

SwordThrust 1

Master Disk

The King's Testing Ground™

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Plunge into fantasy, with the keen, cutting edge
of imagination and computer magic.



A Product of
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SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Apple® II with Applesoft, II+, IIe, or Franklin Ace™ 1000
48K • One Disk Drive • DOS 3.3

PACKAGE CONTENTS

The King's Testing Ground Disk
Instruction Manual
Warranty Card

OVERVIEW

Escaping into this fantasy is great fun, but beware—it is habit-forming. The King's Testing Ground is the introductory game in a whole series of SwordThrust adventures. It will plunge you into the medieval world of cunning and combat. The characters assume a whole range of personalities, requiring diverse strategies, and they grow wiser and wealthier as you play on. No two games within the scenario are ever the same, and there are six more scenarios available.

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Foreword

BroadBelly tipped back the mug at his lips, finishing its contents. He loosed a contented belch, then stood and walked to the kitchen. The barrel was freshly tapped, and the rich foamy blog swirled as it poured out of the wooden spigot into his cavernous mug. "Ahh," he said aloud, "a man's castle is his home!"

BroadBelly heard the automatic drawbridge opener kick in, and then the sounds of hooves crossing over the moat. StarEyes was home! This made BroadBelly happy. He sauntered down to the horse-port where she was tethering the beast. "This woman, she is the finest in the land," he thought, "sharper than a sword and more beautiful than an Arabian filly."

StarEyes was excited, "Wait till you see what I bought!" she said.

"Oh no," came his distressed reply, "I hope you didn't go see that wizard again. Last time he sold you those metal boxes that were supposed to hold magic, but all they do is glow. I could have had a fine ox for the price!"

"Hush up and let me show you." She led him into the den, and handed him the thin, square, floppy thing.

BroadBelly examined it with disdain. "And how much did you pay for this? Enough to keep the wizard in wine for a week, I'll wager."

"Don't you worry," said StarEyes, taking the thing away from BroadBelly before he could get fingerprints all over it. She inserted it into the slot in a box, label side up and nearest her. Then she turned the power on. There was a beep, and in a moment the screen lit up, displaying the Softsmith logo.

"Huh!" exclaimed the startled BroadBelly "What's this, some powerful magic?" He was upset. "Who are these Softsmiths?" he bellowed.

"They are representatives of the Guild of fine craftsmen; they are the merchants of perfect wares."

"Hmm, that's good for them. But I'm a warrior and don't plan to spend a week learning how boxes speak. I'd rather be a member of a different guild."

"No fear, my dear; just 'boot' the disk and play. You'll be taken away to join the ranks of the 'Guild of Free Rogues.' A world of strategy and skill beckons thee to join in merriment, magic, and mystery."

"Ha ha! A land of rogues—now I'm at my best. Move aside, woman, let this warrior do the rest." He sat before the screen. His thick fingers, better suited for axe and sword, fumbled at the keyboard. He typed in his name and pressed <RETURN>. "Questions, questions, it's all too tame. I yearn for adventure!"

"To learn what to do, read the manual through," said StarEyes. "It's full of muse you can use when starting the game. Information contained tells how you move, how to bargain for weapons, and which to choose. There be magical spells and potions to consider, and character traits that make you a winner. Examine your agility and hardiness rating, the knowledge you gain may be worth the waiting. So, read a little more, before you start playing."

"Bah! I'm sure I can play, no time for delay. Look here, I've found it: 'Press <A> for adventure, when you're ready and want it.' Ha ha, I'm off to the King's Testing Ground."

And away went BroadBelly—when will he learn? He travelled south through the caverns, pressing <S> and <RETURN>, searching for booty and plunder to take, not understanding that his name was at stake. For when a character dies in a SwordThrust adventure, the disk drive spins and he exists no more. It didn't take long to meet his fate, for all through the caverns, opponents await. The king's testing ground is not a mere maze, but a place to do battle for money and praise.

Imagine the look of BroadBelly's surprise, when confronting a spider, gigantic in size. The beast wanted battle, no walking away. BroadBelly tried for the right word to say. His fat fingers fumbled as he searched for the verb; "smash," "kill," "destroy," none of them worked. He realized finally, he had to ATTACK. He scored a hit, but the spider came back. The screen flashed a message that told of bad news: he was fighting with fists, no weapons to use. His FATIGUE increased as he continued to fight; the creature would kill him with the next bite. What could be done? He knew he was beat. BroadBelly typed FLEE, the command to retreat.

BroadBelly was shamed by his mistake. He could have bought armour and shields to take. Prior to entering the King's Testing Ground, he could have shopped at the Hall, where weapons abound. Battling bare-fisted had taken its cost; now he was tired and injured and lost. A message he read told of exhaustion; he typed in REST, a prudent precaution. The passage of time brought back his energy, but only magic could heal the injury.

He pressed an <S> to head south again, journeying deeper into the cavern. His path was blocked by a knight dressed in black, wielding a sword and keen for attack. Poor BroadBelly heard the the disk

drive spin; his biography was terminated when the sword pierced his skin. The computer erased all records of his character, with extreme prejudice.

StarEyes giggled as the big warrior blushed. "Adventure," she said, "is not something to rush. You could have left the testing ground richer from the bout, but you went in unready and couldn't even get out. Now your character has died, so move aside and let me try it."

"Argh," he replied, "who cares? I was thirsty for more blog, anyhow."

StarEyes had been reading the manual. She knew she had to check the attributes assigned to her at the beginning. She knew how to bargain with the weapons merchant and training instructor. She bought a drink at the bar and listened for a hint. Only then did she go off on her adventure. It wasn't long before she came back to the meeting hall of the Guild of Free Rogues with gold in her pockets and the sword Excalibur in her hand.

"That was fun," she declared. "I can't wait to go back to the wizard and buy the next game in the SwordThrust series."

"Series?" inquired BroadBelly.

"Why, yes, there are seven adventures. With the booty and experience my character gained in the King's Testing Ground, I should do quite well on the more difficult adventures."

BroadBelly felt drained. His eyes wandered in an unfocused gaze, until he noticed a spider on the wall.

"If only I had my sword," he mumbled to the spider, or no one at all.

