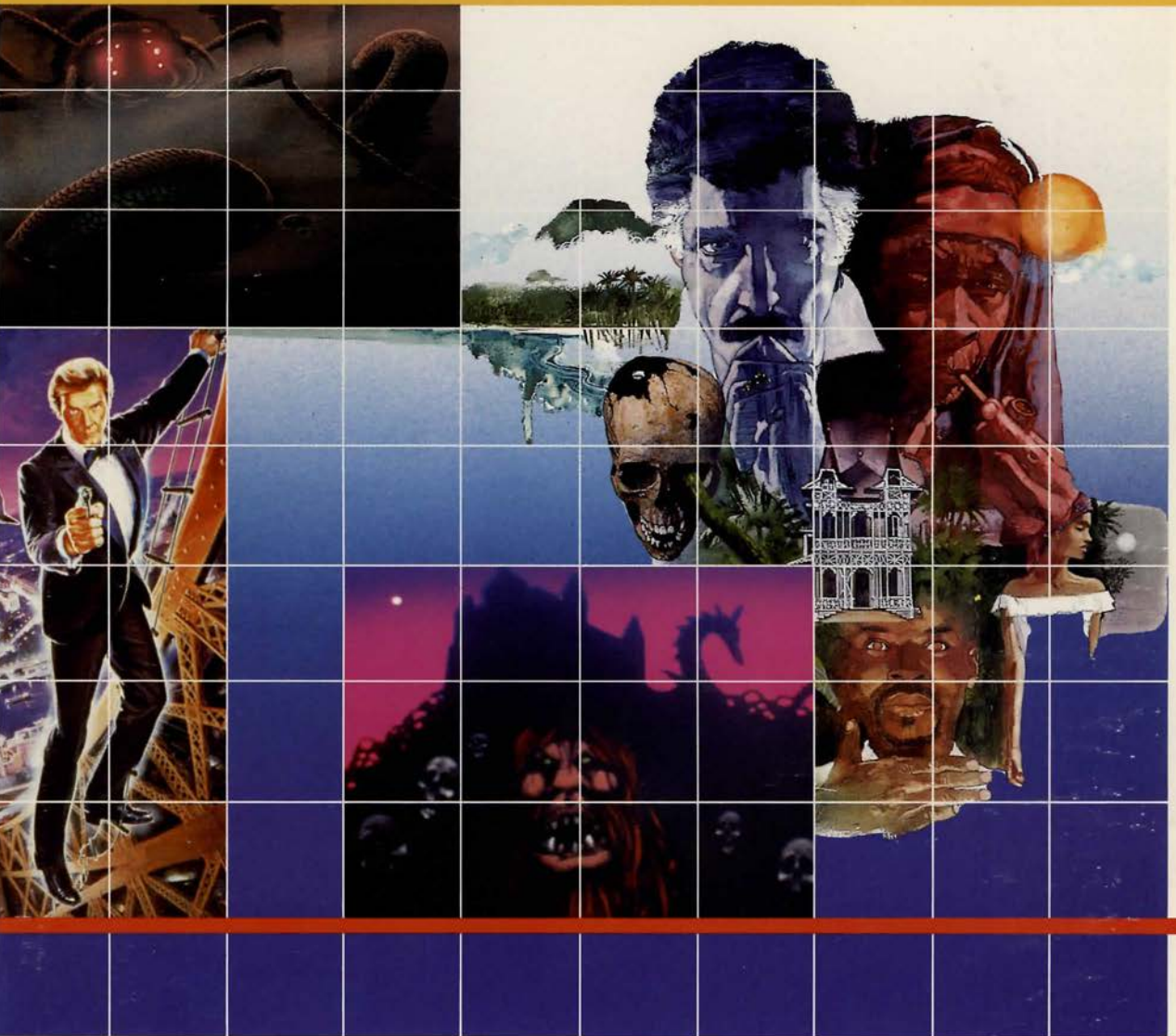


# An Introduction to Interactive Fiction





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# Interactive Fiction



Mindscape, Inc.  
3444 Dundee Road  
Northbrook, Illinois 60062  
An SFN Company



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## AN INTRODUCTION TO INTERACTIVE FICTION

You enter a story—and suddenly, the strangest things happen. You're somewhere you've never been before, and nearly everywhere you turn there's a decision to be made and intriguing characters to meet. If you're not clever—and careful—your next move could be your last.

