Welcome to the exotic and exciting world of Geneforge 3!

Geneforge 3 is a fantasy role-playing game with a science fiction twist. It is similar to other fantasy adventures, and, at the same time, very different.

You will find yourself in the middle of a fierce and deadly rebellion against the power of your people, the Shapers. You can be loyal to your kind and fight to destroy the rebels and traitors. Or you can join them, risking all to end Shaper rule.

Geneforge 3'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 character, develop your 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 3 is shareware. The demo contains the first 24 out of 91 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 3 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
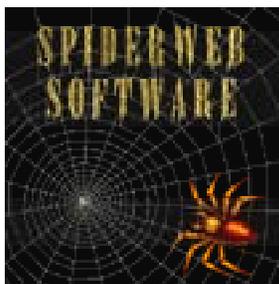
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Chapter 1 : How to Order

        The full version of Geneforge 3 is $25 US. Geneforge 3 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 in the lower right-hand corner of the title screen.
        A complete order form is available in the file "Geneforge 3 Order Form."

TO ORDER BY CREDIT CARD ON THE WEB: We have a secure registration form on our web site: http://www.spiderwebsoftware.com.

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(When ordering by E-mail, Send your credit card #, expiration date, name on the card, and the card's billing address.)

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FOREIGN ORDERS: Foreign orders are welcome! Payment can be made by credit card, a money order in US dollars drawn on a US bank (such as Citibank or American Express), or a postal money order in US dollars. Outside North America, add $5 shipping and handling. Please don't send EuroCheques.

Special Nethergate and Blades of Exile Promotional:
When you order any of our games, 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 order.

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.

The Shapers can make new life forms from nothing but raw materials and 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, resented.

Few ordinary humans are given the honor of being taken into the ranks of the Shapers. Many learn about the weaker sorts of magic, but only the strongest and the smartest are taught the secrets of creating life.

After many years of hard work and preparation, you were given the honor of training to become a Shaper. This meant several years as an apprentice, being served up bone-crushing labor and abuse in equal measure.

You were sent to the Ashen Isles, a remote island chain off the coast of Terrestia, the smaller, less settled of the two continents settled by the Shapers. There, you began study at the Greenwood Academy, on Greenwood Isle. Shaper Schools are always remote places, where the apprentices begin the perilous work of studying their craft far from the distractions of the world.

You have learned a few of the less impressive magical spells and Shaping techniques and have been told that you show exceptional skill and promise for one of your young age. Of course, this has not reduced the workload or frequency of abuse in any way.

Instead, you study, night after night, in your damp, underground room, trying to memorize and master the recipes, spells, and techniques that make up your craft. It is years of painstaking (and dangerous) work, but you do not lose hope. Then, early one morning, as you try to rouse yourself from your bed (still sore from a beating the night before for forgetting a step of a recipe), something happens ...

There is a massive explosion. The walls and floor shake. You are thrown out of bed. Dust and bits of rock shower from the ceiling. In the distance, you hear sections of the ceiling cave in.

Then it is silent. Whatever is happening above, the noises are blocked by the tons of rock around you. You sit, stunned, wondering if the school was attacked. But that's impossible! Nobody would dare attack a colony of Shapers!

You hurriedly pull on your clothes and shoes. The passages down here might be unstable. It would be wise to find a way out to the surface and see what is happening. Before the whole place caves in.

Chapter 3: Getting Started

When you run Geneforge 3, 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...

New Game - Create a new character and begin a new journey.
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 3. 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 3 inside the game.
Preferences – Change the settings for the game, including difficulty.
Credits - See all of the hard-working people who brought this fine electronic entertainment to you.
Quit - Leave Geneforge 3 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 3 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 3: 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.

Since Guardians rely less on magic than Agents or Shapers, they can be harder to play. Be sure to take full advantage of missile weapons and your Parry skill.

Agents – When problems appear in distant lands, Agents travel there and solve them, usually violently. They are independent people, 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. 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 3. 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 3!

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 your body and flows out when you make a creation. Much of Shaper training consists of learning to hold this energy within yourself without being consumed by it.

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 get very little 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 five 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. Each skill has a base cost (in skill points). Every time you buy two levels of a skill, its cost increases by one.