The SwordThrust Series

1. The King's Testing Ground (Master)
2. The Vampyre Caves
3. Kidnapper's Cove
4. The Case of the Sultan's Pearl
5. The Green Plague
6. The Eternal Curse
7. The Hall of Alchemie

Table of Contents

	Page
System Requirements	Front Cover
Package Contents	Front Cover
Overview	Front Cover
Foreword	i
I. Welcome to a World of Fantasy	1
The Game that is an Adventure	1
The Master Disk	2
Getting Started	2
Important Tips	3
The Personality of a New Character	3
Outfitting the Character	4
II. Fighting Your Way Through an Adventure	7
The "Adventure" Display Tells the Story	7
Issuing Commands	8
III. Relating to Others	11
Dealing with Monsters	11
Your Character's Personality	12
Hardiness	13
Agility	13
Charisma	14
Left-hand Rating	14
Fatigue	15
Other Attributes	16
The Characters in the Main Hall	16
Visit the Weapons Shop	16
The Wizard	17
The Banker	17
You, the Rogue	18
Rogues Drink at the Bar	18
The Training Instructor	19
Rogue on Ice	19
IV. Magic Spells	21
Blast	21
Heal	22
Speed	22
Power	22
Charm	22
Fear	23
Deathspell	23
Farsee	23
Teleport	24

Thickskin	24
V. Combat Odds	25
Is It a Hit or a Miss?	25
Preparedness for Attack	25
The Random Factor	26
Defensive Preparedness	26
Experience at Battle	27
VI. The Character Editor	29
1. Clear Out All Old Characters	29
2. Display All Old Characters	29
3. Delete an Old Character	29
4. Transfer a Character	29
To Another Disk	29
Clone a Character	30
5. Enter the Universe of Diurla	30
VII. Buying Software is not a Game	31
How to Obtain a Backup Copy	31
Warranty Card	31
Troubleshooting	31

I. Welcome to a World of Fantasy

A SwordThrust adventure combines the power of your computer with the power of your imagination to transport you to a fantasy universe called Diurla.

THE GAME THAT IS AN ADVENTURE

There are seven SwordThrust disks available. Each contains a computer adventure game. In an adventure game, you are presented with a scenario. As the player, you assume the role of a character in that setting. You move your character through various situations, and solve problems along the way.

SwordThrust is an all-text game. Playing SwordThrust is like reading a very fast-paced adventure novel, except that you are in it! The text provides you with a lot of information. The upper part of the display keeps you abreast of your "status," with information such as whether you are tired or well rested. The lower portion of the screen is where the "action" is. The commands you give the computer are displayed there, followed by the results of your actions.

You move your character through a labyrinth. One of your tasks is to find your way out (eventually). You may wish to chart your travels on a piece of paper: experienced adventurers keep the layout of the labyrinth in their head.

Along the way you will meet other beings. These are called "monsters," though they aren't always bizarre or dangerous. Often, however, they are unfriendly and you must fight them to the death. When you are fighting monsters, it is a good idea to keep an eye on the status line. If your situation gets bad, you will have to FLEE. The main object is to avoid getting killed. It might be a good idea to sneak past a monster if you can.

Assuming you are able to get out alive, you might ask yourself "Why did I go in there?" During an adventure game, there is some prize or set of prizes which you need to gain. It might be some rich booty or some special information. Any item that you can take or otherwise act upon is called an "artifact." Very often, a treasure will have a special monster guarding it. Another problem is that you may need one item to get another, so your actions may have to occur in a specific order.

For seasoned adventure game players, the more convoluted the trickery, the better the game. You will find that "The King's Testing Ground" is a challenging and fun introduction, which will get you ready for the tougher challenges in the rest of the SwordThrust series.

THE MASTER DISK

To play any of the Swordthrust adventures, you must have the SwordThrust Master disk (the one in this package). It holds the Master program as well as the game "The King's Testing Ground." When you begin to play, the Master program asks you for a name. That name is then used to identify a character. The Master program assigns a personality to a character. As the character goes through the adventure, she or he will be changed by the experience. The character can gain skills and wealth. When the character emerges victorious from an adventure, the improved personality and financial status are recorded by the Master program on the Master disk. The Master program can keep track of up to fifteen characters. If a character dies during an adventure, the biography of that character is totally erased.

GETTING STARTED

To get started with SwordThrust, simply follow these steps. (This is called "booting.")

1. Turn off the computer to clear the memory. Turn on the TV or monitor.
2. Open the disk drive door by pulling out and up on its bottom edge. Slip the program disk into drive #1, with the labeled edge being last to enter the drive.
3. When the disk is entirely in the drive, close the drive door.
4. Turn the power switch to the on position. (Apple II users skip to 5, below.) You will hear a "beep" from the computer and the "in-use" light on the disk drive will come on. This means that the program is loading.
5. (Apple II users only) After the] prompt appears, press <6> <CTRL-P> (the <CTRL> and <P> keys simultaneously), and then press <RETURN>.

You will now see the Softsmith logo and SwordThrust title appear on the screen. If you don't, please try turning your computer off briefly, and then on again.

IMPORTANT TIPS

Follow these tips to minimize problems in running this and many other programs on your microcomputer.

If your computer has a shift lock, make sure it is on. This program recognizes only capital letters.

Do not open the disk drive door while the "in-use" light is on. This may damage your disk and render it unusable.

Do not press <CTRL-C> while the "in-use" light is on. Results are unpredictable and damage to your program may result.

Do not press <BREAK> while the program is running.

Do not try to make a copy of this disk. If, during normal use, something goes wrong with your disk, please refer to the Troubleshooting section of this manual.

Handle your disks carefully and hold them with your fingers on the labeled edge only. Always keep them in their special sleeves while not in use.

THE PERSONALITY OF A NEW CHARACTER

When the SwordThrust disk starts up, it will eventually ask whether you wish to play, or to edit old characters. The edit capability is not important unless you already have several characters stored, and want to get rid of some losers to make room for new characters. But since you now have a brand new Master disk, all you have to do is press <P> for "play." This brings you to the gates of the Main Hall of the Guild of Free Rogues. Here the gate-keeper will greet you.

