ATARI-32K

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Birth of the

PHOENIX

A Class 1
Tutorial Adventure

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Birth of the Phoenix

Dedication

We hereby dedicate this to those of you who have never played adventure games. For all of you, the unique challenge of adventuring still lies ahead . . . the joys, the frustrations, and the ultimate solutions are just waiting for you to discover.

Preface

Webster defines an adventure as "an exciting and dangerous undertaking . . . an unusual, stirring, often romantic experience."

Through the use of a semi-intelligent, word recognition computer program you will be transported to worlds of wonder and amazement, to worlds where the only survivors are those who can live by their wits, using every ounce of imagination and common sense which is at their disposal. The universe of an adventure game consists of an original grouping of locations bound together by a central theme, such as "The Old West," "Underground Caves," or perhaps a "Haunted Castle." Adventures are actually puzzles because you must discover each piece and along with the others formulate a solution that will allow you to complete your mission.

WARNING! These are not the type of games that take an hour or two to master. On the contrary, it can take days, weeks or even months to fully solve an adventure.

We hope you will find this booklet helpful in acquainting you with the basics of adventure playing; although we must warn you that to date no substitution has been found for sheer determination combined with imagination and common sense.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The adventures of today are loosely based on a program developed by Will Crowther and Don Woods of Stanford University written a few years ago. It was written in Fortran for a large mainframe computer and required over 300K of memory storage. The "Original Adventure," as it has come to be called, has since been compacted to fit on nearly all micro-computers including at least four versions for the Apple II, one of which fits entirely into memory.)

Beginning the Game

Communicating with the Computer

Most adventures either describe a situation on the screen or show a picture on the screen and then ask you the question, "What do you want to do now?"

You typically answer by typing in two words such as "Go East" or "Get Rabbit" and the computer will then reply "O.K." or some similar acknowledgement. If the computer can't interpret your answer (such as your typing in "Fly Moon") it will respond by displaying "I don't understand" or "You can't go in that direction" or some other appropriate remark.

Most adventures, such as THE BIRTH OF THE PHOENIX, are set up to recognize a verb followed by a noun. There are some exceptions especially in using directions. "Go East" may be abbreviated by just typing in "E" or "East". "Inventory" may be shortened to "I". There is no way to hurt your computer or the program by typing in "wrong" words. Be brave, be daring, but most of all be original. You never can tell what might work.

Making the Computer Understand

The most often heard complaint from new adventure players is "I know what I want to do but I can't seem to communicate it to the computer." To a beginning player this can be very frustrating and can often sour a person who could otherwise become a great adventure player. Since dozens of different verbs may be used to signify a similar action, the question is how to find the one or two that will trigger a response. For example, if you came across a card reading-machine and wanted it to read a card you were carrying, what would you type in? In most cases "Read Card" would not work because most programs would interpret "Read Card" as "I would like to read the card with my eyes." You would receive a message such as "There is nothing on the card to read." What we really want to do then is put the card into the machine and have the machine read the card, but how do we say that in two words? "Put Card" also would not work because most programs equate "Put" with "Drop." Many times the clue on what verb to use will be given in the way the machine or the card is described in the game. For instance, if you "Look Machine" and the description is "It is a large black and blue machine with a slot into which cards may be inserted," then it is a good bet that the verb you should try is "Insert". Or it may be that if you "Look Card" you get the message "The cards are made to be inserted into some kind of machine." Again, the description leads you to the correct verb, "Insert" card!

Remember, use a verb followed by a noun, and get your clues from the words the author uses to give you the descriptions.

Mapping and Getting Around

You'll never complete an adventure unless you're willing to draw maps. In most adventures you'll be able to go in the following directions.

"East" or "E"	"Northwest" or "NW"
"West" or "W"	"Southeast" or "SE"
"North" or "N"	"Southwest" or "SW"
"South" or "S"	"Up" or "U"
"Northeast" or "NE"	"Down" or "D"

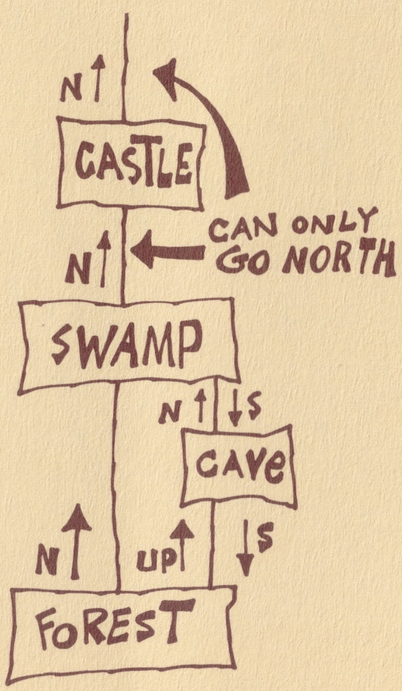
Each room is connected to the next, usually in an obvious manner which is described on the screen by a line which reads "Exits — Northeast, West, South" or "Exits — All directions." Sometimes exits are not so obvious and we'll talk about that later.