These abilities, divided into their main categories, with their base skill point costs, are:

Primary Statistics –

Strength (4 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 (4 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 (4 skill pts.) - Increases your spell energy and essence. Helps you resist fear, charm, and other mental effects.

Endurance (4 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 (2 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 (2 skill pts.) - Makes you more effective 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.

Parry (2 skill pts.) – Reduces the damage you take from melee and missile attacks, and gives you a chance of deflecting any such attack entire. The higher this skill is, the more damage is prevented.

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

Battle Magic (2 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 (2 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 (2 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 (4 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 (3 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 (3 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 (2 skill pts.) - Increases the effectiveness of your Healing Craft spells (like Heal and Cure Effects).

General Skills –

Leadership (1 skill pt.) - How convincing and charismatic you are during conversations. High levels of this skill will make better conversational options available to you.
Mechanics (1 skill pt.) - 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 pt.) - How fortunate you are. Luck skill helps you in many subtle ways.

Chapter 6: The Geneforge 3 Screen

A - Terrain Screen
B - Text Area
C - Buttons
D - Party Roster
E - Automap

When you start playing Geneforge 3, 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 area, 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 3 appears here. If you miss something important, type 't' to show the text you missed again.

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 character) 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.

You can make a character traveling with you inactive by clicking on the Arrow button. This character will no longer be selectable and it won't attack in combat. Click on the arrow again to make the character active.

To bring up a screen with information on a character, press the button with a '?' next to it. On the information screen, you can learn about a character, train it, change your party order, and (if it's not your main character) dismiss it.

To see your main character's inventory, click on the bag. This brings up the inventory screen, where you can pick up and drop items, use potions, or ready weapons and armor. The inventory screen is described in detail in Chapter 9.

Magical Effects

💀 Cursed	❌ Stunned	Mindshield	Resistant
Blessed	Charmed	✝ Charisma	Augmented
Slowed	Acid	Essence Shield	Thick Skin
+ Hasted	Terrified	Essence Armor	Dazed
Poisoned	Shielded	Protection	

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.

Seeing Character Statistics, Training, Changing the Party Order

To see the statistics and other useful information for a character, press the Information button next to it in the party roster area. The button has a question mark on it.

The information screen for your main character shows your name, level, experience, and all of your statistics. If you have enough skill points, you can increase a statistic by pressing the '+' button to its right.

This window will also show how high your resistance is to stunning, fire, and other hostile effects. These resistances are expressed as a percentage (for example, perhaps, 50% resistance to fire). However, when you are attacked, the amount you are protected by your resistances is affected by the strength of the attack. Thus, if your stun resistance is %110, you can still be stunned if the creature attacking you is strong enough.

If you get information on a creation or person traveling with you, you will see its picture and its statistics. If the person or creation has enough skill points, you can press the '+' buttons to the right of its statistics to increase them. Click on the character's name to change it.

If you don't want a person or creature to travel with you anymore, select Absorb or Dismiss on this screen. If you absorb a creation, you will regain some of the essence you used to create it.

If you want to change to order of the characters in the party roster, you can choose Up or Down on the character information screen.

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 3, 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 bring up the inventory screen for your main character. You can read more about this in chapter 9.

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 – There are four buttons you can press to cast spells and four buttons you can set to spells you use often. You can learn about magic 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.

<u>Start/End Combat</u> - 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'.

<u>Formations</u> - 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.

<u>Instructions</u> - Brings up full instructions for Geneforge 3.

<u>File Access</u> - Brings up a list of file options:

> <u>Return To Game</u> – Go back to playing the game.
> <u>Save Game</u> – 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.
> <u>Load New Game</u> - 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.
> <u>Preferences</u> – Brings up the preferences screen. Here, you can set the sound
> volume (or turn sounds off entirely) and change the difficulty level.
> <u>Return To Main Screen</u> – Return to the title screen.

Searching and Using Objects

You will find many usable objects in Geneforge 3. 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 the Inventory screen, and you the items inside
the container will be listed in the upper right corner. 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,
and so on.

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).

Living tools are hardy, Shaper-bred creatures that can be used to manipulate locks
and machinery. Many locks, for example, can be picked by living tools. When you try to
open a locked door, if you have enough tools, you will be asked if you want to use them.
The higher your Mechanics skill, the less tools you will need for any given door.

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 eventually find glowing canisters in Geneforge 3. 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.