You've just embarked on an interactive fiction adventure created by Angelsoft for Mindscape, and you're about to confront some of the toughest challenges you've ever called "fun."

In interactive fiction *you* are the central character in a story. The computer becomes a kind of "live novel"—it provides the setting, introduces the action, and narrates the story. But it's *you* who determines, through your actions and decisions, how the story proceeds. As you progress, bear in mind that we've included tricks, traps, and puzzles to confound you—you'll need to be your crafty best to find the happy ending in *these* stories.



## MOVING THROUGH THE STORY

While each adventure is unique, all share certain basic elements: a landscape, vehicles, characters, and props. The LANDSCAPE is the setting for the story. It unfolds as you move through a series of locations, which can range from fancy parlors to mountaintops to parking lots. You may travel through the landscape on foot or by VEHICLES that you find along the way. Within the landscape you also meet your fellow CHARACTERS. Like your favorite novels or movies, interactive fiction adventures are inhabited by beings who intrigue your mind, challenge your wits, and fire your imagination. Characters may be a source for obtaining PROPS. Props are objects most often found within the landscape itself. They can help you solve puzzles, but they often are everyday objects which you need as you move through the story.

While in a story, you always have several options. You can move within the landscape, manipulate props, ride vehicles, or interact with characters. Interacting with the story is easy; simply type in your command, question, or response. When you are asked a yes/no question, type Y or N. These programs recognize full sentences as well as single words and abbreviations. Just type in what you want to do when you see the prompt —>. You may capitalize and punctuate, but you don't have to. You should, however, use a question mark when you are talking to characters and want to ask a question. And when you want to address a character directly, type that character's name and then follow the name with a comma before typing the rest of your statement or question.

No matter what you enter, you always receive a response. If you get a wildly unexpected or vague response, you may need to vary your approach or your words to gain more information and unfold more of the plot. (See the enclosed Reference Card for more information about conversing with the adventures.)



# COMMANDS

Although each game has its own vocabulary, which you'll discover as you play, there is a standard set of commands common to most games. The following list includes these standard commands and some of their abbreviations and synonyms. You'll note that a Reference Card accompanies each game and lists commands specific to that game.

TAKE (PICK UP, GRAB)

DROP (PUT DOWN)

THROW (TOSS)

WEAR

REMOVE (TAKE OFF)

READ

BREAK

KILL (MURDER)

OPEN

CLOSE

LOCK

UNLOCK

GO

TRADE

GIVE (I WANT)

PUT \_\_\_\_ IN \_\_\_\_

PUT \_\_\_\_ ON \_\_\_\_

WHO IS \_\_\_\_

WHERE IS \_\_\_\_

HAVE YOU \_\_\_\_

EXAMINE (EX or X): gives a detailed description of a prop or character.

EXAMINE \_\_\_\_ CAREFULLY (EX CAREFULLY or X CAREFULLY): may yield additional characteristics or details of a prop or character.

LOOK (L): gives the full description of a location.

INVENTORY (INV): tells you what props you are carrying and what you are wearing at any point in the game.

The sample game at the end of this manual illustrates how some of these commands may be used.

## MOVES

There are several ways to move through the landscape.

You can move from adjacent place to adjacent place by typing in any of the four basic directions of the compass, plus up and down:

N, NORTH, GO NORTH  
S, SOUTH, GO SOUTH  
E EAST, GO EAST  
W, WEST, GO WEST  
  
U, UP, GO UP  
D, DOWN, GO DOWN

There may be times when you want to move more efficiently. With a bit of skill, you should be able to take advantage of various types of vehicles. Vehicles may be powered with the following types of commands:

RIDE BLACK HORSE  
RIDE THE SLOW BOAT TO CHINA  
TAKE CAB TO STATION  
  
OPEN XJ6 DOOR  
GET IN XJ6  
CLOSE XJ6 DOOR  
DRIVE XJ6 NORTH TO MIAMI BAY

# PROPS

Props can be manipulated in a variety of ways. For example, you can:

PUT LITTLE GREEN FROG ON LILY POND  
PUT KRYPTONITE IN LEAD BOX  
READ LOVE LETTER  
THROW DISHES IN SINK  
WEAR KEYS  
TAKE OFF LEATHER VEST  
BREAK MIRROR WITH HAMMER

As you move through the story you will be confronted with doors, gates, lids, etc., which may be closed or locked. Opening them may require some ingenuity.

