

DESCENDING DUNGEONS (c) 2016, James Broad
ZXDev2015 entry
Beta version

STORY

Tales of treasure have enticed many an adventurer.

Across sea and land they come, to the chasm under the mountain.

Following the path ever downwards, leaving behind them sunlight, they reach the Thousand Steps and now their journey has truly begun.

Bronzed Barbarian, Warrior Princess, Wise Mage and Mystical Sorceress. Descending all into dungeons to meet their fate..

For these caverns are home to creatures dark and vile, and hungry for flesh. And in the deepest depths, among his glittering hoard - lurks their Dragon lord.

So come, brave adventurers. Will you find fortune beyond your dreams, or meet a fate worse than death?

INSTRUCTIONS

Descending Dungeons is a "Strategy Game". You control four characters, and guide them on their adventures through the dungeons. The goal of the game is to descend to the bottom dungeon, and defeat the dragon in his lair.

The game plays in turns - first you will move your adventurers, and then the computer will move your adversaries. The game features a state of the art "Artificial Intelligence" which will test your wits to the limits.

Each turn, your adventurers have a number of "Action Points" (AP) which they use to perform actions in the world. Every action they can take expends points - so choose carefully.

You can move your cursor freely around the map using the "W,S,A,D" keys, but at only rooms which have been visited will be shown. Press the "SPACE" button when your cursor is over an adventurer to select them.

You can also quickly switch between your adventurers by pressing the number keys "1", "2", "3", "4" - or press key "N" to select the next.

YOUR ADVENTURERS

Fighters are physically strong, able to wield any weapon and deal great melee damage. They are unable to cast spells, read scrolls, or to wear magical cloaks.

BARBARIAN - A mighty and strong fighter from the Frozen North.

VALKYRIE - A proud swordswoman from the Southern Realms.

Spellcasters are stronger of mind than of physique. They can cast spells, use scrolls and wear magical cloaks – but they are unable to wear armour, or to use most ranged/bladed weapons.

MAGE - A wise old magician from the Western Mountains.

SORCERESS - A mysterious enchanter from the Eastern Lands.

MOVING & INTERACTING

With an adventurer selected, you use the movement keys to move them around. Each square you move will reduce your available movement points.

A list of "context sensitive" actions will be shown, along with the appropriate key-press to perform, and number of "action points" (AP).

Examples:

Next to a door : Open

Next to friend : Swap

Next to a chest : Search

Next to an enemy : Melee

INVENTORY - SWAPPING, USING & SEARCHING

Inventory

Your adventurers are all able to carry 3 items:

Melee Weapon : a weapon used in hand-to-hand combat

Ranged Weapon : a weapon used to attack from a distance

Item : an item which may have various uses

These can be seen in the sidebar underneath your character's stats. Not every adventures is able to use every item; if the character is unable to use an item, the option to take/swap it will not be available.

Swapping

Sometimes it may be necessary to swap items. For example the Barbarian might find a healing potion, and bring it to the Mage. To swap items - stand next to the character you wish to exchange with, and follow the context-sensitive menu in the sidebar.

In the swap mode, you choose options "1", "2" or "3" to exchange your Melee, Ranged or Item.

Searching

On your quest, you will find chests containing useful weapons or items. To search the chest for valuables, stand next to the chest - and follow the context-sensitive menu in the sidebar.

In the search mode, you interact in the same way via the "1", "2" or "3" option keys.

COMBAT

Melee

Your adventurers can engage in close-quarters combat with enemies, by approaching them and pressing the movement key labelled "Melee". In this mode your adventurer's attack strength is weighed up against the opponent's defense points, and a "to hit" value is calculated. You have the option of a light or heavy hit, the latter which will cost more AP but will have a greater chance of overpowering your enemy. If you wield a magical weapon, you also have the chance of expending a magical charge with the attack if it should hit.

Ranged

Ranged combat is entered by pressing "F" for Fire. In this mode, the cursor changes to select a target. Based upon your attack strength, the weapon you are using, the range, and the opponent's defense - a "to hit" percentage is calculated. As with melee combat, you have the choice of light or heavy attacks - and the option to use your weapon's magic enchantment if applicable.

Spells

Spellcasters can select "M" to cast spells. A list of available spells will appear in the sidebar, along with their AP casting cost. Most spells will then require you to select a target. Note that spells have different ranges, some can be cast at longer distances than others.

Not all spells will be available to start with. To learn more spells, your spellcasters must search chests for scrolls. When you use a scroll, the spell will be permanently added to your spell list.

Firebolt - a blast of fire damage.

Iceblast - a blast of icy wind.

Lightning - a bolt of lightning.

Stasis - the enemy is paralysed for a number of turns.

Feral - bloodlust consumes the enemy, who will attack anyone near.

Speed - the target receives an AP boost for a number of turns.

Healing - the target's health gets replenished.

Vanish - the caster becomes invisible for a number of turns.

Teleport - the caster teleports randomly to a pentagram square.

Monsters

A variety of monsters lurk in the depths of the dungeons. As you descend, you will meet greater numbers and more difficult foes. In the final level, the dragon and his guardians will be your most challenging opponents. Be sure to be well equipped for the encounter!

Some monsters are more susceptible to some forms of damage than others. Take note of which ones take more damage from cold, fire or shock - it might mean the difference between success and failure!