On the screen you see a sketch of the "Main Hall," and you hear a short ballad. You can cut this computer music off by pressing the <ESC> key. The Main Hall will soon become very familiar to you. You always go to the Main Hall of the Guild of Free Rogues prior to all adventures, and (hopefully) you return to it at the end of your adventure. As you enter the Main Hall, you are asked to supply a name. Type in a name and press <RETURN>. The computer examines its records and if it finds that the name does not match any of the active biographies, it will check back with you. It asks whether you made a typing error or if indeed you are declaring the name of a new character. Press <N> for "new."

You still are not allowed to enter the Main Hall. First, your new character must be assigned personality traits. Declare whether it is male or female. The character will start life with a meager 200 gold pieces and inferior fighting skills. Ratings in four very important characteristics are assigned by a random process. These are: Hardiness (HD), Agility (AG), Charisma (CH), and Left Hand Rating. You should pay close attention to these traits. It is important for you to formulate a strategy that takes advantage of a character's strong points and covers up weaknesses. Different characters need different game plans to win.

If you get a score of thirteen or below in hardiness, agility, or charisma; that is not-so-good. The maximum score for any characteristic is twenty-four. If your ratings for these three add up to less than thirty-nine, the character is a misfit and doesn't stand much chance of survival. You had better take advantage of the suicide plan, which lets you try again.

At this time you are given a chance to change the name of the character. If the name obviously doesn't fit the personality, this is your chance to change it. After you are more familiar with SwordThrust adventures, you will better understand how these ratings influence a character's personality.

Next, you get your one and only opportunity to change the personality of a character. Follow the computer prompts. You may trade two points from one characteristic to add one point to another. To switch several points, do the operation several times.

At last, the character is taken to the Main Hall of the Guild of Free Rogues.

OUTFITTING THE CHARACTER

Once inside the Main Hall, the character must prepare for the adventure. There isn't really much you can do with 200 gold pieces, but that's okay because your first adventure will be in the King's Testing Ground. This adventure requires less preparation than the others in the SwordThrust series. A character is allowed to go through the King's Testing Ground only once. Hopefully, you should come out alive, a little bit more experienced, and much better off financially. If a character comes out with fewer than 1200 gold pieces, you might as well abandon it, because further adventures will require all the preparation money can buy.

The Main Hall offers you several places to go and use your money. The computer lists your options. Press the appropriate letter, <W> for weapons shop, <E> for examination room, etc. The fact that

you have only 200 gold pieces limits your purchases; for example, the magic spells of the wizard Hokas Tokas are beyond your means. Before you buy anything, use the "examination room" to check on your current situation and guide your purchases so that they optimize your game strategy. To start with, you will want to buy a weapon, perhaps some armour or a shield. If you have enough money left, get some training. Then, go to the bar for a drink (and perhaps a hint you will remember later). If you choose to leave, by pressing <L>, the character is saved for a later adventure.

Charisma exerts a strong influence on the prices you are offered. All prices are negotiable, and you should haggle over all purchases. Although there is a random factor involved, the merchants will usually give more when you give more. When you reach a compromise, the deal is made.

When you leave the adventure and return to the Main Hall, you will have to sell all the extra objects and artifacts you have accumulated. That's good, because you want the money anyhow, to prepare for the next adventure. You may keep, however, four weapons, a suit of armour, and one shield.

When the character is fully outfitted, you are ready to go on an adventure. Press <A>. The computer ushers you out of the Main Hall. Then there is a short pause. This is your chance to switch disks, should you be going on an adventure other than "The King's Testing Ground." The pause lasts only about ten seconds, so if you are going to insert another SwordThrust disk, have it ready. Then, the disk drive starts up again and you are off on an adventure.

II. Fighting Your Way Through an Adventure

The scenario that is included on the Master disk is called "The King's Testing Ground." It is in the "A Class" of SwordThrust games. This classification comes from the resemblance to the classic computer game "Adventure" by Woods and Crowthers. You are given text descriptions of rooms, artifacts, and monsters as you travel about.

THE "ADVENTURE" DISPLAY TELLS THE STORY

The display is divided into two areas, the top and the bottom. The area at the top of the screen is used to give you "status" information. Here you find the current dungeon time, your condition (how damaged, fatigued, and encumbered you are), and the description of the room you are in. The lower area is the "action" area, where the tales of your travels are told, as they occur.

The first time you encounter a monster or artifact, a full description is given for the object. Any special effects you would notice are printed, for example, "There is a green glow around the ball." During any later turn, the monster or artifact will merely be named.

Commands must be one or two words. The first word should be a verb (the action you want to take) and the second, optional word should be the object of the action. For example, OPEN DOOR, or ENTER CAVE. You must use words the computer has been prepared to deal with. If you use a verb it doesn't understand, all legal verbs will be listed for you.

You may abbreviate words, so long as the word you type is unique and can't be confused with something else. You may abbreviate movement commands with one letter. For example, if there is only a book in the room with you, GET BOOK could be abbreviated to GE B. However, if there is also a bottle in the room, or if you are carrying a bottle, you would have to say at least GE BOO.

If there are several identical monsters in the room with you, named for example: BAT1, BAT2, and BAT3, and you don't care which one you attack, you may simply say ATTACK BAT. One of the bats will be selected by the computer.

SwordThrust has a feature that keeps the action moving fast. If you simply press <RETURN> when asked for a command, your last command is automatically repeated for you. This is particularly handy in combat, where you may attack the same monster several times in a row.

The clock shown in the status area at the top of your screen keeps track of how long you have been in the dungeon. It is not important for the King's Testing Ground, but will be in later adventures. Any action that takes you from one room to another will cause thirty seconds to pass in the dungeon. Any other action causes five seconds to pass. You may find it useful to keep track of the duration of spells or other time-dependent events. Note that the dungeon time is not real time, so don't worry about how long it takes you to type in your commands.

ISSUING COMMANDS

The remainder of this section tells you the verbs you can use and what they can do (for your character).

ATTACK: This is your fighting word. It causes you to swing your ready weapon(s) at whatever monster you specify.

DROP: This command causes an object being carried by your character to be dropped to the floor. You may specify what should be dropped. The command DROP ALL will ask whether you want to drop your ready weapon, armour, and shield, along with everything else.

FLEE: This command lets you leave a room that has an enemy in it. The only other way you can get out is to kill the enemy. When you FLEE, your character runs out of the room in a blind panic. You cannot choose the direction you run in, but you always go out some exit. If this sends you into a roaring pit of fire, or into a den of dragons, so be it. Half of the time you will not know in which direction you ran. In addition, enemy monsters may choose to follow you.

