

GENEFORGE

Welcome to the exotic and exciting world of Geneforge!

Geneforge is a fantasy role-playing game with a science fiction twist. It is similar to other games of the genre and, at the same time, utterly different.

You will explore the ruins of Sucia Island, making allies, uncovering secrets, gaining power, and creating an army of powerful, loyal, and expendable creatures. You will uncover a sinister conspiracy and then decide whether to defeat it or join it.

Geneforge's plot is completely open-ended. You can be a good or bad guy. You can make the big choices and change the world, or run in fear. You can help the little people, or you can crush them ruthlessly. The choices are all yours.

This guide will help you create your Shaper, develop your first skills, and go out into the world. Before you start, it's a good idea to check the Helpful Hints section. The advice there is very useful for playing the game.

Also, bear in mind that Geneforge is shareware. The demo contains the first 17 out of 77 sections. To play the rest, you need to get a password from Spiderweb Software. To learn more, read the section titled [How To Order](#).

Finally, have fun, and keep an open mind. Nobody in Geneforge is as evil as they seem. Or as good. Explore. Adventure. And do what you want. Good luck!

If you would like information, to order, or to download one of Spiderweb Software's big, free demos, you can contact us at



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Chapter 1 : How to Order

The full version of Geneforge is \$25 US. Geneforge with the hint book is \$32. The hint book by itself is \$10. Be SURE to include the registration code when you order. It's on the lower right hand corner of the title screen.

A complete [order form](#) is available in the file "Geneforge Order Form."

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Special Avernum Promotional:

When you order an Avernum game or Geneforge, you can get the Nethergate or Blades of Exile CDs (fully registered) for \$15 each. You can only get this at the same time as you register an Avernum game or Geneforge.

Chapter 2: The World of the Shapers

The Shapers are the oldest, most respected, most secretive, and most powerful of the magical sects. The Shapers have the power to magically create life. They have held this secret for many centuries and, thanks to many periods of war and chaos, the origins of their powers have been forgotten.



The Shapers can make new life forms from nothing but raw materials and pure magic. They can mold this life to serve their purpose, be it light housework or major warfare. The Shapers are a research-minded people. Many of them spend the bulk of their lives in musty laboratories, trying to unravel the secrets of living things. What makes something alive? What defines how a creature grows? How can they make an animal stronger? Or smarter? Or more obedient?

The Shapers guard the secrets of their powers very closely. To learn their techniques without permission is to court a speedy death, at the hands of a Guardian in the day or an Agent in the night. The Shapers are feared by normal humans. And, quietly, sometimes resented.

After years of work, study, and testing, you have finally been accepted into the Shapers. You will spend your life advancing their will and delving into their secrets and powers. However, none of those secrets have been shared with you yet.

First, you must complete your apprenticeship. You must spend five years out in a Shaper colony on a remote island, watching their work and aiding their research. The Shapers test their potential members very heavily. The power over life is not something to be given away freely.

After a brief welcoming ceremony and a last night's celebration, you don your traditional garments and board your craft to the remote islands. The journey is two weeks long. You travel on a living craft, a specially modified drayk that will carry you through rough seas to your destination.

After a week's journey, you pass close to a small chain of islands. You consult your chart and find that one of them is named Sucia Island. It is marked on your chart as Barred.

Shapers declare places Barred for a variety of reasons. Experiments gone wrong. Dangerous accidents. Valuable secrets. Whatever the reason, any outsider in a Barred place is punished with instant death. The fate of a Shaper who intrudes is less severe, but still unpleasant.

You stand at the edge of your craft, carefully watching Sucia Island, wondering what secrets lie there. Though you are terribly curious about the secrets the thick woods of the island contain, you do not for a moment consider intruding. As you watch, you fail to notice the sailing ship dead ahead of you, off the southeast coast of the island.

Your craft cries out an alarm, alerting you to the danger. It is a strange ship, of a style you have never seen before. It is in poor condition and the sails are torn and wind-battered. It looks like it has just completed a long and difficult journey. Its shape is strange, and you are unfamiliar with the design. That is why you don't recognize the weapon on its prow.

It fires a long spear at your craft. The razor-sharp bolt strikes your drayk in the neck. It roars in anger and breathes a bolt of fire at your attacker. It strikes the sails, which sets them alight.

The battle takes only seconds. Your living craft founders, mortally wounded, dropping you into the water. Your goods and tools sink into the depths. You attempt to swim to surface.

You barely notice that the ship which attacked you is aflame and having extreme difficulty. Your whole being is consumed with the struggle to reach the shore.

Your strength is not enough. You start to sink. But, with one last effort, your living craft assists you. Bleeding from its neck, rapidly dying, it manages to lift you with its head and carrying you to a crumbling dock.

Then it dies. It sinks away. You are left alone, abandoned, on this forbidden shore. You are alone on Sucia Island.