Mapping requires having a pencil and paper sitting next to your computer. The usual method is to draw a box or a circle to represent the location. A line is drawn from the box in each direction which leads from the room. As each direction is explored, a new box is drawn. Each box should contain the name of the location being explored.

Each direction line should be labelled because, especially in mazes, going back the way you came may not return you to the starting location. For example, if you go North from a forest you may wind up in a swamp. Going South from the swamp may however put you into a cave.

Finally, sometimes going in a direction may be a one way affair and you may not be able to get back at all.

Your map should indicate these peculiarities as you encounter them.

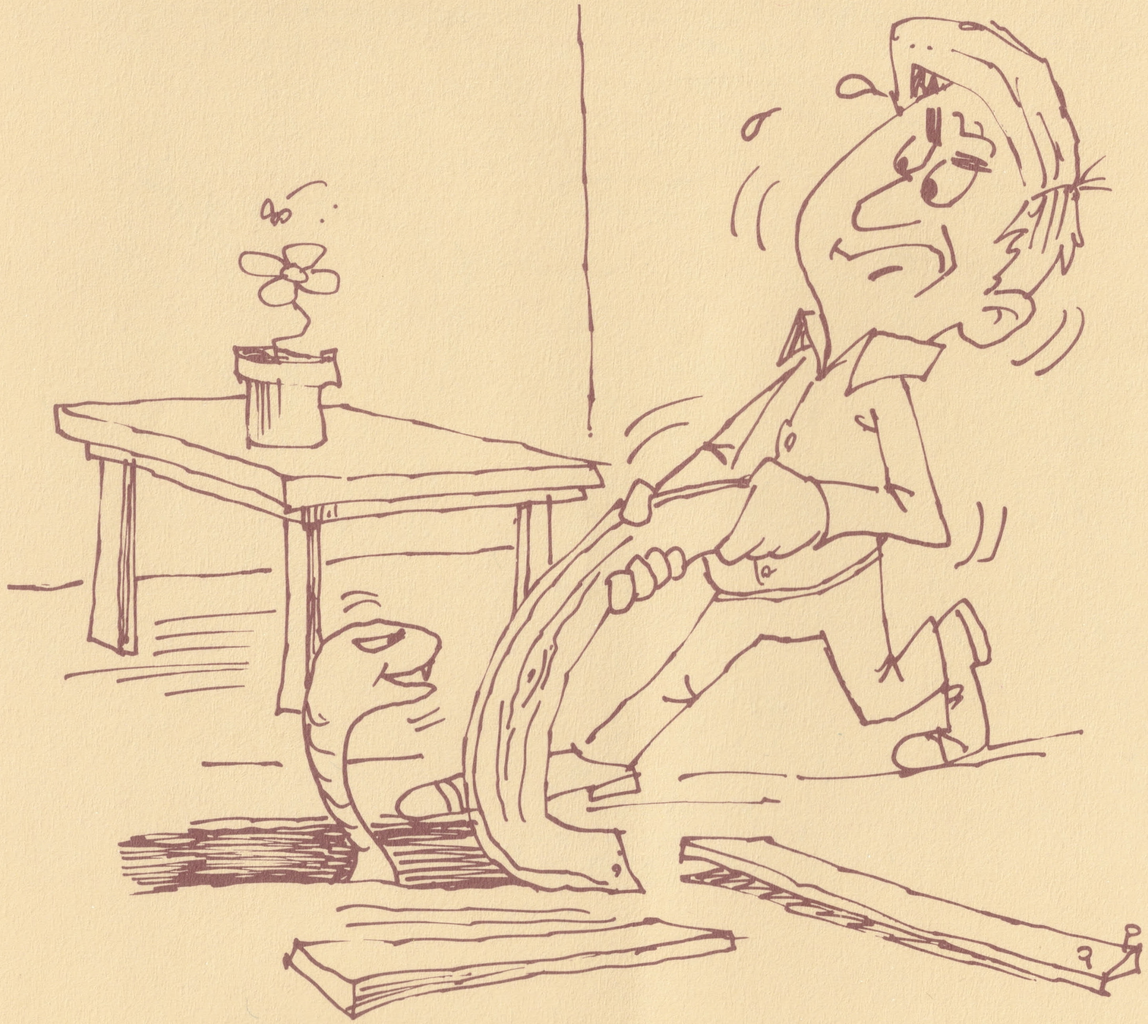


Location Descriptions

One of the most important things you must do is carefully read the description of each area you enter. Most text adventures have a "Room" description when you enter a given location and provide somewhat more detail for some locations than for others. This detail scrolls up on the bottom of the screen the first time you enter the location. If you want to read it again, you must type in "Describe" or "Describe Location" or "Look" and you will get the longer description.

It is important that you don't skim over the descriptions as they may contain needed information in solving the adventure. Most adventures are quite fair but must be examined carefully as to what the wording can mean. For example, if you enter a location where the description reads "Greenhouse," the exits are "South" and the bottom of the screen says, "There are some loose boards on the floor," you should try to "Move Boards" as there may be another exit from the location.

Hi-res adventures which rely on pictures drawn on the screen rather than verbal descriptions for the locations and objects require careful inspection. What at first glance may appear to be a flaw in the picture may be a button to push.



Object Descriptions

When you enter a location you may find various objects in that location. Later on we'll be discussing those objects and their use, but just a few hints here. It is usually a good idea to get everything. While some items may be dangerous and a few may be useless (or red herrings), most of them have or will have a purpose. You will not be able to carry everything and will notice that after getting six or seven objects and trying to get another, the message "You are carrying too much" or "Drop Something" will appear. This is true of almost every adventure written. Another good idea, then, is after mapping out the adventure to carry everything to a central point for later use. You should also indicate on your map, where an object was found.

Saving the Adventure

Because you can get killed rather unexpectedly in adventures, it is a good habit to save the adventure periodically. Almost any adventure has a "Save" and "Restore" feature so that you don't have to work your way back from the beginning. It's usually a good idea to save several copies at different points.

Help, I'm Stuck!!