The canisters can possibly have unusual, and possibly detrimental, side effects on their users. They are also a valuable source of magic spells and other skills. You don't need to use canisters to win the game, but it can help.

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 3. Talking to them is a great way to figure out what is happening in the mountains and 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.

Humans, serviles, and other intelligent creatures on the Ashen Isles will sometimes ask for 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 people 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.

Choosing to sell items brings up your inventory screen. All items you can sell will have a coins button in the lower left corner. The number next to the button is the amount of coins you can get for the item. Press the button to sell the item.

Some characters can also sell you spells and teach you how to make new creations. For example, if you want some new spells, you should talk to people in South End (just outside the school). A trainer can only increase a skill or spell by two levels. If you want greater mastery of a spell or creation type, you will need to find a skill canister.

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.

Saving and Loading the Game

You will frequently want to save the game. Saving the game makes a "snapshot" of your progress. Then, when you quit Geneforge 3 and start playing again, you can continue where you left off.

To save the game, press on the disk button (or hit the Escape key) and select Save Game. This brings up the Save Game window. You can then choose a slot to save the game into. You can also bring up this window by typing Command-S (Control-S on Windows).

Later, you can load that saved game and continue to play from that point by selecting Load game on the title screen. While playing, to load a saves game, press on the disk button (or hit the Escape key) and select Load Saved Game. This brings up the Load Game window. You can also bring up this window by typing Command-O (Control-O on Windows).

Whenever you move from one area to another, the game is automatically saved. This saved game is called Autosave.

There is also a Quicksave slot, which you can use to very quickly save and load your game. Type the F3 key to quicksave, and type the F4 key to load that saved game.

You can't save the game in combat.

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 press 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, choose the 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 the Tab key down to see what they do. The new buttons are:

Attack Someone - 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.

The two buttons to the far left are special. They determine your default attack. If you press the button on the left, every time you attack, you will use your equipped weapon (blade or missile). If you push the button on the right, whenever you attack, you will try to use a combat spell (which will be the last low level combat spell you cast).

You can also cast spells to heal or protect your group or harm the enemy in a variety of ways. To learn about your options, read the chapter on Casting Spells.

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 still you have a foe nearby, combat will immediately begin again.

Attack Strength

When you attack something with a weapon or spell, Geneforge 3 calculates your *attack strength*. This number 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 improved your Searer skill twice, 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.

Your chance of hitting any foe is your attack's base chance to hit (usually 50%) plus 5 times your Attack Strength. You will do a number of dice of damage equal to your attack strength (which means that if the Searer spells's base damage is 1-6 and your Attack strength is 10, you will do 10-60 damage).

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. Unless it says otherwise below, for every combat round or second of game time that passes, the level of all effects you have goes down by 1. When the level reaches 0, the effect is gone.

The effects are:

Stunned – When a combat round begins and a character is stunned, it loses one action point for each level it is stunned (until it is out of action points). Then it is no longer stunned. (So, no matter how stunned you are, you can only lose at most one combat turn.)

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. Being cursed decreases your attack strength with weapons or spells by 4.

Blessed – Your attacks in combat are more likely to hit and do more damage. Being blessed increases your attack strength with weapons or spells by 4.

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

Slowed – Every other round in combat, you only get 4 action points (enough to use an item, but not much else).

Poisoned – Every second (or round of 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 of combat), the number of levels of acid on you goes down by half (to a maximum of 10), and you take 1-8 points of damage for each level of acid that went away.

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 reduced by one-fifth.

Mindshield – Reduces the chance of being affected by mental effects (like Daze, Charm, and Fear).

Charisma – For a short time, characters will react to you as if your Leadership skill is higher.

Essence Shield – Slightly reduces the damage blows do to you. This effect does not fade as time passes. It lasts until you leave the area you are currently in.

Essence Armor – Increases the number of hitpoints you have and reduces the damage blows do to you. This effect does not fade as time passes. If you get essence armor, you immediately lose essence shield. It lasts until you leave the area you are currently in.

Protection Aura – Reduces the damage blows do.

Resistant – Reduces the effect of magical attacks (like fire and cold), acid, and mental effects.

Augmented – Increases the number of hit points you have. This effect does not fade as time passes. It lasts until you leave the area you are currently in.