GET: This command causes your character to pick up objects that are on the floor of the room you are in. You follow the verb GET with the name of the object to be gotten. GET ALL results in an attempt to pick up all artifacts that are in the room with you. If you pick up a one-handed weapon and you have no weapon ready in your right hand, the weapon is automatically readied. Beware—some objects set off special effects when they are gotten.

GIVE: This command causes your character to give artifacts to monsters. It will usually make the monsters more friendly towards you. On the other hand, if you give a one-handed weapon to a weaponless monster, it may be able to use that weapon to attack with. Some items may have other effects— giving healing potion to monsters will heal them.

The format of this command is the verb GIVE followed by the artifact to be given. The computer then asks which monster to give it to. If you attempt to put it all together, such as GIVE AXE HERMIT, the computer will think you are trying to give an "AXE HERMIT" to someone, and will tell you that you aren't carrying that artifact.

You give money by using a number as the artifact description. The command GIVE 10 means you want to give ten gold pieces. If you give money to a monster, he will spend it. Any other artifact you give to a monster will remain on its body.

INVENTORY: This command lists everything that your character is carrying. Any special conditions regarding the character are also listed; for example, wearing a hat, glowing green, etc.

LOOK, EXAMINE: These commands are used to repeat long descriptions and to try for more, new information. These verbs should be used alone to look at the entire room. Any secret items or passages will be found. For this purpose, the two words can be used interchangeably.

Use the verb EXAMINE followed by a monster's name or artifact's name to repeat the description of it. You may notice something new about the object. If you are examining the body of a monster that fell to the ground, you will be told whether the monster is dead or merely unconscious, and you will find any artifacts the monster was carrying.

NORTH, SOUTH, EAST, WEST, UP, DOWN: These six commands are the essential movement instructions. They move your character a distance of one room in the direction you state. You may abbreviate the direction to one letter if you wish: N, S, E, W, U, and D. You cannot move if there are monsters in the room that want to fight you. In that case, you have to FLEE. Occasionally, various mechanical or magical traps keep you from moving in some direction, and you have to figure out a way to deactivate them.

READY: This command brings a weapon or shield out of your backpack and into a ready condition, so that you can use it to attack and defend yourself.

If you ready a shield, it is held in your left hand. Any weapon in your hand is unready and stored away in your backpack. Likewise, if you ready a two-handed weapon, it causes any weapon in your left hand to be unready.

If you ready a one-handed weapon and you have an empty hand, it automatically goes there. If both hands are empty, the right hand is preferred. If both hands are full, you are asked which hand to ready.

SMILE: This command causes your character to smile. Smiling tells you how the monsters in the room feel about you. Each monster will either smile back, ignore you, or growl. If it growls, it hates you and you are about to fight. There is a fifty-fifty chance that you will have lost a round of combat when you smile. In that case, every monster in the room will attack while you are standing there, grinning like an idiot.

WEAR: This command is primarily used to don a suit of armor. You cannot change armor during combat, so make sure you are wearing it before you run into trouble. There are also some other items, such as rings, hats, shoes, etc., that can be worn. These small things may be put on at any time.

III. Relating to Others

There are two places in the fantasy world of Diurla where your character has to deal with other inhabitants. Inside the Main Hall, you haggle with people to buy and sell weapons, learn spells, and bank your money so it doesn't get stolen. Your interactions in the Main Hall are limited to business; no battles can take place there.

Outside the Main Hall, in your adventure, you meet a different breed of creatures. For convenience, these are all referred to as "monsters." These creatures are elves, wolves, other humans, etc. Their range of actions is wider also.

DEALING WITH MONSTERS

All monsters that you encounter fall into three groups—those that hate you, those that ignore you, and those that help you. The monsters who hate you will attack you and your friends, and may follow you if you try to flee them. The monsters who help you will attack those who hate you, and loyally follow you around wherever you go.

Sometimes, when you meet a monster, it will not be sure how it feels about you. In that case, though it might be inclined to hate you, you still have a chance to befriend it. The chances are always affected by your charisma and charm spells. You may give things to a monster, either to befriend it, or to use its strength to carry things for you. A monster will refuse a gift that would make it too heavily encumbered. A charm spell or a bribe could inadvertently offend the monster and cause it to hate you.

If you ever attack a monster that is ignoring you or is friendly, the odds that it will hate you go up tremendously. Such an action will cause every other non-hostile monster in the room to reconsider its opinion of you. If a monster has been charmed, the charm spell is very likely to be broken.

To learn which monsters are your friends and which aren't, you may use a turn to smile at them. Those monsters who like you will smile back, those who hate you will growl at you, and those monsters who don't care will ignore you. Since smiling takes a turn, you risk being attacked; the odds are fifty-fifty that an unfriendly monster will take advantage of the opportunity.

During combat, a monster can do one of several things:

ATTACK: An unfriendly monster will attack you, unless it is otherwise pre-occupied. If it is your friend, it will attack your opponents, and if it hates you, it will try to kill you.

DROP: If a monster is carrying a load, it may drop all but its ready battlegear. This makes it lightly encumbered, so that it can fight more effectively.

FLEE: Every monster has a certain courage rating, which is not revealed to you. During combat, various factors combine to assign the monster a temporary courage rating, which is within twenty points of the real courage. If things get bad enough during combat, the monster flees.

A fear spell cuts a monster's courage in half. Being weaponless cuts its courage to a third. If the damage to a monster or its friends is greater than the courage rating allows, it flees. The monster only runs away a distance of one room. You may pursue it, but will have to figure out which direction it went.

PICK UP: A monster can pick up a weapon. If it doesn't have a weapon, and there is one lying around, the monster may choose to use its turn to pick up that weapon.

PURSUE: If you flee from a monster, the odds are one-half of its rating courage that it will pursue you to the next room. When you flee, all monsters that are friendly travel with you.

REST: Even monsters get tired. Taking a turn to rest lets a monster regain two fatigue points. The odds that a monster will rest are equal to the fraction of its fatigue capacity that it has used up. A monster that ignores you is automatically resting.

SPECIAL: Occasionally, a monster will have special powers, and may surprise you by doing something different.

