Dungeon Crawl Stone Soup manual

Manual

A. Overview

Crawl is a fun game in the grand tradition of similar games like Rogue, Hack and Moria. The objective is to travel deep into a subterranean cave complex and retrieve the Orb of Zot, guarded by many horrible and hideous creatures.

If you have never played Crawl (or a similar game) before, select the tutorial from the starting menu. The tutorial explains the interface in five easy lessons. Once you're familiar with the controls, you may want to play a few games using hints mode.

Detailed instructions for playing Crawl follow. To simplify this manual, we assume you're using the standard distribution and you've not changed the default options. If you don't want to read the whole manual and prefer a short summary of the important points, review the quick-start guide file (quickstart.txt) and learn as you play.

You can also read these documents while playing Crawl by hitting '?' at the help menu. A list of frequently asked questions about gameplay and design can be accessed by pressing '?Q' in the game.

While Dungeon Crawl is strictly a single player game, you can interact with others over a server. Connecting to a server opens several interesting options.

You can:

- watch other players and even communicate with them
- view your past games or those of others
- battle ghosts of other players
- compete using a common score list
- take part in the semiannual tournament
- play the most recent development version

A full list of available servers and information on how to connect to them can be found at: http://crawl.develz.org/wordpress/howto

The servers carry no guarantees, though they are generally always running.

There is also a lively IRC channel dedicated to Crawl at ##crawl on irc.freenode.net. You can ask for help and there will always be someone to watch your game and give hints if you happen to play on a server.

B. Starting screen

At the Crawl start screen, you will be presented with various game modes, a list of saved games (if any), and will be prompted to type a name for your character. You can navigate the game modes and saved games with the cursor 'up' and 'down' arrow keys.

Game modes are:

Dungeon Crawl Start a standard game of Crawl.

Choose game seed Start a standard game of Crawl with a custom seed (see Seeded play_ below).

Tutorial for Dungeon Crawl Start one of several specialised tutorials to learn how to play.

Hints Mode for Dungeon Crawl Start a standard game of Crawl, modified to provide help as you play.

Dungeon Sprint Start one of several single-map challenge mode games of Crawl.

Instructions View the instructional help text you are currently reading.

The Arena Initiate an automated fight mode between two specified combatant groups.

High Scores View scores for prior games played, sorted by decreasing score.

Pressing 'enter' immediately after typing your name will select standard Dungeon Crawl mode, and you will be prompted to select a species and background. Names are unique; entering a name from the saved game list will continue that saved game. If you select a game mode instead of entering a name, you will eventually be prompted to enter a name.

You can choose species and background in either order or randomise any combination if you would rather have the game decide for you. If both are random, you will be prompted to confirm the chosen combination before the game starts.

The choice of species affects several important characteristics, in particular the speed at which you learn different skills. This is very important, and helps

to clearly differentiate the many available species. The following factors are species-dependent:

Major:

- The amount of hit points you get each level
- Your rate of skill advancement
- Your initial primary attributes (this also depends on background)
- Various special abilities, powers and limitations

Minor:

- Your rate of level advancement
- Occasional bonus points added to some primary attributes
- The amount of magic points you get each level
- Your innate resistance to hostile enchantments
- Your initial equipment (this also depends on background)

    note
    Humans are the average to which all other species are compared.

The choice of character background is definitely less decisive than that of species in Crawl. Basically, the background determines what the character has learned prior to entering the dungeon (i.e. the starting skills), and also helps determine equipment at start.

You will notice that a different set of backgrounds will be recommended (white) for each species. Although you are free to pick any background with almost any species (the only restrictions are religious backgrounds where some species are not permitted to worship certain gods, or backgrounds where the starting equipment is completely unusable by a given species), looking at the recommended combinations should give you a rough impression of the weaknesses and strengths of the different species.

For some backgrounds, you must pick a starting weapon before starting the game.

When you start a new character (or load an old one) and want to get a rough impression, you may examine it with the following commands:

A shows any peculiarities like unusual speed or eating behaviours

m shows your skills and lets you disable (or focus) training as desired

i lists equipment and items

ˆ displays information on your god, should you have started with a religion

% gives a general, if terse, overview of your gear and most attributes

Ctrl-O gives an overview of the parts of the dungeon you have discovered so far

C. Attributes and stats

The stat area to the right of the playing map shows a lot of information. It starts with the character's name and title (determined by the character's highest skill), followed by a line listing the species. If the character worships a god, the name of the deity is also listed in the second line, together with an indicator of piety. Below these two lines follow a lot of numbers. These describe different aspects of the character.

Health A measure of life force. Synonymous with hit points and sometimes abbreviated as HP. You die if your health drops to zero or less (although you can die in other ways, too). The main screen shows both your current and maximum hit points. Usually, you regain hit points slowly over time. Pressing '5' or Shift-Num-5 lets you wait for a longer period.

Magic A measure of magic or other intrinsic power. This is used primarily for spellcasting, but is sometimes also used for the evoking and invoking of many other special abilities. They are displayed in the same way as hit points; nothing bad happens if these drop to zero, except, of course, that you can't cast any spells. Resting also restores your reserves of magic.

Next come your defences. For all of them, more is better.

Armour Class Abbreviated to "AC". When something injures you, your AC reduces the amount of damage you suffer.

Evasion Abbreviated to "EV". This helps you avoid being hit by unpleasant things (but will not reduce the amount of damage you suffer if you do get hit).

Shield Abbreviated to "SH". This number is a measure of how good your shield (if any) is at blocking attacks.

Your character's primary attributes are Strength, Intelligence and Dexterity:

Strength Abbreviated to "Str". Increases your damage with melee and ranged weapons. Affects your ability to use heavy armours and shields effectively.

Intelligence Abbreviated to "Int". Affects how well you can cast spells as well as how much nutrition spellcasting takes.

Dexterity Abbreviated to "Dex". Increases your accuracy with melee and ranged weapons. Significantly affects your ability to dodge attacks aimed at you, your general effectiveness with shields, your stealth, and your effectiveness when stabbing unaware enemies.

Attributes grow permanently from gaining levels, and may increase or decrease temporarily from mutations or while using certain artefacts or abilities.

If any attribute drops to zero for some reason, you will experience very unpleasant side-effects, being slowed and suffering some stat-specific negative effects. These effects will persist for a short while even after the attribute is restored.

Upon gaining levels 3, 6, 9, etc., you may choose an attribute to raise. Most species gain additional attributes at some levels, with the frequency and the attribute to be increased determined by species.

Finally some additional information about your character and your progress through the dungeon is displayed.

Experience Level Abbreviated to "XL". Starting characters have experience level 1; the highest possible level is 27. Gaining a level nets additional hit and magic points, and will grant spell slots and sometimes primary attributes.

Place This shows the branch you are currently in, as well as the level within the branch. The starting branch is called Dungeon, so that the place information will read "Dungeon:1" for a new character.

Noise This is a colored bar indicating the loudness of noise that you heard on your last turn. The color provides a rough guide to how far away the noise it indicates might be audible. If the bar is gray, the sound is less likely to be audible outside of your line of sight (at least in an open area); if it is yellow, the sound is likely to be audible outside of your line of sight; and if it is red, the sound will be audible at a substantial distance. If the bar turns magenta, you have made one of the loudest noises in the dungeon. N.b.: terrain can reduce or block the spread of noise.

Time This indicates the amount of time that has passed since entering the dungeon, and also displays in brackets the amount of time that your previous action took. Most actions take 1.0 units of time, but certain actions are particularly slow or quick (such as changing armour and swapping weapons respectively), and other actions can vary in time taken depending on your status (such as attacking with different weapons and at different skill levels).

There are some additional stats that aren't as important on a turn to turn basis and thus aren't listed in the main stats area. They can easily be checked with the '@' or '%' commands, though.

Magic Resistance Affects your ability to resist the effects of enchantments and similar magic directed at you. Has no effect on direct damage dealt by magic, just on more subtle effects. Although your magic resistance increases with your level to an extent determined by your character's

species, the creatures you will meet deeper in the dungeon are better at casting spells, and are more likely to be able to affect you. You can get a rough idea of your current MR by pressing '@' or '%'.

Size Different species have different sizes: Spriggans and Felids are very small; Halflings and Kobolds are small; Ogres and Trolls are large; Nagas and Centaurs are large with a medium torso; all other species are medium-sized. Many transmutations will change your size too. Size affects your evasion: the smaller your character the more evasive it is. On the other hand, characters of larger than medium size do not suffer the usual attack penalties when standing in shallow water. Characters of smaller than medium size will have problems with some larger weapons. Very small characters and large characters are not able to use most types of armour. Players and monsters can only constrict foes of the same size or smaller. In the dungeon you can also meet tiny, very large and giant creatures.

Stealth High stealth allows your character to move through the dungeon undetected. It is affected by your species, dexterity, Stealth skill, and the encumbrance of your body armour. Your current Stealth level can also been seen by pressing '@' or '%'.

There are many ailments or enchantments that can temporarily befall you. These are noted in the stats area below the experience line. Many of them are self-explanatory, like Pois or Hungry. Many others, however, can be subtle, and their effects can be examined by pressing '?/T' and searching for the name of status effect.

Monsters within your field of vision are listed on a special panel, the monster list. Single monsters also get indicators of their health status in the form of a coloured box, and also on effects they enjoy or suffer from. Within target mode you can directly target single monsters by use of the monster list. Use 'Ctrl-L' to toggle this.