Who would do this? Who would dare court the certain doom of attacking a Shaper? Who were the strangers who attacked you? Why are they here? And, most importantly, how can you get off of this island.

There are many reasons why an island can be Barred. And not one of them makes you want to linger a moment longer than is necessary.

Chapter 3: Getting Started

When you run Geneforge, you will be looking at the title screen. Wait a moment and baby creations will emerge and roam across the screen. While they explore, you can decide what to do...

Start New Game - Create a new character and begin a new journey on Sucia Island.

Load Game - Pick up one of your old stories where you left off.

How To Order - Find out how to get the full version of Geneforge. The demo only contains the first fifth of the full game.

Register Copy - Put in the key you get from Spiderweb Software when you register the game. This will unlock the whole story.

Instructions - You can access the full instructions to Geneforge inside the game.

Credits - See all of the hard-working people who brought this fine electronic entertainment to you.

Quit - Leave Geneforge and rejoin the real world.

If you are just starting out, select Start New Game. If you already have a game in progress, select Load Saved Game.

If you have not yet registered, at the lower right corner of the screen, you will see a registration code (a 4 or 5 digit number). Be sure to have that number handy when you register.

Chapter 4: Creating Your Character

When you are ready to begin your journey, select Start New Game on the title screen. You will bring up the character creation screen.

Here, you can build your character. Geneforge has a very open skill-based system, which provides a wide variety of choices for the sort of adventurer you want to play. You have several options:

Character Type - There are three sorts of basic characters in Geneforge: Shapers, Agents, and Guardians. Though these are three different sects, each with its own powers and responsibilities, the outside world refers to them all by one name: Shaper. Anyone with the power to magically make and mold life (as all three classes do) is called a Shaper.

Click on one of the three portraits at the top of the window to pick a character type.

Shaper – Though outsiders call all members of your sect "Shapers," to you, "Shapers" specifically refers to those dedicated researchers and workers who focus primarily on making and altering creations.

Shapers are skilled at magic and unmatched in their ability to create powerful creatures. However, they are physically frail. A Shaper will have to rely on its creations for protection. Shapers have less health and more essence. Combat skills are expensive for them, but Shaping skills are cheaper.

Guardians - Guardians are the defenders of the Shapers. They serve as guards and escorts, and they are the first line of defense when a war breaks out, a rebellion needs to be put down, or an experiment goes wrong. Guardians are highly trained, regimented, and prefer to act in groups.

Guardians are highly skilled in melee combat and can create creatures to aid them in an assault. However, their magical skills are otherwise weak. Guardians receive more health but less spell energy. Magic skills are expensive for them, but Combat skills are cheaper.

Agents - Agents travel around on the command of the shapers and solve problems, usually violently. When a problem appears in a distant land, an agent is dispatched to deal with it. They are independent creatures, sometimes depending on stealth and diplomacy, and sometimes barging in with overwhelming magical force.

Their magic and weapon skills are strong, but they are not good at creating creatures. For this reason, Agents are harder to play than the other two characters. Agents receive less essence but more spell energy. Shaping skills are expensive for them, but Magic skills are cheaper.

Name - Use the Name field to choose your character's name. Type Delete to get rid of what's there and type in your desired name.

Appearance - Use the up and down arrows labeled "Appearance" to change your character's color scheme.

Skills - Each character type starts with a basic set of skill values that will help it survive in the harsh world of Geneforge. If you stick with these values, you will do just fine.

However, if you want to customize your skills, you can use the plus and minus buttons to the right of each skill. Click on the name of a skill to see a description at the bottom of the window. All of the skills are described in depth in the next chapter.

When you are through creating your character, press the check button at the lower right corner of the creation window to begin the game. Read the introduction, and you will enter the world of Geneforge!

Chapter 5: About Your Character

Like all fantasy role-playing games, you play a character wandering through a hostile world. And, like all such games, your character has a set of statistics that describe how well he or she interacts with the world. These numbers define how tough you are, how strong your magic is, etc.

During the game, to see your statistics, select your main character by clicking on it. You will see your character in the inventory area to the right. Then select See Statistics (or, if you have skill points to spend, Improve Statistics).

At the top of the window, you will see a list of your character's most important attributes:

Level - An important overall number which defines how strong you are and how many adventures you have successfully concluded. You start at Level 1. When you accumulate enough experience (by completing quests, killing monsters, etc.) this number goes up, and you improve in numerous ways (described below).

Health - A number which determines how far you are from death. When you take damage, this number goes down. When you are healed, it goes up. If it reaches 0, you die. To increase this number, gain levels or buy more Endurance.

Essence - Essence is the raw material Shapers use to create life. It is stored within you, and comes out when you make a creation.