YOUR CHARACTER'S PERSONALITY

When a character is created, it is assigned various ratings for hardiness, agility, charisma, and left hand rating. These and other factors determine how the character will be able to cope with the various and diverse situations it faces. Some of these factors change with almost every move, but the ratings are more or less fixed. Under special circumstances they can be changed temporarily or even permanently.

Hardiness

Hardiness describes the physical strength and endurance of your character. This rating is initially set, when the character is created, by a random process that assigns a number between three and twenty-four. The most probable hardiness falls between twelve and fifteen.

Hardiness determines how much your character can carry. Hardiness rating times five is the number of "gronds" you can carry and be within the limits of "lightly encumbered." A grond is a measure of weight. A weapon will weigh roughly two gronds, a shield will weigh four gronds, a suit of armour is one grond, and a gold coin weighs 1/100 grond.

If you carry from five to ten times your hardiness, you are "heavily encumbered." If you carry ten to twenty times your hardiness, you are heavily encumbered. Twenty times is your limit. These three levels of encumbrance in turn affect how quickly you get tired (fatigued) and your chances of hitting with your weapons. Also, you can swim only if you are lightly encumbered.

Hardiness also determines how much damage your character can absorb before being killed. Every time a monster lands a successful blow on the character, or you set off a trap, a certain number of damage points is added to your character. Should the total number of damage points accumulated ever get greater than your hardiness, you will be dead! Magic can cure the damage done to you, and you will be completely cured whenever you begin an adventure.

In various adventures, your hardiness may also have other effects. For example, the amount of time you may hold your breath while under water is limited to thirty seconds per point of hardiness. So you can use the clock to determine how long you will be safe under water. By the way, monsters can always hold their breath one second longer than you can.

Your hardiness can be permanently changed, but only under the influence of rare magical devices that you may find in the caverns. Nothing can permanently raise your hardiness above thirty. But beware! These devices can decrease as well as increase your hardiness. If it ever drops to zero, you will be dead.

Agility

The agility rating, like hardiness, is randomly allocated when a character is created. It is usually around twelve to fifteen, though it can range from three to twenty-four. Agility describes the speed and dexterity of the character. The main effect of agility is to increase the odds of your character's scoring a hit during combat.

During combat, several factors are added together to find your chance of hitting with a weapon. One of those factors is your agility. An extra point of agility means a two percent better chance of hitting.

From time to time, your character will blunder into a trap that it may or may not be able to pull out of. The odds of avoiding the trap may be affected by the agility rating.

Only magic can permanently change agility, and simpler magic spells can provide a temporary boost to the agility rating. For example, the magic-spell Speed will temporarily double your agility. Permanent change is limited to a rating of thirty. A rating of zero is fatal.

Charisma

The charisma rating is assigned to a character when it is created. It can initially range from three to twenty-four, but is usually between twelve and fifteen. Charisma means how attractive you are to others. It is beauty, voice, charm, anything that makes people think and say "Gee, what a great person."

Charisma affects the chances that a random monster will like you. For every point of charisma above ten that you have, a monster is two percent less likely to hate you, and two percent more likely to help you. A charisma rating below ten has the reverse affect.

Another very important affect of charisma occurs in the Main Hall of the Guild of Free Rogues. As you know, all prices are negotiable there. Charisma has a major impact on the initial price you are offered for goods, and on the willingness of the merchant to bargain.

Only magic can change your charisma. It cannot be permanently raised above thirty. Should it drop to zero, your character does not die, but cannot gain any gold until it is brought back up, and what use is life to a rogue without gold?

Left-hand Rating

By an odd stroke of fate, every character in Diurla is right-handed. Most characters have two hands. The most common ways to attack are either with a two-handed weapon or with a weapon in the right hand and a shield in the left. However, you may sometimes choose to use a weapon in each hand, to get twice the attacking power. In such a case, the left hand rating affects your chance to score a hit with the extra weapon.

The left hand rating is a multiplier that ranges from twenty-five to ninety-nine percent. The odds for a hit with the left hand are the chances for a right-hand hit times this multiplier. Only rarely will the left hand rating be used for anything other than combat.

As your character gains experience, the left hand rating can be increased up to 100 percent. Also, magic can increase this rating. However, magic and mechanical traps can also decrease the rating. If your left hand ever gets so mangled that the rating drops to zero, you will still be able to use a shield with it, but no weapons.

Fatigue

A character can only do so much before it becomes exhausted. The "fatigue reservoir" begins at twice the hardiness rating. Resting one round recovers fatigue points. The maximum benefit available from continuous rest is limited by the fatigue reservoir.

Maintaining a rested, unfatigued state is important to every-day survival. Attacking will use up one fatigue point, unless you are heavily encumbered. In that case, attacking uses two fatigue points. Movement when normally encumbered has no affect on fatigue. However, when lightly encumbered, movement recuperates a fatigue point, and when heavily encumbered, it uses up a fatigue point. When you flee from a monster, you use one fatigue point if lightly encumbered, two if encumbered, and four if heavily encumbered. Carrying all that booty around can be tiresome, but then, booty is what you are after.

Casting spells uses from one to one hundred fatigue points, depending upon the spell cast. Damage causes fatigue, but recuperating from one does not help the other. Various factors unique to an adventure may also cause fatigue.

There are four levels of fatigue: rested, weary, tired, and exhausted. The level of fatigue affects the chance of scoring a hit in combat. So it is wise to rest before you get into another fight.

When you use a fatigue point, it is considered either a constructive or non-constructive use. Casting spells and attacking are constructive; fleeing, moving, and getting damaged are not. A point constructively used gives you ten percent chance to increase your fatigue reservoir by a point. Therefore, casting the one hundred point deathspell will increase your fatigue reservoir by about ten points.

Other Attributes

Parrying ability, armour expertise, and various weapon expertises start at the same level for all characters. These attributes affect combat situations, determining the odds of a hit, block, or miss. The ratings for these attributes are increased by training at the Main Hall, and by fighting a lot (without dying) in the adventures.

THE CHARACTERS IN THE MAIN HALL

By now, you know that it is important to shop around the Main Hall of the Guild of Free Rogues, to get yourself outfitted before you go out on an adventure.