Sometimes characters will be able to use special abilities, e.g. the Naga's ability to spit poison or the magical power to fly granted by a ring. These are accessed through the 'a' command.

D. Exploring the dungeon

Movement

You can make your character walk around with the numeric keypad (try both Numlock on and off) or the "Rogue" keys (hjklyubn). If this is too slow, you can make your character walk repeatedly by pressing Shift and a direction; alternatively, press '/' followed by a direction. You will walk in that direction until any of a number of things happen: a hostile monster is visible on the screen,

a message is sent to the message window for any reason, you press a key, or you are about to step on anything other than normal floor and it is not your first move of the long walk. Note that this is functionally equivalent to just pressing the direction key several times.

Another convenient method for moving long distances is described in the section on Automated Travel and Exploration below.

Resting

If you press '5', you will rest until your hit points or magic return to full. You can rest for just one turn by pressing '.' or 's'.

Resting stops if a monster appears or if you are otherwise interrupted.

Examining your surroundings

The section of the viewing window which is coloured (with the "@" representing you at the centre) is what you can see around you. The dark grey around it is the parts of the level which you have visited, but cannot currently see. The 'x' command lets you move the cursor around to get a description of the various dungeon features, and typing 'v' when the cursor is over a monster or feature brings up a short description of that monster, as well as a short list of its various strengths, weaknesses, immunities, and any spells or abilities it has. This is generally useful with monsters you've never encountered before. You can get a map of the whole level (which shows where you've already been) by typing 'X'.

You can see the full set of commands available while looking around by pressing '?', both in the 'x' and 'X' modes.

Staircases and Portals

You can make your way between levels by using staircases, which appear as ">" (down) and "<" (up), by pressing the '>' or '<' keys. It is important to know that most monsters adjacent to you will follow when you change levels; this holds both for hostile and allied monsters. Notable exceptions are zombies (and other mindless undead, who are too stupid to properly operate stairs) and ghosts (who feel they belong to their level).

If you ascend an up staircase on level one, you will leave the dungeon forever; if you are carrying the magical Orb of Zot, you win the game by doing this. Otherwise, the game ends, and you lose.

Besides the dungeon you start in, Crawl's dungeon has many branches. All of them are themed and host opponents of some special sort. It is not mandatory to visit any particular branch, but you must explore some of them: progress to

the Realms of Zot (where the Orb is located) is only possible for adventurers who have at least three magical runes of Zot. The bottoms of several branches contain such runes.

Occasionally you will find an archway (displayed as "\" or as an actual arch); these lead to special places like shops, themed one-off portals, or special branches such as Hell and Pandemonium. You can enter these by typing '<' or '>'. A few portals only accept one of '<' and '>'.

Doors and Traps

Doors can usually be opened by just walking into them (there is an option to disable this); else this can also be done using the 'O' command. They can be closed with the 'C' command. Pressing Ctrl plus a direction, or '*' followed by a direction, will open/close doors, too.

If there is no door in the indicated space, both Ctrl-direction and '*'-direction will attempt to attack any monster which may be standing there (this is the only way to attack a friendly creature with melee combat). If there is apparently nothing there, you will still attack it, just in case there's something invisible lurking around.

A variety of dangerous and irritating traps are hidden around the dungeon. Traps sometimes look like normal floor until discovered.

Shops

When you visit a shop (by using < or > while standing on one), you are shown what the shopkeeper has in stock and can choose what to buy. Unfortunately, the shopkeepers all have an exclusive deal with the Guild of Dungeon Procurers which prevents them using non-guild labour to obtain stock, so you can't sell anything in a shop. (But then, what shopkeeper would buy stolen goods from a disreputable adventurer, anyway?)

To purchase one or more items, select them by pressing the letters of the item in the shop menu and then press Enter to make the purchase; you can examine items before buying them by pressing '!' and then the letter of the item.

If you've lost track of the shops in the dungeon, you can get a list of all the shops you've found in the dungeon overview (use 'Ctrl-O').

You can also use the stash search: Hitting 'Ctrl-F' and searching for "shop" will list all stores. The stash-search menu allows you travel quickly to a particular shop; if you just want to know what's in the shop, you can also examine the shop's inventory from the search menu without having to travel all the way to the shop.

Some shops are antique stores that sell items of unknown provenance, usually at a good discount. The dungeon overview screen displays these with yellow glyphs.

If you're short on gold for some particularly interesting commodity, you can place it onto your shopping list. The game will interrupt you when you have collected enough gold to finally purchase an item on that list. You can read the shopping list in the game with '$'.

Automated Travel and Exploration

Crawl has an extensive automated travel system: pressing 'G' (or also 'Ctrl-G') lets you choose any dungeon level; the game will then take the shortest path to reach this destination. You can also use autotravel on the level map ('X'): Move the cursor to the place where you want to go and hit Enter. There are several shortcuts when choosing destinations: For example, try '<' and '>' to quickly reach the staircases.

When your autotravel gets interrupted, Crawl will remember the previous destination. Hitting 'G' or 'Ctrl-G' again and following with Enter puts the cursor on that square. See Appendix 4. List of Keys and Commands_ for all commands and shortcuts in level-map mode, or press 'G?' or 'X?' within the game.

Another use of autotravel is exploration: 'o' makes your character move to the nearest unexplored area. Note that this algorithm does not attempt any optimisation by default. By manual exploration you can save turns, but auto-explore will usually save real time.

Stashes and Searching

Since you can only carry 52 items, you will occasionally want to stash things away (by dropping them with the 'd' command). When you want to search for something in your stashes, you can do this with the Find command 'Ctrl-F'. The parser even accepts regular expressions, although you will mostly just need strings like 'mutation', 'heal wounds', etc. You will be presented with a list of all places where objects matching the search are (or have been) located; you can then travel there or examine the pile. The Find command will also search in shop inventories. Furthermore, you can search skills like 'long blades' (this will find all weapons training the long blades skill) or general terms like 'shop', 'altar', 'portal', 'artefact', etc. You can get help on finding by pressing '?' at the prompt.

The Goal

Your goal is to locate the Orb of Zot, which is held somewhere deep beneath the world's surface. The Orb is an ancient and incredibly powerful artefact, and

the legends promise great things for anyone brave enough to extract it from the fearsome Dungeon. Some say it will grant immortality or even godhood to the one who carries it into the sunlight; many undead creatures seek it in the hope that it will restore them to life. But then, some people will believe anything. Good luck!

Seeded play

Crawl dungeons are determined by a "seed" number used to initialise the game's random number generator. You may either let the game choose a seed randomly, or specify a seed; if you choose a seed this puts the game in "Seeded" mode, which is scored separately. Playing games with the same seed value, as long as the game version is constant, should (within certain parameters) lead to the same dungeon. The entire connected dungeon will be determined by the game seed, including dungeon layout, monster placement, and items. Portal vaults and chaotic zones such as the abyss are not guaranteed to be the same, and the placement of rare unique artefacts may vary depending on certain player actions.

To set a game seed, use the "Choose game seed" option from the main menu; you can also use the 'game_seed' rc file option, or the '-seed' command line option. In offline games you can view your game's seed with '?V' as well as in a character file; in online games a randomly chosen seed will only be shown to you after finishing the game.

If you find that the same seed generates distinct parts of a dungeon on the same or different devices, please report it as a bug. However, keep in mind that upgrading your save game between multiple versions of crawl will naturally lead to seed divergence. When playing offline, if you would like to ensure that your game can be upgraded without divergence, you can set 'pregen_dungeon = full' in your options file. (This will also ensure completely stable unique artefact placement.) On the other hand, to completely disable incremental pregeneration, you can set 'pregen_dungeon = false'.

Further Help

To access Crawl's help menu, press '?'. To get the list of all commands, press '?' again. A different, more verbose description of the commands also appears in Appendix 4. List of Keys and Commands_ of this text. Various other help texts are available as well, including this manual. You can also read the logbook from there by pressing ':'. Note that several commands have their own help screens, among them are targeting ('f'), level map ('X'), travel ('G' or 'Ctrl-G') and searching ('Ctrl-F'); again, press '?' when asked for input.

If you don't like the standard keyset (either because some keys do not work properly, or because you want to decrease the amount of typing necessary), you

can use keymaps and macros. See macros_guide.txt in the docs/ directory, or read it from the in-game help menu.

E. Experience and skills

When you kill monsters, you gain experience points (XP). You receive less XP when friendly creatures took part in killing the monster. When you get enough XP, you gain an experience level, making your character more powerful. As they gain levels, characters gain more hit points, magic points, and spell levels.

Additionally, the experience you gain is used to train your skills. These skills represent proficiency with all areas of endeavour an ambitious adventurer might need in the dungeons. They range from different weapon skills (both for close and ranged combat) to many magical skills and several additional activities like Dodging or Stealth. See Appendix 3. List of Skills_ for a detailed description of all skills present in Crawl. The ease with which a character learns a skill depends solely on species. These aptitudes are displayed when viewing your skills, and a full table can be viewed in aptitudes.txt (also from the help screen during play via '?%').

You can see your character's skills by pressing the 'm' key; the higher the level of a skill, the better you are at it. All characters start with a few skills already trained (which depends essentially on their background), those which are not present have to be learned from scratch. Each skill can go up to 27.

The skill screen allows you to change which skills are exercised and at what speed. Note to new players: it is generally not necessary to finetune the skill selection.

If you want to modify skill selection, here is how:

There are two ways to assigning skills to practise: one is an automatic mode, which puts experience points into the skills you have used recently. The other one is a manual mode, where you specifically select the skills to train. You can switch between the modes by pressing '/' in the character skill screen ('m'); also be sure to read that screen's help text should you want to tweak your skillset.

