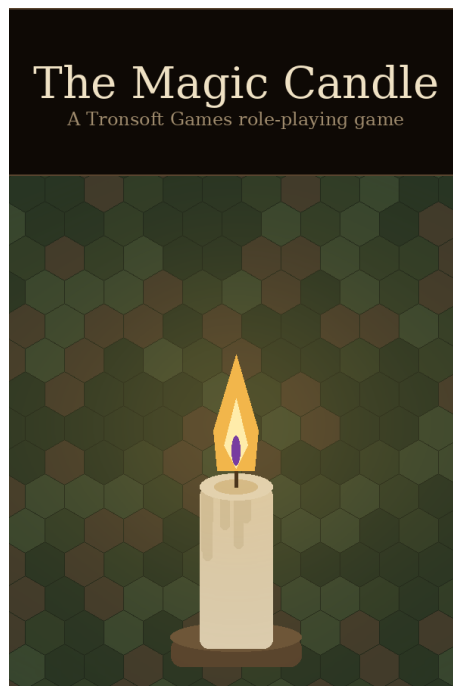




The Magic Candle

Player manual, version 1.3.0. Tronsoft Games, 2026.

The demon Zaralkh is bound in the flame of a candle in the fortress of Halvethar, and the wax is running low. The Rite of Renewing that would relight it is lost: its four verses lie in four ruins, and the order in which they must be spoken is known, one position each, to the sages of the towns. You lead a company across the kingdom of Corvane to find the verses, gather the wax, the wick and the ember, and speak the rite before the flame goes out.

The candle

Every hour spent burns wax: walking, camping, resting at an inn, working, studying, fighting. The candle on the left of the screen burns down to match, and the masthead counts the days left, warming from gold through amber to red and naming the stage - burning down, low, guttering. At half, a quarter, a tenth and a twentieth of the wax the chronicle records how the flame stands. When the wax is gone, the flame goes out and the game is lost. There are three candles:

Candle	Days of wax	Note
A long candle	1400	The wax is deep. Time to learn the land.
A fair candle	1000	As the chroniclers tell it.
A short candle	700	The flame is already low.

The world is generated from a seed - type one on the title screen to play the same land twice. Encounters grow more dangerous as the candle burns down.

The screen

The title screen uses the same arrangement as play: what the game is on the left, the candle, the seed and Light the candle on the right. The version number stands beside the title in the masthead.

Three columns. Left: the candle, the company (click a companion to select them), gold and rations, the roster book of companions left in towns, and the tally of verses and components with the rite order as far as it is known. Centre: the map or battlefield, with the journal below. Right: every control that applies where you are. Keyboard on the road: W E A D Z X for the six hex

directions (arrows too); underground Q W E A D Z X C for the eight compass points; In a battle: S strike, M move, H hold, R run, F let them fight it out, space to step a foe turn. Escape drops a chosen action, closes a sheet, or halts a walk. Sheets have keys of their own: T the quest, M the map - a key to the ground and a list of every place with what it offers and how far it stands - N the chronicle, R the roster book, B the satchel, P the company sheet, ? the help page. Clicking a neighbouring hex steps there; clicking any farther hex or place walks there by the quickest road, hex by hex, stopping for encounters or arrival - hover first to see the route and the time, and Stop here halts the walk. On the world map the wheel or a pinch zooms about the cursor, dragging pans, and the Map band offers Zoom in (+), Zoom out (-) and Centre on company (0).

The company

You begin with Aldwin and 150 gold. Recruits wait in taverns; up to five may be taken, six in the company. Each has a people and skills; skills rise slowly with use and quickly with paid teaching.

Recruit	People	Skills		Kit
Aldwin	man	sword 5, lore 2		sword, leather
Isolde	man	casting 5, lore 3		staff, robe
Thessaly	elf	bow 5, casting 2		bow, leather
Brannoch	dwarf	axe 5, craft 3		axe, mail
Pim	halfling	stealth 5, bow 2, lore 1		bow, leather
Marrow	man	sword 3, axe 3, craft 1		axe, mail
Vell	elf	casting 4, lore 4		staff, robe
Orla	dwarf	craft 5, axe 3		axe, mail
Tamsin	halfling	stealth 4, sword 3		sword, leather
Corwen	man	bow 4, sword 2, lore 2		bow, leather
People	Hit points	Energy	Skill bias	Note
Men of Corvane	+0	+0	-	Even-handed; quick to learn any trade.
Ilthari elves	-4	+6	bow +2, casting +2, sword -1	Sure with a bow and deep in casting; frail.
Dunmar dwarves	+6	-4	axe +2, craft +2, casting -2	Hardy, axe-handed, born to the forge.
Wend halflings	-2	+4	stealth +3, lore +1, axe -1	Light-footed; slip past what they cannot fight.
Skill	Use			
Sword	Blade work at arm's length.			
Axe	Heavy blows; slow, hard to turn.			
Bow	Shooting across the field.			
Casting	Spells drawn from the ember of the mind.			
Stealth	Passing unseen; picking a way through ruins.			
Lore	Reading old script; hearing what sages leave unsaid.			
Craft	Forge and bench; smithing and mending.			