Thick Skin – Reduces the damage blows do to you. This effect does not fade as time passes. It lasts until you leave the area you are currently in.

Dazed – Causes the victim to forget who it was attacking and stand still, unable to act for a time. If the character takes any damage, the dazing effect instantly fades.

Your main character, due to its high level of mental training, is immune to mental effects (Fear, Daze, and Charm).

Chapter 9: Inventory and Items

A - Items on Ground
B - Equipped Items
C - Quick Use Items
D - Your Pack

To get and use items, you will need to bring up your character's inventory screen. To do this, press the bag button by your main character in the party roster, press the Get Items button at the bottom of the screen, or type 'i'.

There are four areas on the inventory screen:

A – The Ground. These are items on the floor or on tables near a member of your group. Some of these items will be marked with a 'NY', which means 'Not Yours'. Picking up these items when a townsperson is near you can be hazardous.
B – Your Character. When you are wearing a piece of armor or holding a weapon in your hand, it is said to be equipped. Items you have equipped are displayed here.
C – Quick Use items. These are items (like potions) you frequently use or weapons you often want to equip. When an item is in a Quick Use slot, it will be visible on a button at the bottom of the main game screen. You can then press that button to use or wield the item without having to open the inventory screen.
D – Your Pack. All the items you are just carrying around are shown here.

To pick up an item, click on it. You can then click on a different area of the inventory screen to put the item there. So, for example, to pick up an item on the ground and put it in your pack, click on the item and then click on an open space in your pack. To put on a piece of armor, click on it and then click on the portrait of your character.

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

To see a description of an item, hold the Control key down and click on it. If an item can be used, it will have a button that looks like a little fireball in the lower left corner. Press that button to use the item. If the item is a weapon, the inventory screen will close and you may then need to click on a target on the terrain area.

To split up a stack of items, hold the shift key down and click on it.

Batons

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.

Each baton can only be reloaded with the thorns grown to be used in it. For example, an acid baton can only be reloaded with acid thorns.

Pods and Spores

You will frequently find pods and spores. These items have beneficial effects (like healing, or a blessing that makes you stronger in combat).

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

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.

Crafting Items

On each island, it is possible to find an enchanted anvil. (On Greenwood Isle, for example, speak with Hawthorne in Kentia East Gate). When you use an anvil, your inventory screen will come up, and you can try to craft new items.

To try to combine some items, pick them up, drop them in the forge area (to the upper right), and press the Combine button. With luck, they will unite into a new item. As you travel, you might find recipes that give hints for what to combine to make what. Some items you can make are extremely powerful.

You will find enchanted gemstones in your travels that can be used to make your weapons and armor stronger. Blessing stones and runed rubies are two such items. If you put such a gem in the forge with a weapon or piece of armor, they will be combined, making the item more powerful. This can even be done with weapons and pieces of armor that are already magical.

Note, however, that you can only use a gem to improve any given piece of equipment once, and that the gem is consumed in the process.

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 the Ashen Isles. If you never make any pets, you will have a difficult time escaping alive.

You learn how to make creations by talking to Shapers in towns (like Diwaniya in San Ru) or using skill canisters. You start Geneforge 3 being able to make a fyora. To make a creation, you have to have learned how to make it, you have to have enough essence, and the related Shaper skill has to be high enough (for example, to make a drayk, your Fire Shaping skill has to be at least 3).

If you improve a creation skill 3 times (by, say, training in Create Thahd twice and then using a Create Thahd canisters), you learn to make a new, stronger sort of creation (in this case, the thahd shade). To make the improved creation costs more essence, and your related Shaper skill needs to be higher.

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 new 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 is 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 you 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 become 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, bring up its information screen (by pressing the '?' button next to it in the party roster). 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 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 four Circles of magic - Battle, Mental, Blessing, and Healing Craft - each with eight spells in it. The higher your level of skill in a Circle, the more of its spells you will be able to cast and the more effective those spells will be.

To learn a spell, you need to be trained in a town (for example, in South End) or find and use the correct skill canister. You can find trainers by talking to people you meet. The more times you improve your skill with a spell, the more effective it will be. Each trainer can teach you a spell twice (once to learn it and once to improve it).

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 Fort Kentia). Remember, making creations reduces the maximum amount of Essence you can have until the creation dies.

