**Rolan’s Quest Gameplay Style**

This guide will start high level, then dig deeper into the lower bowels of Rolan’s Quest.

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# 1 Controller

* We have the four directions on the DPad
* We have the four face buttons (usually in a diamond shape on the controller)
* The four face buttons on the controller in this document will be called:
  + Action button
  + Hammer button
  + Special button
  + Menu button
* The Start button on the controller will bring up the high-level meu with the options Resume, Load, Save, Settings, and Quit.

## 1.1 Controller Customization

The user can map each button to whatever key they like on a customization screen.

# 2 Game Basics

## 2.1 Items

### 2.1.1 Item Bag

Rolan will have an Item Bag which will contain standard and rare items. When in the bag, the user will see the items, and the count of each item. We will decide what the max of each item is when we are in the balancing stage of development.

### 2.1.2 Standard Items

These will be “assist” items, such as healing potions, temporary buffs, etc. They can be bought or found. There will be a limit of how many of each item Rolan can carry at any given time.

### 2.1.3 Rare Items

Rare items are special items such as one-time-use single-increment-stat boosts (these will only be found, not bought). Something like “Strength +1”, which is a permanent upgrade to Strength, but can only be used once. These will be rare and will be in Rolan’s standard Item Bag.

### 2.1.4 Key Items

These items are story items and are only used to unlock events in order to progress in the game. The items in this list are read-only; they cannot be used (they will be used automatically in the game but even after use will remain in this Key Items list). For example, you can get a jail key. The key will appear in Key Items. But to use it, you just go to the jail door and press the Action button to open it. It will remain in the Key Items list forever and will serve no further purpose. Their purpose of remaining in the list are to give the player remembrance of various points in the game they have been. “Oh yeah, I remember the jail key. That part was fun!”

## 2.2 Equipment

### 2.2.1 Equipment Bag

Rolan will have an equipment bag which will contain armor and weapons.

### 2.2.2 Equipment

Items the player has equipped. Contains the weapon, defensive items, and one amulet. Some equipment can contain a stats boost attached to it or other benefit. For example, if you equip a certain helmet, it can boost your strength by 2. Equipment can be either bought or found. Equipment can be changed during battle and basically at any non-paused area of the game (the player cannot change equipment during a dialog sequence, but can change equipment during a boss battle, for example). Equipment is changed in the menu only. The weapon is permanent and cannot be changed. It will be displayed in the Equipment screen so the player sees what he has and what mode his weapon is in. See Weapon Modes in this article to get more information on that aspect. All equipment except for the sword can be sold. All equipment will automatically be added to your inventory. But it will show a really quick prompt so you can see what you got.

Types of equipment:

**Helmet**

**Body**

**Grieves**

**Amulet**

### 2.2.3 Amulets

Amulets are for stat boosts or other special purposes only. For example, the player can equip an “anti-poison” amulet, and now a poisonous area does no damage to the player. Or he can equip a “floating” amulet, and now he can pass large gaps. Amulets can be either found or bought at the equipment store (found amulets will generally be stronger). The player can equip only one amulet at a time.

## 2.3 Character Stats

### 2.3.1 HP

Hit points. Gets restored at an inn, via item, special, or save point.

### 2.3.2 Strength

Determines the damage the player will inflict from his primary weapon.

### 2.3.3 Defense

Determines how much damage will be inflicted on the player from physical attacks.

### 2.3.4 Special

Determines how strong Rolan’s specials are.

### 2.3.5 Special Defense

Determines how good Rolan’s defense is against enemy specials.

### 2.3.6 Luck

Partially determines the likelihood of receiving a fragment/item drop from a fallen enemy, and the contents of some treasure chests. Also determines the chance of a critical strike on an enemy.

## 2.4 Specials

### 2.4.1 Sonic Forge

When a player receives a fragment, it charges up his Sonic Forge, which is used by his Specials. Sort of similar to Magic Points, but these go up by finding fragments **only**, **not** by an inn or save point. Sonic Forge will have a maximum, so the player will need to choose his Specials carefully. For example, a Heaven’s Judgment attack can take 80 Sonic Forge points, and if he only had 100, he will only have 20 points left! The maximum amount can be increased by stat boost items or by leveling up.

