



HELP FILE

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Covers Version 1.32

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1. INTRODUCTION

... About *The Drop*

The Drop is a unique dungeon crawler set in the universe of *The Reconstruction* and *I Miss the Sunrise*. Features include:

- No typical HP & MP drudgery. Instead, the player and all enemies have Body, Mind, and Soul ratings which serve as both. Knocking any of these to zero means defeat, so spelunkers beware!
- Create your own player character. Choose a race, appearance, starting weapon, elemental alignment, perks, and a background. Or, choose from an array of premade characters, including a few familiar faces.
- Use magic to manipulate the environment to your advantage. Freeze water to trap foes in place. Set fire to grass to create a smokescreen. Evaporate spilled poison to create a toxic cloud. Blow up damaged walls to uncover new paths. Many interactions await!
- Exploit your enemies' fears and emotions using magic and items. Send enemies fleeing in terror or distract them by using the correct properties!
- Use stealth and line-of-sight to your advantage. Sneak up on enemies to attack from behind, or avoid them entirely. But be careful - enemies you didn't see can do the same to you!
- Hardcore mode available for a true roguelike experience!

... System Requirements

Required

OS- Windows® XP with DirectX 7.0 or better

CPU- Pentium 4 2.0GHz or compatible

RAM- 1 GB

Recommended

OS- Windows® XP with DirectX 8.0 or better

CPU- Pentium 4 2.0GHz+ or compatible

RAM- 4 GB+

... Contact Information and Credits

Official game web site: <http://www.tilde-one.com/thedrop>

Contact the author by using the contact form at <http://www.tilde-one.com>

Concept, design, and development by Elliot Mahan (Space Lizard).

Character portraits by Luigi Llave (Daigerus). Uses O4B fonts created by Yuji Oshimoto.

Lead Testers: Ro9ge, edchuy, Fool, Gourd_Clae, Gibmaker, Sweetfable

Scripts implemented:

"Fullscreen++ v.1.0" script by Zeus81.

"Name Input Using Keyboard" script by Estriole.

"Path Finding v1 For VX Ace" script by Near Fantastica.

2. BASIC INFORMATION

... Running the Program

Begin playing by running the program **GAME.EXE** in the game's folder. Use the **F5** key to toggle full screen mode. Use **ALT+F4** to quit any time, or the **F12** key to return to the title screen.

... Controls and Options

The game may be played using either a keyboard or a suitable gamepad/joystick. You can change the controls as well as other game options by pressing the **F1** key.

Directions (Arrow keys, D-Pad, or joystick)

- Move the cursor around on menus.
- When the popup menu is open: select the choice that corresponds to a certain direction.
- Turn your character (press once quickly).
- Move your character (press in facing direction, or hold key down) – causes a turn to pass.
- Move the targeting or inspection cursor around within active range.

Action Key (Z Key, Space Bar, Enter Key, or “C” button)

- Select a highlighted menu option, and confirm a name entry.
- Melee attack an enemy in the spot in front of your character (causes a turn to pass).
- When the Magic menu is open, enter Magic Memorization mode.
- Choose the target location of a spell or thrown item (the center for area-of-effect attacks).
- Quit out of Inspection mode.
- Open action menu when choosing an item in the inventory.
- Talk to friendly characters in safe areas such as the outside of the dungeon.

Cancel Key (X key, Escape key, or “B” button)

- Back out of a menu when possible.
- When naming your character, back up and erase previous letter.
- Open the popup menu.
- Stop targeting with an item/spell or inspection.

Shift Key

- Quick-pick-up all items, a plant, a mineral, or a liquid on the ground beneath the player.

Cycle Keys (Q & W, PgUp & PgDn, or Gamepad Buttons 5 & 6 / “L” & “R” triggers)

- Scroll the message log up and down.
- Scroll your list of memorized spells by one “page” at a time.

Other Keys

- **1, 2, 3, 4:** Quick cast the spell mapped to that slot on your hotbar.
- **5, L:** (L)ook at objects in view (enable Inspection Mode). Does not take up a turn.
- **6, i:** (I)nventory. Open inventory screen.
- **7, M:** (M)agic Setup. Memorize spells and set them to keys 1-4 on the hotbar.
- **8, S:** (S)tatus screen. View player statistics and bestiary.
- **9:** Open or close the mini-map inside the dungeon (if it is available).
- **F1:** Open the options menu.
- **R:** Rest for 30 turns. You will regenerate health during this time. Enemies may still attack you.
- **ALT+F4:** Immediately exit the game. **Unsaved data will be lost.**
- **F12:** Reset the game and return to title screen. **Unsaved data will be lost.**

Note: In these two cases, a “hardcore” character currently being played will be lost forever.

... Music Playlist Setup

In *The Drop*, the majority of gameplay takes place inside a randomly-generated dungeon. Each floor of this dungeon has background music randomly picked from a “playlist” that the player is able to modify outside of the main game.

To access the playlist, look for the file called “**playlist.txt**” in the same directory as GAME.EXE. This file is *created the first time you load a dungeon floor*. **Note:** It is important that this file is not moved from this location or renamed, or else your list will not be available in-game.

Music files are listed here, one per line. The default soundtrack files are named “Drop1.ogg”, etc. These files exist in the **Audio/BGM subfolder** of the game’s main folder. When a floor is loaded, the game picks a random line from this file and plays that song. To force a song to play more frequently during gameplay, you may duplicate its filename in the playlist file (but be sure to only list one file per line). To prevent a song from playing at all, remove its line or put a **hash mark (#)** before its file name.

You can also **add your own music** to show up in the rotation if you so choose:

1. Copy the file(s) you want to hear into the Audio/BGM subfolder. Formats accepted: **MP3, OGG, and WAV.**
2. Add the filenames (with extensions) to the playlist.txt file, one file per line. The filename must match **exactly**.

... Gamepad Support

A standard gamepad or joystick is partially supported in *The Drop*:

- Any actions involving the direction keys are supported by the main directional pad/stick.
- The “Action” key corresponds to Button 1.
- The “Cancel” key corresponds to Button 2.
- The “Shift” key corresponds to Button 3.
- The “Cycle” keys correspond to Buttons 7 & 8 (usually a pair of left and right triggers on top of the gamepad).

When playing this way, hotkey actions like quick-casting spells 1-4 are not available and must be performed by opening the menu (Button 2) and using the Directional pad to choose an option, or by using the keyboard. The mouse is not supported in *The Drop*.

... Playing in Full Screen Mode

- **For Windows™ XP, Vista, and 7 players:** Press **ALT+Enter** to play in regular full-screen mode, or press **the F5 key** for interpolating fullscreen mode.
- **For Windows™ 8 players:** Standard fullscreen mode does not run properly under this operating system. It is highly recommended you use the interpolating mode by **pressing the F5 key**.

3. STARTING THE GAME

... Playing a Premade Character

The Drop allows the player to choose from a list of premade characters, each with his or her own race, class, stats, special traits, and starting magic. These characters cannot be renamed or modified, and have their own pre-determined backgrounds and story texts.

“Legacy” characters originally appeared in *The Reconstruction*, and gain levels faster overall.

“Original” characters are new as of *The Drop*, and have their own specific backgrounds.

“Special” characters are unlocked for completing the game with other characters. They are typically quite strong, but tend to have unique gameplay quirks.

Use the Directional keys up and down to highlight a character, and press **Action** to see his or her stats and history. If you wish to play as this character, press **Action** a second time; otherwise, press **Cancel** to go back and choose another.