Visit the Weapons Shop

You can get adequate weapons, armour, and shields from Heinrich, the owner of the weapons shop. Like every one else, Heinrich adjusts his prices to reflect charisma, then haggles. As you expect, the quality of the equipment affects its asking price. And of course, you have to pay him in cash, with gold pieces.

Any form of shielding has a "hit" value, which describes its ability to prevent damage. When you get hit in combat, the damage is reduced by one point for every hit value. Heinrich offers three kinds of armour: leather that stops one point of damage (it costs about 100 gold pieces), chain mail that stops two points of damage (costing about 200), and plate armour that stops five points of damage (costing about 420). You can buy shields from Heinrich; he has two types. Small shields have a hit value of one and cost about 50 gold pieces. Large shields have a hit value of two and cost about 67 gold pieces. It is important to have plenty of defenses, but be aware that the more shielding you use, the less sharp your attacks become. A small shield reduces accuracy by 5%, a large one by 15%.

Heinrich's favorite subject is weapons. He offers five kinds: axe, bow, mace, spear, and sword. He offers this equipment at three quality levels: poor, fair, and good. The quality of a weapon determines its complexity, which is -10%, 0%, and +10% for the respective levels. The following table sums up the price and effectiveness of the various weapons. To understand the "damage" expectation, you will have to wade through the Combat Odds in Section V of this manual. The code "1D6" means roll one die that has six sides, so the maximum damage is six points.

Table of Weapon Values

Weapon	C.A.*	Damage	Cost		
			Poor	Fair	Good
Axe	2	1D6	10	30	50
Bow	3	1D6	10	40	70
Mace	1	1D4	1	10	70
Spear	2	1D5	1	20	40
Sword	4	1D8	10	50	90

* Complexity Adjustment

You may own several weapons if you choose to. However, when it comes to buying a new shield or suit of armour, you must first sell any others you have, because Heinrich will let you own only one at a time. He gladly buys any equipment you have for him, but at the ridiculous rate of one twentieth the original cost. He makes an exception only when you offer him something out of the ordinary. As a collector, he will gladly give you a good price on any equipment you offer him that he does not already peddle.

The Wizard

Hokas Tokas, the wizard, was once a great rogue himself, and a specialist in magic. However, a great love of odd alcoholic beverages proved to be his downfall. He now hangs out at the bar of the Main Hall, rising from his drunken stupor only to teach others the ten spells.

He will teach any of the ten spells to anyone who can pay. His prices vary, with adjustments for charisma and haggling. He has the usual rogues' policy regarding credit: you pay cash, in gold.

The Banker

Shylock Fitzhugh-Smythe is a banker who works in the Main Hall. He neither makes loans nor pays interest for money left in his care. But it is a good business. He gets to keep the money of the rogues who never return. But, of course, that won't happen to you, so rest assured that as a banker, he is absolutely trustworthy.

The reason for leaving gold on deposit with him is that any gold you carry with you may be stolen or forcibly taken from you, but any you leave behind is safe. On the other hand, the gold left behind cannot be used as bribes—er, that is, gifts.

You, the Rogue

The examination room shows you the current values of most of the factors that determine your character and status. There is no charge, it is a courtesy among rogues. In the examination room, you can check the three main attributes of hardiness, agility, and charisma. You see your current level of expertise at using various weapons, and your abilities at parrying and using armour. You are also shown what you are carrying, and how much gold you have on deposit with the banker.

Armour and shields are listed with information about the hits stopped and the adjustment to your chance of hitting. For example: LEATHER (1/-10%) means the armour is made of leather, stops one point of damage per blow, and reduces the accuracy of your attacks by 10%.

Weapons are listed along with their complexity, CMP, rating. The more complex a weapon, the more likely it is to score a hit. Two-handed weapons are indicated by an asterisk (*).

Rogues Drink at the Bar

You may purchase drinks at the bar of the Main Hall for one gold piece per drink. The only correct time to visit the bar is just before you go adventuring.

For every drink you have, there is a chance that you will overhear a useful hint for your next adventure. You won't know what the hint is until you are on your way into the adventure. The per-drink chance of getting a hint is your charisma divided by 30. Having many drinks will almost insure that you will get a hint. But that doesn't mean you should get schlocked. You never get more than one hint, and there are side effects.

To begin with, drinking causes fatigue. The amount of fatigue points used is the amount you drink cubed (that's right, cubed). So one drink uses one fatigue point, but three use nine. So you would start your adventure in need of rest.

Furthermore, you might pass out and fall down unconscious. That happens if you drink more than your fatigue can handle. There is a fifty-fifty chance of your gold sack getting stolen while you sleep. Also, you could affect your hardiness.

The effects of drinks are cumulative within a visit to the Main Hall. Going to the bar four times for one drink is the same as going once for four drinks.

The Training Instructor

Jermaine Munro is the most famous and successful of the female rogues. Nowadays she is running a training shop to share her skills with all. Of course, she expects to be paid handsomely in gold for her services. She can upgrade your ability with any of the weapons: axe, bow, club, spear, and sword.

Jermaine teaches three courses. The beginner's course is limited. It can increase your expertise up to five points above the beginning level. Her base price for a beginner's course is 100 gold pieces. The advanced course can boost your expertise by ten points above the beginning level, and has a base price of 1000.

And then there is the "ultimate" course. There is no limit to how much it can increase your expertise. However, the base price is 10,000 gold pieces! Also, this course is dangerous. For every point of expertise you gain, there is a chance that you will suffer an accident that will lower your agility by one. And if your agility goes down to zero, goodbye!

The number of points you actually gain from any course varies by many factors. It depends on the limits of the course, your agility, and random chance. If you wish to halt a long course, you may press <S> to stop it prematurely.

Rogue on Ice

Using the "Leave" option saves your most recent purchases on the disk and lets you put it away for later use. Your character goes into "cold storage." The computer pauses and does nothing for about a minute. This is a good time to turn it off; otherwise it will start the game up again.

A word of warning: never turn the computer off in the middle of a scenario. Only turn off the computer by using the "leave" option, or when the illustration of the Main Hall is showing.

IV. Magic Spells

Magic is divided into two aspects: local and universal. Local magic is often called upon by manipulating magical artifacts or by saying special words. The area that any particular spell will operate in will be very limited. With local magic, results seem unpredictable. There is an underlying logic, but it is not obvious.