The amount of essence you have is determined by your Level and Intelligence. When you make a creation, you spend some essence, and your maximum amount of essence goes down by the cost of the creature. If you have 100 essence and make a creation that costs 50, you can have at most 50 essence until the creation dies.

Essence is also used to cast spells. Thus, if you make a lot of creations, you will be able to use fewer spells. To restore essence, find an essence pool or return to a friendly town.

Spell Energy - Casting a spell weakens you, and it takes time to regain your strength. Each spell reduces your spell energy. If you don't have enough spell energy, you can't cast spells. Spell energy comes back to you with time.

Spell energy increases with your level and your Intelligence. At low levels, you might not have enough spell energy to cast all the spells you want. More powerful spells are much more demanding. Also, if you use a lot of the more powerful spells in a combat, you may run out of spell energy and need to spend some time recharging.

Experience - When you defeat a foe, you gain experience. For every thousand experience you earn, you gain a level. This gives you more health, essence, spell energy, and stronger skills.

The amount of experience you gain for killing an enemy depends on how tough it is in relation to you. If it is a lot tougher, you gain more experience. If it is weaker than you, you gain less. If it is much weaker than you are, you won't gain any experience.

If you have creations with you, you will gain less experience for your kills, and some of this experience will go to the creations. The more pets you have, the fewer overall experience points your party will gain. However, most of this experience will always go to your main character.

Skill Points - When you gain a level, you earn six skill points. Skill points are like currency; you have to spend them to raise your skills. To do this, press the plus button to the right of a skill's name.

Weight - You can only carry so much weight. The amount you can carry depends on your strength. If you are carrying too much, you will be encumbered and have fewer actions in combat.

In the lower half of the statistics screen, you will see all of your character's abilities - and buttons that let you increase them, if you have enough skill points. These abilities, divided into their main categories, with their base skill point costs, are:

Primary Statistics –

Strength (5 skill pts.) - Improves your chance of hitting and damage in hand to hand combat. Enables you to carry more weight and makes you resistant to stunning.

Dexterity (5 skill pts.) - Increases your chance of evading blows in combat. Makes your missile weapons more likely to hit, and helps you act more quickly in battle.

Intelligence (5 skill pts.) - Increases your spell energy and essence. Helps you resist fear, charm, and other mental effects.

Endurance (5 skill pts.) - An extremely valuable skill. Increases your health points. Also helps you resist poison.

Combat Skills (cost is reduced by 1 for Guardians, increased by 1 for Shapers) –

Melee Weapons (3 skill pts.) – Makes you more effective when using a melee weapon (like a sword). Each level of Melee Weapons increases your attack strength in hand to hand combat by 1 (attack strength is explained in the chapter on Combat).

Missile Weapons (3 skill pts.) - Makes you more effective when when using a missile weapon (like a baton or javelin). Also makes magic items (like crystals and wands) more accurate and powerful. Each level of Missile Weapons increases your attack strength with missiles by 1 (attack strength is explained in the chapter on Combat).

Quick Action (2 skill pts.) - Helps you act more quickly in combat. In addition, gives you a chance of getting a free second attack when attacking with a melee weapon (not a missile). Very dangerous at high levels.

Anatomy (2 skill pts.) - Makes you more dangerous in melee. Gives you a chance of doing a high-damage critical hit against creatures with internal organs (like creations or humans, but not undead). Doesn't work with missiles.

Magic Skills (cost is reduced by 1 for Agents, increased by 1 for Guardians) –

Battle Magic (3 skill pts.) - Increases the effectiveness of your Battle Magic spells (like Firebolt or Searer). Each level of Battle Magic increases your attack strength with these spells by 1 (attack strength is explained in the chapter on Combat).

Mental Magic (3 skill pts.) - Each level of Mental Magic increases your spell strength with these spells by 1 (spell strength is explained in the chapter on Magic).

Blessing Magic (3 skill pts.) - Each level of Blessing Magic increases your spell strength with these spells by 1 (spell strength is explained in the chapter on Magic).

Spellcraft (5 skill pts.) - Each level of Spellcraft increases your spell strength with any spell by 1 (spell strength is explained in the chapter on Magic).

Shaping Skills (cost is reduced by 1 for Shapers, increased by 1 for Agents) –

Fire Shaping (4 skill pts.) - Increases the level of the fire-based creations (like Fyora and Roamers) you create. Must be at least level 1 to make any fiery creations.

Battle Shaping (4 skill pts.) - Increases the level of the melee-based creations (like Thahds and Clawbugs) you create. Must be at least level 1 to make any melee creations.

Magic Shaping (4 skill pts.) - Increases the level of the magic-based creations (like Artila and Vlish) you create. Must be at least level 1 to make Battle Magic magical creations.

Healing Craft (3 skill pts.) - Increases the effectiveness of your Healing Craft spells (like Heal and Cure Effects).

