, typing in all your requests on your keyboard when you see the prompt (>). When you have finished typing a line, press the RETURN key and STARCROSS will digest your request.

STARCROSS usually acts as though your sentence begins with, "I want to . . .," although you should not type those words explicitly. STARCROSS then displays a response that tells you whether what you want to do is possible in the current situation, and if it is, whether anything interesting happens as a result.

All words you type are distinguished by their first six letters and all subsequent letters are ignored.

STARCROSS "understands" many different types of sentences. Some examples:

TAKE THE SPACESUIT. PUT ON THE SPACESUIT. TAKE OFF THE SPACESUIT. DROP SPACESUIT. WEAR SPACESUIT

GO STARBOARD. GO AFT. WALK CLOCKWISE. SB.

PUSH BUTTON. PUSH THE RED BUTTON. OPEN AIRLOCK DOOR

LOOK AT THE SCREEN. LOOK UNDER THE TABLE. LOOK BEHIND THE PANEL. LOOK IN THE CAGE.

READ THE PLAQUE. READ ALL THE PLAQUES. FIRE THE RAY GUN AT THE PLAQUE

You must separate multiple objects of a verb by the word AND or a comma.

For example:

TAKE ALL BUT THE ALIEN AND THE RAY GUN. PUT THE SPACESUIT AND THE RAY GUN IN THE DISINTEGRATOR. THROW THE ALIEN AND THE MONSTER IN THE CAGE.

You can include several sentences in one input line if you separate them by the word THEN or a period. You don't have to type a period at the end of an input line.

For example:

TAKE RAY GUN. AFT. DROP TAPE LIBRARY. TAKE RAY GUN THEN P THEN DROP TRANSLATOR

There are only two kinds of questions that STARCROSS understands: WHAT and WHERE. For example:

WHERE IS THE CHIEF? WHAT IS A GRUE?

You can tell or ask various characters to do something. For example:

COMPUTER, LAND ON MARS. COMPUTER, SET COURSE FOR CERES. REPORT STATUS. ALIEN, GIVE ME THE ROD. TURN THE PAGE

STARCROSS tries to be clever about what you really mean when you don't give enough information. If you say that you want to do something, but you don't say what to do it with or to, STARCROSS will sometimes decide that there was only one possible object you could have meant. When it does so, it will tell you, by displaying, for example, (WITH THE ROPE). If your sentence is ambiguous, STARCROSS will ask what you really meant. Most such questions (for example, WITH WHAT?) can be answered briefly (for example, ROPE).

STARCROSS uses many more words than it "understands." STARCROSS's vocabulary consists of several hundred words which are nearly all you are likely to use when conversing with STARCROSS. However, responses may tend toward "purple prose" at times, and STARCROSS will display English descriptions that it couldn't possibly analyze. Indeed, the response may refer to something to which you cannot refer (perhaps to your dismay). In that case, it is not essential to the story, and appears only to enhance your mental imagery.

Completely mystifying sentences will cause STARCROSS to complain in one way or another. After making the complaint, STARCROSS will ignore the rest of the input line. Unusual events, such as being attacked, will also make STARCROSS ignore the rest of the sentences you typed, since the event may have changed your situation drastically.

Rules and Strategies

STARCROSS, Infocom's mindbending science fiction first, launches you into the year 2186 and the depths of space. And not without good reason, for you are destined at that point in time to rendezvous with a gargantuan ship from the outer fringes of the galaxy. Upon boarding this craft, you will explore as startling, complex and engaging a world as any in Infocom's universe.

In this story, time passes only in response to your input. You might imagine a giant clock that ticks once per move, and the story progresses only at each tick. Nothing happens in the story while you are thinking and planning your next move, so you can plan your moves slowly and carefully if you so choose.

STARCROSS keeps track of your score as a rough measure of your progress in unraveling the mysteries of the alien probe, and in gaining mastery of the vessel itself.

Commands for Exploring

The best way to move from place to place is to type the direction in which you want to travel. Acceptable directions are FORE or F, AFT, PORT or P, STARBOARD or SB, UP or U, and DOWN or D. In appropriate circumstances, IN and OUT may also be used.

