

Journey to the Center of the Earth

Player and Developer Manual · After the 1864 novel by Jules Verne

Descend the crater of Snæfells Jökull that the shadow of Scartaris caresses before the calends of July, bold traveller, and you will reach the centre of the earth. I have done it.

— the cryptogram of Arne Saknussemm, as your uncle finally reads it

Package	Journey to the Center of the Earth 1.0.0
Engine	Tronsoft Interactive Fiction Engine, Core 2.3.0 (unmodified)
Entry file	index.html
Players	One. Single-player only; no computer opponent.
Play length	About 60–90 minutes for a first complete run
World	20 rooms in 5 regions, 47 objects, 5 characters
Scoring	150 points — 9 quests (7 required, 2 optional) and 4 specimens
Shortest win	120 points in 61 moves
Full completion	150 points in 70 moves, 14/14 achievements
Save key	tronsoft_tife_journey_to_the_center_of_the_earth_save
Source	Public domain: Voyage au centre de la Terre, Jules Verne, 1864

The story

Hamburg, May 1863. Professor Otto Lidenbrock comes home with a twelfth-century Icelandic chronicle, and a square of runic parchment falls out of it, signed with the name of an alchemist whose books were burnt in 1573. You are Axel, his nephew and assistant. Between you, in an afternoon, you read what the parchment says — and by evening your uncle has decided that it is not a boast but an itinerary.

What follows is a route: Kiel, Copenhagen and Reykjavík; a silent eider-down hunter engaged at Stapi for three rixdales the week; a crater with three chimneys in the floor of it and a shadow that names one of them; four days east down the wrong tunnel on a pint of water; a well of black porphyry with three-hundred-year-old iron staples in the wall; and, thirty-five leagues down, a sea with a surf and a stone sky burning like a standing aurora. You will be separated from the expedition in the dark. You will get back to it by shouting at a wall.

Playing

The game is parser interactive fiction and is strictly turn-based; it waits indefinitely for you and nothing happens in real time. Type a command, or use the buttons: choose a verb from the ACTIONS band and the CONTEXT band fills with every valid target for it in the room. Every typed command has a button equivalent, and the whole story can be finished without typing a word.

Commands

Category	Commands
Movement	N S E W U D OUT · GO NORTH
Handling	LOOK EXAMINE x TAKE x DROP x USE x OPEN x CLOSE x SEARCH x READ x
People	TALK TO name
Story verbs	LIGHT DRINK SHOUT LISTEN CLIMB SWIM BLAST
Time	WAIT (several scenes resolve only when you let them)
Information	INVENTORY JOURNAL QUESTS ACHIEVEMENTS STATS SCORE
System	HINT SAVE name RESTORE name TRANSCRIPT RESTART HELP ABOUT
Short forms	X = EXAMINE L = LOOK I = INVENTORY Z = WAIT ? = HELP

What costs a move

Queries are free: LOOK, INVENTORY, JOURNAL, QUESTS, ACHIEVEMENTS, STATS, SCORE, HELP, SAVE, RESTORE, TRANSCRIPT and RESTART cost nothing. Everything else costs exactly one move, including EXAMINE, WAIT and HINT. Within a turn the reading order is fixed: the command is echoed, then the action's own text is printed, then any consequences the world draws from it.

Hints

There are 25 hint ladders, each of 3 levels, keyed to where you actually are and what you actually have. The first level nudges, the second narrows it down, the third gives the command outright. Asking again advances a level; the ladder never runs past its last rung.

The world

20 rooms in 5 regions, joined by 35 exits, 9 of which the story opens as you go. The WORLD MAP panel charts the region you are standing in, bracketing your own room and showing rooms you have not yet entered as dots.