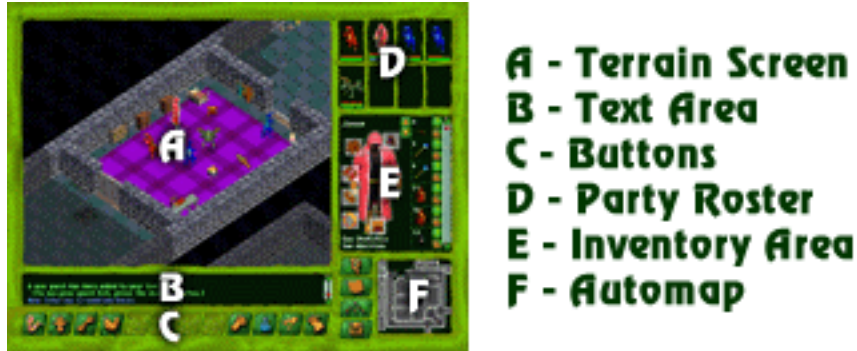
General Skills –

Leadership (2 skill pts.) - How convincing and charismatic you are during conversations. High levels of this skill will make better conversational options available to you.

Mechanics (2 skill pts.) - How good you are with locks, traps, and other mechanical objects. Makes Living Tools more effective for you. High levels of this skill will make more areas and treasures available to you.

Luck (1 skill pts.) - How fortunate you are. Helps you in many subtle ways. Also useful in some special encounters.

Chapter 6: The Geneforge Screen



When you start playing Geneforge, you will see the game screen. It has several areas, each of which gives different information.

The Terrain Area

This is where you play the game. You will see your characters, their surroundings, your enemies, and so on. To scroll your view of the terrain, move the cursor to the edge of the screen.

In the terrain view, north is to the upper right (marked with an N) and west is to the upper left (marked with a W). To learn more about playing the game, read the next chapter.

Text Area

A running description of everything that happens in Geneforge appears here. If you miss something important, you can use the scroll bar to see the text that came earlier.

Buttons

Buttons are used for actions. To see labels describing the buttons, hold down the Tab key. For detailed descriptions of actions, read the chapters on Playing the Game and Combat.

Party Roster

Your character and all of its creations are depicted here. Under each graphic, you will see bars which represent how much health, spell energy, and (for your Shaper) essence you have remaining.

To select a character, either for movement or spell targeting, you can click on it in the roster (you can also select a character by clicking it in the terrain area). You can also type '1'-'8' to select individual characters, or '0' to select the whole group.

Magical Effects

	Cursed		Stunned
	Blessed		Charmed
	Slowed		Acid
	Hasted		Terrified
	Poisoned		Shielded

When your characters has a special magical effect (like haste, blessing, etc), it is indicated with a special icon. The effects are described in the chapter on Combat.

Inventory Area

If your main character is selected, you will see his or her inventory in this area. To learn about this area, read the chapter on Inventory and Items. Below your character, there is one button that bring up your skills and training windows, and another that brings up a list of your current abilities.

If one of your creations is selected, you will see its picture and its statistics. You have several ways to interact with your creations:

See Statistics – See what skills you have bought for this creation.

Statistics/Evolve Creation - See what skills you have bought for this creation and, if you want, spend its skill points.

Turn AI On/ Turn AI Off – Toggles whether the computer or you controls this creature's actions in combat. This choice is only available if you bought at least 2 levels of intelligence for this creation.

Absorb – Instantly destroys this creation. You gain essence equal to half of this creature's essence cost.

Rename – Change this creation's name.

Use the arrow buttons at the upper right corner of the inventory area to shift around your group's order.

Automap

This is a map of the area you are currently exploring. The flashing dot represents your character. The red crosses are enemies, the green crosses are friendly characters, and the blue crosses are neutral creatures (like livestock).

If you click on the automap, you will instantly shift the terrain view to that spot on the map.

Chapter 7: Playing the Game

Most of your time will be spent paying attention to the terrain screen, moving around, searching chests, talking to people, and looking for trouble.

Selecting Characters and Moving

To get anywhere in Geneforge, you first need to move. Begin by selecting a character. To select a character, click on it. To select multiple characters, “draw a box” on the screen by clicking on the terrain area, holding the mouse button down, and moving the mouse. You will see a white box, which can be adjusted to enclose all the characters you want to pick.

Typing ‘0’ selects your whole group, and typing ‘1’-‘8’ selects individual characters.

Once your group is selected, click on a spot on the terrain area and they will move there. They can move to any space that has been mapped out.

The Action Buttons

Use the buttons at the bottom of the screen to do things. To see what all of the buttons do, hold down the Tab key.



Getting - When you press the Get Items button, you will see a small window containing all the available items near your character. Click on an item, or type the letter next to it, to transfer the item to your character's pack.