### 2.4.2 Specials

Either healing, temporary buff, or attacking move. The player will gain stronger skills later in the game. Specials can be leveled up by using them. Leveling up a special will make it stronger. These are similar to “magic” in most other games. Each special use will consume some of the player’s Sonic Forge. Some specials can be crafted, others are gained by leveling up, and others are gained by reaching a story point.

## 2.5 Sword modes

The player can only carry one weapon at a time. However, via certain story points or by crafting, he can change the mode of his sword. The player can change modes at any time, during battle or out. Some examples of modes are “Ice” which will give the sword a blue hint and be strong against fire enemies. Another mode can be “Ranged”, which will be good against far away enemies but weak against nearby enemies. Some modes can be used to solve puzzles. For example, he can run across an ice wall that can only be taken down by a fire-mode sword. I got this idea from the game Crystalis, so check that game out or read about how it works to see where I am going with this. Changing modes does not cost the player anything and can be done at any time. In some cases, the player will get a new mode, say Fire, and think to himself “Wow, I saw a few ice walls a while back that I can now get past. Where were they again? I should check them out and see what is there!”. A special gem may be obtained by getting a late-game mode, going back to a very early point in the game, and using that new mode and locating the gem. This will require the player to retain a good memory of where he has been and what areas he wasn’t able to figure out how to get past.

### 2.5.1 TODO: Choose Sword Modes

**Spectral Sword** - a puzzle sword, virtually does nothing, no damage, no puzzle opening abilities, until you get to the haunted forest stage where you can use it to kill the

ghosts and open spectral passageways

**Leaf Blade** - \*Deals leaf damage to enemies, \*\*Allows Rolan to drain's enemy's HP per hit.

**Fire Blade** - \*Deals additional damage to enemy. \*Plus burning condition to the enemy gradually reduse their HP. \*\*Allows Rolan to burn non passable trees

**Ice Blade** -\* Deals, frost damage to enemies, and slows enemy's movement and attack. \*\*Allows rolan to turn water to ice.

**Thunder Blade** - \*Deals, electric damage to enemies, and Increases Rolan's Attack speed x2. \*\*Allows rolan run faster than normal.

**Wind Blade** - \*Deals wind damage to enemies, \*\*allows Rolan to Jump and glide.

**Venom Blade** - \*Deals poison damage to enemies, slowing enemy's attack and damage Hp per sec

Secret Sword Modes: Are hard to get modes I guess.

**Light Saber** - Full Damage with a speed of light!!

**Time Blade** - deals damage based from how many hours you already have playing the game.

**Legend Blade** - deals damage based from how many high level monster Rolan already killed.

**Rage Blade** - the more damage/hits rolan takes, the more damage it causes. You can use this in an area where there are a lot of little enemies that causes small but frequent hits.

### 2.5.2 Non-damaging swords and use in puzzles

Swords with special non-damaging abilities will display a prompt when that special ability can be used:

Example 1. When you're fighting a boss and you're using the wind sword which special ability is to jump, every time that boss makes huge swings, a prompt will quickly show, telling you to jump by pressing the attack button. Get the timing wrong and you'll still get hit.

Example 2. puzzle solving - when you're using the wind sword and you come by a button that's out of your reach, say, there's lava in between you and the button/lever, once you get to the edge of the ground, a prompt will show up and tell you to press the attack button to jump.

The particular sword mode must be equipped to see the prompt.

## 2.6 Gems

***Effect of gems:***

1. new sword modes

2. permanent stat boost

3. new special

For simplicity, we can classify gems into 3 - story gems, rare gems, normal gems

### 2.6.1 Story gems

Sword modes necessary for progress in the game are craftable from story gems, but it's the only thing craftable from that specific gem so players won't get stuck because they chose the wrong sword mode to craft.

### 2.6.2 Rare gems

powerful effect. Some will allow choices of effects, some will only have one craftable effect.

### 2.6.3 Normal gems

allow you to choose between a number of effects.

## 2.7 Sword Upgrades

The player can receive special gems that will upgrade his sword upon Craft. There will be a limited number of sword upgrades in the game and each one is a significant upgrade to damage (damage multiplier increase). Some of these rare gems can come from beating a boss. Some are given as part of the story. One or two are hidden. These are universal damage multipliers regardless of sword mode.