You can elect to either not practise a particular skill or to focus on it by selecting it once or twice in the skill screen.

Dark grey skills will not be trained, so that the skill will remain static and no experience points will be used to increase it. As a consequence, more experience will be spent on your other skills (and thus they will increase more quickly). Note that you cannot deselect all skills; at least one skill must be actively exercised.

Highlighted skills are focused on and will use a higher proportion of available experience. You can highlight as many skills as you like, though obviously if all skills being trained are highlighted there will be no net effect.

Occasionally you may find a manual of a skill which allows you to make quick progress in this area. When you are carrying it, experience used to practise the given skill will have twice the usual effect for a while.

F. Monsters

In the caverns of Crawl, you will find a great variety of creatures, most of which are displayed by capital or small letters of the alphabet. Many of them would very much like to eat you. To stop them from doing this, you will generally need to fight them. To attack a monster, stand next to it and move in its direction; this makes you attack it with your wielded weapon. Of course, some monsters are just too nasty to beat, and you will find that discretion is often the better part of valour. Sneaky characters are known to choose encounters to their liking.

There are several other less dangerous methods you can use to kill monsters. Hunters and similarly oriented characters will prefer ranged combat to mindless bashing. When wielding some launcher, the 'f' and 'F' commands will fire appropriate missiles. See the section on Targeting in the Items Chapter for more on this. Likewise, many magicians will prefer to use spells from a safe distance. They can use the 'z' command to cast spells previously memorised. Again, see the Targeting section.

Some monsters can be friendly; friendly monsters will follow you around and fight on your behalf (but they gain some of the normal experience points for any kills they make, so you get less). You can command your allies using the 't' key, which lets you shout to attract them or tell them who to attack, or else tell them to stay where they are or to follow you again. You can also shout to get the attention of all monsters in range if, for some reason, you want to do that.

Some special monsters are Uniques. You can identify a unique because he or she will have a name and personality. Many of these come up with very nasty ideas how to rid the dungeon of you. Treat them very carefully, particularly if you meet one of them for the first time.

Other, even rarer, obstacles are statues. A variety of statues can appear, ranging from harmless granite ones (who still often signify something of interest) to really dreadful ones. Be alert whenever seeing such a statue.

When playing Crawl, you will undoubtedly want to develop a feeling for the different monster types. For example, some monsters leave edible corpses and others do not. Likewise, ranged or magic attackers will prove a different kind of threat from melee fighters. Learn from past deaths and remember which monsters pose the most problems. If particular monsters are giving you trouble, try to alter your tactics for future encounters.

You can obtain information about a monster by using the 'x' (examine) command, moving the cursor over the monster in question, and pressing 'v' to view the

monster's details; or by searching for a monster by name or symbol with '?/m'. The details screen shows:

- The monster's name and description.
- Bars indicating its:
    - AC: armour class; how well it ignores most damage
    - EV: evasion; how well it avoids being hit
    - MR: magic resistance; how well it resists most Hexes and similar enchantments.
- Its difficulty level, speed (if different from average speed), size, resistances, and special attacks.
- Its spells and special abilities. Monster spells and abilities are of four types:
    - Natural abilities are innate, non-magical effects.
    - Magical abilities are innate magical effects. They are affected by antimagic.
    - Divine abilities call upon the monster's god for a magical effect. They are prevented by silence, but not affected by antimagic.
    - Spells are cast using memorised magical words. They are both prevented by silence and affected by antimagic.

G. Items

In the dungeons of Crawl there are many different kinds of normal and magical items to be found and used. Some of them are useful, some are nasty, and some give great power, but at a price. Some items are unique; these have interesting properties which can make your life rather bizarre for a while. They all fall into several classes of items, each of which is used in a different way. Here is a general list of what you might find in the course of your adventures, how they are displayed, and what commands there are to use them:

)	weapons	(use 'w'ield)
(	missiles	(use 'f'ire)
[	armour	(use 'W'ear and 'T'ake off)
%	food	(use 'e'at; also 'c'hop up corpses)
?	scrolls	(use 'r'ead)
!	potions	(use 'q'uaff)
/	wands	(use 'V' to evoke)
=	rings	(use 'P'ut on and 'R'emove)

"	amulets	(use 'P'ut on and 'R'emove)
|	staves	(use 'w'ield)
:	spellbooks	(use 'M'emorise and 'z'ap)
}	miscellaneous	(use 'V' for evoking from the inventory)
$	gold	(use 'g' to pick up)

There are several general keys for item management:

d drop item; if you want to drop only some items from a stack (of arrows, for example), then press 'd' followed by a number and then the item's slot key

g pick up item from the ground (also with the comma key ',')

= reassign item slot (works also for spell slots and abilities)

i show inventory - pressing the key of an item shows additional information

{ inscribe item (see Appendix 5. Inscriptions_)

**** check list of already discovered items

Item usage

You pick up items with the 'g'et or',' (comma) command, and drop them with the 'd'rop command. When you are given a prompt like "drop which item?", if you type a number before the letter of the item, you will drop that quantity of the item (similarly when picking up). The same works if you want to pick up only part of a stack and there are several types of items on the square (so that they are shown in a list). When there is only a single stack of arrows and you want to pick up only some of them, use the';' command. Note that picking up items from one square takes exactly one turn. However, dropping several items at once takes more turns.

Typing 'i' displays your inventory (what you are carrying). When you are given a prompt like "Throw [or Wield, Wear, etc] which item?", you usually get a list of all available options. You can press '*' in case you want to wield something unusual. When the inventory screen shows "-more-", to show you that there is another page of items, you can type the letter of the item you want, even if it is not visible, instead of pressing Space or Enter to see the next page.

You can carry at most 52 items at once, and your item slot usage is printed at the top of the inventory screen.

You can use the adjust command (the '=' key) to change the letters to which your possessions are assigned. This command can be used to change spell or ability letters, too.

Some items can be sticky-cursed, in which case they weld themselves to your body when you use them. Such items usually carry some kind of disadvantage: a weapon or armour may be damaged or negatively enchanted, while rings can have all manner of unpleasant effects on you. If you are lucky, you might find magic which can rid you of these curses.

Items like scrolls, potions, and some other types each have a characteristic, like a label or a colour, which will let you tell them apart on the basis of their function. However, these characteristics change between each game, so while in one game every potion of curing may be yellow, in another game they might all be purple and bubbly. Once you have discovered the function of such an item, you will remember it for the rest of the current game. You can access your item discoveries with the '\' key.

In order to get a description of what an item does, bring up the inventory (with 'i') and press the letter of that item. Try this when comparing different types of armours and weapons, but don't expect too much information from examining unidentified items.

In most equipment-related prompts and menus, the ';' key is a shortcut for "last unequipped item," meaning the armour, jewellery or weapon you most recently took off or unwielded.

Another useful command is the '{' key, which lets you inscribe items with a comment. You can also inscribe items when looking at your inventory with 'i', simply by pressing the letter of an item. For more details, and how to automate this process, check Appendix 5. Inscriptions__.

) Weapons

These are rather important. You will find a variety of weapons in the dungeon, ranging from small and quick daggers to huge, cumbersome battleaxes and polearms. Each type of weapon does a different amount of damage, has a different chance of hitting its target, and takes a different amount of time to swing. There are several weapon skills (press 'm' to show a list of those that you are training) like Short Blades, Long Blades, Axes, etc. These skills affect damage, accuracy, and speed (up to a point). The same goes for Unarmed Combat.

Weapons can be enchanted; when you first wield or otherwise identify them, you reveal values which tell you how much more effective they are than an unenchanted version. Weapons which are not enchanted are simply '+0'. Some weapons also have special magical effects which make them very effective against vulnerable enemies.

You can wield weapons with the 'w' command, which is a very quick action. If for some reason you want to go bare-handed, type 'w' followed by a hyphen ('-').

The '(apostrophe) key is a shortcut which automatically wields the item in slot a. If item a is being wielded,' causes you to wield item b instead, if possible. Try assigning the letter a to your primary weapon, and b to your bow or something else you need to wield only sometimes. Note that this is just a typing shortcut and is not functionally different to wielding these items normally.

(Missiles

If you would rather pick off monsters from a safe distance, you will need missiles for your sling, bow or other appropriate launcher. Several kinds of missiles, such as javelins, are effective when simply thrown; other kinds require you to wield an appropriate device to inflict worthwhile damage. Upon impact, missiles may become destroyed. The chance for this to occur depends on the type of missile.

The 'f' command fires or throws a missile. The default missile to be fired or thrown (your "quiver") is displayed on the main screen beneath your wielded weapon. The quivered item will always be what Crawl thinks is most likely to be what you want. Thus it will either be an item you previously chose and fired (with 'f') or directly quivered (with 'Q'), or the item in your inventory that ranks highest in fire_order - if there are several of similar order, the one with the lowest inventory slot is chosen.

See Appendix 5. Inscriptions_ for inscriptions which let you fine-tune the list of items to choose from. See also the Missiles section of options_guide.txt.

The firing interface also allows you to manually select an item to throw with 'i'; but it may not be very effective if you lack the correct launcher.

Use the '(', ')' to cycle through your quiver without firing, and 'Q' to choose the quivered item from a list. If you would like to choose something to fire without inserting it into the quiver use 'F' instead.

The interface for shooting or throwing things is also used for evoking wands and casting certain spells, and is described in detail in section I (Targeting).