For universal magic, relatively consistent laws of magic have been discovered. The primary application of these discoveries has been the development of ten spells that you may use almost anywhere in Diurla. You are cautioned, however, that local magic concentrates its power in a small area and so can overpower the universal laws. There are dead areas where some spells won't work. For example, the Main Hall is completely spell-proofed.

For a fee paid in gold, you can get Hokas Tokas, the wizard, to teach you magic spells. Even then, you will not be able to use them with absolute certainty. When you learn a spell, you will have a beginning knowledge of from twenty-five to seventy-five percent. That is your probability of successfully casting that spell. Your spell knowledge is not revealed; you have to gauge it for yourself by trying. You increase your knowledge of a spell by successfully using it, the more frequently the better.

Magic requires contact of mind and sight. Therefore, don't try to cast a spell on something you cannot see, or on an unconscious monster. You cast a spell by having your character say the name of the spell and the name of its focus. The focus is the monster or object it is to affect, if any. Therefore, if you are attempting to charm a dog, you would type in the command SAY CHARM DOG. You cannot abbreviate the name of a spell. Casting a spell uses fatigue points, but it is a productive use.

BLAST

The spell Blast sends a miniature ball of energy at any living target you specify. It cannot be used to break down walls or doors; they don't have a mind and so cannot believe in magic. The focus must be specified or the spell will be wasted. For example, BLAST DOG.

If the spell is successful, it will unerringly strike its target, doing one to eight points damage (damage rating 1D8). Armour and shields offer no protection from the Blast spell. Ten fatigue points are used when casting this spell. The cost is about 3000 gold pieces.

HEAL

The spell Heal can remove damage. It can be used to heal yourself, or to heal monsters. Mention a focus to use the spell on another, for example, SAY HEAL DOG. Issue the command without mentioning a focus to use the spell on yourself, for example type: SAY HEAL.

If the spell is successful, one to ten points of damage are removed. Casting the spell uses three points of fatigue. The cost is about 1000 gold pieces.

SPEED

The spell Speed temporarily doubles your agility. The effect lasts from five to fifteen minutes. To use it, just type SPEED.

The benefit of doubling your agility is a much better chance of scoring a hit when you are in combat. Casting Speed again before it expires will extend its duration. Casting this spell uses twenty fatigue points. The cost is about 5000 gold pieces.

POWER

The spell Power results in a momentary lowering of the strength of (universal) natural laws. This makes local magic more powerful. To use it, type POWER.

When this spell is invoked, there is no telling what will happen. Anything is possible, from resurrecting dead monsters, to healing people, to putting them to sleep, to changing your sex. These effects may be either temporary or permanent. This spell uses one fatigue point. It is available for the bargain basement price of only 100 gold pieces.

CHARM

The spell Charm causes monsters to reconsider their opinion of you, with an improved chance they will like you. To use this command, type the command and a focus, for example: CHARM DOG.

The monster will have twice the normal chance of helping you and half the chance of hating you, but nothing is guaranteed. Should the monster have a reason to again reconsider its opinion, at some later time, the charm will wear off. This spell uses four fatigue points. The cost is about 6000 gold pieces.

FEAR

The spell Fear causes a monster to reconsider its morale, at half its normal rating of courage. To use the spell, type the command and a focus, for example: FEAR DOG.

The monster may flee the room, or it may stay where it is. The effect wears off as soon as you part company, so should the monster flee the room and you meet again, it will react with its normal courage. This spell uses four points of fatigue. The price is about 6000 gold pieces.

DEATHSPELL

The spell Deathspell kills either the focal target or you. It is risky. Type the command and focus, for example: DEATHSPELL DOG.

The effect of this spell depends on "hardiness remaining," in you and your opponent. Hardiness remaining is equal to total hardiness minus damage absorbed. The new hardiness remaining for each character is equal to its old hardiness minus the hardiness of the opponent. This formula guarantees the death of the character with lower remaining hardiness. If you had 10 and the dog had 7, you end up with 3 and the dog ends up dead. The Deathspell is useful for assuring the conclusion of a duel you are winning. It uses 100 fatigue points, so it will almost certainly exhaust you to unconsciousness. The cost of this spell is about 1000 gold pieces.

FARSEE

The spell Farsee pulls your mind free from the body and lets you explore from one to three rooms, without being in danger. To use it, just type FARSEE.

Your mind can only go along a path that your body can follow. It cannot go through locked doors and the like. If your mind goes into a room that would mean instant death for a body, the shock instantly cancels the spell. Also, it is possible, though rare, that the mind will get lost and never come back. The spell Farsee uses 30 fatigue points. It costs about 20,000 gold pieces.

TELEPORT

The spell Teleport usually moves the bodies of you and your friends home to the Main Hall. To use it, type the command TELEPORT.

Twenty percent of the time when you invoke the spell, you are not successfully teleported, but instead remain where you are. Five percent of the time, you get teleported into solid rock, so don't use this spell just to avoid a long walk. Also, most dungeon cells are counterspelled against Teleport. Attempting to cast the spell Teleport uses 10 fatigue points. The cost is about 30,000 gold pieces.

THICKSKIN

The spell Thickskin reduces by one point the damage you receive from a hit. To use it, type the command THICKSKIN.

The Thickskin spell lasts from five to fifteen minutes by the clock. Invoking the spell again extends the time. If you change your armour, the spell is broken. Invoking this spell uses 15 points of fatigue. The cost is about 8000 gold pieces.

V. Combat Odds

When you are involved in a fight, a lot of information flashes across the screen. This text gives you a blow by blow description of events. A lot of calculations occur inside the computer to monitor the events of the battle and create a realistic, exciting fight. It is possible to play without knowing these complex calculations, so skip this section if you are not interested.

IS IT A HIT OR A MISS?

While you and the monster are bravely swinging weapons at one another, the computer has to determine the outcome of each attack. For each swing, it first sums up the various factors of fighting preparedness. The result of this simple addition is a percentage. This percentage is compared with a random number to determine if the swing was a hit or a miss. Then the opponent's defensive preparedness is figured in.

The above computations may sound too easy to be true. They are; the actual process is much more complicated.

Preparedness for Attack

The chances of hitting are expressed as a percentage. To calculate that percentage, the computer starts with the attacker's agility and doubles it. Next it adds in the complexity of the weapon being used. Then it adds in the attacker's expertise with that type of weapon. Finally, it subtracts a little bit if the defensive equipment of the attacker is making the attack more clumsy.