Instead of the getting button, you can also type 'g'.

Make a Creation - This button brings up the creation window. You can select, edit, and build a creation here. For more information on this process, read the chapter on Creations.

Casting Spells - Most of the buttons are for the different spells you can cast. Click on a button to begin casting a spell. Then, if necessary, select one of your characters or an enemy. All of the spells are described in the Magic Spells chapter.

Journal - Brings up a screen with all of the information in your journal. You will see lists of all the messages you have saved while talking, all of the special items you have accumulated, and all of the quests you have learned about.

The quest list can be extremely useful when you forget what people in towns have asked you to do. Select a quest and you will be told what character asked you to do something and where that character can be found. When quests are completed, they are removed from the list.



Start/End Combat - Press this button to enter combat mode, described in the chapter on Combat. Press this button again to end combat. You can also begin or end combat by typing 'f'.

Formations - When you move your group to a spot, they arrange themselves in a formation. Press this button to cycle through all of the different formations.

Instructions - Brings up full instructions for Geneforge.

File Access - Brings up a list of file options:

Return To Game - Go back to playing the game.

Save Game - Brings up the save game window. Select one of the available slots and press the check button to the lower right to save the game.

Load New Game - Brings up the load game window. Select one of the available slots and press the check button to the lower right to load a saved game.

Preferences - Brings up the preferences screen. Here, you can set the sound volume (or turn sounds off entirely) and change the difficulty level.

About Geneforge - Learn more about the good people who brought this game to you.

Return To Main Screen - Return to the title screen.

Searching and Using Objects

You will find many usable objects on Geneforge. Books on pedestals. Boxes. Dressers. Traps. If you move the cursor onto an object and the cursor turns into a hand, that is an object you can use. Click on the object to use it.

If it is a box, you will probably see a window depicting all of the objects inside it. If it is a book or sign, you will be shown what it says. If the object is a trap and your Mechanics skill is high enough you will disarm it (if it isn't, you may have a problem). If the object is a lever, you will pull it.

Picking Locks

Not all levers and boxes are immediately usable or openable. Some are locked. If your Mechanics skill is high enough, you will be able to pick the lock. If not, you need to use living tools or an Unlock spell (described in the chapter on Spells).

To use a living tool, click on the use button (next to it in the Inventory area) and then click on the locked object. This uses up the tool. If the object does not open immediately, you will be told roughly how many tools you need to pick the lock.

Once a lock is picked, the game will remember that you have done so and you won't need to pick it again.

Skill Canisters

You will find many glowing canisters in Geneforge; the first is in the building just east of where you start the game. These valuable artifacts are called Skill Canisters. They were created to magically alter the user in such a way as to create new magical powers. Very nice.

The canisters have been known to have unusual, and possibly detrimental, side effects on their users. Unfortunately, they are also the only source of the skills you will need to survive Sucia Island.

To see the spells you have accumulated, select See Abilities (under your character's portrait in the inventory area).

Special Encounters

Sometimes, when you are walking around, something special will happen. You will see a text window describing the event, and you may be asked what you want to do. Choose the way you wish to react from the list.

Talking to People and Shopping

You will meet many friendly and interesting people in Geneforge. Talking to them is a great way to figure out what is happening on Sucia Island and to advance the story.

When you hold down the Tab key, the name of each visible character will be superimposed over its graphic on the terrain screen. Interesting characters tend to have specific names (like "Joe") as opposed to generic ones (like "guard"). To approach a character and speak with it, click on it.

During dialogue, you can select different options. If something strikes you as interesting, press the Record button at the lower left corner to save it (the Journal button on the main screen brings up your records). To end a conversation early, use the check mark button. Certain urgent conversations won't give you this option.

The serviles of Sucia Island will sometimes ask you your opinions on various issues. There is no right or wrong answer to these questions, but the cumulative effect of all of your answers will affect how the serviles react to you in the future. If you constantly say how worthless and unimportant serviles are, don't be surprised to find that they like you less.

Sometimes a character will offer to buy and sell things. This brings up the shopping window. Press the Buy button next to an item to purchase it. To sell an item in your pack, press the Sell button (it has coins on it) next to it. Each shop only has so much money, however. A shop won't buy an item it can't afford.

Crimes and Theft

Some items in towns are owned by people nearby. If you take items when they can see you, you are committing theft, and they don't appreciate it. If you kill their livestock, they will be annoyed. If you attack them directly, they will be even more upset.

If you commit too many crimes, the town will rise up and attack you. The amount of things you have to do wrong to be attacked varies from town to town.

Chapter 8: Combat

When you meet someone you want to attack, or when something attacks you, you enter combat mode. If you are attacked, this mode starts automatically. You can also enter combat by pressing the Start Combat button, or the 'f' key.