[Armour

This is also rather important. Most worn armour improves your Armour Class, which decreases the amount of damage you take from most types of injury. The heavier an armour is, the more AC (armour class) it will provide, at the expense of your EV (evasion) and stealth. Heavier types of armour also hamper your melee accuracy, making it harder for you to hit monsters. Wearing heavy armour also increases your chances of miscasting spells, an effect which is only slightly reduced by your Armour skill. These penalties are smaller if you have a high Armour skill, but larger if you have low Strength. On the other hand, body armour will also provide some guaranteed damage reduction against melee attacks, and heavier armours are better at this.

A shield normally increases neither your AC nor your evasion, but it lets you attempt to block melee attacks and some ranged attacks aimed at you. Wearing a shield (especially larger shields) with insufficient Shields skill makes you less effective in hand combat and hampers your ability to cast spells. It also lowers your evasion if you do not have sufficient skill, and you obviously cannot wield a two-handed weapon while wearing a shield. Shields are most effective on the first attack on you each turn and become less useful on every one after that. There are three types: bucklers, shields, and large shields.

Some magical armours have special powers. These powers are sometimes automatic, affecting you whenever you wear the armour, and sometimes must be activated with the 'a' command.

You can wear armour with the 'W' command, and take it off with the 'T' command. With '[' you can have a quick look at your current gear.

Most armours can be improved by reading the appropriate scroll. Body armour and bardings can be enchanted up to the base value of AC they provide. Shields can be enchanted up to +3, +5, or +8, depending on their size. Other gear is limited to +2.

% Food and Carrion

Food is extremely important. You can find many different kinds of food in the dungeon. If you don't eat when you get hungry, you will eventually die of starvation. Fighting, casting spells, and using some magical items will make you hungry. When you are starving, you fight much less effectively and cannot cast spells or use many abilities. You can eat food with the 'e' command.

You may wish to dine on the corpses of your casualties. Despite the fact that corpses are represented by the same '%' sign as food, you can't eat them without first cutting off the more edible pieces with the 'c' command. Being hungry helps you choke down the raw flesh. Chopping up corpses will take some time and will produce a number of 'chunks', which can be eaten with the 'e' command as above.

Some species are happy to eat raw meat at any time, and others cannot eat meat at all. Information on special diets is displayed on the 'A' screen.

? Magical Scrolls

Scrolls have many different magical spells inscribed on them, some good and some bad. One of the most useful scrolls is the scroll of identify, which will tell you the function of any item you have in your inventory; you might want to save these up for items that are dangerous or wasteful to use when unidentified, such as potions or other scrolls. You can read scrolls (and by doing so invoke their magic) with the 'r' command.

! Magical Potions

While scrolls tend to affect your equipment or your environment, most potions affect your character in some way. The most common type is the simple curing potion, which restores some hit points and cures many ailments, but there are many other varieties of potions to be found. Potions can be quaffed (drunk) with the 'q' command.

/ Wands

Sometimes you will be lucky enough to find a stick which contains stored magical energies. Wands each have a certain number of charges, which you immediately recognise when you pick them up. When you pick up a wand of type you already have in inventory, the charges from the new wand are merged into the existing one, and the new wand no longer exists. Beware that when the last charge of a wand is used, the wand is destroyed.

Wands are aimed in the same way as missile weapons, and you can release the power of a wand by evoking it with 'V'. See section I for targeting.

=" Rings and Amulets

Magical rings are among the most useful of the items you will find in the dungeon, but can also be some of the most hazardous. Use the 'P' command to put on rings, and 'R' to remove them. You can wear up to two rings simultaneously, one on each hand; which hand you put a ring on is immaterial to its function. If you try to put on a ring while both ring fingers are full, you will be asked which one to remove. Octopodes are an exception, and may wear up to eight rings on their tentacles. Some rings function automatically, while others require activation (with the 'a' command).

Amulets are similar to rings, but have different range of effects. Amulets are worn around the neck, and you can wear only one at a time.

You can press '"' to quickly check what jewellery you're wearing.

| Staves

There are a number of types of magical staves. Some enhance your general spellcasting ability, while some greatly increase the power of a certain class of spells (and possibly reduce your effectiveness with others). Some can even be used in melee combat, although with mediocre effectiveness unless you can harness their special power, using a combination of the Evocations skill and the skill specific to the staff's type. Staves which do not enhance a destructive magic school tend to have no combat powers at all.

: Books

Most books contain magical spells which your character may be able to learn. Upon picking up a book, all of the spells in it will be added to your spell library, allowing you to access a description of each spell or memorise spells from it with the 'M' command.

Occasionally you will find manuals of some skill. Carrying these will cause your experience to have twice the effect as usual when used for training that skill.

{ Miscellaneous

These are items which don't fall into any other category. They can be evoked with 'V', just like wands. Runes, a particular item in this category, have no function whatsoever except to open the endgame. You must collect at least three in order to enter the Realm of Zot. Some particularly cocky adventurers brag about having retrieved ten or even fifteen runes through their strength and cunning, but most scholars on the subject of Zot agree that such a thing is probably impossible in the first place, and secondly would be a meaningless achievement in any regard.

$ Gold

Gold can be used to buy items should you run across shops. There are also a few more esoteric uses for gold.

Artefacts

Weapons, armour, jewellery and spellbooks can be artefacts. These come in two flavours: randomly created artefacts ('randarts') and predefined ones ('un-randarts'). Randarts will always carry unusual names, such as "golden double sword" or "shimmering scale mail". Artefacts cannot be modified in any way, including enchantments.

Apart from that, otherwise mundane items can get one special property. These are called 'ego items', and examples are: boots of running, a weapon of flaming, a helmet of see invisible, and so on. Note that, unlike artefacts, such items can be modified by enchanting scrolls.

All ego items are noted with special adjectives but not all items noted in this way need have a special property (they often have some positive or negative enchantment, though):

general glowing, runed;

metal armours shiny;

leather armours dyed;

other armours embroidered.

H. Spellcasting

Magical spells are a very important part of surviving in the dungeon. Every character can make use of magical spells.

There are many skills related to magic, the principal one being Spellcasting. Spellcasting determines the number of Magic Points available; it also helps in several respects during the actual casting of spells. Next, there are several general magical skill areas (Conjuration, Hexes, Charms, Summoning, Necromancy, Translocation and Transmutation) as well as several elemental areas (Fire, Ice, Air and Earth) and, finally, Poison. A particular spell can belong to (and thus allow training of) up to three areas. Being good in the areas of a spell will improve the casting chance and, in many cases, the effect as well.

Spells are stored in books, which you will occasionally find in the dungeon. Once you have picked up a book and added its contents to your spell library, you can memorise a spell using the 'M' command.

In addition to picking up new spells, your character may also wish to get rid of old ones by reading a scroll of amnesia, which will let you pick a spell to forget.

Each spell has a level. A spell's level denotes the amount of skill required to use it and indicates how powerful it may be. You can only memorise a certain number of levels of spells; type 'M' to find out how many. When you gain experience levels or advance the Spellcasting skill, your maximum increases; you will need to save up for several levels to memorise the more powerful spells. When casting a spell, you temporarily expend some of your magical energy and become hungrier (although high intelligence and Spellcasting help against hunger from spells). Pressing 'II' (or 'I!') displays the relative hunger costs of your spells. The hunger cost is approximately proportional to the square of the number of # marks in this display.

You activate a memorised spell by pressing 'z' (for Zap). Use 'I' to display a list of all memorised spells without actually casting one. The spells available are labelled with letters; you are free to change this labelling with the '=' command. You can assign both lowercase and uppercase letters to spells. Some spells, for example most damage dealing ones, require a target. See the next section for details on how to target.

Most spells have caps on their effects: no matter how intelligent and proficient you are, there is a limit to the damage you can achieve with a Magic Dart. In general, it is a good idea to look at the output of the 'I' and 'II' screens to get

a picture on your casting abilities. This is especially useful if you're about to change armour or rings.

High level spells are difficult to cast, and you may miscast them every once in a while (resulting in a waste of magic and possibly dangerous side-effects). Your chance of failing to cast a spell properly depends on your skills, your intelligence, the level of the spell and whether you are wearing heavy armour. The chance of miscasting a spell is displayed on the spell screen, and coloured based on potential severity (with yellow representing a moderate chance, and red representing a severe chance).

Be careful of magic-using enemies! Some of them can use magic just as well as you, if not better, and often use it intelligently.

I. Targeting

When throwing something, evoking certain wands, or casting spells, you are asked for a direction. There are several ways to tell Crawl which monster to target.

You can press '?' when asked for a direction; this will bring up a help screen. Otherwise, you use the following commands:

- The cursor will target on the monster which is closest to your position. Should you have been firing at something previously, with the offender still being in sight, the cursor will instead rest on the previous target.
- Pressing '+' or '=' moves the cursor to the next monster, going from nearer to further away. Similarly, '-' cycles backwards.
- Any direction key moves the cursor by one square. Occasionally, it can be useful to target non-inhabited squares.
- When you are content with your choice of target, press one key of Enter, Del, or Space to fire at the target. If you press '.', you also fire, but the spell/missile will stop at the target's square if it misses. This can be useful to keep friendlies out of the fire, or to make sure your precious missiles won't end up in deep water.
- You can press Escape if you changed your mind - no turns are deducted.

