

Ultima IV

Quest of the Avatar

A browser recreation — player's manual — version 1.0.3

This is not a game about killing a dark lord. There is no dark lord. Britannia is at peace, and what it lacks is an example: someone who lives the eight virtues well enough that the rest of the land can measure itself against them. Lord British calls you through a moongate and asks you to become that person, and then the game spends its whole length watching how you behave.

Nothing in this manual is invented for the manual. Every table below is generated from the same data tables the engine loads, so if the game changes and the manual is rebuilt, they change together.

The quest, in order

Eight virtues, each with a town that keeps its rune, a teacher who knows its mantra, a shrine where it is tested, and a companion who asks you a question about it before travelling with you. To be elevated in a virtue you need three things at once: its rune in hand, its mantra on your tongue, and the virtue itself standing at 99. Then you meditate three cycles at its shrine.

With all eight elevations you still cannot enter the Great Stygian Abyss. You need the Bell of Courage from a wreck at sea, the Book of Truth from the Lycaenum, and the Candle of Love from Cove, used at the black door; and you need the Word of Passage, which is spelled out one syllable at a time by placing three coloured stones on three altars deep in three dungeons. At the bottom of the Abyss the Codex asks eleven questions. Answer them and the quest is done.

The eight virtues

Virtue	Springs from	Mantra	Town	Shrine
Honesty	truth	AHM	Moonglow	Honesty
Compassion	love	MU	Britain	Compassion
Valor	courage	RA	Jhelom	Valor
Justice	truth+love	BEH	Yew	Justice
Sacrifice	love+courage	CAH	Minoc	Sacrifice
Honor	truth+courage	SUMM	Trinsic	Honor
Spirituality	truth+love+courage	OM	Skara Brae	Spirituality
Humility	none	LUM	Magincia	Humility

The three principles

Principle	Virtues drawn from it
Truth	honesty, justice, honor, spirituality
Love	compassion, justice, sacrifice, spirituality
Courage	valor, sacrifice, honor, spirituality

Humility appears in none of those lists, and that is the point of it: it is the virtue that consists of not claiming the other seven.

Companions

Eight may travel together and one of those eight is you, so seven companions is the most you will ever have at once, and there are eight to choose from. Each will only join once the virtue they care about stands at 60 or better, and each asks a question first.

Companion	Class	Virtue	Found at	Health	Weapon	Armour
Mariah	Mage	Honesty	Moonglow	100	Staff	Cloth
Iolo	Bard	Compassion	Britain	120	Bow	Leather
Geoffrey	Fighter	Valor	Jhelom	160	Axe	Chain Mail

Companion	Class	Virtue	Found at	Health	Weapon	Armour
Jaana	Druid	Justice	Yew	110	Staff	Cloth
Julia	Tinker	Sacrifice	Minoc	125	Mace	Leather
Dupre	Paladin	Honor	Trinsic	150	Long Sword	Plate Mail
Shamino	Ranger	Spirituality	Skara Brae	135	Sling	Leather
Katrina	Shepherd	Humility	Magincia	105	Sling	Cloth

How conduct is scored

Each virtue is a number from 0 to 99. You are never given that number in play: Hawkwind, the seer in the castle, reports it in words, and the panel beside the map draws it as a bar. The table below is the whole scoring system. Positive acts are small and repeatable; offences bite harder than any one good deed repairs, which is deliberate.

Act	Virtue	Change
Gave gold to a beggar	Compassion	+3
Turned away a beggar	Compassion	-2
Let a fleeing creature go	Compassion	+2
Struck down a fleeing creature	Compassion	-5
Slew a creature that was not evil	Compassion	-10
Raised arms against the innocent	Justice	-10
Raised arms against the innocent	Honor	-10
Held the field	Valor	+3
Won without striking the innocent or the fleeing	Honor	+3
Fled the field	Valor	-5
Took what was not given	Honesty	-10
Took what was not given	Justice	-5
Paid the price asked	Honesty	+1
Named a thief to the magistrate	Justice	+3
Shielded a thief	Justice	-3
Gave blood to the healers	Sacrifice	+5
Refused the healers	Sacrifice	-2
Took a blow meant for a companion	Sacrifice	+4
Kept thy word	Honor	+8
Broke thy word	Honor	-8
Meditated at a shrine	Spirituality	+3
Spoke a false mantra	Spirituality	-3
Answered humbly	Humility	+5
Boasted of thy deeds	Humility	-10
Spoke truly	Honesty	+5