## 2.8 Crafting

Crafting is a special system in the game. The player will collect rare Gems, either through the story, in hidden or special areas, or after defeating a boss. When the player is outside of battle, the Crafting menu item will be enabled. In there he can select the Gem. Some Gems will be specific. For example, they can give the weapon a new mode and that is it. Some will give the player a permanent stat boost. Some will give the player a new Special and that is it. Some will give the player a choice. They can choose to learn one of two Specials, but not both. After the craft, the gem is destroyed and can never be used again. Gems are rare items, so the craft is a very special moment for the player and usually a huge moment of achievement for them. They will be like “I got the fire sword mode! Now those ice monsters are toast!!!”.

## 2.9 Achievements

Bonuses for accomplishing certain tasks. For example, if you kill a certain number of monsters, you will get a “Monster Hunter” achievement. These serve no purpose other than a mental “Oooh yeah, badass!”. These will be integrated into Steam’s Achievements system. Unlocking achievements can be addictive for players and gives the game replayability. At any point the player can view their achievements in the Menu system.

1. Regular achievements - non-secret achievements obtainable by just playing the game linearly like "Noble Sacrifice - sacrifice yourself to save Lulu "

2. Special achievements - hidden from the list in the main menu. These are mostly related to secrets. For example - an achievement like "Field explorer - discover 100 secret rooms" will be a special achievement and not shown to the player until he gets it. This way we won't mess up the secret itself.

## 2.9.1 Regular achievements

Regular achievements will be shown on the screen blanked out if they have not been achieved yet.

## 2.9.2 Special achievements

Special achievements will not be shown on the screen if they have not been achieved yet. This keeps certain things in the game secret from the player, and in some cases they will respond with “Oh, I didn’t know there was an achievement for that!”.

## 2.10 Leveling System

The leveling system in Rolan’s Quest is based on experience gained from enemies. Upon gaining a new level there will a small boost to all stats, and one point the player can distribute to his stats (HP, Strength, Defense, Luck, Special Defense, and Special). There will be some pre-defined levels where the player will get a brand new Special move.

## 2.11 Gold

Gold is automatically added to the player’s inventory after each enemy kill. Some chests will also contain gold. Gold is used at the Inn to restore health. It can also be used at item or equipment shops/vendors, or at special points in the game (a troll on a bridge can require a toll to pass, or a boat will require Gold to let you on board).

## 2.12 New Game+

New Game Plus is purely for replayability. What it does is when the player finishes the game, he has the option to carry over certain elements into his new game. There is usually a factor that determines how many things you can carry over. Like if you collect X amount of a certain item from exploring, you can carry Y many things over. The better the carry-over item, the more of X you need. The “Tales of” games do this well. Some examples of things that can be carried over are your level, your Specials, your equipment, your money, etc. You can also make the next play-through either harder or easier by simply having the options of “2x health” or “1/2 damage” or “2x experience”. Or we can go crazy and have one that says “Play as Lulu” – Lulu and Rolan would get reversed.

### 2.12.1 New Game + options

2x strength

½ strength

3x health

½ health

2x experience

Play as Lulu

Bring sword modes

Bring specials

Unlock new special

Double fragments

½ experience

Unlock super sword mode

# 3 General Gameplay

In this section we will discuss how the game will play in each setting of the game. This is a top-down game. The player walks on either the X or Y axis (or both). The style of play is similar to The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past. The general game play style is similar to that game.

## 3.1 Towns

In Towns, Rolan will move with the DPad. The Action button will speak to people. The Action button will advance dialog and choose dialog options. Some villagers will stand still. Others will move either up, down, left, or right; they will also pause on occasion. And a few will walk or run along a predefined path. For example, some kids may run around a set of bushes constantly. Towns will be animated, with flowing water, moving flowers. Some towns will have birds that fly overhead, or hop around on the ground. The hopping birds will fly away if Rolan gets too close. The towns will feel alive. The Action button talks to people. The Hammer button swings the hammer – towns will have secrets or fragment elements. The Special button shows the Special menu – but only friendly Specials will be allowed like healing. The Menu button will show the menu. Rolan will not be able to attack in the town if it is in a friendly state. A town in an unfriendly state is considered an enemy area.