There are some shortcuts while targeting:

- Typing Shift-direction on your keypad fires straight away in that direction.
- Pressing 'p' or 'f' fires at the previous target (if it is still alive and in sight). Due to this, most hunters can go a long way by pressing 'ff' to fire their ammunition at a monster and then keep firing at it with further 'ff' strokes. At times, it will be useful to switch targets with the '+' or '-' commands, though.

It is possible to target yourself, and some beneficial effects like invisibility will automatically target the cursor on you, leaving to you only the pressing of '', Enter, etc. - except if you want to aim at someone else. If you target yourself while firing something harmful (which can be sensible at times), you will be asked for confirmation.

Finally, the ':' key allows you to hide the path of your spell/wand/missile.

J. Religion

There are a number of gods, demons and other assorted powers who will accept your character's worship, and sometimes give out favours in exchange. You can use the '^' command to check the requirements of whoever it is that you worship, and if you find religion to be an inconvenience you can always renounce your faith (use the 'a' command - but most gods resent being scorned). Further details can be seen with '!' while in the '^' screen.

To use any powers which your god deems you fit for, access the abilities menu via the 'a' command; god-given abilities are listed as invocations.

Depending on background, some characters start out religious; others have to pray at an altar to dedicate themselves to a life of servitude. There are altars scattered all over the dungeon, and there are rumours of a special temple somewhere near the surface.

At an altar, you can enter a god's service by pressing < or >. You'll first be given a description of the god, and then be asked if you really want to join. To see a list of the standard gods and which of their altars you've seen in your current game, press 'Ctrl-O'. You can also learn about all gods by pressing '?/G'.

Note that some gods are picky about who can enter their service; for example, good gods will not accept demonic or undead devotees.

If you would like to start the game with a religion, choose your background from Berserker, Chaos Knight or Abyssal Knight.

K. Mutations

Although it would doubtless be a nice thing if you could remain genetically pure, there are too many toxic wastes and mutagenic radiations in the Dungeon for that to be possible. If your character is so affected by these that he or she undergoes physiological change, you can use the 'A' command to see how much of a freak they've become and the 'a' command to activate any mutations which can be controlled. Many mutations are actually beneficial to your character, but there are plenty of nasty ones as well. Many mutations have multiple levels, each of which counts as a single mutation.

You can also become mutated by overusing certain powerful spells, particularly 'Invisibility' and 'Irradiate', as your system absorbs too much magical energy. A single use of those effects will never cause dangerous levels of magical contamination, but multiple uses in short succession, or usage with existing contamination from other sources (e.g. from miscasting spells) can cause trouble. Mutations from magical contamination are almost always harmful. Mutations can also be caused by specific potions or by spells cast by powerful enemies found deep in the dungeon.

It is more difficult to get rid of bad mutations than to get one. Using potions of mutations will remove a number of your current mutations, but will give you more mutations. These might be better to your taste. However, the only sure-fire ways is to join the gods Zin or Jiyva, each of whom provides some remedy against mutations.

Demonspawn are a special case. Characters of this species get certain special mutations as they gain levels; these are listed in cyan. They are permanent and can never be removed. If one of your Demonspawn powers has been augmented by a random mutation, it is displayed in a lighter colour.

Many a species starts with some special intrinsic feats, like the greater speed of Centaurs or Spriggans, or the eating habits of Trolls, Kobolds and others. These are often, but not always, like a preset mutation. In case such an innate feature gets amplified by an ordinary mutation, it is displayed in a light blue colour.

Some mutations are only temporary and will dissipate after slaying more enemies. These are listed in purple on the list of mutations, and marked as temporary.

L. Licence, contact, history

Licence See licence.txt for information about Crawl's licensing. Most of the game's components are licensed under version 2 or later of the GNU General Public License; those that aren't are under compatible licenses.

Disclaimer This software is provided as is, with absolutely no warranty express or implied. Use of it is at the sole risk of the user. No liability is accepted for any damage to the user or to any of the user's possessions.

If you'd like to discuss Crawl, a good place to do so is the official forum:

https://crawl.develz.org/tavern

All topics related to this game usually meet a warm response, including tales of victories (going under 'YAVP', i.e. 'Yet Another Victory Post'), especially first victories (YAFVP) as well as sad stories of deceased characters (being 'YAAD' or 'YASD', i.e. 'Yet Another Annoying/Stupid Death').

Many players, especially those on the online servers, also frequent ##crawl on the freenode IRC network. This IRC channel also contains many bots providing helpful information or statistics about the game.

Stone Soup's homepage is at:

> http://crawl.develz.org

Use this page for direct links to downloads of the most recent version. You can also submit bug reports there at https://crawl.develz.org/mantis. Be sure to make sure that your bug isn't already in the list. Feature requests should be posted on the official forum or the development wiki on crawl.develz.org instead.

The history of Crawl is somewhat convoluted: Crawl was created in 1995 by Linley Henzell. Linley based Crawl loosely on Angband and NetHack, but avoided several annoying aspects of these games, and added a lot of original ideas of his own. Crawl was a hit, and Linley produced Crawl versions up to 3.30 in March 1999. Further work was then carried out by a group of developers who released 3.40 in February 2000. Of them, Brent Ross emerged as the single maintainer, producing versions until 4.0 beta 26 in 2002. After a long period of silent work, he went a great step by releasing 4.1.2 alpha in August 2005. This alpha contained a lot of good ideas, but was nearly unplayable due to balance issues. In the meantime, several patchers appeared, improving Crawl's interface tremendously. Several of them formed a new devteam; reasoning that rebalancing 4.1.2 was a very difficult task, they decided to fork Crawl 4.0 beta 26 and selectively include good ideas from 4.1.2 and other sources. This fork is Stone Soup, and is the game this manual describes. Stone Soup's release versions were restarted at 0.1 to avoid confusion with the existing plethora of Crawl versions.

It should be mentioned that there have been other Crawl variants over the years, among them Ax-Crawl, Tile Crawl and Dungeon Crawl Alternative.

The object of your quest in Crawl (the Orb of Zot) was taken from Wizard's Castle, a text adventure written in BASIC.

M. Macros, options, performance

Crawl supports redefining keys via key maps. This is useful when your keyboard layout makes some key awkward to use. You can also define macros: these are command sequences which can make playing a great deal more convenient. Note that mapping 'a' to some other key will treat almost all pressings of 'a' in that new way (including dropping and wielding, etc.), so is not recommended. Macroing 'a' to some other key will only change the command key 'a'.

You can set up key maps and macros in-game with the '~' key ('Ctrl-D' will also work); this also allows for saving all current key bindings and macros.

Alternatively, you can directly edit the macro.txt file. For more information on both and for examples, see macros_guide.txt.

Crawl supports a large number of options that allow for great flexibility in the interface. They are fully documented in the file options_guide.txt. The options themselves are set in the file ~/.crawlrc (for UNIX systems - copy over init.txt to ~/.crawlrc) or init.txt (for Windows).

Several interface routines are outsourced to external Lua scripts. The standard distribution has them in the dat/clua/ directory. Have a look at the single scripts for short descriptions.

Generally, Crawl should run swiftly on all machines (it compiles out of the box for Linux, Windows, and, to some lesser extent, OS X and other Unices). If, for some reason, you find Crawl runs unacceptably slowly on your machine, there are a few measures which may improve the situation:

- set travel_delay = -1 to avoid screen redraws during travel (this might be especially useful if playing on a remote server)
- try playing in console mode rather than tiles

N. Philosophy (pas de faq)

In a nutshell: This game aims to be a tactical fantasy-themed dungeon crawl. We strive for strategy being a concern, too, and for exquisite gameplay and interface. However, don't expect plots or quests.

You may ponder about the wisdom of certain design decisions of Crawl. This section tries to explain some of them. It could also be of interest if you are used to other roguelikes and want a bit of background on the differences. Prime mainstays of Crawl development are the following, most of which are explained in more detail below. Note that many of these date back to Linley's first versions.

Major design goals
- challenging and random gameplay, with skill making a real difference
- meaningful decisions (no no-brainers)
- avoidance of grinding (no scumming)
- gameplay supporting painless interface and newbie support

Minor design goals
- clarity (playability without need for spoilers)
- internal consistency
- replayability (using branches, species, playing styles and gods)
- proper use of out of depth monsters

Balance

The notions of balance, or being imbalanced, are extremely vague. Here is our definition: Crawl is designed to be a challenging game, and is also renowned for its randomness. However, this does not mean that wins are an arbitrary matter of luck: the skill of players will have the largest impact. So, yes, there may be situations where you are doomed - no action could have saved your life. But then, from the midgame on, most deaths are not of this type: By this stage, almost all casualties can be traced back to actual mistakes; if not tactical ones, then of a strategical type, like wrong skilling (too broad or too narrow), unwise use of resources (too conservative or too liberal), or wrong decisions about branch/god/gear.

The possibility of unavoidable deaths is a larger topic in computer games. Ideally, a game like this would be really challenging and have both random layout and random course of action, yet still be winnable with perfect play. This goal seems out of reach. Thus, computer games can be soft in the sense that optimal play ensures a win. Apart from puzzles, though, this means that the game is solved from the outset; this is where the lack of a human game-master is obvious. Alternatively, they can be hard in the sense that unavoidable deaths can occur. We feel that the latter choice provides much more fun in the long run.

Crawl has a huge number of handmade vaults/maps to tweak the randomness. While the placement, and often parts of the contents, of such vaults are random as well, they provide several advantages: vaults offer challenges that are very hard to get via just random monster and layout generation; they may centre on some theme, providing additional immersion; finally, they will often contain some loot, forcing players to decide between safety and greed.

(The next topic can also be filed under balance; see Replayability for what balance does not mean to us.)