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 Minor Heal, but 5 to cast Remove Effects.

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 been taught Cure Effects twice, 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.
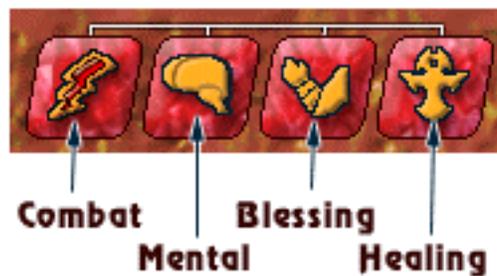
How To Cast A Spell

To cast a spell, press one of the four spell-casting buttons. A small window will come up displaying the available spells in that circle. Select a spell to cast it. You may also need to select a target (if you are casting a hostile or healing spell).

Alternate Way To Cast Spells

If you prefer, you can bring up a spell selection window, which lists all of your spells by pressing Shift-C.

Quick Spell Buttons

If there is a spell you like to use often, you can set it as a quick spell for easy access. The four buttons to the right of the spell casting buttons (with question marks on them) are quick spell buttons. If you press one of them, a window will come up with a list of all the spells you know. Select one and the button will be set to cast that spell.

You can also cast spells in your quick spell buttons by pressing the function keys, F5, F6, F7, and F8.

Later, if you want to change a spell for a quick spell button, hold the Control key down and press it.

The spells in Geneforge 3 are listed below. You will also find the essence and spell energy costs and the minimum skill to cast them.

Battle Magic

Battle Magic spells do damage to your enemies. Trying to cast any of these spells starts combat. All of these spells except Burning Spray, Acid Shower and Aura Of Flames can potentially miss the target. Higher Battle Magic and Spellcraft skills increase your chance to hit.

Firebolt (Essence: 0, Spell Energy: 4, Min. Skill: 1) - Fires a bolt of fire, which does 1-4 points of fire damage plus 1-3 times spell strength to a single target.
Burning Spray (Essence: 2 Spell Energy: 15, Min. Skill: 1) – Covers a single enemy with acid (Base 2 levels plus 2 times spell strength). The acid does damage over several rounds. This spell can't be parried.
Searer (Essence: 1, Spell Energy: 40, Min. Skill: 2) - Fires a globule of acid, which does 1-8 damage plus 1-4 times spell strength to a single target. The attack, if it hits, also covers the target with a small amount of acid.
Ice Spray (Essence: 1, Spell Energy: 50, Min. Skill: 3) - Fires a bolt of ice, which does 1-15 plus 1-5 times spell strength cold damage to a single target.
Essence Orbs (Essence: 4, Spell Energy: 75, Min. Skill: 4) - Fires up to three energy missiles. They strike enemies close to the target you select. Does 1-20 plus 1-5 times spell strength energy damage.
Acid Shower (Essence: 14, Spell Energy: 120, Min. Skill: 5) – Covers all nearby enemies with acid (2 + 2 times spell strength). The acid does damage over several rounds. This spell can't be parried.
Kill (Essence: 8, Spell Energy: 100, Min. Skill: 6) - Fires a bolt of death magic which does 1-20 plus 1-10 times spell strength magical damage to a single target.
Aura of Flames (Essence: 25, Spell Energy: 200, Min. Skill: 7) – Covers all nearby enemies with fire (1-20 plus 1-10 times spell strength damage). This spell can't be parried.

Mental Magic

Mental Magic spells daze your enemies and improve your own mental powers. All of these spells which affect your foes start combat. Mental Magic and Spellcraft skill make all of these spells more effective. Mental attacks cannot be parried.

Daze (Essence: 2, Spell Energy: 12, Min. Skill: 1) - Confuses all nearby enemies. They will forget their current targets and will not be able to move or attack for a while. Attacking the enemy breaks the spell. If your target's level is too high compared to the spell strength, the spell might not take effect.

Mental Barrier (Essence: 4, Spell Energy: 15, Min. Skill: 1) – Protects all nearby allies from mental effects (like fear or charming) for a short time (2 seconds times spell strength).

Unlock (Essence: 5, Spell Energy: 50, Min. Skill: 2) - Unlocks nearby chests or levers. If the spell is stronger than the lock, you will be able to open it. 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, Min. Skill: 3) - Overwhelms a single enemy with fear, causing it to run away for a short time. If your target's level is too high compared to the spell strength, the spell might not take affect.