Hamburg, 1863 — 3 rooms

Room	Exits
Königstrasse Study	WEST → parlour, SOUTH → courtyard
The Parlour	EAST → study
The Königstrasse Courtyard	NORTH → study, OUT → reykjavik (gated)

Iceland — 4 rooms

Room	Exits
The Quay at Reykjavík	EAST → library, NORTH → stapi (gated)
The Reykjavík Library	WEST → reykjavik
Stapi and the Basalt Coast	SOUTH → reykjavik, UP → crater (gated)
The Crater of Snæfell	OUT → stapi, DOWN → chimney

The Descent — 6 rooms

Room	Exits
The Central Chimney	UP → crater, DOWN → gallery (gated)
The Lava Gallery	UP → chimney, DOWN → fork
The Forked Gallery	UP → gallery, EAST → dryway, WEST → hansbach (gated)
The Dry Eastern Gallery	WEST → fork
The Granite Descent	UP → fork, DOWN → well
The Great Well	UP → hansbach, DOWN → shore

The Lidenbrock Sea — 5 rooms

Room	Exits
The Shore of the Lidenbrock Sea	UP → well, EAST → forest, OUT → raft (gated)
The Forest of Mushrooms	WEST → shore
Aboard the Raft	WEST → shore, EAST → island (gated)
Axel Island	WEST → raft, EAST → cape
Cape Saknussem	WEST → island, EAST → shaft (gated)

The Ascent — 2 rooms

Room	Exits
The Central Shaft	UP → stromboli (gated)
The Slopes of Stromboli	—

Characters

Character	First met	Travels with you	Lines
Professor Lidenbrock	Königstrasse Study	yes	3
Gräuben	The Parlour	no	3
Martha	The Parlour	no	2
Professor Fridriksson	The Quay at Reykjavík	no	3
Hans Bjelke	Stapi and the Basalt Coast	no	3

Professor Lidenbrock travels with you from the first room. Hans Bjelke joins at Stapi once he has been engaged, and both of them are gone — really gone, not merely quiet — for the stretch of the story in which you are separated from the expedition.

Scoring

150 points. The 7 required quests are worth 120 together, so a player who ignores every optional discovery still finishes the story; the remaining 30 are optional.

Award	Kind	Points
Read the Cryptogram	required	15
Engage a Guide	required	15
The Shadow of Scartaris	required	20
Find Water	required	15
Rejoin the Expedition	required	15
Cross the Central Sea	required	20
Return to the Surface	required	20
The Field of Bones	optional	5
Saknussemm's Mark	optional	5
Piece of iceland spar (specimen)	optional	5
Human skull (specimen)	optional	5
Broken tooth (specimen)	optional	5
Corroded dagger (specimen)	optional	5
Total		150

Achievements

Achievement	Achievement
The Runic Cipher	The Hansbach
Northward	Lost in the Dark
The Burnt Heretic	A Voice in the Rock
Three Rixdales the Week	The Field of Bones
The Shadow of Scartaris	Mariner of the Central Sea
Beneath the Crust	Saknussemm's Mark
The Eastern Error	Sons of Stromboli

Winning and losing

You win by climbing out onto the slopes of Stromboli. Each region gates the next, so any completed run scores at least 120; the measured shortest winning route is 61 moves for 120 points, and full completion is 150 points in 70 moves with all 14 achievements.

Three decisions are fatal. Each is described in the room you are standing in, warned about by your companions, and covered by that room's hint ladder before you can reach it.

Where	Command	Fatal until
The Crater of Snæfell	DOWN	before the shadow of Scartaris has been seen

Where	Command	Fatal until
The Great Well	DOWN	before the cords have been made fast
Aboard the Raft	SWIM	while the reptiles are fighting

There is no other way to lose and there are no unwinnable states. Nothing can be dropped, used up or left behind that makes the story impossible to finish; every region can be walked back through until the charge is fired at Cape Saknussem, after which the route is one-way and everything still needed is already in hand.