Crusade against no-brainers

A very important point in Crawl is steering away from no-brainers. Speaking about games in general, wherever there's a no-brainer, that means the development team put a lot of effort into providing a "choice" that's really not an interesting choice at all. And that's a horrible lost opportunity for fun. Examples for this are the resistances: there are very few permanent sources, most involve a choice (like rings or specific armour) or are only semi-permanent (like mutations). Another example is the absence of clear-cut best items, which comes from the fact that most artefacts are randomly generated. Furthermore, even non-random artefacts cannot be wished for, as scrolls of acquirement produce random items in general. Likewise, there are no sure-fire means of life saving (the closest equivalents are controlled blinks, and good religious standings for some deities).

Anti-grinding

Another basic design principle is avoidance of grinding (also known as scumming). These are activities that have low risk, take a lot of time, and bring some reward. This is bad for a game's design because it encourages players to bore themselves. Even worse, it may be optimal to do so. We try to avoid this!

This explains why shops don't buy: otherwise players would hoover the dungeon for items to sell. Another instance: there's no infinite commodity available: food, monster and item generation is generally not enough to support infinite play. Not messing with lighting also falls into this category: there might be a benefit to mood when players have to carry candles/torches, but we don't see any gameplay benefit as yet. The deep tactical gameplay Crawl aims for necessitates permanent dungeon levels. Many a time characters have to choose between descending or battling. While caution is a virtue in Crawl, as it is in many other roguelikes, there are strong forces driving characters deeper.

Interface

The interface is radically designed to make gameplay easy - this sounds trivial, but we mean it. All tedious, but necessary, chores should be automated. Examples are long-distance travel, exploration and taking notes. Also, we try to cater for different preferences: both ASCII and tiles are supported; as are vi-keys and numpad. Documentation is plenty, context-specific and always available in-game. Finally, we ease getting started via tutorials.

Clarity

Things ought to work in an intuitive way. Crawl definitely is winnable without spoiler access. Concerning important but hidden details (i.e. facts subject to spoilers) our policy is this: the joy of discovering something spoily is nice, once. (And disappears before it can start if you feel you need to read spoilers - a legitimate feeling.) The joy of dealing with ever-changing, unexpected and challenging strategic and tactical situations that arise out of transparent rules, on the other hand, is nice again and again. That said, we believe that qualitative feedback is often better than precise numbers.

In concrete terms, we either spell out a gameplay mechanic explicitly (either in the manual, or by in-game feedback) or leave it to min-maxers if we feel that the naive approach is good enough.

Consistency

While there is no plot to speak of, the game should still be set in a consistent Crawl universe. For example, names of artefacts should fit the mood, vaults should

be sensibly placed and monsters should somehow fit as well. Essentially, this is about player immersion. As such, it's good to have in mind, but consistency is always secondary to gameplay. A typical example is player vs. monster behaviour: while we try to make these identical (or similar), there are good reasons for keeping them distinct in certain cases.

Replayability

This is actually quite important, but in some sense just a corollary to the major design goals. Besides these, there are several other points helping to make playing Crawl fun over and over again:

Diversity whenever there are choices to the player, be that choice of species, god, weapon or spell, the various options should be genuinely different. It is no good to provide dozens of weapons with different names (and perhaps even numbers) if, in the end, they all play the same.

Many different species This is partly due to the skills and aptitude system. Similarly important are the built-in starting bonuses/handicaps of species; these often have great impact on play. To us, balance does not mean that all combinations of background and species play equally well! Some are much more challenging than others, and this is fine with us. Each species has at least some backgrounds playing rather well, though.

Dungeon layout Even veteran players may find the Tomb or the Hells exciting (which are designed such that life endangering situations can always pop up). These and other branches may or may not fit a given character's buildup. By the way, we strongly believe that games are pointless if you can reach the invincible state.

Religion This addresses new players, as getting to the Temple and choosing a god becomes the first major task of most games. But religion is also a point in favour of replayability for experienced players, since the choice of god can matter as much as species does.

Playing styles Related to, but encompassing, species, background, god are fundamentally different playing styles like melee oriented fighter, stabber, etc. Deciding on whether (and when!) to make a transition of style can make or break games.

Out of the depths

From time to time a discussion about Crawl's unfair OOD (out of depth) monsters turns up, like a dragon on the second dungeon level. These are not bugs! Actually, they are part of the randomness design goal. In this case, they also serve as additional motivation: in many situations, the OOD monster can be survived

somehow, and the mental bond with the character will then surely grow. OOD monsters also help to keep players on their toes by making shallow levels still not trivial. In a similar vein, early trips to the Abyss are not deficits: there's more than one way out, and successfully escaping is exciting for anyone.

Appendices

1. List of character species

Species are categorized, roughly, by how difficult and complex they are to learn how to play, into three categories: *Simple*, *Intermediate*, and *Advanced.* These categories do not necessarily align with difficulty for an experienced Crawl player, but rather are intended as an indication of to what degree a species has unusual or complex mechanics, or requires deeper/wider knowledge of how the game works. (For example, Deep Dwarves have one of the higher win rates of all species, but are classified as "Intermediate" because their no-healing mechanic takes some adapting to, and has non-trivial interactions with background and god choice.) Despite being the outcome of a discussion among many players, these categorizations definitely have a subjective element to them, and you shouldn't take them to be limiting!

The order within categories is also, roughly, determined by our best judgment about the relative ease of learning to play each species.

Next to each species name, in parentheses, is the canonical abbreviation for the species.

> **note**
>
> **Use 'A' to check for which particular peculiarities a species might** have. Also, some species have special abilities which can be accessed by the 'a' abilities menu. Some also have physical characteristics which allow them to make extra attacks.

> **note**
>
> **Humans are a useful reference point when considering other species:** they have 0 for almost all aptitudes; have no special abilities, weakness, or constraints against using certain types of equipment; move normally; and gain experience and magic resistance at a "typical" rate. However, you will see that they are categorized as an *Intermediate* species – because they are decent, but not excellent, at nearly everything, a Human may need to make use of all sorts of game mechanics depending on what they find in the dungeon, and know how to defend itself against any type of damage or attack it encounters.

Simple species

Species categorized as *Simple* work straightforwardly for players who have less experience with Crawl's game mechanics. While many do have quirks, these quirks tend to be passive traits that simplify gameplay, rather than challenges that a player has to consciously work around. While all of these species do have weaknesses of some kind, these weaknesses are simple to understand, aren't fundamentally crippling to all members of the species, and are balanced by other strengths. In many cases the special properties of these species allow the player to set aside many aspects of the game while still developing a strong character.

Hill Orcs (HO) Hill Orcs are Orcs from the upper world who, jealous of the riches which their cousins (the Cave Orcs) possess below the ground, descend in search of plunder and adventure.

Hill Orcs are more robust than Humans. Their forte is brute-force fighting, and they are skilled at using most hand weapons (particularly axes, with which they are experts), though they are not particularly good at using missile weapons. Hill Orcs are passable users of most types of magic and are particularly skilled with Fire.

Many Orcs feel superior to all other species and beings, and they have formed a religion around that idea. Only Orcs can worship Beogh, the Orc god. They can join Beogh even without an altar whenever an orc priest is in sight.

Minotaurs (Mi) The Minotaurs are yet another species of hybrids - Human bodies with bovine heads. They delve into the Dungeon because of their instinctive love of twisting passageways.

Minotaurs are extremely good at all forms of physical combat, but are awful at using any type of magic. They can wear all armour except for some headgear. When in close combat, Minotaurs tend to reflexively headbutt those who dare attack them.

Merfolk (Mf) The Merfolk are a hybrid species of half-human, half-fish that typically live in the oceans and rivers, seldom venturing toward land. However, Merfolk aren't as limited on land as some myths suggest; their tails will quickly reform into legs once they leave the water (and, likewise, their legs will quickly reform into a tail should they ever enter water). They tend to be surprisingly nimble on land as well as in the water. Experts at swimming, they need not fear drowning and move very quickly through water.

The Merfolk have developed their martial arts strongly on thrusting and grappling, since those are the most efficient ways to fight underwater. They therefore prefer polearms and short swords above all other weapons, though they can also use longer swords quite well.

As spellcasters, they tend to be quite good in specific areas. Their mystical relationship with water makes it easier for them to use poison and ice magic, which use water occasionally as a material component. The legendary water magic of the Merfolk was lost in ancient times, but some of that affinity still remains. The instability of their own morphogenic matrix has made them very accomplished transmuters, but most other magic seems foreign to them.

Gargoyles (Gr) A cross between ordinary stone gargoyles and living beings, Gargoyles are hideous humanoids with an affinity to rock. They have low health, but large amounts of innate armour which increases further as they gain levels. They eventually gain the ability to fly continuously.

Gargoyles' partially living form grants them immunity to poison, as well as resistance to electricity, and protection from some effects of necromancy. Their natural armour makes them strong melee fighters, and they are naturally skilled with blunt weapons and in unarmed combat. They can also be exceptional earth-based conjurers.

Draconians (Dr) Draconians are human-dragon hybrids: humanoid in form and approximately human-sized, with wings, tails and scaly skins. Draconians start out in an immature form with brown scales, but as they grow in power they take on a variety of colours. This happens at an early stage in their career, and the colour is determined by chromosomes, not by behaviour.