Rule Number 1 — Don't Panic.

The degree of difficulty of an adventure is controlled by the number of hints given to the adventurer. Always be sure to try the words "Hint" or "Help" as the computer may be able to give you a clue.

Occasionally you'll find hint givers such as a friendly robot or a singing sword that will provide clues. In the robot example, it may follow you around and have a button to push that makes it talk. As it follows you from location to location keep pushing its button to see what it says.

Remember . . . Don't be afraid to try something (anything). You can't hurt the computer or the program and what you try may even work!!!!!

At this point you should start playing BIRTH OF THE PHOENIX using the general rules just outlined. If you run into trouble or get stuck, type "Help". Your computer will then refer you back to this booklet for assistance with the problem. Your operating instructions for the game are on page 19 of this manual and you should glance at them now.

The Objects of the Game

If you find a book or leaflet or magazine as an object in a room be sure to get it. First say "Read Book" or "Look Book" and you might get a message such as "The book has a title of 'Great Pickles of the Western World'." If you don't have it in your possession you may not be able to read it and may think it has no value. In the case of a book or similar object be sure to also try "Open Book". Then say "Read Book" and you may get an entirely different message. Also try "Turn Page" and then "Read Book" as there may be more than one message. Try this approach until you either get repetitive messages or the computer informs you "I can't do that." You will also run into instances where you may see an inscription written on a wall. Be sure to "Read Inscription" or "Read Wall".

Sometimes the writing may appear to be indecipherable because it is written in an alien language. In this case you will need to find some other object to translate or interpret the writing. This may be some goggles or perhaps a language translator.

Other times writing may be in a foreign language, frequently Latin. In these cases, a good dictionary will usually have a foreign language section to help you with the translation.

Objects in General

If you find an object, it may be obvious what to do with it. More often than not it will take some thought to figure out the purpose of the object.

Sometimes objects must be collected and put together to do something. For instance, you might find a wheel here, a pair of handles there and a box-like object. With all of these in your possession you can "Make Wheelbarrow". At first blush it may not appear you have the components of a wheelbarrow, but in the hypothetical adventure we're describing it will become clear along the way that you need a wheelbarrow.

Objects may be hidden in other objects. Just as we might turn pages in a book, if we find a box we should look in it to see what it contains. You may also have to look in it several times to find all the objects. Sometimes objects can be turned into other objects. Usually a magic word or a machine is needed to perform the act.