1  **2** **LANI** **4** **BACKGROUND: LEGACY CHARACTER**
3 **RACE: FIH'JIK** **ALL GROWTH RATES + 0.1**

5 TOUGH FIH'JIK GUARDSWOMAN WHO LIVED AND TRAINED WITH HUMANS MOST OF HER LIFE. LANI WAS PROMOTED TO HEAD OF THE GUARD DURING THE REBUILDING OF THE HUMAN CITY NAL. HOWEVER, SHE QUICKLY GREW BORED AND ANXIOUS IN HER POSITION, AND DECIDED TO SET OUT FOR THE NEWLY COLLAPSED DROP, IN HOPES OF RECOVERING GOODS AND MATERIALS OF VALUE IN ORDER TO BENEFIT HER CITIZENS. SHE CONSIDERS THE FIH'JIK PEOPLE'S PLIGHT TO BE OVER AFTER THE ARGUABLY-DESERVED DESTRUCTION OF THEIR HOMELAND.

LANI IS A LEGACY CHARACTER, FIRST APPEARING IN THE RECONSTRUCTION.

6 **CLASS: WANDERTOWER**
 LITERALLY KNOWN AS "THE WANDERING TOWER" BY THOSE WHO HAVE SEEN HER IN BATTLE, LANI IS AN UNSTOPPABLE FORCE AND AN IMMOVABLE OBJECT ALL IN ONE. HER NEWFOUND MAGICAL ABILITIES AFTER RECENT EXPOSURE TO THE DROP HAVE ONLY FURTHER COMPOUNDED HER FEROCITY IN HEAD-TO-HEAD BATTLE.

7 **TRAIT: CRUSHING BLOWS**
 SMASH FIRST, ASK QUESTIONS LATER. WEAPON ATTACKS HAVE EXTRA FORCE BEHIND THEM, KNOCKING ENEMIES SENSELESS WHILE POSSIBLY DAMAGING WHAT THEY CARRY.
 10% CHANCE TO STUN OR PARALYZE ON MELEE
 DROP RATE -20

TRAIT: SHRUG OFF
 A GLUTTON FOR PUNISHMENT, LANI KNOWS WHEN TO BRACE HERSELF WHILE ON THE RECEIVING END OF A STRIKE. MAGIC IS STILL A PROBLEM, THOUGH.
 10% CHANCE TO TAKE HALF DAMAGE FROM A MELEE ATTACK
 MIND GROWTH RATE -0.3

8 **STARTING STATS**
BODY 75 / 20 + 20
 REGEN 1 GROWTH 1.3x
MIND 30 / 10 + 10
 REGEN 1 GROWTH 0.7x
SOUL 60 / 20 + 20
 REGEN 2 GROWTH 1.2x

STEALTH 5
VISION 6
DROP RATE 40
ELEMENT  PHY

9 **CONFIRM**
CANCEL

(1) Character's sprite.

(3) Character's race.

(5) Character's backstory.

(7) Traits and descriptions. Green lines are benefits; red ones are drawbacks.

(9) Action to continue, Cancel to go back.

(2) Character's first name.

(4) Character's background and benefit.

(6) Class name and description.

(8) Starting stats and elemental affinity. See next section for details.

... Races and Stats

Four primary races inhabit the world of *The Drop*. Each has its own strengths, weaknesses, and pool of backgrounds and traits available. Note that some premade characters have unique differences from others of their race.



Humans are the explorers and leaders of the world, and excel at many different professions. They typically have **balanced** stats.



Shra are large, brawny, lizard-like beings of various levels of intelligence and temperament. They usually excel in **Body** stats.



Fortians are (typically) humans who have devoted a lifetime to the magical arts. They wear monocles and brightly-colored clothing. They usually excel in **Mind** stats.



Fih'jik are cat-like beings; agile, crafty, and devout. They tend to have excellent vision as well. They usually excel in **Soul** stats.

About Body, Mind, and Soul.

There is no HP or MP in the world of *The Drop*; instead, all characters and enemies have three forms of health: **Body**, **Mind**, and **Soul**. All attacks (both melee and magical) deal damage to **one** kind of health, and casting magic costs the user one kind of health as well.

Body is always represented by the color **orange**. It represents physical well-being and stamina.

Mind is always represented by the color **purple**. It represents concentration and consciousness.

Soul is always represented by the color **green**. It represents willpower and emotional strength.

Depleting any one of these health values to zero will defeat the character. This goes for the player and for enemies alike. Different kinds of enemies may be weak to one kind of damage and resistant to another; therefore, it is in your best interest to keep a versatile spread of kinds of damage available, or to avoid enemies which you cannot easily take down.

Don't forget: Casting magic consumes health as well. If you have **insufficient health** to cast a certain spell, you will not be able to cast it.

Body-damaging spells will usually consume **Mind** points to cast.

Mind-damaging spells will usually consume **Soul** points to cast.

Soul-damaging spells will usually consume **Body** points to cast.

Non-damaging spells could cost any kind of health to cast.

And, as always, there are exceptions to the rule!

Explanation of Stats.

STARTING STATS			
BODY	75	20	20
REGEN	1	GROWTH	1.3x
MIND	30	10	10
REGEN	1	GROWTH	0.7x
SOUL	60	20	20
REGEN	2	GROWTH	1.2x
STEALTH	5		
VISION	6		
DROP RATE	40		
ELEMENT	PHY		

Health: “Body”, “Mind”, or “Soul.” In this example, the character starts with 75 Body points. See previous explanation.

Attack. Represented by the **sword** icon. Influences damage for melee attacks, magic, and thrown items that deal damage of that type. **Note** that there is a separate attack value for each kind of health. The Body Attack stat does not affect anything that inflicts Mind damage, for instance.

Defense. Represented by the **shield** icon. Resists damage from enemy attacks of that type, and affects amount of health recovered by healing magic or healing items of that type. Also affects damage done to self when using harmful items!

Regen: Regeneration rate for each health type. Every few turns, this amount of health is restored to its respective health amount (Body Regen for Body, etc.)

Growth: Growth rate. A multiplier that affects how much “essence” of each type is gained when defeating an enemy or using/eating certain items. See “Essence and Progression” at the end of this manual for more information.

Stealth: An overall “sneakiness” rating. The higher it is, the less likely you will be noticed by nearby enemies. Enemies are more likely to notice you when you’re close and/or within their field of view. Stealth also temporarily decreases whenever magic is cast due to its noise.

Vision: A rating of vision range and spread. A character’s vision cone extends outward in the direction he or she is facing. Magic and thrown items are confined to this spell range. A higher vision rating lets a character see further ahead.

Drop Rate: The percentage chance that a defeated enemy will leave behind an item or a pickup worth Favor. Note that this does not affect the rarity of the item that drops; only whether an item will be dropped at all.

Element: The player’s elemental alignment. Attacks of the same element against the player deal **reduced** damage, while attacks of the opposite element do **extra** damage. In addition, magic of the same element can be cast with extra range and effectiveness, but magic of the opposite element cannot be used at all.

Heat: Opposes Cold. Magic tends to focus on high damage.

Cold: Opposes Heat. Magic tends to affect the target’s movement ability.

Physical: Opposes Mental. Magic tends to be noisy, but cheaper to cast.

Note: Do NOT confuse this with “Body” damage!

Mental: Opposes Physical. Magic tends to affect the target’s mood or mental state.