Act	Virtue	Change
Paid above the asking price	Honesty	+2
Spoke falsely	Honesty	-5

An elevation is not permanent. If the virtue behind it falls below full, the partial Avatarhood goes with it, and you must earn both again. Nothing is unrecoverable: there is no state of this game from which the quest cannot be finished.

Hawkwind's readings

When the virtue stands at	He says
0 or better	Thou art doing nothing at all for thy that virtue. Thou must repent!
20 or better	Thou art nearly lost to that virtue, seeker. Take heed.
40 or better	Thou hast much yet to do for thy that virtue.
60 or better	Thou art progressing in thy that virtue, but there is work still.
80 or better	Thou art well advanced in thy that virtue. Persevere!
95 or better	Thou art nearly ready to be elevated in that virtue. Seek the shrine!
99 or better	Thou art ready to be elevated in that virtue. Go to the shrine and meditate!

Playing

Movement

Britannia is drawn on a hex grid, so there are six ways to go, not four: Q or W for north-west, E for north-east, A for west, D for east, Z for south-west, X for south-east. Clicking a hex walks there one step at a time and stops if anything interrupts. Every step costs one unit of food and may bring an ambush.

Turn order

Out in the land, one command is one turn. In battle the field is an 11 by 9 grid: each of your party acts once, in order, and then every enemy acts. A character may move one hex, attack something within the reach of the weapon they carry, cast, shield a companion, or hold station.

Winning

You win by answering all eleven Codex questions at the bottom of the Abyss, which you can only reach with eight elevations, the three relics and the Word of Passage.

Losing, and what it costs

If the whole party falls you wake in Castle Britannia with half your gold and half your health, and your ship back at its berth. That is the entire penalty. A wrong answer to the Codex sets you down at the mouth of the Abyss and lets you try again.

Starting over

New quest begins a fresh game with a freshly generated Britannia; the sites always stand in the same relation to one another, but the coastlines, forests and mountains are new. Save journal and Load journal keep one saved game in your browser's local storage.

The commands

Command	What it does
MOVE <dir>	Go one hex: nw, ne, w, e, sw, se.
ENTER / LEAVE	Go into the site you stand on, or come out of it.
TALK <name>	Speak to someone in a town.
ASK <word>	Ask about a keyword: name, job, health, mantra, rune, quest.
QUESTION / ANSWER <word>	Invite a companion's virtue question, and answer it.
JOIN	Ask the person you are speaking to to travel with you.
DONATE <gold> / REFUSE	Give to a beggar, or turn away.
GIVE BLOOD	Give blood to a healer. Costs health, raises Sacrifice.
BUY <thing> / OVERPAY / STEAL <thing>	Trade honestly, generously, or not at all.
REPORT THIEF	Name a thief to the magistrate at Yew. Raises Justice.
SHIELD THIEF	Say nothing to the magistrate, and let the thief go.

Command	What it does
SWEAR / RETURN RING	Take on the widow's charge at Trinsic, and discharge it.
SEARCH	Look for the rune here, a relic, a stone, or reagents in the wild.
MEDITATE <mantra> <cycles>	At a shrine. Three cycles at a full virtue elevate you.
CAMP	Rest. Costs food, restores health, and may be interrupted.
BOARD / LAND <dir>	Take ship at the harbour; go ashore on the side you choose.
DIVE	Dive on the wreck, from aboard ship.
DESCEND / ASCEND	Go down or up a dungeon level. Needs a torch.
USE <stone>	Place a stone on an altar in the deepest chamber.
USE BELL / BOOK / CANDLE	At the black door of the Abyss.
SAY <word>	Speak the Word of Passage.
ATTACK <n> / CAST <spell> <n>	In battle, against the numbered foe.
SHIELD <name>	Take a blow meant for a companion. Raises Sacrifice.
PASS / FLEE	Hold station, or quit the field and lose Valor.
CODEX <word>	Answer the Codex.
STATUS	Turn, food, gold, party and elevations.