When you find a frog, wave your magic wand over it and it may turn into a prince (or it may also turn into a crocodile . . . an unfriendly crocodile).

Another example of finding objects in objects might be if you need sugar and you find sweet tasting water. You may get the sugar by evaporating the water.

It's Catching

Be sure to "Climb Tree" as you'll find something there. Climbing tall structures is always a good idea. In the tree we find a branch and a net and wonder what to do with them. Obviously the net is to catch something and we can surmise it is the Phoenix but we haven't seen a Phoenix as of yet. If we come across any other creatures we can also try to catch them. Capturing is something you'll be doing in adventure games. In BIRTH OF THE PHOENIX you have a net. In other adventures you may find ropes, cages, snares, traps or other paraphernalia to help you catch something. You might even try your hands if all else fails. Some peculiar critters might succumb to hypnosis or music. There is always the danger that something you're trying to catch might resent the fact and eat you up if you don't have the correct object.

If you can't catch something, it may be that some other object you're carrying around is preventing the capture. For example, carrying a scarecrow might prevent you from capturing a needed bird even if you have a cage.

Do You Smell Smoke

The branch that you found could be used for a lot of things. In this case it will be used to start a fire. Of course, you must now figure out where and why the fire must be started. Rubbing a branch and a stick just might start a fire.

Many adventures take place in caves and dark places and fire can serve as a source of light. We'll discuss this further on. But fire can also be used as a weapon and to burn things up. As a rule if something is burned up and leaves ashes it's a good idea to look in the ashes to see if something is in there.

If the object to start the fire is a match, you may get only one chance to use it and must guard the match jealously until the appropriate time, being careful not to get it wet, or use it prematurely.

Occasionally there is a nasty creature living in the fire or the fire can get out of control and finish you off. Be careful when playing with fire.

It's Magic

On Uttering Magic Words

Obviously we want to get across the cliff to the other side but there is no apparent way to do it. The only way to get across is to use a magic word which is in the book. Magic words are usually found in books or written on walls or whispered in your ear in a certain location. Sometimes the word will be backward or disguised in some other manner. To use a magic word, type "Say Marshmallow", if "Marshmallow" happens to be a magic word.

Uttering the word may transport you to a location or from a location. Saying the word in a wrong location could have disastrous results or no results. Occasionally the word will render you invisible or it may call up a demon that takes an instant dislike to you. It may, on the other hand, produce a friendly pixie or a heretofore undiscovered treasure.

It's always wise to save a game before saying any magic word.