Note: Do NOT confuse this with “Mind” Damage!

Divine: Opposes Noxious. Magic tends to cast off light and inflict blindness.

Noxious: Opposes Divine. Magic tends to have a damage-over-time component.

... Saving and Loading

Saving your progress. In regular game modes, you may only save your progress at the glowing point beside the entrance to the dungeon, on the “safe” floor.

Use the **directions** up and down to choose a slot, and **action** to confirm. Be careful about overwriting older or otherwise occupied slots; there is no way to reverse this. Saving will retain all of the stats for that character, as well as update any accomplishments you may have earned.

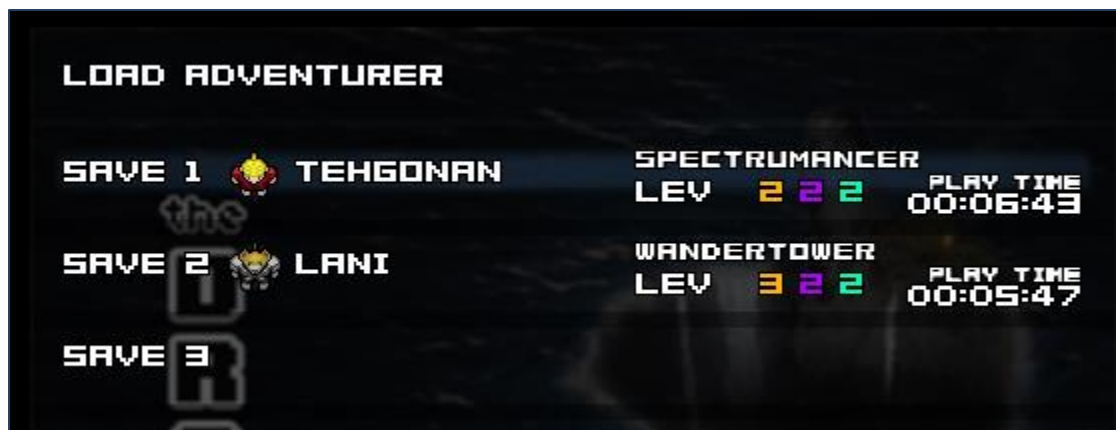
On hardcore mode, saving will cause the game to quit.

Once you load a hardcore character (which appears in red), the save will be deleted.

This goes for Quicksave characters too, which appear in blue.

Loading a game. Select the saved game you wish to continue.

In Hardcore Mode and for Quicksave files, you will begin on the floor you were preparing to enter when you saved your game last, and your save file will be deleted.



The **save/load screen** allows you to store up to 16 saved characters at one time. Each slot includes the character sprite, name, class name, levels in body/mind/soul, and the total time played on that file.

The **accomplishments file** is shared between characters, and keeps track of secondary data, such as how many of a certain type of enemy have been defeated. It also saves a backup of itself in case anything goes wrong with the save process. **Completing accomplishments will grant new characters more starting Favor.**

The **bestiary** is shared as well, and is updated when you save your game. You can view it by **pressing the Action button while viewing your character Status screen.** An enemy is added to the bestiary **when it's defeated.** You can see details on any enemy in the game that has been defeated by any of your characters here. Properties, however, are **only those known to the current character.** Use the [Direction] keys left and right to navigate between entries, or the [Cycle] keys to skip over unknown enemies.

... Create Your Own Character

You have the ability to design your own character to take into the Drop. To do so, **choose to play a new adventurer, and then select the “custom character” option.** You can modify many aspects of your character: race, name, elemental affinity, weapon, background, and special traits. You are also able to create and name your own class.

About *randomized* characters: You also have the option to jump right in and play a completely randomly-generated character with no customization. The character’s race, name, appearance, affinity, weapon, background, and traits will all be randomized. You can play this way by choosing the “**randomized character**” option from the New Character screen.

... Customizing Your Character

The **first step** is choosing your character’s **race**. Each race has different starting stats, appearances, starting magic, and possible traits and backgrounds. Any race can use any weapon or learn any magic, however.



Human characters are well-rounded, with equal stats all around. They start with magic based on their elemental affinity.



Shra characters excel in **body** stats. They tend to start with **physical** and **noxious** elemental magic, plus that of their affinity.



Fortian characters excel in **mind** stats. They tend to start with **heat** and **mental** elemental magic, plus that of their affinity.



Fih’jik characters excel in **soul** stats. They tend to start with **cold** and **divine** elemental magic, plus that of their affinity.

Almost every decision you make in character creation will affect your stats, which will be immediately reflected in the summary at the bottom of the screen. Note that **stats will not go below a certain threshold after your character is confirmed.** Health values cannot go below 15 points, and attack and defense ratings cannot go below 10, even if the summary says otherwise. In addition, Vision Rating bottoms out at 3 and Stealth Rating at 1.

For details on the creation process, please continue to the next page.

(Continued)



Character Creation, Page 1. Press the **cancel** key to go back to the race selection page. Use **up** and **down** to navigate the choices, and the **action** key to bring up the selected options.

- **Set Name:** Change your character's name. Use **left and right** to toggle between the "Set" and "Random" options. Choosing **Set** will let you type in any name you want using the keyboard (Enter to confirm). Choosing **Random** will generate a random name appropriate to your character's race. When you are satisfied, press the **cancel** key to go back.
- **Set Appearance:** Change your character's sprite. Use **left and right** to see available looks. Appearance and gender have no effect on gameplay. When you are satisfied, press the **action** key.
- **Set Background:** Change your character's background story. The default background is neutral, and does not affect stats. Most backgrounds have benefits and penalties, and can also affect how some residents of the Drop perceive you. Changes in your character's stats are immediately reflected in the box at the bottom of the screen. Use **left and right** to choose a suitable background. Press **action** to confirm.
- **Set Element:** Change your elemental affinity. You must select one of the six. This also affects your starting magic. Use **left and right** to choose one, and **action** to confirm.
- **Next Page:** Continue with the creation process.



Character Creation, Page 2. Press the **cancel** key to go back to the first page of options.

- **Set Starting Weapon:** Choose from one of three beginning weapons. You will be able to purchase other basic weapons at the safe point above the Drop; however, this choice also grants you an **attack bonus** to the damage type of the weapon you choose.
- **Set First Trait:** Choose traits for your character. Traits come in three kinds: general traits, racial traits, and challenge traits.
 - **General** traits are available to everyone, and grant small bonuses and penalties to suit different play styles.
 - **Racial** traits are specific to one race, and can have wildly varying effects.
 - **Challenge** traits allow a seasoned player to inhibit certain aspects of the game in exchange for faster growth rates. **Growth rates are capped at 1.5.**

Some traits are mutually exclusive – for instance, “Lightly Armored” and “Heavily Armored” – and so they will not be selectable when the other trait is incompatible. In addition, a single trait cannot be repeated between both trait “slots.”

- **Set Second Trait:** See above.
- **Name Your Class:** Cosmetic. You can name your class by choosing “Set”, or let the game pick a class name for you (based on race, weapon choice, and elemental affinity) by choosing “Default.” This has no impact on gameplay.
- **Confirm Character:** Finish customizing and begin playing the game.

4. EXPLORING THE DROP

... Overview

The main aspect of gameplay in *The Drop* involves the exploration of “randomly-generated” dungeons – that is, dungeon floors whose layouts are never the same. These floors are populated with an assortment of monsters, treasure, and environmental elements such as standing water and patches of grass. Reaching a “staircase” leading down will allow you to descend deeper into the dungeon where more powerful creatures and items await, although it may be a good idea to explore as much of each floor as you can to ensure you are strong enough to handle what awaits.