The resulting sum is not yet ready for hit determination. It's lowered, anywhere from a little bit to a lot, by a set of multipliers. There is a multiplier based on the character's encumbrance: seven-eighths if encumbered, one-half if heavily encumbered. There is a multiplier based on the character's fatigue: one if rested, seven-eighths if a trifle weary, five-eighths if tired, and one-fourth if exhausted. Another multiplier, the left hand rating, lowers the odds for an attack by a weapon in the left hand. Multipliers are cumulative. Entering a battle heavily encumbered and exhausted reduces your odds to one-eighth what they would be if you were rested and carrying no junk.

The Random Factor

The computer now has a number, between one and a hundred, which expresses the odds of the swing making contact as a hit. Next, it creates a random number between one and a hundred. It makes a comparison, and if the odds number is greater than the random one, the swing was a hit.

One-tenth of all hits are critical hits. For a critical hit, another random "toss of the dice" determines just how critical. Chances are that it does a lot of damage. Less than ten percent of all swings miss so badly that they turn into fumbles. Another random toss of the dice determines the result of the fumble, from no effect to great self-inflicted damage.

The damage from the hit is determined by rolling dice according to a characteristic formula for each weapon. You can see the formula for a weapon when you go to the examining room of the Main Hall. These formulas are expressed as xDy. They are a hold-over from the old, pre-computer adventure games. The letter D stands for "dice," the x is how many, and the y is for the number of sides to the dice. Therefore, 2D6 means roll "two dice with six sides." In this example, the results would be in the range of 2 to 12, and 7 would be the most likely outcome.

DEFENSIVE PREPAREDNESS

When the attacker scores a hit, other than a critical hit, there is some chance the defender might use the weapon in its right hand to parry or block the hit. Parrying ability increases with experience.

A blow that strikes and is not parried does some damage, somewhere. A shield that the defender has ready absorbs damage points. If the shield had a hit value of two, then the first two points of damage would go into it. Any armour the defender is wearing is next in line for damage, up to its hit value. Finally, the rest of the damage goes into the defender, hurting her, him, or it.

Armour can get worn out. Every piece of armour has a lifetime limit of how much damage it can absorb before it disintegrates. That is why it is a good idea to trade in old armour and shields at the Main Hall.

EXPERIENCE AT BATTLE

The first learning possibility is the development of weapon expertise. When you use a weapon and make a hit, there is a chance you might also learn how to use that weapon better. Expertise goes up one percent at a time. Monsters can gain weapons skills also.

The second learning possibility is in the skill of your armour expertise. Your armour expertise can only increase if armour is currently making you clumsy and lowering your chance to hit. It can go up one percent at a time. Monsters don't gain armour expertise, but they probably already have it.

VI. The Character Editor

As you recall, when you first started the system, you could have worked with a feature called the "Character Editor." The Character Editor has several nice little utilities that let you handle the characters stored on your Master disk. You press a number, 1 to 5, to do the following:

1. CLEAR OUT ALL OLD CHARACTERS

This program will wipe out, at one fell swoop, every character stored on your Master disk. This is rarely useful. This option also restarts a file on the disk, so if your disk drive is hungry one day, and does damage so that you cannot play the game, clearing out all the old characters may get things running again.

2. DISPLAY ALL OLD CHARACTERS

This will show all the characters on the disk, and tell you everything you could possibly want to know about them.

3. DELETE AN OLD CHARACTER

This will let you remove a character from the disk, essentially "killing" it. You have to give the name of the character to delete and you are given a chance to change your mind.

4. TRANSFER A CHARACTER

To Another Disk

This will let you move a copy of a character from one Master disk to another. The character remains on the old disk as it is written onto the new. The result is two copies of the character, one on each disk. This is useful for moving characters from a friend's copy to yours, and will also be useful for new SwordThrust projects currently being developed.

Clone a Character

Once you have developed a good character, you won't want to lose it. Use the Transfer process to make a copy (clone) of the character. The result is a pair of identical characters with different names on the same master disk.

5. ENTER THE UNIVERSE OF DIURLA

This command enters the normal game of SwordThrust.

VII. Buying Software is not a Game

When you go off on a fantasy adventure, you arm yourself with sword and shield and go off to uncharted lands. But when you go hunting software, your best defense is to stick with a name you know and trust: Softsmith.

HOW TO OBTAIN A BACKUP COPY

This program disk is protected against duplication. To obtain a backup copy, please send a check or money order in the amount of ten dollars (\$10.00) to the Software Guild together with your Warranty Card.

WARRANTY CARD

Please take a moment to fill out and mail the enclosed Warranty Card. By having your name on file, we will be able to provide the best possible customer service, including information on program updates and replacement of damaged disks.

The objective of the Software Guild is to provide the best software available. A Softsmith product is the trademark of software quality. We ensure that the program functions smoothly and is easy to use. To improve our products whenever possible, we are happy to receive comments, criticism, or praise. Please write to us at:

The Software Guild, Inc.
Customer Service
2935 Whipple Road
Union City, CA 94587

Consult your local Softsmith dealer for a catalog of our programs and a demonstration of any of our software products.

TROUBLESHOOTING

A great deal of effort has gone into preparing this program to operate smoothly, without "bugs." Given normal use, it should provide you with many hours of consistent operation. However, should you have problems with the program, please follow these steps:

1. If the program never starts, or dies soon after starting:

- Check the instructions on how to start the program. Try them again, following all steps exactly.
- Check to see that you have the disk in the correct disk drive.
- Make sure that you have all the equipment necessary to run this program, and that it is properly connected. See the front page of this document for a list of necessary equipment.
- Make sure your disk drive is working properly. Try another disk that you know works well. If it does not start properly, stop the computer immediately and disconnect the drive. Do not use the drive again until it has been checked or it may damage other disks.

2. If your disk becomes damaged:

Given normal use, your disk should not become damaged. However, if either the disk or the program on it does become damaged, please return it to us with a description of the problem. The Software Guild will replace your disk promptly, according to warranty provisions.

3. If you have other problems:

Please contact our Customer Service Department at the following toll free number.

1 (800) 341-4000

We have the experience and service network to assist you.

Softsmith™

NOTES

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