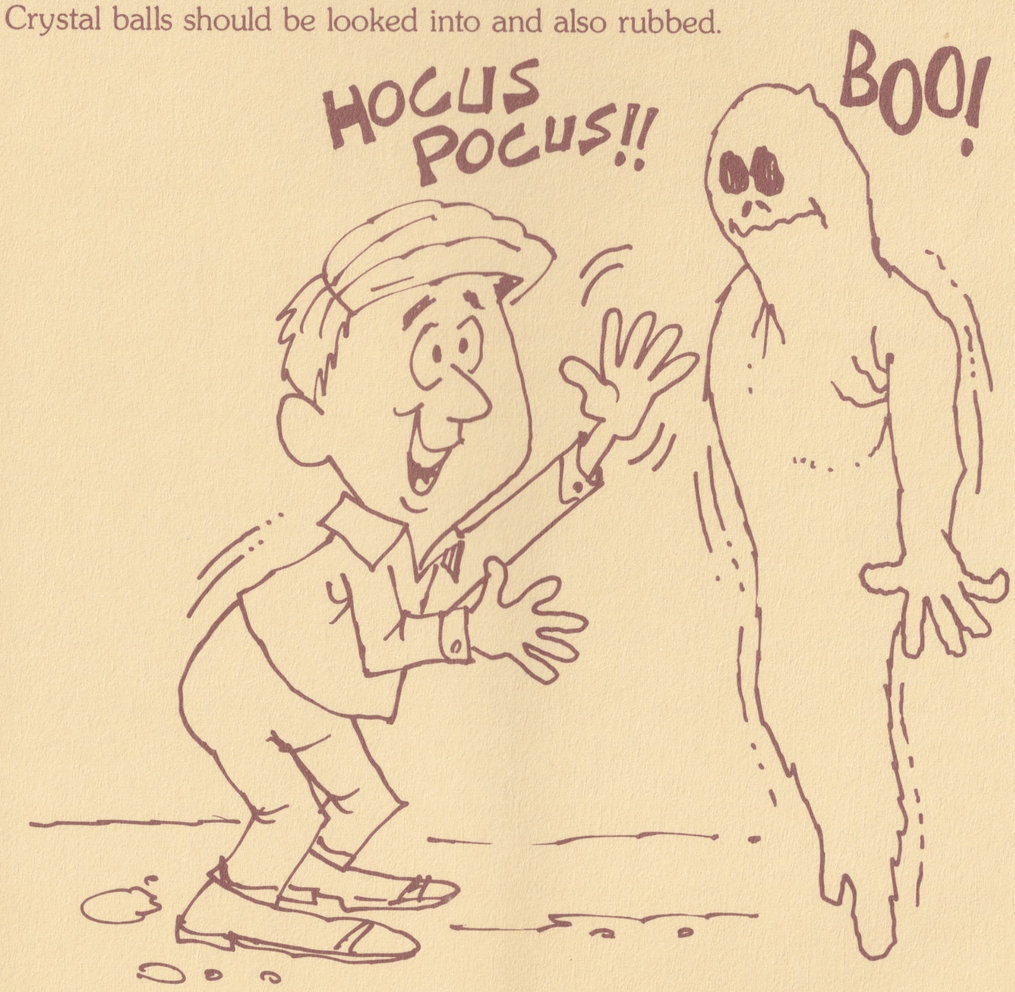
Other Magic

While we are on the subject of magic, some adventures may contain magic items, possibly weapons or garments. You can never tell the effect of a magic weapon until you try it out. It may have different results with different creatures. For example, your magic sword might slay a werewolf, but bounce foolishly off a pterodactyl which then carries you home for breakfast. Weapons are usually fairly obvious, but occasionally you might find something such as a branch which could be used to bash something over the head as well as casting a spell.

Garments, such as cloaks, boots, hats and armor, may not only provide cover or protection but have magic side effects. Boots might be Seven Leaguers or an innocuous hat might be just what you need to turn invisible. (Incidentally, be sure to search hats and cloaks as they often contain other objects or articles.)

Magic wands and staffs do their thing by waving them. Magic lamps can be activated by rubbing them. Magic rings are often activated by turning them or rubbing them. Watch out for negative effects caused by any of these, especially if they are overused. You may get three good actions out of them and the fourth use turns you into a chicken.

Crystal balls should be looked into and also rubbed.



Open and Shut Cases

Locked Safes

Don't assume just because you've found the key that it opens the safe, because it doesn't open the one in the cave. In many cases of course it does take a key to open a safe, but in other cases it might take two keys. The safe in BIRTH OF A PHOENIX happens to have a combination lock. The combination is not very well hidden.

Locked Doors

One of the most frustrating experiences is trying to open a locked door which refuses all efforts to budge it. Don't assume that a locked door is the only way into or out of a room. There very well may be a secret passage or a trapdoor. Look behind pictures and move tables and chairs to see if there isn't another exit. Try all the magic words you've come across.

Don't hesitate to use weapons to blast open the door. Knock on the door to see if someone on the other side opens it (sometimes this can be fatal). Kicking the door has been known to work.

Many times the locked door can be opened only from the other side and in your wanderings you may find you open a door which brings you into the original locked door location.

In some cases locked doors have buttons that must be pushed to open the door. Pushing the buttons in sequence can have effects ranging from none, to opening the door . . . to disaster. This is a trial and error situation although some adventures may provide clues to the correct sequence.

Shedding Some Light on the Subject

Digging into Things

The shovel you find in the workshop is to be used to dig for something. In some adventures the spot where you dig is obvious. In others it's not . . . in one case it was in the ceiling. However the best course is not to dig everywhere unless you just can't find a spot where "The ground appears soft." If you can't find that soft spot, then you'll have to try digging in every location until you find the right place (or the fact that the shovel is a red herring).

In other adventures it may be relatively easy to find the spot to dig but extremely difficult to find an implement with which to dig. When you say "Dig", the computer may respond with "With What?". If you haven't been able to find a shovel you might try your hands (although they probably won't work). Try anything else that might be lying around.

Light Up Your Life

Almost every adventure has some location that is dark and if you go into it without any light you'll wind up there permanently. Some locations are very unforgiving . . . if you try to move in the dark it's all over. Others let you grope your way around for a while before finishing you off. A few will let you find your way out.