When you enter a particular place (STARCROSS calls any kind of place a "room") for the first time, STARCROSS usually displays the name of the room, a description of it, and then descriptions of any interesting objects in the room with which you might want to interact. Normally, when you return to a room, just the name of the room and the names of the objects in it are displayed.

The VERBOSE command tells STARCROSS to show the descriptions of rooms and objects every time you go there, not just the first time. The BRIEF command tells STARCROSS to fully describe only newly encountered rooms and objects, as it did initially. For moving through areas you already know well, the SUPERBRIEF command tells STARCROSS to show only the name of the room (even on your first visit there), and not even to mention objects in the room. You can always get a description of the room you are in and the objects in it by typing LOOK (or the abbreviation L).

Suggestions for More Successful STARCROSS Playing

It is essential that you draw a map. Remember that there are 6 possible directions. In certain circumstances IN or OUT apply.

Read everything carefully. There are clues in some of the descriptions, labels, and books, etc.

Most objects in the game which can be taken are important for solving problems.

Unlike other games with which you may be familiar, there are many possible routes to the successful completion of STARCROSS. There is no one "correct" order for solving problems. Some problems have more than one solution, or don't need to be solved at all.

It is often helpful to play STARCROSS with another person. Different people find different problems easy, and can often complement each other.

Don't be afraid to try something bold or strange—you can always save your state first if you want. Trying the bizarre can be fun and often will give you a clue. A non-sense example:

> GIVE THE CATERPILLAR TO THE CHRISTMAS-TREE MONSTER.
THE CHRISTMAS-TREE MONSTER IS REVOLTED AT THE THOUGHT OF ADORNING ITS BRANCHES WITH A CATERPILLAR.

You have just learned that there is probably something which would be a decoration pleasing to the monster and possibly a solution to the problem.

How to Quit

If you want to stop playing, and never continue from this particular position again, type QUIT. STARCROSS will respond:

YOUR SCORE WOULD BE score (TOTAL OF 400 POINTS) IN number MOVES. THIS SCORE GIVES YOU THE RANK OF rank. DO YOU WISH TO LEAVE THE GAME? (Y IS AFFIRMATIVE): >

Type Y next to the prompt (>) and press the RETURN key.

If you never want to continue from this particular position again, but you want to keep playing, type RESTART after the prompt (>). STARCROSS responds by starting the game over from the beginning.

If you want to continue playing from this particular position, but at a later time, follow the SAVING A GAME POSITION instructions.

Saving a Game Position

It will take you some time to play STARCROSS through to the end, just as it takes you some time to finish a good book. You will almost certainly not finish in one sitting. STARCROSS allows you to continue playing at a later time without having to start over from the beginning, just as you can place a bookmark in a book you are reading. There is a command, called **SAVE**, that makes a "snapshot" of your position in the game. If you are a cautious or prudent player, you may want to save your position before you embark upon (or after you finish) any particularly tricky or dangerous part of the journey. Having taken a snapshot, you can go back to that position even though you may get lost or killed afterward.

When the prompt (>) appears, type: **SAVE**, then press the **RETURN** key. Then follow the instructions on your Reference Card.

Restoring a Saved Game Position

When you want to continue playing from where you made a snapshot, follow the **RESTORE** procedure. You can **RESTORE** a saved snapshot at any time during play.

When the prompt (>) appears, type: **RESTORE** and press the **RETURN** key. Then follow the instructions on your Reference Card.

You may now continue playing from your restored position. You can type **LOOK** for a description of where you are.

List of STARCROSS Commands

To simplify your adventuring, you may order STARCROSS to give you information by typing specific commands. These commands can be used over and over again as needed, but they are each considered one complete move. Type your command in sentence form after the prompt (>) appears.

The list of commands is:

AGAIN

STARCROSS will respond as if you had repeated your previous sentence.

BRIEF

This commands STARCROSS to fully describe only newly encountered rooms and objects. Rooms already visited and objects already seen will be described by printing the room name and the object names only.

INVENTORY

STARCROSS lists your possessions. You may abbreviate **INVENTORY** by typing **I**.

LOOK

STARCROSS describes your surroundings in detail. You may abbreviate **LOOK** by typing **L**.