Movement, combat, and exploration are all handled in a “grid” style view from an overhead perspective. For detailed information on any aspect of gameplay, consult one of the following sections of the manual.

Your gameplay experience is divided into **two major areas**:

- The “overworld” safe haven aboveground.
- The “dungeon” within the Drop.

In the overworld, you will be able to talk to people around the camp, save your game, purchase items and spells with collected Favor, and enter the dungeon. You can return to the overworld by using your **Golden Thread** item; however, you will have to pay a Favor penalty in order to return directly to the deepest floor you’ve visited. **This cost is 50 Favor per floor.** For instance, to return to floor 15, you must pay 750 Favor. If you cannot afford this cost, you must start at Floor #1 again until you’ve earned enough to pay the cost.

In the dungeon, you will explore the randomized hallways, collect treasure, defeat or avoid enemies, and look for stairways that will lead you to deeper floors. There are **a total of 30 floors** in each character’s dungeon run. Enemies and items become progressively more powerful as you venture deeper into the Drop. After level 30, you will have “cleared” the game with that character, but you are free to explore even deeper floors with that character if you wish. Enemies will continue to become stronger as you go deeper from here.

Floors are entirely randomized every time they are entered. Items and enemies *do not respawn*, and aggressive enemies will **not** follow you between floors.

Please see the following pages for detailed explanations of the overworld area and the dungeon interface.

... The Overworld

After you have created or chosen a character to play, you will begin on the overworld. This is a safe haven where you can use the Favor you've acquired to purchase items and spells that may make your adventure a little less troublesome. You can also talk to residents of the area for backstory and hints. These residents will change from time to time, and you may occasionally even see familiar faces to talk to.

To interact with an NPC or the Save Point, walk up to it and press the  Action key.



1. **Weapon vendor.** Purchase basic weapons here.
2. **Curative vendor.** Purchase basic healing items here.
3. **Special vendor.** Purchase rare and powerful items here. Stock replenishes over time.
4. **Alito.** Alito will keep track of your Accomplishments and sell you Mapping Kits.
5. **Yacatec.** Yacatec will identify unknown items in your inventory for a fee.
6. **Save point.** Save your progress here! Stand next to it and press the Action key to use. The **blue prism** allows you to access the menu if hotkeys are unavailable.
7. **Dungeon entrance.** Walk in to the mouth of the cave to enter the dungeon. You can choose to start from the top, or, if Favor permits, the deepest floor you've reached.
8. **Spell vendors.** These shra will sell you basic magic of each element, as indicated by the color of their robes. Moke (in green) will not be present if he is your playable character; you will begin with all basic Noxious-element magic already.

Note: The Favor cost for learning magic goes up every time you buy a spell.

... Main Gameplay Interface Explanation



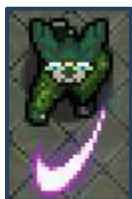
- 1) **Your player character.** Always in the center of the screen.
- 2) **Targeting reticle.** A blue square that appears when casting magic or throwing an item. Use the directions to move it around within range, action to confirm a location, or cancel to go back.
- 3) **Range.** Glows when using magic or throwing an item. Based on your **line of sight**.
- 4) **Visible squares** are lighter in color and have been seen by your character. Enemies and items in these squares are revealed.
- 5) **An enemy.** This one is presently facing the player character.
- 6) **Walls.** Cannot be walked through, and block line of sight.
- 7) **An item on the ground.** Move over it and press the SHIFT key to pick it up. You can also collect items off the floor by using the **Inventory** screen ('i' or '6' key).
- 8) **Grass growing wild.** An example of an "environmental element." Grass, water, and other natural elements will appear on the floor, and can be gathered or struck with items or magic.
- 9) **Message log.** Actions and events happening in the game are recorded here. Use the CYCLE keys to scroll back or forward in history. A new event pushes the log to the end.
- 10) **Hotkeys.** Keys 1 – 4 cast memorized spells. Key 5 enables "inspection" mode. Key 6 opens the inventory. Key 7 opens magic memorization. Key 8 shows status. Key 9 opens the map.
- 11) **Stealth rating.** An overall rating of how hard it is for enemies to detect you. White is neutral; red is penalized; blue has a bonus.
- 12) **Favor.** Basically, currency. Collected from defeated enemies and converted items.
- 13) **Attack, defense, health bar, and essence bar.** One for each of **body**, **mind**, and **soul**.

... The Turn System

The Drop is a turn-based RPG; you can take all the time you need to make a decision or perform an action. Gameplay alternates between player and enemy turns – any actor, player or enemy, can make one action per turn, whether it be moving, attacking, casting magic, or using an item.



Movement: Moving one square in any direction takes up a turn. Actors who are **stunned** or **paralyzed** cannot move. Attempting to move while in either state will cause you to skip your turn. You can move into any “floor” space that is not occupied by an enemy or a wall. Note that you are free to turn in place to look around without taking up a turn, so long as you are not stunned or paralyzed. You can turn by quickly pressing the direction you wish to face; press and hold the direction to turn and move in that direction, and hold the direction down to continue moving. While you move, any nearby enemies will take one turn for each step you take.



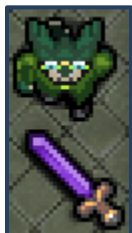
Attacking: You have the ability to melee attack the square directly in front of your character. This attack will strike and deal damage of your weapon’s type to the enemy in that square, if any. You can also swing at an open space to “skip” a turn, which is useful in situations where you want to pass turns without moving.



Casting Magic: Casting a spell takes up one turn. This goes for both offensive and curative magic. When preparing to cast a spell, you will be presented with a glowing area based on range and line of sight, and a cursor to choose the target location. If you start to cast a spell but cancel the targeting portion, your turn is not forfeited.



Item Use: Using an item, eating an item, throwing an item, or equipping a weapon will all take up one turn. Keep this in mind if you are in the middle of combat. If you **throw an item into an empty space**, any non-deaf enemies within earshot will turn to look at where it landed. Useful for making a distraction!



Picking Up Items: Picking up an item or stack of items, or gathering something from the dungeon floor like water or grass, will cause a turn to pass.

Note: Favor drops from enemies (represented by a stack of yellow coins) are automatically collected when passed over, and do not take up an extra turn.

(continued)



In addition, some actions from the **menu** will cause a turn to pass. If this is a possibility in the menu you're currently using, the **turn icon** will be displayed. It will stay dim until an action that causes a turn to pass is performed; then, it will turn blue.

- **Memorizing Magic:** When setting *any* active spell, a turn will pass after the memorization menu is closed. You can set as many spells as you want on this screen; only one turn will pass.
- **Inventory Screen:** Using/eating/equipping items will cause a turn to pass. Converting an item to Favor is a free action. **You cannot convert items to Favor while under attack.**

... The Line-Of-Sight System



Your character's vision range is constrained to a rough cone shape that extends in the direction he or she is facing. Areas that are not visible are shaded; any enemies, items, and stairways in these areas will not appear. The brighter areas are visible, and anything lurking in these areas is visible to you.

The size of your vision cone is affected by **your character's "Vision" rating**. Vision is blocked by obstructions like walls, smoke, dust, and heavy fog.