The flashlight is a light source for a dark place. Other light sources can be torches, matches, lamps, lanterns. The way to turn them on is "Light On", "On", "Light Lamp" or a similar expression. Some of them operate on batteries, some on combustion and some on magic. Some of them will remain lit as long as you want them. Others will remain lit for only so many moves before they burn out. It's a good practice to turn the light off ("Light Off", "Off", "Extinguish Light") if you are through using it for the time being.

Amazing

Meeting People

The guardhouse contains an unfriendly guard who won't let you by. Typically you can try to battle your way by or get by by trickery or by friendship. It's usually best to try friendship first and resort to harsher means later.

There's no guarantee that niceness will work, but it's a place to start. When trying to be a nice guy, you should attempt to offer something ("Give Guard" or "Offer Sapphires"). If the object is not named, the computer may come back with "What." You then name the object. Try food or drink.

Maze Mapping

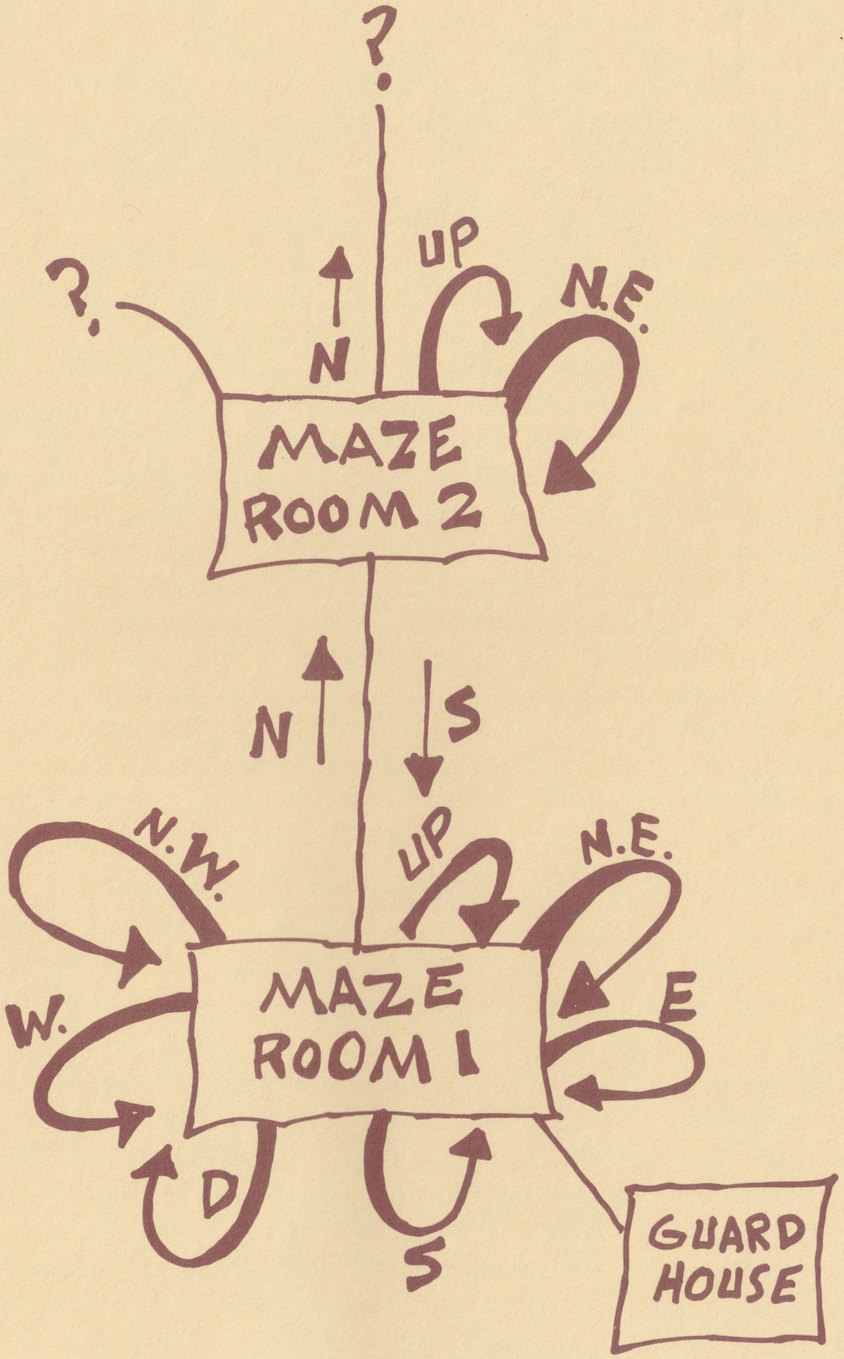
This is the entrance to a maze. The beginning (and in many cases advanced) adventurer is completely frustrated and annoyed by mazes. They really aren't very difficult if treated systematically. The most important thing to recognize when you enter a maze is that you are in a maze. You can do this by noticing expressions such as "All passages look alike" or "You are in a twisting corridor." As soon as you see such an expression immediately reverse directions to find the way out.

