

ZORK I

THE GREAT UNDERGROUND EMPIRE

Player Manual · Version 1.1.0
Tronsoft Games · Tronsoft Interactive Fiction Engine 1.3.2

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1. The Story

West of a white clapboard house, its front door boarded over, an ordinary field hides an extraordinary secret. Beneath the house lies the Great Underground Empire — a buried kingdom of troll-haunted passages, a derelict flood-control dam, a silent temple, the gates of the land of the dead, and a rainbow arched above a thundering chasm.

Fifteen great treasures remain down there. Your task is to find every one and carry it home to the trophy case in the living room. You are not the only one looking: a gentleman thief works the tunnels ahead of you, and he is very good at his trade.

2. Starting Play

Launch the game from the Tronsoft Games library. It runs in your browser with no installation, plug-ins or network access. Type a command at the > prompt and press Enter. If you would rather not type, every common action is available as a button.

A reasonable opening sequence:

```
> OPEN MAILBOX
> READ LEAFLET
> NORTH
> EAST
> OPEN WINDOW
> ENTER
```

3. The Screen

The display reads top to bottom, and the story always comes first.

Area	What it holds
Status bar	Game title, current location, turn count and clock
LOCATION pane	Room name, a short summary, and a button for every exit
STORY pane	The narrative and your command prompt
PLAYER pane	Your meters and your inventory
Context actions	Bands of ready-made commands, directly beneath the story
Quick row	Map, Journal, Inventory, Save and Settings

The PLAYER pane shows four meters: your score out of 237, how many of the fifteen treasures are banked, your current light source, and how much you are carrying.

4. Context Actions

You may play entirely by typing, entirely by clicking, or by mixing the two. The bands beneath the story hold complete composed commands, not verb prefixes: a button reads “Go North” or “Attack Troll with Sword” and sends exactly that. Every button has a typed equivalent, shown as a tooltip.

Band	Contents
Movement	Every exit from the room you are standing in
Objects	What you can see here: examine, take, open, use
Characters	Talk to anyone present, and ask them about topics
Inventory	Contextual actions for what you carry, such as Turn On Lamp

The bands are rebuilt from the state of the world after every turn, and a band with nothing useful in it is hidden. In the dark, the Objects and Characters bands vanish entirely: you cannot act on what you cannot see.

The quick row along the bottom opens the Map, the Journal (with tabs for Journal, Quests, Achievements, Stats, Talk Log and Transcript), your Inventory, the Save manager, and Settings. Settings offers a green or amber phosphor theme, four text sizes, and Help, About, Hint and Restart. Your theme and text size are remembered between sessions.

5. Commands

Movement

Command	Effect
NORTH SOUTH EAST WEST	Travel; abbreviated N S E W
UP DOWN	Travel vertically; U D
NE NW SE SW	Diagonal travel
IN OUT	Enter or leave an enclosure
ENTER <thing>	Go into something (a window, a barrow)
CLIMB <thing>	Climb a tree, a chimney, a rope

Observation and objects

Command	Effect
LOOK	Describe the room again (L)
EXAMINE <thing>	Inspect closely (X, INSPECT, SEARCH)
READ <thing>	Read writing on an object
TAKE <thing>	Pick it up (GET, GRAB); TAKE ALL works

DROP <thing>	Put it down
INVENTORY	List what you carry (I, INV)
OPEN / CLOSE <thing>	Operate a container, door or window
MOVE <thing>	Push or shift it (PUSH, PULL, SLIDE)

Light, action and puzzles

Command	Effect
TURN ON LAMP	Light the brass lamp (TURN OFF to save it)
LIGHT CANDLES	Light something with a match or torch
ATTACK <foe> WITH <weapon>	Fight (KILL, HIT, STRIKE)
SAY <word>	Speak a word aloud
TALK TO <character>	Start a conversation
ASK <character> ABOUT <topic>	Ask about something specific
GIVE <thing> TO <someone>	Offer an object
PUT <thing> IN <container>	Place an object; PUT x IN CASE banks a treasure
TIE <thing> TO <thing>	Fasten a rope
DIG <thing>	Dig, with a suitable tool
WAVE / RING / WIND <thing>	Use an object in its own way
PRESS <colour> BUTTON	Operate the dam controls
TURN BOLT WITH WRENCH	Operate the sluice gates
PRAY	Seek help in a holy place

Game management

Command	Effect
SCORE	Report your score and moves
SAVE / SAVE <name>	Save to a slot
RESTORE / RESTORE <name>	Reload a save (LOAD)
SAVES	Open the save manager
RESTART	Begin again
JOURNAL / QUESTS	Review discoveries and objectives
ACHIEVEMENTS / STATS	Review milestones and statistics
TRANSCRIPT	View or download the session log
HINT	A graded hint for your situation
HELP	The command list

6. The Parser

The parser accepts plain English of the form VERB, VERB NOUN, or VERB NOUN PREPOSITION NOUN. Articles are optional and most verbs have synonyms. It is deliberately forgiving:

- A mistyped object is recognised — TAKE SWROD replies “Did you mean the sword?”
- A mistyped verb is recognised — OPNE MAILBOX replies “Did you mean OPEN mailbox?”
- A bare object name is examined — typing MAILBOX describes it.
- An unsupported verb on a real object suggests what does work.
- Otherwise the reply points at what is visible, the exits, or the dark.

7. Light and the Grue

Most of the Empire is unlit. Entering a dark room without a light source warns you; moving again in the dark ends the game — something lurking there will eat you. The brass lamp in the living room is your first light; the ivory torch found below is both a light and a treasure. Take a light with you every time you go down.

8. Scoring

The maximum is 237 points: points for first taking each of the fifteen treasures, further points for placing each one in the trophy case, and a final bonus of 25 for entering the stone barrow. The quest panel shows how many treasures are banked.

9. Winning and Losing

To win: bank all fifteen treasures in the trophy case, then follow the revealed map to the stone barrow southwest of the white house and enter it. To lose: walk in the dark, or flood the maintenance room by pressing the blue button. After death, RESTART or RESTORE.

10. Saving

Saves are written to your browser's local storage under the key `tronsoft_zork_i_saves`, with theme and text size under `tronsoft_zork_i_theme` and `tronsoft_zork_i_textsize`. They stay on your machine, are never transmitted, and persist between sessions. Use named slots to keep several positions.

11. Support and Licence

Support: <https://tronsoft.net> — Licence: see LICENSE.txt. Credits and attribution: docs/credits.txt. A full walkthrough is provided in docs/strategy.pdf; it contains complete spoilers.