Most types of Draconians have breath weapons or special resistances. Draconians cannot wear body armour and advance very slowly in levels, but are reasonably good at all skills other than missile weapons, and they develop natural physical defenses that compensate for the lack of body armour, without needing to train their Armour skill at all. Still, each colour has its own strengths and some have complementary weaknesses, which sometimes requires a bit of flexibility on the part of the player. They are good general-purpose spellcasters, and typically their spellcasting aptitudes will adapt slightly when they gain a colour.

Draconian colours are detailed below, in the subsection titled Draconian types_.

Halflings (Ha) Halflings, who are named for being about half the size of Humans, live in small villages. They live simple lives and have simple interests. Sometimes a particularly restless Halfling will leave his or her village in search of adventure.

Halflings are very small but surprisingly hardy for their size, even having an innate resistance to mutagenic effects. They can use short blades and shields very well, are passable with long blades, and excel in ranged combat with slings. They are also very stealthy and dextrous, but are poor at magic (except for charms, translocations, and air magic). They advance in levels as rapidly as Humans. Halflings cannot wield large weapons.

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Trolls (Tr) Trolls are monstrous creatures with powerful claws. They have thick, knobbly skins of any colour from putrid green to mucky brown, which are covered in patches of thick fur.

They are incredibly strong, and have a lightning-fast metabolism - requiring a great deal of food to survive, but regenerating rapidly from even the most terrible wounds. However, they are hopeless at spellcasting and learn most skills very slowly.

Ghouls (Gh) Ghouls are horrible undead creatures, slowly rotting away. Although Ghouls can sleep in their graves for years on end, when they rise to walk among the living, they must eat flesh to survive. Raw flesh is preferred, and Ghouls heal and reverse the effects of their eternal rotting by consuming it, but they can never become truly full.

They aren't very good at doing most things, although they make decent unarmed fighters with their claws and, due to their contact with the grave, can use ice, earth and death magic without too many difficulties.

Like other undead, ghouls are naturally immune to poisons, negative energy and torment; have little warmth left to be affected by cold; and are not susceptible to mutations.

Intermediate Species

Species classified as *Intermediate* require a broader understanding of the mechanics of Crawl, have some weakness(es) that must be actively compensated for, and/or add a relatively complex mechanic (or change in mechanic) to gameplay.

Humans (Hu) Humans tend to be hardworking and industrious, and learn new things quickly. The Human species is the most versatile of all the species available to players. Humans advance quickly in levels and have equal abilities in most skills.

Kobolds (Ko) Kobolds are small, ugly creatures with few redeeming features. They are not the sort of people you would want to spend much time with, unless you happened to be a Kobold yourself.

They tend to be more agile and weaker than Halflings, and are slightly more talented at using most types of magic, particularly necromancy. They are competent in combat, especially with short blades, maces or crossbows, and are also very adept at using magical devices. They often live as scavengers, surviving on carrion (which they can eat even when not hungry), but are carnivorous and can only eat meat. Kobolds advance in levels as quickly as Humans. Like Halflings, Kobolds cannot wield large weapons.

Demonspawn (Ds) Demonspawn are horrible half-mortal, half-infernal creatures - the flip side of the Demigods. Demonspawn can be created in any

number of ways: magical experiments, breeding, unholy pacts, etc. Although many Demonspawn may initially be indistinguishable from those of pure mortal stock, they will inevitably grow horns, scales or other unusual features. Powerful members of this class of beings also develop a range of unholy abilities, which are listed as mutations.

Demonspawn advance slowly in experience and learn most skills at about the same rate as do Demigods. However, they are a little better at fighting and conjurations and much better at necromancy and invocations. Note that unlike Demigods, they can take on gods, although not all will accept them.

Centaurs (Ce) The Centaurs are another species of hybrid creatures: horses with Human torsos. They usually live in forests, surviving by hunting.

Centaurs can move very quickly on their four legs, and are excellent with bows and other missile weapons; they are also reasonable at fighting in general while being slow learners at specific weapon skills. They advance quite slowly in experience levels and are rather sub-par at using magic. Because of their body shape, they receive reduced protection from the body armour they wear.

Spriggans (Sp) Spriggans are small magical creatures distantly related to Elves. They love to frolic and cast mischievous spells.

They are poor fighters and have little physical resilience, though they are incredibly skilled at dodging attacks. They are terrible at destructive magic - conjurations, summonings, necromancy and elemental spells. On the other hand, they are excellent at other forms of magic, and are very good at moving silently and quickly. So great is their speed that a Spriggan can overtake a Centaur. Due to their tiny size, they need very little food. However, they are herbivorous and cannot eat meat. Their size also makes them unable to wear most armour. They cannot wield large weapons, and even most smaller weapons require both hands to be wielded by a Spriggan.

Tengu (Te) The Tengu are an ancient and feared species of bird-people with a legendary propensity for violence. Basically humanoid with bird-like heads and clawed feet, the Tengu can wear all types of armour except helmets and boots. Despite their lack of wings, powerful Tengu can fly magically, and very powerful members of this species can stay in the air indefinitely. Their movement speed and evasion are increased slightly while flying.

They are experts at all forms of fighting, including the magical arts of combat (conjurations, summonings and, to a lesser extent, necromancy). They are good at air and fire elemental magic, but poor at ice and earth magic. Tengu do not appreciate any form of servitude, and so are poor at using invocations. Their light avian bodies cannot sustain a great deal of injury.

Deep Elves (DE) This is an Elven species who long ago fled the overworld to live in darkness underground. There, they developed their mental powers, evolving a natural gift for all forms of magic (including necromancy and earth magic), and adapted physically to their new environment, becoming shorter, weaker, and losing all colouration. They are poor at melee combat and physical defense.

Ogres (Og) Ogres are huge, chunky creatures who are very strong and robust, but are not nimble at all. They possess a raw talent for magic, but are poor at making use of magical devices. Ogres mature almost as quickly as Humans.

Their preferred methods of avoiding beatings are dodging and the use of shields, but they can also use armours made from magical hides, since these accommodate their large frames. Ogres are proficient at using all types of melee weapons, yet all sophisticated forms of missile combat are too awkward for them. They are, however, good at throwing things, in particular boulders.

Deep Dwarves (DD) Deep Dwarves are short, hardy people who, unlike their extinct surface relatives, never left the underground homelands. Living there for countless generations made them turn pale and lose all ability to regenerate health over time, or to have their rate of regeneration hastened by any effects. Deep Dwarves can instead draw on their magical essence to heal, but doing so will gradually deplete their maximum reserves of magic. They are passively able to reduce all incoming damage, and their empathy with the earth allows them to sense their surroundings; these abilities increase in power as they gain experience levels.

Naturally, Deep Dwarves are quite adept with all arts of avoiding blows and damage. Offensively, they are skilled users of axes, crossbows, and slings. Deep Dwarves are highly spiritual beings, often portrayed as actual spirits by outsiders; because of this, their skill with invocations is great, and they often rely on divine assistance for healing. They are most at home with the magic of earth and death, eventually gaining some resistance to the dark powers of necromancy.

Gnolls (Gn) Gnolls are a race of caniform humanoids originally hailing from the arid deserts and grasslands of the east. In recent history they have become unusually attracted to the Dungeon, establishing tribes around and even inside of it. Unfortunately their long stay in the Dungeon has exposed their somewhat fragile minds to excessive amounts of its magic.

On the one hand, their bizarrely altered brains now have incredible proficiency at learning every skill. On the other, these same alterations have rendered Gnolls incapable of selective learning. They learn all skills equally at the same time, so it's hard for them to learn more about any one thing.

In order to survive with this limitation, Gnolls use their universal knowledge and excellent physical attributes of strength, intelligence, and dexterity to

take advantage of every resource they find in the Dungeon. They also have powerful noses adapted to the Dungeon's scents, allowing them to easily locate where treasures lay hidden.

Advanced Species

Advanced species have some substantial weaknesses, and/or add multiple complex new mechanics to gameplay. This category includes several species that experienced players may not find difficult per se, but that may require quite a bit of experience to adapt to. It also includes species that are just plain difficult, such as Mummies.

Vine Stalkers (VS) Limber in shape, Vine Stalkers are anthropomorphic masses of thick vines. They possess a once-humanoid core, parasitised moments before death by the magical vines. Lacking any other discernible features, their faces are dominated by the disproportionate, vicious maw with which they disrupt and devour the magical energies of their foes.

Magic courses freely through their bodies, and any damage they take is split between their health and magical reserves. They also physically regenerate at an alarming rate. However these traits come at a price: the dual nature of their bodies makes them extremely frail, and they cannot benefit from potions to heal their wounds.

Living examples of adaptation, Vine Stalkers level up quickly and lend well to an all-out offensive style; trusting their stealth to choose their prey and then their regenerating capabilities to power through the wounds they may sustain in battle. Many members of the species however, are seen wielding magic quite competently and then switching to a hybrid style when their reserves start to run low, thus replenishing their shroud of magic and their spells' fuel with each voracious bite.

Vampires (Vp) Vampires are another form of undead, but with a peculiarity they may become alive. A bloodless Vampire has the traits of an undead (immunity to poisons, negative energy and torment, resistant to damage from the cold), but cannot physically regenerate when monsters are in sight and are less resilient. On the other hand, a Vampire full with blood will regenerate very quickly, but will lose all undead powers. Vampires can never starve. Upon growing, they learn to transform into quick bats. Unlike other undead species, they may be mutated normally at all times.

Demigods (Dg) Demigods are mortals with some divine or angelic ancestry, however distant; they can be created by a number of processes, including magical experiments and the time-honoured practice of interplanar miscegenation.