For example:

UNLOCK THE JEWELRY BOX WITH THE SILVER KEY  
OPEN PEARLY GATES  
GO THROUGH THE GREEN DOOR  
PRY OPEN THE MOLDY CHEST WITH THE CROWBAR



# CHARACTERS

You can examine and converse with the characters you meet in your travels. Getting to know characters can sometimes be tricky, and you would do well to try a variety of approaches when conversing with them. Beware, though, as some characters may be more interested in your demise than in your conversation.

When you are talking to a character, you do not have to address him or her (or it!) by name, but doing so can be a useful form of flattery. If there are two characters in the same location, using one of their names can help keep a conversation less confusing.

For example:

LEONARD, TELL ME, DID YOU NOTICE ANYTHING UNUSUAL DURING THE SHOW?

might guarantee a more sensible response if both Leonard and his talking dog are in the room at the same time.

You can get information from characters by asking them questions or giving them commands:

DO YOU HAVE THE RAY GUN?  
TELL ME THE COLOR OF YOUR MOTHER'S HAIR  
PLEASE GIVE ME THE SPOILED MILK  
WILL YOU TRADE THE FLEECE?  
QUICK, CHARLIE, THROW ME YOUR KNIFE

Characters can also take things from you, or pick up props before you do, so be careful.

As you play, you may find yourself getting lost within the landscape or puzzling over a false move. Here are a few game strategies that might help you:

### **Read Carefully**

Otherwise you could miss subtle clues that might help you during the game.

### **Make a Map**

When you enter the story, you're in uncharted territory. Drawing a map as you make your moves can help you keep track of where you are, where you've been, and what you've found, and where you can get a vehicle.

### **Save Your Position**

When you sense danger, or if you're about to do something rash (e.g., jump off a cliff), it's a good idea to save your current position before proceeding. (See the Reference Card for instructions for SAVING.)

### **Print Your Game**

If you want a detailed record of your game, you can use your printer to record your progress. You may start (or stop) printing at any point in your game. (See the Reference Card for details.)

The following sample game, *Pavlova's Pigs*, will give you a taste of what lies in store.



You're being feted at the White House for capturing an international terrorist. The President and First Lady are giving a banquet in your honor, complete with headline entertainment—Leonard Fell and his talking dog, Swoop.

A hush falls over the Green Room as you settle into your uncomfortable gilt chair and wait for the show to begin. A crystal chandelier sparkles above your head, and through large windows on either side of a huge oak door to the north you can see the well-manicured White House lawn and the Presidential swimming pool. Just as the band strikes up, the audience is startled by a resounding gunshot, followed by a splash!

All eyes are on you. This glittering company expects you—the heroic guest of honor—to spring into action...

—> OPEN OAK DOOR

You bolt from your seat, dash across the room, and fling open the oak door.

—> NORTH

You run through the open oak door, out onto the White House lawn. Out of the corner of your eye, you glimpse a large, burly man running through the parking lot, dripping wet. In a second he's melted into the crowds on Pennsylvania Avenue.

Before you is the Olympic-sized pool in which the President swims his laps every afternoon at five o'clock. In the pool, floating face down, is one of the President's Secret Service men—shot through the head. Beside him floats a man's white wool sport jacket.

—> TAKE MAN FROM POOL

You drag the drowned man out of the pool and lay him on the grass. There's nothing you can do for him now.

—> TAKE JACKET FROM POOL

You take the jacket from the pool.

—> EXAMINE JACKET



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This is a man's white wool sport jacket. It's dripping wet.