Your current vision area also limits the area you can cast magic or throw items within. This area will glow a certain color when choosing a target for a spell or item. It will glow **the color of the element** for magic, and **light blue** when throwing an item.

Note that even if squares outside of your vision cone are already revealed and visible, your targeting range is still constrained to your natural line of sight.

Enemies also behave according to line-of-sight rules. If your character walks in front of an enemy, he or she is more likely to be spotted. Being closer to the enemy also heightens the chance of being detected, as does the player's **Stealth** rating. Enemies also have an inherent "awareness" rating, so some enemies are more difficult to avoid than others.

About the "Blinded" status effect. When your character is blinded by an enemy attack or environmental effect, the screen darkens and your line-of-sight is reduced to a single square in front of your character. Magic and thrown items will all have a range of 1 during this time. This effect usually disappears after a few turns.

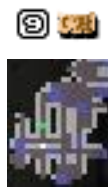
(continued)

Line-of-Sight Modes: You can choose a **challenge trait** when making a custom character that restricts your line-of-sight to your character's natural cone.

- **Normal Mode:** When a square is revealed by your line-of-sight, it will remain revealed, even when you move or face another direction. Comparable to revealing the “fog of war” in strategy games.
- **Challenge Mode:** Your vision is *always* constrained to your current line-of-sight. If you move, turn, or are blinded, any squares that were revealed will be covered up again. This is a dangerous and more exciting gameplay option.

Lighting effects: Some spells give off a certain amount of “light” when cast. This means that a circle of squares around the target point will be revealed, allowing you to see the area around that spot even if it's outside of your line of sight. Spells that give off light will have a **candle, fire, or sun icon on the memorization screen** depending on how much light they produce.

In **normal** games, these squares will be revealed permanently, as if you had seen them yourself. On **challenge** mode, these squares will disappear again **upon performing any action** – moving, turning, preparing to cast a spell or throw an item, or any action that causes a turn to pass.



About the map: You can bring up a map of the current floor by pressing the **9 key**, or by “using” the map from your inventory, if it is available. This will let you see the areas you have explored on this floor, as well as any floor elements (in **blue**) and staircases (**green**) you have located. The mapping kit must be purchased from Alito in the safe area, and it is lost if you are defeated or if the map item is discarded.

... About “Properties”

In *The Drop*, all enemies, items, spells, environmental elements, and even the player have a set of **properties** that influence many interactions. For instance, a fire spell with the “BOIL” property will boil off any standing water that is struck with the spell. Or, an enemy may have the property “FEARS SHRA,” and would automatically flee from a player who is a member of the shra race. The different kinds of properties will be explained below, though the properties themselves are left for the player to discover.

Properties can be **proactive** or **reactive**. A property that sounds like an action (such as “freeze”) will potentially affect the enemy or environmental element in such a way when that item or spell is thrown or cast. A property that sounds like a behavior (such as “fears” or “likes”) will respond when exposed to a spell, item, or character with the property that is described.

Properties interact **exactly as they are written**. The property “FIRE” does *not* automatically infer the same thing as “BOIL”, or even “HEAT.” Keep this in mind when choosing spells; an enemy that “FEARS FIRE” may dislike it for reasons other than the heat!

(continued)

Player's Properties: These properties are hidden from the player, but correspond to certain choices made in character creation. These properties include:

- **Race:** Human, Fortian, Shra, or Fih'Jik.
- **Elemental Affinity:** Heat, Cold, etc.
- **Properties from chosen *traits***
- **Other properties** from sources such as background and story traits.

These properties always affect how certain enemies perceive your character. For instance, a normally-passive enemy may be aggressive if your character has a certain elemental affinity, or may be fearful of a certain character race. When these instances are encountered, they will be noted in the enemy's own property list as shown below.

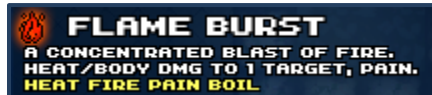


Enemy name: The color of the enemy's name corresponds to its difficulty level: **Blue, Yellow, Orange, Red, Purple.**

Enemy's Properties: Every enemy type in the game has its own list of properties. All but the first two are hidden and must be learned by triggering the property interaction shown.

- The first two properties are the enemy's **kind** and **temperament**.
- Properties written in **green** are things the enemy **fears**. If the enemy is struck with a spell or item with the matching property, that enemy will be sent into a **Panic** state and will try to flee from the player for several turns.
- Properties written in **purple** are things the enemy **likes**. If the enemy *has not yet noticed the player* and is struck with a spell or an item with a property it likes, it will stop moving and **ignore** the player completely for several turns. **Note:** The spell or thrown item will deal no damage to the enemy if it's something it likes if it hasn't noticed you.
- Properties written in **red** are things the enemy **hates**. This involves player properties; a passive enemy may turn aggressive if it "hates" some property of the player.
- Properties written in **blue** are things the enemy **trusts**. The enemy will be passive to the player if he has a property the enemy "trusts," even if it would normally be aggressive.
- Properties written in **pink** are things the enemy **loves**. If the enemy is not attacking the player, and is struck with an item or spell with a property it loves, it will **fight alongside the player** until it is harmed by the player, defeated, or angered. Friendly enemies (called "friends") will not follow the player between floors, and are subject to certain rules:
 - Friends will only melee attack and must be next to an attacking enemy to intervene.
 - Friends will be attacked by aggressive enemies only if the player is not within range of an attack or special attack.
 - Essence gained from enemies defeated by a friend is **halved**.
 - You will gain **no essence** from a defeated friend. Items can still drop.
 - Friends will refuse to attack enemies of types they "like." For instance, if a friend HATES ANTIBUG, it will not attack a BUG type.
 - Similarly, defeating a type that your friend likes will cause it to turn aggressive.

(continued)



Magic Properties: Each magic spell has several properties.

These can be viewed on the **magic memorization** screen and are displayed in yellow text as shown to the left. Examples:

- **Element** of the spell.
- **Status effects** the spell can inflict like Pain, Stun, Blind, etc.
- **Inherent properties** like fire, ice, etc. *These are not necessarily the same as elements.*
- **Specific interactions** like boil, freeze, shock, etc.

Some heat-element spells could have the “BOIL” property, but not the “FIRE” property, so always familiarize yourself with what your current selection of spells can do!



Item properties: Similar to spell properties, item properties are found on the **inventory** screen and are written in yellow. The blue entries are available actions for this item.

For most items, the properties and the item itself are **unknown** until you learn them. This is accomplished by **eating the item or using it on yourself**. When an item is learned, any more you collect will have their name, description, and properties revealed, and they can usually be converted into Favor as well.

Item properties can be things such as:

- The **kind** of item (plant, mineral, weapon, liquid, etc.)
- **Status effects** the item inflicts when used, thrown, or wielded.
- **Element** of the item, if any.
- **Inherent properties** such as “food” and “poison.”
- **Specific interactions** when the item is thrown, like “boil” and “freeze.”