Dominate (Essence: 7, Spell Energy: 120, Min. Skill: 4) - 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). If your target's level is too high compared to the spell strength, the spell might not take affect.

Strong Daze (Essence: 5, Spell Energy: 60, Min. Skill: 5) – Like Daze, but much more potent. You will be able to affect much stronger foes with this version.

Charisma (Essence: 8, Spell Energy: 100, Min. Skill: 6) – Temporarily makes the target (probably you) more charismatic. Enables you to converse as if you have a higher Leadership skill.

Mass Madness (Essence: 20, Spell Energy: 200, Min. Skill: 7) – Attacks the minds of all foes near you, either dazing, scaring, or dominating them. Which effect happens depends on how high the foe's level is compared to the spell strength.

Blessing Magic

These spells make you and creatures fighting on your side stronger. Some of them affect single targets, and some affect everyone nearby. Note that the blessing spells that affect everyone nearby don't only help your creations. They also affect people who might be fighting on your side at the moment (like town guards).

War Blessing (Essence: 3, Spell Energy: 10, Min. Skill: 1) – Makes all friends nearby more effective in combat. Their blows will hit more often and do more damage. Has the effect of increasing all of their combat and attack spell skills by 4.

Protection (Essence: 3, Spell Energy: 10, Min. Skill: 1) – Makes all friends nearby harder to hurt in combat. Enemy blows will do one-fifth less damage.

Essence Shield (Essence: 20, Spell Energy: 0, Min. Skill: 2) – Improves the armor of the recipient, making it slightly harder to hit. This spell lasts until you leave your current area.

Speed (Essence: 12, Spell Energy: 100, Min. Skill: 3) - Makes a single target faster in combat, giving more action points per turn. This is usually enough to give an extra attack.

Mass Energize (Essence: 20, Spell Energy: 150, Min. Skill: 4) - Makes all nearby allies more effective in combat and heals some of their damage. Has the effect of both blessing and speeding up the recipients.

Steel Skin (Essence: 50, Spell Energy: 0, Min. Skill: 5) – Strengthens the skin of the recipient, making all attacks do slightly less damage. This spell lasts until you leave your current area.

Essence Armor (Essence: 60, Spell Energy: 0, Min. Skill: 6) – Improves the armor of the recipient, making it slightly harder to hit. Also slightly reduces the damage the recipient takes from any blow. This spell lasts until you leave your current area. If you cast this on someone with an Essence Shield on, the shield goes away.

Battle Roar (Essence: 30, Spell Energy: 200, Min. Skill: 7) – This spell protects, heals, blesses, cures, and shields every friendly creature nearby. Also cures mental effects.

Healing Craft

These spells remove damage and other damaging effects. Some of them affect single targets, and some affect everyone nearby. Note that healing spells can be cast on anyone friendly nearby, not just you and your creations. They also affect people who might be fighting on your side at the moment (like town guards).

Minor Heal (Essence: 2, Spell Energy: 5, Min. Skill: 1) - Increases the health of a wounded ally. Heals 1-10 points of damage plus 1-4 for each level of spell strength.

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

Augmentation (Essence: 30, Spell Energy: 0, Min. Skill: 2) Fills a single target with life energy, temporarily increasing its maximum number of hit points. This spell lasts until you leave your current area.

Heal (Essence: 4, Spell Energy: 30, Min. Skill: 3) - Increases the health of a wounded ally. Heals 1-20 points of damage plus 1-8 for each level of spell strength.

Group Heal (Essence: 8, Spell Energy: 60, Min. Skill: 4) - Increases the health of all nearby wounded allies. Heals 1-20 points of damage plus 1-6 for each level of spell strength.

Remove Effects (Essence: 6, Spell Energy: 60, Min. Skill: 5) – Purges the target of all negative effects, including mental ones. The higher the spell strength, the more afflictions are removed.

Major Heal (Essence: 6, Spell Energy: 75, Min. Skill: 6) - Increases the health of a wounded ally. Heals 1-30 points of damage plus 1-15 for each level of spell strength.

Mass Restore (Essence: 20, Spell Energy: 150, Min. Skill: 7) Cures damage and hostile effects on all nearby allies.

Chapter 12: Credits

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