QUIT

This gives you the option to quit playing. If you want to save your position, first read the instructions under **SAVING A GAME POSITION**. You may abbreviate **QUIT** by typing **Q**.

RESTART

This ends the game and starts the game over from the beginning.

RESTORE

Restores a game position you saved with the **SAVE** command. See the section **RESTORING A SAVED GAME POSITION**.

SAVE

Saves a game position on your storage diskette. See the section **SAVING A GAME POSITION**.

SCORE

STARCROSS shows your current score with the number of moves you have made, and your rank. (Your rank is your rating as a professional STARCROSS player and is based on the number of points you have.)

SCRIPT

This command assumes you have a printer. It commands the printer to begin printing a transcript of your game session.

SUPERBRIEF

This command tells STARCROSS to show you only the name of the room you have entered, and no other information. It is briefer than **BRIEF**.

UNSCRIPT

This command stops your printer from printing.

VERBOSE

This command tells STARCROSS to show you a long description of the room and the objects in it whenever you enter a room.

VERSION

STARCROSS responds by showing you the release number and serial number of your copy of the game.

WAIT

This command causes time in the game to pass. Normally, between moves, no time is passing as far as STARCROSS is concerned—you could leave your computer, take a nap, and return to the game to find that nothing has changed. **WAIT** is used when you want to find out what will happen in the game if you do absolutely nothing while time passes. For example, if you encounter an alien being, you could **WAIT** and see what it will do.

Appendix

STARCROSS Responses

STARCROSS may occasionally have a few words for you when it wants you to clarify your instruction. Some responses are:

I DON'T KNOW THE WORD 'your word.' The word you typed is not in the game's vocabulary. Sometimes a synonym or rephrasing will be "understood." If not, STARCROSS probably doesn't know the idea you were trying to get across.

I CAN'T USE THE WORD 'your word' HERE. STARCROSS knows the word you typed, but the word made no sense where you put it in the sentence: "Open the take," for example.

YOU MUST SUPPLY A VERB! Unless you are answering a question, each sentence must have a verb (or a command) in it somewhere.

THERE IS A NOUN MISSING IN THAT SENTENCE. This usually indicates an incomplete sentence such as, "Put the lamp in the," where STARCROSS expected another noun and couldn't find one.

TOO MANY NOUN CLAUSES. An example is "Put the troll in the basket with the shovel." A valid STARCROSS sentence has, at most, one direct object and one indirect object.

BEG PARDON? You did not type anything after the prompt (>) and before you pressed the RETURN key on your keyboard.

IT'S TOO DARK TO SEE. In the story, there was no light to see objects in the room.

I CAN'T SEE ANY 'object' HERE. In the story the object you referred to was not accessible to you.

MULTIPLE OBJECTS CANNOT BE USED WITH 'your verb.' It is legal for you to use multiple objects (that is, nouns or noun phrases separated by "and" or a comma) only with certain verbs. Among the more useful of these verbs are "take," "drop," and "put."

I DON'T UNDERSTAND THAT SENTENCE. You typed a sentence that is gibberish: for example, "Give alien with ray gun." You might try rephrasing the sentence.

Command Summary

The following commands can be entered when the prompt (>) has appeared on the screen. (For explanations, see LIST OF STARCROSS COMMANDS section.)

AGAIN
BRIEF
INVENTORY
LOOK
QUIT
RESTART
RESTORE
SAVE
SCORE
SCRIPT
SUPERBRIEF
UNSCRIPT
VERBOSE
VERSION
WAIT

Sentence Syntax

- A STARCROSS sentence must contain at least a verb or a command (e. g., AGAIN).
- Separate multiple objects of the verb by the word AND or a comma (,).
- Several sentences typed to STARCROSS at one time must be separated by a period (.) or by the word THEN. A period is not needed at the end of a line of input.
- Only two kinds of questions may be asked: WHAT and WHERE.
- For the shortest abbreviation of directions, use F (FORE), AFT, P (PORT), SB (STARBOARD), U (UP), and D (DOWN).
- The letter L may be used to abbreviate the LOOK command.
- The letter I may be used to abbreviate the INVENTORY command.