Special property interactions: Some items and spells will have properties that affect a specific enemy or even the player. Examples of these are listed below:

- **“BANE.”** Causes panic. Example: “BUGBANE.” Any enemy with the “BUG” property would be **panicked** if struck with an item or spell with this property.
- **“CHARM.”** Causes pacification. Example: “BEASTCHARM.” Any enemy with the “BEAST” property would be **pacified** as long as it’s not currently trying to attack the player.
- **“LURE.”** Causes curiosity. Example: “HUMANLURE.” Any enemy with the “HUMAN” property would **become a friend to** the player without attacking him, as long as it isn’t already trying to kill him. A friend will fight other enemies for the player.
- **“DAZE.”** Causes confusion. Example: “SHRADAZE.” Any enemy with the “SHRA” property would be **confused** if struck with an item or spell with this property. *Note: This extends to the **player** as well. A player’s shra character would experience confusion when using or eating an item with this property!*
- **“BLOCK.”** Negates all damage. Example: “POISONBLOCK.” Any item or spell with the “POISON” property would **deal no damage** at all, regardless of elemental or other factors. A rare but dangerous property to encounter!

Social enemies: Some enemies will become aggressive if you defeat an enemy of the same kind (BUG, HUMAN, etc.) in their presence! This goes for **friendly** enemies as well! This is signified by the property “HATES ANTI(TYPE)”.

You will encounter many different properties and enemy reactions to them during your adventure. Most will make logical sense, but some could be a nasty surprise, so take care when battling new enemies or trying out unknown items!

... Inspecting the Environment



You can freely inspect enemies, environmental elements, and atmospheric effects during your turn by:

- Pressing the “5” key, or
- Pressing the “L” key, or
- Opening the popup menu and choosing “Inspect”.

Your line-of-sight cone will glow slightly, showing the area you are able to inspect. Inspecting does *not* cause a turn to pass.

Use the **directions** to move the blue cursor around the floor. Place it underneath the entity or material you want to inspect. The box on the top right part of the screen will give you information on what you’ve selected.

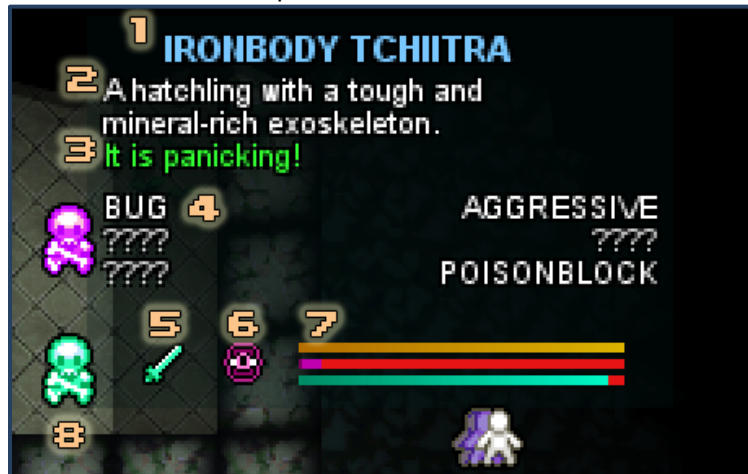
For **atmospheric effects**, you are given the name, a description, and any status effect that exposure to the effect might cause.

For **environmental elements** like water and grass, the amount of information you are given depends on your knowledge of the object. Unknown objects will give generic descriptions. You can learn about these objects by standing over them and **gathering** a unit, then using or consuming it like a regular item. Once an object is known, its name, description, and properties will be displayed instead.




(continued)

For **enemies**, a great deal of information is presented:



- | | |
|--|---|
| (1) The enemy's name. | (2) Description of the enemy. |
| (3) Enemy's current mood. | (4) Enemy's properties. (???? are unknown.) |
| (5) Enemy's melee attack damage type. | (6) Enemy's elemental affinity. |
| (7) Health bars: Body, Mind, and Soul. | (8) Inflicted status effects. |

... Melee Attacking

By pressing the  action key during your turn, your character can **melee attack** the square in front of him. This costs nothing to use, and cannot miss, and it will inflict damage of your weapon's type (body, mind, or soul) on any enemy immediately in front of you. Damage is determined by your **attack** stat for that kind of health, multiplied by a multiplier value for your weapon. Damage is reduced by the enemy's **defense** of that health type, and some enemies will be resistant to certain kinds of damage. You may only have one weapon equipped at a time, and changing weapons takes a turn.

Weapon strength has no effect on magic power or other stats.



Attacking an enemy from behind will deal **extra damage**. If you can sneak up on an enemy, you can deal a punishing strike this way. You can also try forcing an enemy to flee in fear to make them turn away from you. Attacks from the side deal no extra damage.

Enemies will attempt to melee attack you when they are in range and aggressive. They can also attack **you** from behind for extra damage, so be careful which way you're facing at the end of your turn! A **confused** player character has a chance of **fumbling** when trying to attack, forfeiting his turn.

... Memorizing Magic

Any character can use magic, and can have up to four different spells "memorized" at one time. These spell are the only ones that can be cast at the moment, either through the menu or with the 1 – 4 hotkeys. To cast other spells that your character has learned, they must be **memorized** first.

(continued)



To reach the **magic setup** screen, you can:

- Press the “M” key, or
- Press the “7” key, or
- Open the popup menu, go to **Magic**, then **press the Action button** on the magic menu.

Currently-memorized spells are listed as 1 through 4 on the left, and correspond to those hotkeys. All known spells are listed on the right, and are **grouped according to element**.

Use the **directions** up and down to move to different slots in the list. When you have chosen the slot you wish to change, press the **Action** button. The cursor will move to your list of known spells on the right side. Use the up and down directions to pick the new spell, then press **action again** to swap that spell into an active slot, or press **cancel** to back out. You can also use the **cycle keys** to page through your spells quickly.

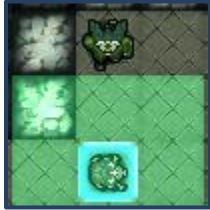
After swapping in a new spell, the **turn icon** will light up, meaning that a turn will pass once you exit the screen. You can swap as many spells as you want while still only taking up one turn. If you do not change your spell lineup, a turn will not pass, so you are free to browse your spell collection without penalty.

The spell’s description is given at the bottom of the window, and includes the following information:

- **Icon.** A spell’s icon is a shortcut for displaying the spell’s element, damage type, and area of effect.
 - The damage type is **orange for body**, **purple for mind**, or **green for soul**.
 - If the glow has an additional **bright green** ring around it, that spell is a **healing spell**.
 - The “amount” of glow signifies the area of effect. A small glow will strike a single target; a **large** glow means it will hit a cross-shaped area around your target as well.
 - The icon itself signifies the element:
 - **Heat**
 - **Cold**
 - **Physical**
 - **Mental**
 - **Divine**
 - **Noxious**
- **Name.** The name of the spell.
- **Description.** A description of the spell, as well as an abbreviated description of its effects.
- **Properties** of the spell.
- **Range** (RNG) in squares, within the player’s line of sight.
- **Effectiveness** (EFF). Multiplied by your **attack** stat of that health type to determine damage. When this value is **negative**, it’s a healing spell and uses your **defense** stat instead.
- **Cost.** The amount of health (and what kind) it will cost to cast this spell.
- **Light.** Represented as a candle, fire, or sun icon. Amount of light given off, if any.

Once a spell has been memorized, it can be cast by pressing the corresponding hotkey number (1 through 4) or by going through the menu and choosing Magic, then choosing a direction.

... Casting Magic



If you've chosen a spell and are able to meet the health cost, you will be presented with the spell's range and a targeting reticle, with the following exceptions:

- A healing or self-targeting spell can only be used on yourself.
- A spell with range 1 will always target the square in front of your character.
- If your character is blinded, all spells are treated as if they had a range of 1.

Note that you **cannot harm yourself** by casting an area-of-effect spell on an adjacent square; however, any **environmental changes** that spell causes *can* still affect you.