—> X JACKET CAREFULLY

In the pocket of the white jacket is a plastic bag filled with small green capsules.

—> TAKE PLASTIC BAG

You take the plastic bag from the pocket of the white jacket.

—> INV

You are holding your gun, the white jacket, and the plastic bag in your hands, and wearing the tuxedo.

—> LOOK

You are standing beside the Presidential swimming pool. To the south, an oak door to the White House stands open. To the east is a caretaker's house and to the west is a parking lot.

—> N

You can't go that way; you'll fall in the pool.

—> GO THROUGH THE OAK DOOR

You've returned to the Green Room.

Leonard and Swoop are here.

Leonard Fell is short and slightly built. There are shiny patches on his tux, he's wearing an extremely obvious toupee, and his teeth need work.

Swoop is a little yellow mongrel with an intelligent gleam in his eyes. Judging by his diamond collar, he's the star of the Fell and Swoop duo.

—> DID YOU NOTICE ANYTHING UNUSUAL DURING THE SHOW?

Swoop: Well, the audience really wasn't as responsive as usual. I suppose the humor was too subtle for them.

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—> LEONARD, DID YOU NOTICE ANYTHING UNUSUAL DURING THE SHOW?

Leonard: Not really. I couldn't keep my eyes off that great-looking woman in the red dress. I've got a date with her tonight at her hog farm in West Virginia.

—> WHO IS THE WOMAN IN THE RED DRESS, LEONARD?

Leonard: Her name is Olga Pavlova; she's a Nobel Prize-winning Russian scientist. Well, I've got to be going now. I don't want to keep Olga waiting.

He exits to the north, with Swoop following close at his heels.

The First Lady just arrived.

—> GOOD EVENING

First Lady: Good evening. I'm very worried about the President's safety. If it weren't for this soirée, he would have been in that pool.

—> DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT OLGA PAVLOVA?

First Lady: She's been quite popular at Washington parties ever since she defected from the Soviet Union five years ago.

—> WHY DOES SHE HAVE A HOG FARM?

First Lady: How should I know? I thought YOU were going to help ME.

The First Lady hands you a set of keys: Here take these. There's a car waiting for you in the parking lot.

—> INV

You are holding your gun, the white jacket, the plastic bag, and the keys in your hands, and wearing the tuxedo.

—> N

You've returned to the swimming pool.

—> W

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You've reached the White House parking lot. You see the low-slung Jaguar XJ6.

—> OPEN XJ6 DOOR

The XJ6 door is now open.

—> GET IN XJ6

You slide into the driver's seat.

—> CLOSE XJ6 DOOR

The XJ6 door is now closed.

—> DRIVE WEST

You drive for a couple of hours until you reach Olga Pavlova's farm, deep in the backwoods of West Virginia.

You are in the driveway of Olga's huge white farmhouse. To the east is a grain silo, to the west is the filthiest hog pen you've ever seen, and to the north is the entrance to the farmhouse.

—> OPEN XJ6 DOOR

The XJ6 door is now open.

—> GET OUT

You get out, and stand next to the car.

Olga is here.

Leonard and Swoop are here.

Olga is a raven-haired beauty of ample proportions. She's wearing a clinging red silk dress—a strange contrast with the sturdy, mud-splattered farm boots on her feet.

—> EXAMINE LEONARD CAREFULLY

Leonard doesn't look pleased to see you.



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Suddenly, Olga's bodyguard, a large, burly Russian wearing white wool trousers and a set of brass knuckles lunges at you from behind a tree.

—> FLIP THE RUSSIAN

He lands flat on his back in the mud, but his free hand triggers a mechanism that releases the hogs, who immediately stampede.

—> KILL THE RAMPAGING HOG HERD

Are you sure you want to kill the hogs?

—> YES

In this sample game, we won't take you far enough to find out whether you kill the hogs or the hogs kill you. But we will tell you that in YOUR adventures, you'll meet dangers much greater than a mere herd of angry oinkers. So get ready for action—and good luck!





Mindscape, Inc.  
3444 Dundee Road  
Northbrook, IL 60062

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