Reference tables

Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Reach	Cost
Hands	4	1	—
Dagger	6	1	20
Staff	8	1	30
Sling	8	4	40
Mace	12	1	65
Axe	14	1	90
Bow	12	5	100
Long Sword	18	1	175
Halberd	20	2	220
Magic Axe	24	3	450

Armour

Armour	Protection	Cost
No Armour	0	—
Cloth	2	20
Leather	5	60
Chain Mail	9	180
Plate Mail	14	400
Magic Mail	18	800

Creatures

Only creatures marked evil may be fought without cost. Striking anything else, or striking a creature that has turned to flee, is scored against you on the spot.

Creature	Health	Damage	Reach	Evil	Depth
Giant Rat	14	4	1	yes	1
Bat	12	3	1	yes	1
Orc	28	8	1	yes	1
Troll	46	12	1	yes	2
Brigand	40	11	1	yes	2
Gremlin	20	5	1	yes	1
Headless	34	9	1	yes	2
Ettin	70	18	1	yes	3
Reaper	84	16	3	yes	3
Wisp	40	14	3	yes	2

Creature	Health	Damage	Reach	Evil	Depth
Dragon	120	26	3	yes	4
Daemon	110	24	2	yes	4
Balron	160	32	2	yes	5
Town Guard	90	20	1	no	3
Townsperson	24	3	1	no	1

Spells and reagents

Spell	Magic	Where	Mixture
Awaken	5	any	Ginseng, Garlic
Blink	15	world	Sulphurous Ash, Blood Moss
Cure	5	any	Garlic, Ginseng
Dispel	20	any	Sulphurous Ash, Garlic, Black Pearl
Gate Travel	40	world	Sulphurous Ash, Black Pearl, Mandrake Root
Heal	10	any	Ginseng, Spider Silk
Iceball	15	combat	Black Pearl, Blood Moss, Mandrake Root
Light	5	any	Sulphurous Ash
Magic Missile	5	combat	Sulphurous Ash, Black Pearl
Resurrect	45	any	Sulphurous Ash, Ginseng, Garlic, Spider Silk, Blood Moss, Mandrake Root
Tremor	30	combat	Sulphurous Ash, Blood Moss, Mandrake Root
View	15	world	Ginseng, Blood Moss

Nightshade and mandrake root are not sold anywhere. Search a swamp for the first, and hills or forest for the second.

The three altars

Altar room	Stone	Dungeon	Syllable
Altar Room of Truth	Blue Stone	Deceit	VERA
Altar Room of Love	Yellow Stone	Despise	MO
Altar Room of Courage	Red Stone	Destard	COR

The three syllables together make the Word of Passage: **VERAMOCOR**.

What the Codex asks

The eleven questions are always the same, and they are all answerable from the virtue tables at the front of this manual. That is the exam: not whether you can fight, but whether you were paying attention.

#	Question
1	Which virtue springs from Truth alone?
2	Which virtue springs from Love alone?
3	Which virtue springs from Courage alone?
4	Which virtue springs from Truth and Love together?
5	Which virtue springs from Love and Courage together?
6	Which virtue springs from Truth and Courage together?
7	Which virtue springs from all three principles?
8	Which virtue springs from none of the three?
9	Name the principle from which Honesty, Justice, Honor and Spirituality are drawn.

#	Question
10	Name the principle from which Compassion, Justice, Sacrifice and Spirituality are drawn.
11	Name the principle from which Valor, Sacrifice, Honor and Spirituality are drawn.

Measured play

The package ships with a reference walkthrough that plays the whole quest by issuing the same typed commands a player uses. These are the figures it produced on three different generated worlds, and they are what the validator checks on every build.

World seed	Turns	Battles	Party wipes	Commands	Final party
20260724	1094	105	10	6281	8
42	956	126	2	7234	8
7777	1348	147	1	9876	8

A first, unhurried playing will take longer than the walkthrough: it knows where every rune is. Expect three to five hours to become the Avatar.