

THE FIRST APVENTURE, REVIEWED

Dungeon Campaign

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Photo 1: A partially explored maze in *Dungeon Campaign*. The red and green squares in the middle of the display are the explorers and a group of zombies, respectively, that are about to do battle. The thick white lines denote a stairway, while the light blue square near the bottom represents a hazard of unknown kind (at the moment).

One of my favorite games for the Apple II is *Dungeon Campaign*, from Synergistic Software (see "At a Glance" for details). I cannot think of a game that offers so much entertainment per unit of program. *Dungeon Campaign* is an example of fine game design and expert use of limited resources. Even though it does not use either game paddles or high-resolution graphics, it is far more entertaining than most games that do.

When the game begins, the computer draws four levels of mazes and erases them (this takes a minute or two). It has just created the maze that you will explore. After the full maze has been created, the program places you in the middle of a blank area that represents the top level of the maze. You use five 1-keystroke commands (U, D, R, L and J) to move your explorer group (shown as a red square) up, down, right or left (J for jump can precede any of these commands to jump over a square that might contain danger). As you move in the maze, adjacent walls become visible, allowing you to explore the level you are on. If you are lucky in your explorations, you will find some treasure, your group of explorers will not be totally destroyed, and you will leave the bottom level of the maze, thus winning the game.

The object, of course, is to find treasure; but in your explorations you may find stairways, pit traps, monsters, poison gas, man-eating dragons, and several other inhabitants; I will not tell you about these others to give you the surprise of discovering them. Combat with different kinds of monsters is resolved by die rolls for each side and subsequent computation (all done by the program); this gives the program an entertaining *Dungeons and Dragons*-like flavor.

The program is, at times, subtle. For example, sometimes the bottom level is drawn with the single exit blocked off (the maze is randomly created for each game). At first, I thought there was no way to leave the maze and win the game. But, in a later game, I discovered a "magic carpet" treasure that can be used only once to take your explorers over walls. This is an indication of the sophistication of this seemingly simple (but always enjoyable) game. ■

At a Glance

Name	versions supplied in each package)
<i>Dungeon Campaign</i>	
Type	Computer
Low-resolution color graphics game	Apple II or Apple II Plus, with 32 K bytes of memory (16 K bytes for cassette Integer BASIC version)
Manufacturer	Documentation
Synergistic Software 5221 120th Ave. SE Bellevue, WA 98006 (206) 226-3216	Instruction sheet plus instructions in program.
Price	Features
\$15 cassette, \$17.50 disk	Sound effects through Apple II speaker
Format	Audience
Cassette tape or 5-inch disk	Game enthusiasts of all ages (simple enough for children)
Language	
Applesoft and Integer BASIC versions (both	