Combat is split up into rounds. Each character gets one turn per round. Faster characters act first. High Dexterity and Quick Action skills and being hasted help a character act sooner in combat.

Each turn, a character has a base of 8 action points (less if slowed or encumbered, more if hasted). Moving depletes action points depending on how far the character moves. Attacking takes 5 action points. Using an item or drinking a potion takes 3. Getting items or using an object costs 5 action points. Equipping or dropping an item costs 1. Trying to attack when you have less than 5 action points ends your turn immediately. The number of action points you have left is indicated on the party roster. When all of the action points are gone, the next character gets to act.

To end a character's turn early (if you don't want it to do anything else), click on it or hit the space bar.

To attack a foe, click on it. You will attack with your current default attack (described below). To cast a spell on a foe, press the button for that spell and then click on the foe. Note that most magical abilities can't be used on someone standing right next to you. Casting a spell is a delicate business, which can easily be disrupted by a foe. You may need to move away a little bit.

Creations will act on their own in combat unless you have bought enough Intelligence for them (read more about this in the chapter on Creations).

Combat Buttons -



The buttons change when you enter combat mode. As always, hold down the Tab key to see what they do.. The new buttons are:

Attack Character - Sometimes, you want to attack something which is friendly to you. To attack anyone, press this button and then select the target. This may make the locals angry with you.

End Combat - Attempts to end combat. You can also type 'f'.

The four buttons to the left are special. They determine your default attack. When you press one of these buttons, it determines the attack you use when you click on an enemy in combat and have not specifically selected a different ability. These four attacks are:

Melee/Missile - Attacks the enemy with the currently equipped melee or missile weapon.

Bolt of Fire, Searer, Essence Orbs - Casts this spell at the enemy.

Select a different button to change your default attack. Other attack spells (like Terror and Dominate) can't be set as a default. You need to select the spell and then the target.

Ending Combat

When you are through with combat, press the End Combat button or type 'f'. If there are no enemies visible, combat ends immediately. Otherwise, it will cease at the end of the current round. Note, however, that if you are still under attack, combat will immediately begin again.

Attack Strength

When you attack something with a weapon or spell, Geneforge calculates your *attack strength*. This is a number which represents how effective the attack is. The way this number is calculated depends on the type of attack:

Melee attack – Attack strength is your Strength plus your Melee Weapons skill.

Missile attack – Attack strength is your Dexterity plus your Missile Weapons skill.

Spell Attack – Attack strength is your skill in that spell type plus your skill with that spell plus your Spellcraft. (So, if you have used 2 Bolt of Fire canisters, your Battle Magic skill is 3, and your Spellcraft is 1, your attack strength with this spell is 6)

Your creations' Attack Strength in all attacks is their level plus the amount of Strength you have bought for them.

There are numerous other factors which can affect your attack strength. Perhaps most importantly, your chance to hit is reduced by 1 for every point of Dexterity your target has.

The damage for your attack and base chance to hit are derived from your Attack Strength as follows:

Attack Strength	Base Chance To Hit	Dice of Damage
0	%50	1
1	%55	2
2	%60	3
3	%65	4
4	%70	5
5	%75	6
6	%80	7
7	%90	8
8	%95	9
9	%100	10
10-11	%105	11
12-13	%110	12
14-15	%115	13
16-17	%120	14
18-20	%125	15
21-23	%130	16
24-26	%135	17

27-29	%140	18
30-34	%145	19
35+	%150	20

When an attack hit, it does a random amount of damage depending on the attack (1-8 for swords, or 1-6 for bolts of fire) multiplied by the number of dice of damage of the attack.

Magical Effects

Your characters can be exposed to a variety of magical effects, some beneficial, some harmful, most of them related to combat. Some effects (like blessing) are gained by casting spells or using magic items. Others, like poison, are inflicted by hostile spells.

Each effect has a numeric level, which indicates how strong it is. For every second of game time, or combat round, the level of all effects goes down by 1. When the level reaches 0, the effect is gone.

The effects are:

Stunned – When a combat round begins and you are stunned, you lose one action point for each level you are stunned (until you are out of action points). Every action point lost cures one level of stunning (so if you have 9 levels of stun and you start a round with 8 action points, you lose all of your action points and your stun level goes down to 1).

When a creature is hit in combat, it has a chance of being stunned. Armor generally provides excellent protection against being stunned.

Cursed – Your attacks in combat are less likely to hit and do less damage. Each three levels of curse you have decrease your attack strength by 1.

Blessed – Your attacks in combat are more likely to hit and do more damage. Each three levels of bless you have increase your attack strength by 1.

Hasted – You get more action points in combat (usually enough to gain a second attack).

Slowed – Every other round in combat, you only get 3 action points (enough to use an item, but not much else).

Poisoned – Every second (or round in combat), you take a random amount of damage between half of your poison level and your poison level (so if you have 10 levels of poison, you take 5-10 points of damage).