Rolan has the ability to push a villager if they are in the way – with the exception of villagers running on a predefined path or standing still. Predefined path villagers will just stop moving if Rolan is in their way.

There will be secrets in the towns to acquire items, equipment, fragments, gems, gold, or amulets. One example of a secret would be a walk-through wall that leads you to another room that contains a treasure chest with a gem.

## 3.2 Cut scenes

If the player wishes to skip a cut scene, he may do so by pressing the Hammer button at any time. A prompt will show up asking him if he wants to skip the cut scene.

## 3.3 Enemy areas/Dungeons

The controls for enemy areas and dungeons are the same. DPad walks. Action button swings the sword. Hammer button swings the hammer. Swinging the hammer can be used against environment items (like turning a rock into a canon), or against certain monsters that are weak against the hammer. Menu button shows the menu. The Special button shows the Specials menu. Escape button brings up the high-level menu. When in any menu, the game is paused. There is a state in which Rolan can become stunned. In this state none of the buttons do anything and the player must wait… and pray.

Enemy areas and dungeons will contain treasure chests (some out in the open, some acquired by a secret or puzzle) which can contain items, equipment, amulets, fragments, gold, or gems.

### 3.3.1 Dungeons

Dungeons function as larger fighting areas, and usually contain more treasures and upgrades, and more bosses. Keep in mind – a boss can appear at any time. Even from basic story progression inside of a town. They are not relegated to dungeons like Zelda. Dungeons typically have more puzzles than fighting areas, and are more integrated and tight. Meaning, things can happen in a dungeon that will affect another part of the dungeon. The player can hit a switch that will open up a part of the dungeon that was previously inaccessible. Think of dungeons as a character in the game. Each has its lore. Some puzzles will encompass the entire dungeon.

Most dungeons in Zelda games are quite well designed. I would use those as reference. Each has a central style that the entire dungeon is structured around. A ton of thought and love is put into each dungeon.

# 4 Puzzles

In either the town or enemy areas/dungeons, there will be puzzles. This is where the style of gameplay may differ per puzzle. Some general puzzle types follow:

## 4.1 Environment/Hammer Smash puzzles

These puzzles will typically consist of a path that is blocked. The player will need to locate the object to hit with their hammer. The object will then allow them to pass the blocked obstacle. For example, the player may come across a locked gate. Rolan hits a nearby rock with his hammer. The rock turns into a canon. Rolan activates the canon, which blasts the door open.

Sometimes an incorrect smash will reveal an enemy or bomb or other nasty surprise.

## 4.2 Timing puzzles

These puzzles involve memorizing a timing pattern, and when the time is up, hitting a button.

## 4.3 Switch puzzles

These puzzles involve stepping on a switch which changes something elsewhere. Many of these can be organized in a puzzle-like fashion. For example, a floor can consist of tiles that have spikes, and those that don’t. A switch can flip them so the ones that have spikes get rid of them, and the ones that don’t get them. Another switch flips them again. This can be developed into a puzzle. Switches can move objects ala the ghost train in Final Fantasy 6.

## 4.4 Memory puzzles

One area of a dungeon may show you a sequence. You must remember that sequence for you must repeat it later.

## 4.5 Picking up/moving objects

Put the objects in their right place to solve this puzzle.

## 4.6 Dungeon-wide puzzles

A switch in on area of a dungeon can activate something way far away on the other side of the dungeon that the player must travel to.

## 4.7 Danger floors

Floors that switch between two modes – dangerous and safe, on a set timer. There are various safe spots that the player will need to run to when the floor is in “safe” mode. If the player is caught in a damage area when the floor is in dangerous mode, he either dies or takes damage.

## 4.8 Etc.

Puzzles are the epitome of creativity. Have fun!

# 5 Enemies

Enemies will vary widely. Some may stay in one state (or “mode”). Some will switch between states. An example of a two-state enemy is the tree stump. He will stay in “idle” mode until the player gets close. When the player gets too close, he will switch to “active” mode and attack the player, and then constantly walk towards him. At some point he will switch back into “idle” mode.