Towns

Inn: a night costs 3 gold a head and heals fully. Market: rations (2 gold; the company eats one per head per day) and herbs. Smith: the company kit at a glance, each companion beside the best affordable piece that would improve them (weapons only in skills they hold), bought with one press; or pick a companion and choose for yourself. Teachers: a grid of the company against the skills the town teaches, each cell the level held and the price of one more; a level costs from 40 gold and takes 7 days, up to 3 levels at once, and the student stays behind. Tavern: everyone looking for work with their people, skills and kit, and what each would add measured against the best the company already holds in every skill. Work: a grid of the company against the trades with every daily wage, the best-paying marked; set the length once, press a wage, and the companion is paid when collected. Sage: one position in the rite order, for a fee that rises. The chandler in Whitespire sells Moonwax; the Dunmar forge draws a silver wick from Barrow ore, cheaper the better your smith.

Town	Teaches	Sage	Special	Note
Whitespire	sword, lore, casting	yes	chandler	The king's seat. Halvethar, where the candle burns, lies a few days off.
Thornby	bow, stealth	yes	-	A market town in the barley country.
Dunmar Halls	axe, craft	-	forge	Dwarf-delvings under the hills; the only forge that draws silver wire.
Ilthar	casting, bow, lore	yes	-	Elf-town in the high wood. They remember the candle's making.
Saltmere	sword, stealth	yes	-	A fishing port; the marsh road ends here.
Ashford	axe, sword	-	-	The last hamlet before the burnt country.
Job	Skill	Base wage	Note	
Farmhand	none	3	Anyone can bind sheaves.	
Town guard	sword	4	Walking the wall by night.	
Smith's hand	craft	4	Bellows and hammer.	
Scribe	lore	4	Copying ledgers by lamplight.	
Hunter	bow	4	Meat for the inn's table.	

The road

Every step across the hex map costs hours by terrain - roads are quickest, mountains slowest - and may bring an encounter; the danger rises as the candle burns down. Click a neighbouring hex to step, or any farther hex to walk there by the quickest road; hovering first gives the time and, if the packs are too light, how many rations short the journey would leave the company. Camp a night in the open to bind wounds and restore energy at the cost of a day and a ration a head, or Camp until rested to keep watch night after night until the company is fit, the rations run out, an encounter finds the camp, or seven nights have gone; underground the same button keeps a shorter, colder watch.

Arms, armour and herbs

Weapon	Skill	Damage	Range	Price
Sword	sword	3-8	1	40
Axe	axe	4-11	1	45
Bow	bow	2-7	5	50
Staff	sword	1-4	1	10
Fine sword	sword	5-11	1	160
Great axe	axe	6-14	1	180
Long bow	bow	4-10	6	170

Armour	Guard	Price
Robe	0	5
Leather	2	30
Mail	4	120
Plate	6	320

Herb	Effect	Price
Hollowcap	Restores energy; a night's sleep in a mouthful.	6
Emberroot	Rekindles a caster's ember for one more spell.	10
Nightgill	Closes wounds; bitter, and it works.	9
Quickfoil	Quickens the blood; an extra stroke in the next fight.	12
Wardweed	Hardens the skin against the next few blows.	14

Spells

Casters begin with Spark and Mend and may learn more from the mage of any town that teaches casting, which sets out every spell against every caster - what it needs, what it costs, what it does, at twelve times the spell's energy cost. Casting spends energy, which returns with rest and Hollowcap.

Spell	Cost	Needs casting	Kind	Power	Range	Note
Spark	3	1	bolt	4-9	5	A thrown coal of fire.
Mend	4	2	heal	6-12	3	Knits a companion's flesh.
Shroud	5	3	ward	3	3	A companion is hard to strike for three turns.
Fire lance	7	4	bolt	9-16	6	A line of flame.
Quiet	6	4	sleep	2	4	A foe stands dazed for two turns.
Kindle	9	6	burst	7-13	5	Fire bursts on a foe and its neighbours.
Restore	8	6	heal	14-24	3	Closes even grave wounds.
Sunder	12	8	bolt	16-28	6	Breaks what it strikes.

Battle

A battle takes its ground from the hex the company was standing in, named in the caption and described under the controls: woodland and rock give cover to both sides, marsh, sand and rock slow the stride, a hillside lets bows reach a square further and trees make them draw a square shorter. Blades are never affected.