In most mazes the way out is the opposite of the way in. If you get in by going North, you can get out from that location by going South. In some of the tougher adventures, you're going to spend a lot of time in mazes. Mapping mazes consists of dropping objects in a location and keeping track of which object was dropped. You then try different directions and as each direction is tried drop another object and keep track of that on your map. Many times you can't return the way you came by reversing direction (If you "Go North" you can't necessarily return by "Going South"), so knowing where your objects are is essential.

All directions must be tried from every location. It is a Murphy's Law that if you try every location but one, that one will be the important one.

In BIRTH OF THE PHOENIX we have a six room maze. Starting at the Guardroom you will find an amazing bag to help you map out the maze. After you get by the guard, "Go Northwest" or "NW" from the Guardroom. You will then be in the first room of the maze. If you "Go Southeast" or "SE," you will be back in the Guardroom. Entering the maze again, drop one of the colored pieces of paper . . . then "Go South" or "S." You'll find yourself in a room with that same colored piece of paper and know that that passage curves in on itself. Now "Go North," and you'll find yourself in a room without a piece of paper. This then has to be a new room. Drop another colored piece of paper and "Go South." The original colored piece of paper tells you you're back in maze room 1. Of course, you're keeping track of all this on your map. This is how the first two rooms of the maze look mapped out.

The mapping of mazes should be done completely as it is very easy to miss something. If you find one item it may not be the only item. Mastering this phase of adventuring is absolutely necessary.



On Time and Treasures

Telling Time

The clock in the mountains is running down and it better be wound up . . . quickly. Many adventure games are a race against the clock with time measured in moves. In BIRTH OF THE PHOENIX we must wind the clock before a given number of moves elapses. Some adventures must be totally completed within a given number of moves or you will lose. In others, you can get a perfect score only if it is completed in a certain number of turns.

Treasures and Other Shiny Things

The treasury has a sign instructing you to "Store Treasures Here." If you have a treasure and say "Store Treasures" or "Drop Treasures", you will get credit toward the maximum score possible. In order to see what your score is, say "Score" and you will get a message telling you how you are progressing. Some adventures are strictly treasure gathering affairs and others have a purpose or quest to be undertaken and fulfilled. BIRTH OF THE PHOENIX contains some elements of both. The treasures in this adventure are readily identifiable by the brackets around them on the object line . . . (Sapphires). The brackets are there to indicate this is a treasure. Not all treasures are immediately recognizable. A dusty lump of coal may turn out to be a diamond if you "Rub Coal". A lamp may be made out of gold which can be determined only by "Examine Lamp". Treasures may have multiple purposes. A flaming torch may be both a source of illumination and a treasure. You must therefore decide at what point you want to use it and at what point you want to store it. Most treasures which have a useful purpose (and even treasures which don't) can be removed from the storage area. In this case the score is invariably reduced by the value of the treasure.

Always Look A Gift Treasure in the Mouth

As with any object, you may have one which is dangerous. A treasure chest may be boobytrapped with a poisoned needle, so save the game before you "Open Chest". A pair of gloves may be needed before you open the chest.

Some treasures may be fragile and lose their value if mishandled. A rare idol may be broken if you just say "Drop Idol" and the computer may inform you that "The idol shatters into a thousand jagged pieces." You may need to find and store an oriental rug first ("Store Rug") and then store the idol to get the message "The idol falls gently to the carpet."

Some treasures contain other treasures which must be removed before they can be individually stored. A rare vase may contain an ivory cameo. If you just "Store Vase" you may get 10 points. If you "Look Vase" the computer might respond "I see a beautiful cameo." If you "Get Cameo" and subsequently "Store Cameo" and "Store Vase" you will get a total of 15 points . . . 5 for the cameo and 10 for the vase.