Some enemy types:

* Annoying but with large numbers
* Interacts or limits your movement on environment
* Really strong but is only seen alone
* Specialized/gimmicky enemies with interesting attacks or funny tricks
* Boss/storyline encounters

Here are some basic gameplay styles enemies can contain:

* Wander around aimlessly but is pretty fast and can walk into on accident
* Shoot a projectile at player
* Go around an object endlessly and is indestructible - spiked
* Spiked enemy - stands still
* Spears falling from sky at players’ location
* Piece of enemy falls off, flies at player
* Shoot projectiles in either straight or diagonal
* Speed rush attack in direction of player when the player is either directly vertical or horizontal to them (think snakes from Zelda 1), otherwise they wander around aimlessly.
* Fly in circular motion
* Fly in parabola
* Wander around aimlessly, but with slight pause in steps.
* Chuck spear in direction of player
* Comes up and out of ground, otherwise wanders aimlessly.
* Throw whip
* Shoots laser (usually a warning prior to attack), goes into freeze mode so you can't attack it.
* Flame follows player for a period of time - may be launched by an enemy
* Spikes coming out of ground.
* Makes you fly back when you strike it - these enemies follow you
* Ring of fire goes in a circle around a pillar or block - indestructible
* Bomb thrower towards player - distance thrown is only so far
* Hopper that doesn't follow player – moves randomly
* Hopper that follows player
* Bees that wander aimlessly but fast
* Water enemy - shoots fireball
* Enemies with defensive barrier in front of them.
* Fire enemy who goes diagonally and bounces off of anything it touches - indestructible
* Random electrify = shocks and damages player if he attacks when they are electrified.
* Moves in opposite direction as you, can only be hurt from attack on back or side
* Spiked, moves along predefined path – indestructible

# 6 Bosses

Each dungeon will contain one or more bosses. However, bosses are not relegated to dungeons. Some may appear at random. Some may appear when you were least expecting it (they player should save often). Some may appear as part of story progression. For example, when Rolan returns to his burning village, the general can be a boss fight – purely out of story progression. There was no dungeon pre-cursor. Just Boom! Boss. It’s good to keep the player on their toes, never allow them to feel 100% safe.

Gameplay-wise, each boss should be unique. Each will have its own style of attack and its own weakness. Some bosses may just be a test of player reflexes – Aghanim from A Link to the Past is a good example of this – I suggest looking it up.

But they should *all* be fun to fight. And the player just may see the same boss again at some point in the future ☺, but changed a little.

# 7 Saving/Continuing

Saving is common among these types of games. The player is given an unlimited amount of saves – however, there is a counter that counts how many times the player has saved the game. If they beat the game without saving at all, they get a super rare achievement.

## 7.1 Checkpoints

Rolan’s Quest will incorporate a checkpoint system at various points so if the player dies, he doesn’t lose too much progress. However, the player should never completely rely on checkpoints – they may doom themselves if they go into a point with very little health and cannot beat a bad baddie. A checkpoint does not save any progress – it is all in memory. If the game is turned off, checkpoint data is erased.

## 7.2 Inns

The player may save their game and regain their health at an inn in a town.

## 7.3 Story point

Some points in the story will ask the player if they want to save (typically before a boss fight or something major happening).

## 7.4 Save points

Dungeons will contain Save points where the player may save their progress. Typical locations for these would be right before a boss battle.

# 8 Enemy drops

Enemies will give out gold automatically. However, they will also occasionally drop items, equipment, fragments, or gems. Fragments and weaker items will just show as an icon above the player’s head. Like “Meat+”. Equipment will show up in a quick modal dialog box. Drop rates are affected by Luck.

# 9 Strongest Item/Special:

-The thought here is that you can get a rare Gem. You then have an option. Do you want to craft a Speical with the Gem, or a new sword mode?

-this story choice could happen right before the big battle. Before Rolan goes to face the dark lord. If he choose to craft the special, it will make it easier for him to defeat

the enemies leading up to the dark lord, but he'll have a much harder time when facing the boss/lulu herself.

# 10 Map

The map will reveal itself gradually as the player explores the world.