Battles are fought on a 9 by 7 field. Units act in initiative order; the current unit is highlighted on the field, and the left column shows the order of play - who acts next, with their hits, foes marked apart, and a divider where the round turns over. Point at a foe to read its hits and your chance to hit. A companion may Strike a foe in reach (click it), close with a foe out of reach (click it), Move to a lit square, Cast, hand a Herb to a neighbour (out of battle the satchel lists the company with their hits and energy and offers each herb only where it would do some good), Hold, or the company may Run - stealth improves the chance. Let them fight it out resolves the battle automatically. Foe turns step with a button so you can watch them. A fallen companion recovers with rest; if all fall, carters carry the company to the nearest town, fifteen days and half the purse are gone.

Monster	Tier	Hits	Attack	Damage	Guard	Speed	Range	Gold
Brigand	1	12	4	2-6	1	3	1	8
Grey wolf	1	10	5	2-5	0	5	1	0
Goblin	1	8	4	1-5	1	4	1	4
Goblin archer	1	8	5	2-5	0	4	4	4
Marshling	2	16	6	3-8	2	3	1	5
Ogre	2	30	7	5-12	2	2	1	15
Barrow wight	2	22	7	4-9	3	3	1	12
Hedge hexer	2	12	7	3-7	1	3	4	18
Ash gaunt	3	34	9	6-13	4	4	1	20
Cinder drake	3	48	10	8-16	5	3	3	40
Iron warden	3	40	9	7-14	6	2	1	25
Candle shade	4	36	10	7-13	4	5	2	0
Demon thrall	4	50	10	9-15	5	3	1	30

The ruins and the rite

Ruins are square-tiled passages 26 by 18, entered by stepping onto them. Only what the company's light has reached - three squares - is shown; the rest stays dark until walked to, and what has been seen is remembered. Monsters within a few squares close in; chests hold gold; the prize lies in the farthest room. Click any floor square to walk there by the shortest way; the walk halts when a monster comes into the light, at a chest, or at the goal. Guardians must fall before it can be taken.

Ruin	Tier	Holds	Also	Note
the Sunken Chapel	2	verse_wick	-	Half under the marsh water; the verse is cut in the altar stone.
the Hive of Moths	2	verse_wax	-	A hollow hill where pale moths breed in the dark.
the Ashen Vault	3	verse_flame	ember	The First Ember is kept here, guarded.
the Barrow of Kings	3	verse_watch	silver_ore	The old kings were buried with silver.
Halvethar	4	-	-	The fortress of the candle. The demon Zaralkh is bound in the flame.

Verse	Kept in
Verse of the Wick	the Sunken Chapel
Verse of the Wax	the Hive of Moths
Verse of the Flame	the Ashen Vault
Verse of the Watch	the Barrow of Kings

Component	How it is got	Price
Moonwax	Pale wax, bought by the pound from a chandler who knows what it is for.	400
Silver wick	Drawn at the Dunmar forge from silver ore.	250
First Ember	A coal that has never gone out, kept in the Ashen Vault.	-

The quest sheet (under the rite tally) lists every verse, component and sage with its status, where it lies and the travel time from where you stand; Travel there sets off by the quickest road.

With all seven in hand, reach the Candle Hall at the far end of Halvethar, defeat the shades that hold it, and Speak the rite: choose the four verses in order. The true order renews the candle and wins. A wrong order burns the company but never ends the quest; there are twenty-four orders, each sage consulted fixes one position, and the rite sheet lists the orders that still fit, striking through any already spoken so none is tried twice.

The roster book

Companions left in towns appear in the roster book with their trade or lessons, the days still to run, the wages owed so far and the distance from where you stand. Rejoin takes back a companion in the town you are in and pays the wages; Travel there sets off for one further away. The wages shown are the wages paid.

The chronicle

The chronicle collects the turning points of the campaign - a companion joining, a sage answering, a verse or component taken, a ruin first entered, the company falling, the rite spoken - and a record of days and wax left, verses held, positions of the order known, ruins entered, battles, wages and hexes walked. It is reachable in town, on the road and underground, and from the end screen, which names the seed so the same land can be walked again.

Saving

The game saves itself after every action into browser local storage under `tronsoft_the_magic_candle_save`, and offers to continue from the title screen. Lighting a new candle replaces the saved campaign. The sound toggle is remembered in `tronsoft_the_magic_candle_prefs`. The game is fully playable with sound off.

Credits and source

An original game by Tronsoft Games in the shape of The Magic Candle (Ali N. Atabek, Mindcraft Software, 1989); not affiliated with or licensed by its publisher, and containing none of its world, text, art or data. See `docs/credits.txt` and `LICENSE.txt` in the package.