Saving

SAVE and RESTORE take an optional slot name and default to *quick*; the SAVE MANAGER in the footer lists every slot with its room, score and move count. Saves live in browser local storage under the single key below, on this device only, and the game reads and writes no other storage. RESTART begins again at move zero and does not itself consume a move.

tronsoft_tife_journey_to_the_center_of_the_earth_save

Developer notes

This is a TIFE Core 2.3.0 native story package. The engine ships inside it and ships unmodified: `js/core/*.js`, `js/game.js` and `css/game.css` are byte-identical to the Core 2.3.0 distribution, their SHA-256 digests are recorded in `docs/engine-purity.json`, and `validate.js` recomputes every one of them on each run and fails the package if any differs. All story behaviour is applied as game-side prototype patches loaded before the shell constructs the engine.

Package layout

Path	Role
<code>games/journey-to-the-center-of-the-earth/game.js</code>	Story data: rooms, objects, characters, quests, achievements, hints, rules.
<code>js/core/*.js</code> , <code>js/game.js</code> , <code>css/game.css</code>	TIFE Core 2.3.0, unmodified. Never edited by this package.
<code>js/interface.js</code>	Rule conditions and actions, turn ordering, story verbs, companions, save key.
<code>js/map.js</code>	Region-aware world chart, applied over the shell's fixed grid renderer.
<code>js/sound.js</code>	Five procedural Web Audio region beds. No audio files are distributed.
<code>css/theme.css</code>	Story skin: override only, over the pristine core stylesheet.
<code>validate.js</code>	In-package tests: specification conformance, engine purity, world integrity, playthroughs.
<code>docs/engine-purity.json</code>	Recorded digests of every engine file.

What the interface layer adds

Fourteen rule conditions and fourteen rule actions beyond the Core set; a `move.attempt` trigger that resolves before movement, so a warned-about step can be blocked or can end the story; deferred rule narration, so output order is always command, then room or action text, then consequences; the once-guard written before a rule's do-list rather than after, so a re-entrant rule cannot fire twice; presence checks on `USE`, `SEARCH` and `READ`; companions who travel with the party and arrive before the destination's rules are evaluated; the Section 23 save key; and a fix for the Core RESTART crash, in which `reset()` clears `lastAction` and `dispatch` then dereferenced it — RESTART also no longer consumes a move.

Rules by trigger

Trigger	Trigger	Trigger
<code>room.enter</code> (9)	<code>item.searched</code> (8)	<code>action.after</code> (7)
<code>item.used</code> (7)	<code>verb.wait</code> (5)	<code>inventory.changed</code> (2)
<code>move.attempt</code> (2)	<code>npc.talked</code> (2)	<code>verb.listen</code> (2)
<code>verb.swim</code> (2)	<code>game.start</code> (1)	<code>item.opened</code> (1)
<code>verb.blast</code> (1)	<code>verb.drink</code> (1)	<code>verb.light</code> (1)
<code>verb.shout</code> (1)		

52 rules across 16 triggers. Every rule id, room id, item id, character id, quest id, achievement id and journal id referenced anywhere in the data is checked for existence by `validate.js`, and the total of every score award in the rules (130) plus every scored object (20) is asserted equal to the declared maximum of 150.

Accessibility and audio

Six accessibility profiles, text-to-speech narration with a diagnostic test button, captions, visual sound indicators, high contrast, adjustable text size, larger controls, reduced typing, simplified layout, reduced motion and screen-reader optimisation, all persisted on the device. Audio is synthesised at runtime and begins only after the player presses DESCEND; the package distributes no audio files, and no content, point, puzzle or ending depends on hearing anything. The package makes no network request of any kind.

Colophon

Adapted from Voyage au centre de la Terre by Jules Verne, first published 1864 and in the public domain worldwide. The original title is retained because the source is public domain; all room text, object text, dialogue and puzzle design in this package is newly written for it. Package, code, prose and artwork copyright © 2026 Tronsoft Games. See docs/credits.txt for the full statement, including the AI-assisted-development disclosure.

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