Acid – Every second (or round in combat), you take 1-4 points of damage for each level of acid (so if you have 10 levels of acid, you take 4-40 points of damage). This amount is reduced by your armor.

Charmed – A charmed creature will attack its allies for as long as it is charmed.

Fear – This creature will flee any enemy for as long as it is terrified.

Shielded – All damage is halved.

Chapter 9: Inventory and Items

You can pick up items by pressing the Get Items button (or typing 'g'). You can also get items by searching boxes. Once you have items, you can use them.

Items in your possession can be inspected in your inventory screen. Select your main character to see it. Items you have picked up are in the list to the right. Use the scroll bar to scroll through your pack.

To see a description of an item, press the button marked with a '?'. If an item can be used, it will have a button with a little fireball. Press that button to use it. You may need to select a target.

Many items, such as clothes, armor, and weapons, need to be equipped. To equip an item, click on it. This picks it up (and the cursor turns into the item). Click on the large graphic of your character and the item will appear on it in a black box. This item is now equipped. If it's a weapon, you will now attack with it in combat. If it's armor, you are wearing it, and you will get benefits from it.

To drop an item, click on it to pick it up, move it over the terrain screen, and click again to drop it. It will appear at your character's feet.

When you use a pod, it helps your main character in some way. When you use spores, they help you and all creations standing near you.

Batons are reloadable missile weapons. Each baton fires a different sort of thorn, and can only be reloaded with that sort of thorn. If you fire an empty baton in combat, it automatically reloads it if you have that sort of thorn in your inventory. Reloading a baton costs as many action points as a full attack.

Gold

When you get items, if there are any coins on the ground, you will pick them up automatically. You use coins to buy items in towns. Shops will also buy items from you to add to your supply of coins.

Chapter 10: Creations

The greatest power of the Shapers is the ability to create and alter new life forms. It is their most important secret. Any outsider who tries to use Shaper powers is likely to receive a visit from an assassin in the dead of night.

Creations are also your greatest weapon against the threats of Sucia Island. If you never make any pets, you will have a difficult time escaping alive.

You learn how to make creations by using skill canisters. The first pet you can make, the fyora, can be found in the second section that you enter (Abandoned Vale). If you use three skill canisters of the same type (say, three Create Fyora canisters), you learn to make a new, stronger sort of creation (in this case, the cryoa).

You can only make creations when you aren't in combat. Press the Make Creation button (to the far left) to bring up the edit creation screen.

On this screen, select the sort of creation you want from the roster at the top. Each type of creature has a base cost in essence. You will see a description of each creature when you select it.

Once you have selected the type of creation, you can buy higher statistics for it. Raising statistics increases the cost in essence of the creation. The four statistics for creations are:

Strength: A creature's strength affects how much damage it does with its attacks. More strength gives all of the creation's attacks a damage bonus. Higher strength also helps the creature resist stunning.

Dexterity: Helps the creature act sooner in combat, evade enemy blows, and land blows of its own. Very useful for missile based creatures like the Fyora.

Intelligence: Helps the creature resist mental attacks and keep from fleeing in combat. Also keeps the creature from going rogue and attacking you.

It is important to know that, if you buy two levels of Intelligence, you can control the creature in combat. Otherwise it will act on its own, and you may not like what it does.

Endurance: Affects how much health the creature has and how well it resists poison and similar effects. Extremely useful for any creature type.

Finally, when you're ready, press the check button to make the creation.

The level of your creation depends on your skills. Each creature type has a base level. It gains an additional level for each level of the appropriate Create Skills. For example, the base level of a fyora is 1. If your Fire Shaping skill is 2 and your Create Fyora ability is at level 3, all fyoras you make will be level 6.

Essence and Creations

Creations cost essence. The more intelligence you have and the higher your level, the more essence you have. Spending essence on a creation decreases your maximum essence level. If you have 90 essence and you spend 60 to make a pet, your maximum essence will be 30 as long as it is alive.

Fleeing and Going Rogue

Creations are under your control. However, they are not entirely without a will of their own. If a creation is damaged, there is a chance it will run away. Worse, in stressful situations, a creation will occasionally go rogue and turn against you for a few rounds.

To reduce the chance of either of these things happening, buy more Intelligence for your pet. Also, if you buy at least two levels of Intelligence, you will be able to control the creation in combat. This will make it much more effective.

Levels and Augmenting Creations

When your party gains experience, all of your creations are given the same amount. Every thousand experience, each creation gains a level. When a creation gains a level, its health, spell energy, and basic statistics improve. Creations you keep with you for a long time will get very powerful.

You can increase a creation's skill after you make it. Creations gain two skill points with each level. If a creation has skill points, select it and then select Statistics/Evolve Creation in the inventory area. This will bring up the creation editing window. Each skill point can be used to increase a statistic by one. Note that this also increases the creature's essence cost.