Magic is not impeded by obstacles or other enemies in the path of the spell; if your targeting reticle can reach a square, the spell *will* be cast on that location. However, **your targeting range is still constrained to your current line-of-sight**. Also remember that you do not have to target an enemy direction to cast magic; you are free to cast on *any* square, whether it be to strike two adjacent enemies at once with an area of effect, or to manipulate the environment, or to light up an area with sufficiently bright magic. For more information, see **environmental interactions** later in this document.

Casting magic creates noise. Some spells are “noisier” than others. This has an effect of temporarily **lowering your Stealth rating**, which will gradually return to normal after a few turns.

... Using Items & Equipping Weapons

You will discover many kinds of items during your adventure. Some can be used as weapons; some can be eaten or applied to yourself for beneficial reasons; some can be thrown to harm or befriend enemies.

Most items you find will be unidentified at first. You can attempt to make an educated guess on the item's effect by its appearance, but be aware that several different items can look the same.

For **weapons**, you immediately learn the item's information by equipping it. There are no “cursed” or harmful weapons. **Status effects** on weapons have a chance to trigger on each hit. **Properties** on weapons only trigger when the weapon is thrown like an item.

For **any other item**, the item must be **eaten or used** to learn its information. Doing so can potentially harm your character, so care should be taken. Eating or using an item will remove it from your inventory. Interact with an item by highlighting it using the **direction** keys and pressing **action**.



Do nothing: Close the popup menu.

Equip: Equip the item as your weapon. Swaps out with your current weapon.

Use on Self: Apply the item to your skin.

Consume: Eat the item. Riskier, but some items provide *essence* bonuses when eaten.

Throw: Throw an item.

Convert to Favor: Destroy the item and gain the indicated amount of Favor. Can only be used on identified items with a value.

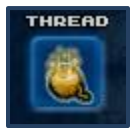
Item effects can vary greatly. An item that heals body damage when used on yourself may be poisonous if you eat it! Once an item is identified, though, you can see its **eat**, **use**, and **throw** damage or healing effects by looking to the right of the description.



Not all items can be interacted with in every way. Items like stones cannot be eaten, and only certain specific items can be equipped. In addition, not all items can be converted to Favor, even after being identified; you can get rid of these by Throwing them out of your inventory.

Your inventory is limited! Under normal circumstances, you can hold up to **eight** items at a time.

... The Golden Thread (Not available in **Hardcore** playthroughs)



The **golden thread** is accessible from your **inventory** screen. It can be used like a regular item, except it is not consumed when used. Using this item will **allow you to escape the dungeon as long as no enemies are coming after you**. You can return to your deepest floor by **paying 50x the floor number in Favor**. *This depth counter is **not** lost if you decide to start at Floor 1 again.* You can return to your deepest floor later so long as you meet the Favor cost.

... Enemy Behaviors & Status Effects

Every enemy type you encounter in the Drop has its own demeanor, likes, and fears based on its **properties**. Inspecting an enemy will allow you to see its current mood and any properties you've learned about that enemy type. The enemy's mood can be any of the following:

- **"It is not aggressive."** This enemy will not attack you unprovoked, and will tend to move around aimlessly. Most enemies with the "PASSIVE" property will behave this way.
- **"It is likely to attack!"** This enemy is aggressive, but it hasn't detected you yet. It will move about until it spots you. You can try for a sneak attack, or try to slip away from it. You can also try using an item or spell with a property it likes to sedate it.
- **"It is coming after you!"** The enemy has spotted you and is trying to attack you. You can no longer bribe it with items it likes, and it will pursue you until you defeat it or leave the current floor. Enemies will not pursue you between floors.
- **"It is panicking!"** This enemy is fearful and is trying to get away from you. This is usually temporary, and after the fear effect wears off, it will be angry with you.
- **"It has taken a liking to you."** The enemy will follow you around curiously. Friendly enemies will also fight other enemies for you, and can block them from reaching you. Any aggressive action against this enemy will cause it to become angry with you.
- **"It is happily ignoring you."** You've bribed the enemy with something it likes. The enemy will ignore you for a few turns unless you do something harmful to provoke it.
- **"It is moving erratically!"** This enemy is under the **confusion** status effect. It will move at random for a few turns. Confusion is cured if the enemy is attacked.

Enemy actions: An aggressive enemy will either attempt to **melee attack** you, or use its **special ability** if you are in range. Special attacks can have an element, status effect, atmospheric effects, and even affect the environment. Some special abilities also cause **noise**, which can alert other enemies nearby!

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Status effects are attached to many spells and items and inflict a wide variety of debilitations. They tend to fade naturally after a few turns. Inflicting the same status effect multiple times will cause it to “stack.”



Pain, Sicken, and Wither. Deal damage-over-time to body, mind, or soul respectively. Inflicts 3 points of damage at the end of every turn.

Note: These effects cannot cause health to drop below 1 point.



Blind. Character can't see. The player's vision will darken, and line-of-sight and all spell and throwing ranges are reduced to 1. Enemies will move erratically and cannot use special attacks, but can still melee attack the player character if he is in an adjacent square.



Confusion. The character is moving around erratically. Removed if the character is attacked. When the player character is afflicted, he will move at random and may fail to attack.



Paralysis. Character cannot move. When the player character is afflicted, trying to move or rotate will cause the turn to be skipped instead.



Panic. Character can do nothing except try to run away. Removed if the character is attacked. *This effect cannot be used on the player character.*



Passive. The character has been lulled and is not paying attention. Aggressive enemies will ignore the player for a time. Removed if the enemy is attacked. *Cannot be used on the player.*



Stun. Character cannot perform *any* action until the effect wears off. When the player character is stunned, trying to perform any action (including using the menu) will skip the turn.

... Environmental Interactions

An important key to success when exploring the Drop is manipulating the environment to debilitate your enemies or otherwise give you the upper hand. By exploiting certain property interactions against naturally-occurring aspects of the environment, it is possible to defeat or escape from even the most powerful of enemies. Therefore, it is important to know your surroundings, and the location of the nearest environmental element for when you need it.

Note that different floor “themes” will have different kinds of environmental elements available. A cave-like floor may have puddles of water everywhere, while a sandy floor may have none at all. It's important to learn what's available, and more importantly, how you will be able to interact with what you find.



Any environmental element can be picked up and used as an item by walking over it and pressing the SHIFT key. This will take up a spot in your inventory. These items are of middling healing and offensive power, and cannot be converted into Favor, but they can be helpful in a pinch, and may have certain properties that will help you against certain enemies.

For an idea on the kinds of interactions available, here are some examples of common environmental elements you will encounter:

- **Water.** Can be clean or tainted. Using the BOIL property on a square containing water will cause it to evaporate into a cloud of steam. Using the FREEZE property will cause it to turn into ice, and any enemies (or the player character himself) caught on the frozen squares will be stuck in place for a few turns. Using the SHOCK property will send electricity surging through the water!
- **Grasses.** There are many varieties of grass growing in the Drop. Many will catch fire when exposed to the BURN property. Some may wither and die when exposed to COLD.

