= Telengard =

Telengard is a 1982 role @-@ playing dungeon crawler video game developed by Daniel Lawrence and published by Avalon Hill . The player explores a dungeon , fights monsters with magic , and avoids traps in real time without any set mission other than surviving . Lawrence first wrote the game as DND , a 1976 version of Dungeons & Dragons for the DECsystem @-@ 10 mainframe computer . He continued to develop DND at Purdue University as a hobby , rewrote the game for the Commodore PET 2001 after 1978 , and ported it to Apple II + , TRS @-@ 80 , and Atari 800 platforms before Avalon Hill found the game at a convention and licensed it for distribution . Its Commodore 64 release was the most popular . Reviewers noted Telengard 's similarity to Dungeons and Dragons . RPG historian Shannon Appelcline noted the game as one of the first professionally produced computer role @-@ playing games , and Gamasutra 's Barton considered Telengard consequential in what he deemed " The Silver Age " of computer role @-@ playing games preceding the golden age of the late 1980s . Some of the game 's dungeon features , such as altars , fountains , teleportation cubes , and thrones , were adopted by later games such as Tunnels of Doom .

= = Gameplay = =

In Telengard , the player travels alone through a dungeon fraught with monsters , traps , and treasures in a manner similar to the original Dungeons & Dragons . The game has 50 levels with two million rooms , 20 monster types , and 36 spells . It has no missions or quests , and its only goal is to survive and improve the player character . The game is set in real time and cannot be paused , so the player must visit an " inn " to save their game progress . In the early releases (e.g. , Apple II) , the game world has no sound and is represented by ASCII characters , such as slashes for stairs and dollar signs for treasure . Unless the player enters a special cheat , they cannot resume progress upon dying .

The single @-@ player adventure begins by personalizing a player character . Each character has randomly generated values for their statistical character attributes : charisma , constitution , dexterity , intelligence , strength , and wisdom . While the algorithm stays the same , the player can randomize repeatedly for new character attribute distributions until satisfied . The player begins with a sword , armor , shield , and no money , and can only see his immediate surroundings , rather than the whole level . Monsters spawn randomly , and players have three options in battle : fight , use magic , or evade . Magic includes combative missiles , fireballs , lightning bolts , and turning the undead , as well as health regeneration and trap navigation . The effects of the game 's most complex spells are not outlined in the instruction manual and must be learned by trial and error . Like the game , the battle events are carried out in real time instead of in turns . Enemies increase in difficulty as the player progresses through the dungeon . They include both living and undead monsters such as elves , dragons , mummies , and wraiths . Defeating enemies awards experience points , which accrete to raise the player 's experience level and increase player stats . The player is rewarded with treasures that include magical weapons , armor items , and potions . Players can code their own features into the game .

= = Development = =

While a computer science student at Purdue University , Daniel Lawrence wrote several hobbyist computer games for the university 's PDP @-@ 11 RSTS / E mainframe computer , and one grew into Telengard . In his 1976 and 1977 college summers at home , he worked at BOCES in Spencerport , New York , where he wrote a dungeon crawl game called DND (not to be confused with dnd) in the BASIC programming language for the DECsystem @-@ 10 's TOPS @-@ 10 operating system . He had been influenced by the pen and paper Dungeons & Dragons . At college , he ported the game to Purdue 's PDP @-@ 11 RSTS / E. The game 's mechanics grew from conversations at the Purdue engineering building . Part of its " real @-@ time " nature descended

from the need to not have players occupy the few shared computer terminals for long .

In 1978 , Lawrence purchased the Commodore PET 2001 and no longer needed the university 's computer . He rewrote DND as Telengard within eight kilobytes of memory . Due to a lack of space , he designed the dungeon to be procedurally generated based on the player @-@ character 's position so the maps would not have to be stored in memory . Lack of memory was Lawrence 's primary design obstacle . Nevertheless , the final version almost completely used 32 kilobytes of memory . It was easily ported to the Apple II + and TRS @-@ 80 platforms due to their similar usage of the 8K BASIC programming language . The later Atari 800 port required a more complicated handling of string variables . The three ports were finished before Avalon Hill saw the game at a gaming convention and licensed it in 1982 as one of its first computer games . The IBM PC port required a rewrite into the C programming language ; the source code for this version was later lost . The Heath / Zenith CP / M version requires MBASIC . The game 's most popular port was for the Commodore 64 .

Matt Barton of Gamasutra reported that Lawrence 's DND (and consequently , his Telengard) was directly inspired by Whisenhunt and Wood 's dnd for PLATO , with its randomized dungeons and minimalist graphics , though Lawrence recalled in an interview that he had not seen or known of their game . Computer Gaming World 's " resident adventure game expert " wrote that Telengard was based on the earlier , public domain software Castle Telengard .

As the game 's BASIC source code was available , ports and remaster exist therefore by the fan community .

= = Reception and legacy = =

RPG historian Shannon Appelcline identifies Telengard as one of the first professionally produced computer role @-@ playing games . Gamasutra 's Barton described the game as a " pure dungeon crawler " for its lack of diversions , and noted its expansive dungeons as a " key selling point " . AllGame 's Earl Green remarked that the game 's mechanics were very similar in practice to Dungeons & Dragons , and Computer Gaming World 's Dick McGrath also thought the game " borrowed heavily " from the original such that he expected its creators to be thanked in the end credits , and Scorpia cited four specific similarities with Dungeons & Dragons .

Green described the game as both " exceedingly simple ... yet very addictive " and rated it four of five stars . McGrath wrote that he wanted to have more control over his money , and added that a store for purchasing upgrades would have been useful . He thought that games such as Dunjonquest and Maces and Magic handled this aspect better . McGrath suggested that the player draw their own map in the absence of an overview mapping system . He felt that his appreciation for the game grew with time and that it had the necessary hook to make him continually return and play again . Tony Roberts of Compute ! considered the Commodore 64 version of the game best for its enhanced graphics . Scorpia in 1993 stated that while Telengard was " interesting for its time , the game would be pretty dated today " compared to the Gold Box games ; " back then , however , it was hot stuff , and a fun way of passing the time " .

Barton of Gamasutra placed Telengard alongside Wizardry and the early Ultima series in what he deemed " The Silver Age " of computer role @-@ playing games that preceded the golden age of the late 1980s . Yet in 1992 , Computer Gaming World 's Gerald Graef wrote that Telengard and Temple of Apshai were " quickly overshadowed " by the Wizardry and Ultima series . Some of the game 's dungeon features , such as altars , fountains , teleportation cubes , and thrones , were adopted by later games such as Tunnels of Doom . The 1982 Sword of Fargoal similarly shared features . Barton wrote in 2007 that Telengard " still enjoys considerable appreciation today " and questioned whether the Diablo series was " but an updated Telengard " .