The End of the Quest Is in Sight

Nowhere To Go But Up

Earlier we talked about finding treasures being the object of an adventure. There are other purposes toward which an adventure can be written. In BIRTH OF THE PHOENIX, the object is to help the Phoenix become reborn from the ashes of the old Phoenix. If you've read the book found in the forest, you've all the information you need to complete the assignment and win the game provided you've also stored the treasures. If you haven't . . . well . . .

BIRTH OF THE PHOENIX illustrates the mixed use of treasure gathering and quest solving. Many adventures have the sole purpose of fulfilling a mission . . . Phoenix Software's ADVENTURE IN TIME is an example of this type of program. Typically quest type adventures are shorter, i.e., contain fewer locations, but are more difficult to solve than their treasure hunting counterparts. A well written quest adventure must be fair to the user as well as not too obvious. If you enter a room with a sign that says "No Loitering" and you loiter you should assume something is going to happen. Perhaps the object of the game is to kill Vampira and the only way she appears is to loiter in that room. If that sign is not in the room and you need to "Loiter" there can be no way to encounter Vampira to kill her and complete the task unless a clue is given.

Some typical missions are rescuing people, escaping from a planet, saving the world, getting out of a dungeon or getting out of a cave. Whatever the goal is, it is either made obvious to the player at the start of the game or it must be learned during the play of the game.

Notes:

Verbs And Nouns Common to Many Adventures Games

Verb Table

Attack	Get	Pour
Break	Give	Press
Catch	Go	Pull
Climb	Help	Push
Close	Jump	Read
Describe	Kill	Restore
Dig	Leap	Rub
Drink	Light	Save
Drop	Look	Say
Enter	Off	Swim
Examine	On	Take
Exit	Open	Tap
Feed	Place	Turn

Noun Table

Altar	Cloth	Lake	Safe
Animals	Computer	Lamp	Sapphires
Bag	Console	Lever	Score
Bear	Dial	Light	Seeds
Bed	Diamonds	Machine	Shovel
Boat	Fire	Manual	Sign
Book	Flashlight	Matches	Snake
Bottle	Flute	Mirror	Stick
Bow	Food	Net	Stone
Branch	Glasses	Note	Sword
Button	Gold	Paper	Troll
Candle	Guard	Pencil	Vial
Card	Gun	Picture	Violin
Carpet	Hammer	Plants	Wall
Cave	Inventory	Potion	Wand
Charm	Key	Rope	Water
Chest	Knife	Rubies	Well
Clock	Ladder	Rug	

Note To Remember:
Some words can be used by themselves such as exit, enter, inventory, jump, on, off, etc.

Operating Instructions

Starting Off

It's a matter of simply booting the diskette. If there's any problem, consult your disk drive manual. The program is written in Machine Language. The diskette cannot be copied. If your diskette fails return it to:

PHOENIX SOFTWARE, INC.
64 Lake Zurich Drive
Lake Zurich, IL 60047

We will turn it around within two days.

Commanding The Computer

BIRTH OF THE PHOENIX recognizes two word commands to be input as a verb followed by a noun; "Get Stick". Except as noted below, you must type in the full words, no abbreviations.

Movements are controlled by typing in direction such as "Go North" or "Go Northeast". "Up" or "Down". Directions may be abbreviated by inputting one letter "N" for "Go North", "U" for "Up".

To see what items you are carrying, type in the word "Inventory". The computer will understand the abbreviation "I".

When you enter the various locations of the adventure, you will get a complete description of that location. If you enter the location again, you will not get this elaboration. If you would like to see the long description again, type in "Look".

Saving The Game

Unfortunately, you may get killed (figuratively), as you go through the BIRTH OF THE PHOENIX. You may also get tired and want to turn the computer off.

The "Save Game" feature requires a **blank** diskette to be placed in the drive. The diskette will be initialized automatically after typing "Save". The next time you save to that diskette, it will not have to reinitialize and will complete the save routine in a few seconds.

You can save only one version of the game on each diskette. You might want to have several diskettes saved at various stages of the adventure.

To recall the adventure, boot up the game diskette and enter the first location. Type in "Restore" and put the diskette with the saved game into the disk drive.

Since players have different degrees of experience in solving adventure games, Phoenix is implementing the following rating system of skill levels for the games we produce.

Class 1 — Novice Player	(Beginning Player)
Class 2 — Rookie Player	(Has played 1 or 2 adventures)
Class 3 — Average Player	(Has completed 2 or 3 adventures)
Class 4 — Experienced Player	(Has completed 4 or more adventures)
Class 5 — Expert Player	(Has completed all adventures)

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