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- **Minerals.** Can be thrown a good distance. Try throwing a rock to distract an enemy into turning around, or to finish off a weakened enemy at a distance.
- **Ice.** Can be melted with sufficient HEAT into pure water. Can also be kicked up into a chilling mist when exposed to FORCE. Cannot be picked up from the ground.
- **Acid.** Reacts explosively with water! Can also be picked up and used as a thrown weapon.
- **Tainted water.** Water that's unfit to drink. Can be caused by tainting clean water with the DEFILE property. Can be purified by something that CLEANSSES.
- **Dead grass.** Very flammable. Can also be exposed to FORCE to kick it up into blinding dust.
- **Breakable walls** look different from normal walls, and crumble to FORCE or WARP properties!

There are many other examples with their own interactions to be discovered. Note that **enemy attacks** can trigger reactions! Standing in dead grass while fighting an enemy who uses fire can spell a quick end!



About flying enemies: Enemies with the FLYING property will not be affected by ground-based changes such as freezing water, and will ignore attacks with the "GROUND" property as well. However, any attack with the "AIR" property will deal extra damage.

... Atmospheric Effects

Many spells, items, enemy attacks, and environmental changes leave behind **atmospheric effects** on one or more squares. These effects appear as a translucent fog or mist, and anyone who passes through the affected squares has a chance to suffer status effects due to exposure. These effects will disappear over several turns.

Some atmospheric effects will **block line of sight**. This means that your own vision cone can't penetrate these squares, as if they were walls. This also means that enemies cannot see through them, potentially allowing your character to sneak by unseen. You can still walk through them normally.



Steam. Boiled water. Inflicts **pain** status.

Miasma. Foul air. Inflicts **sicken** status.

Mist. Cold, heavy fog. Inflicts **wither status** and **blocks line of sight**.

Dust. Heavy suspended material. Inflicts **blind status** and **blocks line of sight**.

Smoke. A byproduct of fire. Inflicts **stun status** and **blocks line of sight**.

Poison. Dangerous toxic gas. Inflicts **pain, sicken, and wither** status.

Chill. Very cold air. Inflicts **sicken, wither, and paralysis** status.

Irritant. Burning, irritating vapor. Inflicts **blind, pain, and sicken** status.

Fire. This square is covered in flames! Inflicts **pain, wither, and confuse** status, and can leave behind **smoke** when it fades. Very dangerous!

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Fire has special behaviors when exposed to certain properties:

- The **water** property will extinguish an area of fire.
- The **flammable** property will cause the fire to expand to adjacent squares!
- The **force** property will snuff out fire in an area.

Fire is great for keeping enemies locked down, and it is important to have something on-hand that will put out a fire if you find yourself caught up in the flames as well. For player characters without access to fire magic, be on the lookout for items that cause burning, such as the **Fortian Fire** item. All player characters start out with two units of this material, which can be thrown to set fire or boil an environmental element.

... Essence, Progression, and Defeat

Your character gains strength by obtaining **essence**. There are three kinds of essence, corresponding to body, mind, and soul. Essence is gained for defeating enemies and by eating certain items. The amount of essence gained is based on the enemy or item, and is multiplied by your growth rate. Different races and characters will grow more quickly in some kinds of health than in others. The exact amount of essence gained from defeating an enemy is displayed in your message log.



You can quickly see how much essence you've obtained by looking at the bar beneath the health bar on the main interface. When the bar is empty, it appears gray. As you gain essence, it fills up with the color of that health type.

When the bar fills completely, **that aspect of your character "gains a level."** Your character gains at least one point in health, attack, and defense for only that health type. Your character also has a chance of gaining a bonus point in any of those stats. This bonus chance is determined by the **growth rate** of that health type. A growth rate of "1.2x" means your character has a 20% chance of gaining an extra point of health, attack, or defense. A growth rate of 1.0x or less has a flat 10% chance of gaining a bonus point in a stat.

Upon leveling, the essence bar resets to empty, and the next level takes even more essence to acquire. You can see exact numbers for essence and essence to next level by viewing the **status** screen ('S' or '8' key) during your turn. As always, **body, mind, and soul essence and level are all completely independent of one another.**

Leveling up also affects the chance of inflicting status effects on enemies. Stats like regeneration, stealth, and vision range never increase due to leveling.



Another form of progression is **Favor**. Favor is effectively like "gold" in other games; it measures the willingness of friendly NPCs above ground to help you out, and can be spent like currency.

Favor is gained by defeating enemies and picking up certain items they drop, which are always represented by stacks of yellow coins. These items are immediately collected and converted to Favor when passing over them, so no additional inventory space or action is needed. You can also manually convert many items in your inventory (as long as their properties have been learned) to Favor. This will eliminate the item from your possession permanently, so be cautious with what you wish to convert.

You cannot convert items to Favor while an enemy is coming after you!



Progressing deeper into the Drop involves locating **stairways leading down**, which are scattered randomly throughout each floor. These stairways are invisible until seen. Deeper floors will house tougher enemies and better items, and you may face a new theme or some other change to the environment. Make sure you are completely prepared before descending to the next floor; you cannot go back to the previous floor once you descend.

To descend to the next floor, step onto a tile containing the stairway and choose “descend to next floor.” In **hardcore** mode, you will have the opportunity to save your progress and quit playing at these points as well. In **regular** games, you can **quicksave** your progress and quit the game without having to return to the safe area. A quicksave file will be deleted upon loading.

Learning new magic: Your character slowly learns new magic over the course of your adventure by being exposed to different elements. This is accomplished by gaining affinity toward a particular element through certain actions, including:

- Using attack magic of a particular element against enemies.
- Consuming certain items with elemental properties, or elemental “cores.”

Note: You **cannot** learn magic of the affinity opposite of yours!

After you have obtained enough exposure to a certain element, you will automatically learn a random unknown spell of that affinity (either attack or healing). This spell will be added to your available magic and can be memorized and used immediately. You will hear a chime and see a message when a new spell has been learned.

Special events: Upon entering a new floor, you may receive a message about something *different* about that floor. You may have to adjust your strategy accordingly, so be on guard. Some examples of special events are:

- “**The floor feels more open.**” There will be more open rooms and fewer hallways.
- “**Light is creeping in.**” You can see further, but stealth is reduced.
- “**The air feels very humid.**” There will be more fresh water and live grass on the ground.
- “**The air is very hot and dry.**” Grass will be mostly dead and there will be little to no water.
- “**You feel a sense of dread.**” More powerful enemies will appear!
- “**A low moan fills the air.**” A very dangerous creature is lurking somewhere in the darkness.

When your character is defeated in combat, he will be ejected from the Drop. From here, one of several things could happen:

- If your character **has the Golden Thread**, he will be returned to the “safe” floor aboveground, still alive. However, **your Favor will be cut in half, and you lose all items in your inventory except your equipped weapon.**
- If you are playing in “**Hardcore**” mode, **your character is deleted permanently.** This is a more traditional “roguelike” experience. Note that *your save file is actually deleted every time you load it, and you cannot continue playing once you’ve saved*, so be careful about resetting the game or quitting prematurely. Don’t say you haven’t been warned!

In the latter case, when losing a character permanently, a “**graveyard file**” will be generated in the game’s **Graveyard** directory as a text file. The filename consists of the character name, levels in body/mind/soul, floor, and turn number. This file contains your character’s stats, what defeated him, and the last 200 entries in the message log.

Thank you for reading all this, and for giving the game a chance! You can contact the author via email by using the contact form at <http://www.tilde-one.com/contact.php> with any questions or comments.

I'm always on the lookout for bugs! If you were defeated due to a glitch, or if you experienced anything else strange, be sure to include the relevant lines from the graveyard file to the author for testing purposes!