Chapter 11: Magic Spells

All characters (but especially Agents) will want to use magic spells. They are a reliable way to damage foes, heal yourself and your creations, and bless yourself in combat.

There are three magic Circles - Battle, Mental, and Blessing - each with three spells in it. There is also a Shaper-based Circle called Healing Craft, with three spells corresponding to it. The higher your level of skill in a Circle, the more effective the spells in it will be.

To learn a spell, you need to find and use the correct skill canister. If you find more than one skill canister of the same sort (say, two Cure Effects canisters), using the second one makes that spell much more effective. The more canisters you find, the better.

Spells cost spell energy and essence. The maximum amount you can have of each increases with your Intelligence and your level. Spell energy comes back with time. Essence is regained by finding an essence pool or returning to a friendly town (like Vakkiri).

Each spell requires you to have a minimum level in the corresponding Circle skill to cast it. For example, your Healing Craft skill must be 1 to cast heal, but 5 to cast Mass Restore.

Spell Strength

When you cast a spell, it has a *spell strength*, similar to attack strength (described in the chapter on Combat). A spell's strength is the level at which you know that spell, plus your skill in that spell's Circle, plus your Spellcraft. (So if you have used 2 Curing canisters, your Healing Craft skill is 3, and your Spellcraft is 1, your spell strength with this spell is 6).

Each level of spell strength makes a spell more effective, as described below. With a combat spell, its attack strength is equal to its spell strength.

The spells in Geneforge are listed below. You will also find the essence and spell energy costs, the minimum skill to cast, and whether they can be used in town, combat, or both.

Battle Magic



Firebolt (Essence: 0, Spell Energy: 4, Combat, Min. Skill: 1) - Fires a bolt of fire, which does damage to a single target. Battle Magic and Spellcraft skills increase the chance of hitting and damage.

Searer (Essence: 1, Spell Energy: 40, Combat, Min. Skill: 3) - Fires a globule of acid, which does damage to a single target. Battle Magic and Spellcraft skills increase the chance of hitting and damage.

Essence Orbs (Essence: 4, Spell Energy: 60, Combat, Min. Skill: 5) - Fires up to three energy missiles. They strike enemies close to the target you select. Battle Magic and Spellcraft skills increase the chance of hitting and damage.

Mental Magic



Unlock (Essence: 5, Spell Energy: 50, Town, Min. Skill: 1) - Unlocks nearby chests or levers. If the spell is stronger than the lock, you will be able to open them. The effect is the same as picking the lock with a Mechanics skill equal to your current Mechanics skill plus twice the spell strength. (Thus, if your current Mechanics skill is 5 and your spell strength is 4, the Unlock spell would be equivalent to trying to pick the lock with a Mechanics skill of 13.)

Terror (Essence: 2, Spell Energy: 80, Combat, Min. Skill: 3) - Overwhelms a single enemy with fear, causing it to run away for a short time. The tougher the foe, the lower the chance this spell will affect it. This spell counts as an attack with attack strength equal to your spell strength.

Dominate (Essence: 7, Spell Energy: 120, Combat, Min. Skill: 5) - Temporarily controls the mind of a single enemy, causing it to attack its friends for a short time. This only works on creatures with brains (not undead, for example). This spell counts as an attack with attack strength equal to your spell strength.

Blessing Magic



War Blessing (Essence: 6, Spell Energy: 40, Town, Combat, Min. Skill: 1) - Makes the recipient more likely to hit in combat, and makes its blows more effective. Gives you and all creations near you three levels of blessing for each level of spell strength.

Speed (Essence: 12, Spell Energy: 100, Town, Combat, Min. Skill: 3) - Makes the recipients faster in combat. Gives you and all creations near you three levels of haste for each level of spell strength.

Mass Energize (Essence: 12, Spell Energy: 150, Town, Min. Skill: 5) - Makes all nearby allies more effective in combat, and heals some of their damage. This demanding spell

can only be cast when there are no enemies nearby. Gives you and all creations near you three levels of haste and bless and heals two points of damage for each level of spell strength.

Healing Craft



Heal (Essence: 2, Spell Energy: 10, Town, Combat, Min. Skill: 1) - Increases the health of a wounded ally. Heals 1-6 points of damage for each level of spell strength.

Cure Effects (Essence: 1, Spell Energy: 25, Town, Combat, Min. Skill: 3) - Cures poison and acid on a wounded ally. Cures 2 levels of poison for each level of spell strength and 1 level of acid for each two levels of spell strength.

Mass Restore (Essence: 10, Spell Energy: 150, Town, Combat, Min. Skill: 5) – Rejuvenates your entire group. This demanding spell can only be cast when there are no enemies nearby. Equal to a Heal and a Cure spell on you and all creations near you.

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