Demigods look more or less like members of their mortal part's species, but have excellent attributes (Str, Int, Dex) and are extremely robust;

they can also draw on great supplies of magical energy. On the downside, they advance more slowly in experience than any other race, gain skills slightly less quickly than Humans and, due to their status, cannot worship the various gods and powers available to other races.

Formicids (Fo) The Formicids are a species of humanoid ants. Just like their tiny insect ancestors, the Formicids are well adept at earth work, both on the physical and magical sides. Their abilities have been used to tunnel immense underground communities and structures, many of which are tens of thousands of years old.

Perhaps unfortunately, their strong ties to earth have left them completely impervious to being teleported or hasted; Formicids are tied to the earth with a complete sense of stasis. While this is a seemingly bad property for a dungeon adventurer, stasis has the beneficial effect of preventing many types of nasty hexes and maledictions.

With the ability to lift ten times their own weight, the Formicids have strength rivaling that of ogres. This, along with the fact that they have four arms, allows Formicid warriors to equip both a shield and a two-handed weapon at the same time.

Formicids make good earth and venom mages, but are quite capable at both melee and ranged combat too. They are naturally bad at air magic and conjurations.

Nagas (Na) Nagas are a hybrid species: Human from the waist up with a large snake tail instead of legs.

They are reasonably good at most things and advance in experience levels at the same rate as Merfolk. They are naturally resistant to poisons, can see invisible creatures, and have tough skin, but their tails are relatively slow and cannot move them around as quickly as can other creatures' legs (this only affects their movement rate; all other actions are at normal speed). Like Centaurs, their body shape also prevents them from gaining full protection from body armour. A Naga's biggest forte is stealth: Nagas are very good at moving unnoticed. Their tails eventually grow strong enough to constrict their foes in combat.

Nagas can spit poison; the range, accuracy and damage of this poison increases with the Naga's experience level.

Octopodes (Op) These land-capable relatives of common octopuses can move about as fast as humans and yet retain the ability to swim underwater, although their dual adaptation is not as good as that of the shapechanging merfolk.

Octopodes have eight tentacle-shaped legs, and need four of them to move. While a tentacle lacks fingers, two tentacles are a rough equivalent of a human's arm where item manipulation is concerned - including wielding two-handed weapons with four. They can use no armour other than loose

hats, but can handle shields just fine. Another peculiarity they have is the ability to wear eight rings, one on each tentacle.

Their natural camouflage makes them excel at stealth, and they have good knowledge of poisons as well. They are also able to use their tentacles to constrict enemies - potentially several at a time!

Felids (Fe) Felids are a breed of cats that have been granted sentience. Originally they were witches' familiars that were magically augmented to provide help for their masters' rituals, yet many have abandoned, outlived, or, in at least one case, eviscerated their former masters and gone out into the world.

While fully capable of using speech and most forms of magic, Felids are at a serious disadvantage due to their inability to use armour or weapons. Like all cats, Felids are incapable of thriving on vegetable food, and need meat to survive.

Their agility and stealth are legendary, as is their ability to get to hard to reach places. They move faster than most races, but don't run as fast as Centaurs or Spriggans. Felids advance in levels very slowly. They are skilled with many forms of magic, though less so with raw elemental magic.

Felids gain extra lives as they increase in levels. Upon death, they will be resurrected in a safe place, losing an experience level in the process.

Barachim (Ba) Barachim are an amphibious humanoid race, spawned at the dawn of time as servants for the gods. Inevitably, they rebelled and fled into the mortal world; but even uncounted years later, the darkness still flees at their approach, remembering those who they once served.

Barachim's most remarkable trait is their grossly overmuscled legs, which allow them to leap great distances. When not leaping, they are somewhat slow-moving, and the long sight-lines that their heritage creates can be a major disadvantage, but they can master almost any skill.

Mummies (Mu) These are undead creatures who travel into the depths in search of revenge, redemption, or just because they want to.

Mummies progress slowly in levels, half again as slowly as Humans in all skills except fighting, spellcasting and necromancy. As they increase in levels, they become increasingly in touch with the powers of death, but cannot use some types of necromancy which only affect living creatures. The side effects of necromantic magic tend to be relatively harmless to Mummies. However, their desiccated bodies are highly flammable. They also do not need to eat or drink and, in any case, are incapable of doing so.

Like other undead, mummies are naturally immune to poisons, negative energy and torment; have little warmth left to be affected by cold; and are not susceptible to mutations.

Draconian types

Red Draconians feel at home in fiery surroundings. They are bad with ice magic but very proficient with fire. Their scorchingly hot breath will leave a lingering cloud of flame.

White Draconians stem from frost-bitten lands, and are naturally resistant to frost. Their breath is piercing cold. They are versed in ice magic, but bad at fire.

Green Draconians are used to venomous surroundings and breathe clouds of mephitic vapours. They are especially good in the arts of poison and without deficiencies in other magic realms. Later on, they will develop a poisonous stinger.

Yellow Draconians have a sulphurous breath full of corrosive acid, and later gain an acidic bite attack. They are acid resistant, too.

Grey Draconians have no breath weapon, but also no need to breathe in order to live, which helps them survive in deep water. They are proficient with earth magic but bad with air magic, and also have harder scales than other Draconians.

Black Draconians can unleash huge electrical discharges, and are naturally insulated. They are good at air magic but feel cumbersome with earth magic. Their wings will eventually grow larger, which allows them to fly continuously when combined with their natural skill with air magic.

Purple Draconians are highly adapted to all spellcasting in general, and to hexes and charms in particular. They are a bit better at evoking things than most other Draconians. They can breathe dispelling energy which strips those it hits of their enchantments, and are naturally more resistant to hostile enchantments than other draconians.

Pale Draconians are better at air and fire magic, and have no deficiencies in other schools. They breathe steam and, like their Purple cousins, have a slight advantage at Evocations.

2. List of character backgrounds

In your quest, you play as one of a large number of different types of characters. Although each has its own strengths and weaknesses, some are definitely easier than others, at least to begin with. The best backgrounds for a beginner are probably Gladiators and Berserkers; if you really want to play a magician, try a Conjurer or a Wizard. However, not all species are equally well suited for all backgrounds. After you have selected a species, the background selection menu while show backgrounds generally considered to be more accessible for a species in a brighter colour.

Each background starts out with a different set of skills and items, but from there you can shape them as you will. Note that due to peculiarities of size or body shape, some species-background combinations start with a different inventory than described here.

Warrior backgrounds

Warriors are experienced at using physical weapons and defending themselves.

Fighters Fighters usually start with a good weapon of their choice, a suit of heavy armour, a shield, and a potion of might. They have a good general grounding in the arts of fighting.

Gladiators The Gladiator has been trained to fight in the ring, and so is versed in the arts of fighting, but is not so good at anything else. In fact, Gladiators have never learned anything except bashing monsters with heavy things. They start with a weapon of their choice, light armour, headgear and some nets.

Monks The Monk is a member of an ascetic order dedicated to the perfection of one's body and soul through the discipline of the martial arts. Monks start with only a simple weapon of their choice and a robe. When they choose a god for the first time, their spiritual training gives them a piety boost.

Hunters The Hunter is a type of fighter who specialises in missile weapons. A Hunter starts with either some throwing weapons or a ranged weapon of their choice and some ammunition, as well as a short sword, and a set of leathers.

Assassins An Assassin is a stealthy character who is especially good at killing, using daggers or darts. They start with a dagger, a robe and cloak, poisoned darts, and a few deadly and rare curare darts.

Adventurer backgrounds

Adventurers have varied and idiosyncratic skills that they have picked up in their travels.

Artificers Artificers are attuned to gadgets, mechanics and magic elicited from arcane items, as opposed to casting magic themselves. As a consequence, they enter the Dungeon with an assortment of wands. Artificers are skilled at evoking magical items, and also understand the basics of melee combat.

Wanderers Wanderers are people who have not learned a specific trade. Instead, they've travelled around becoming "jacks-of-all-trades, masters of none". They start the game with a random assortment of skills and maybe some small items and spells they picked up along the way, but, other than that, they're pretty much on their own.

Zealot backgrounds

Zealots start the game already worshipping a god.

Berserkers Berserkers are hardy warriors who worship Trog the Wrathful, from whom they get the power to go berserk (as well as a number of other powers, should they prove worthy), but who forbids the use of spell magic. They enter the dungeon with a weapon of their choice, and dressed in animal skins.

Abyssal Knights The Abyssal Knight is a fighter serving Lugonu the Unformed, ruler of the Abyss. They are granted some power over the Abyss, and must spread death and disorder in return. They are sent from the Abyss into the Dungeon to spread corruption and chaos, starting with a simple weapon of their choice and leather armour.

Chaos Knights The Chaos Knight is a plaything of Xom, subject to the god's constantly changing moods. Xom is a very unpredictable (and possibly psychotic) entity who rewards or punishes according to whim. They begin with a lightly enchanted leather armour, and a simple weapon of their choice.

Warrior-mage backgrounds

Warrior mages begin the game with a mix of physical combat and magic skills, though usually excel at neither. They start with a book of spells, and usually with some way of defending themselves.

Skalds Formidable warriors in their own rights, Skalds practice a form of augmenting battle magic that is either chanted or sung. Unique to the highlands in which they originate, these spells and formulae are second nature: they can either inspire greatness in themselves and their allies, or fear in the hearts of their enemies. They begin the game with a weapon of their choice, some leather armour, and the Book of Battle.

Transmuters Transmuters specialise in transmutation magic, and can cause strange changes in themselves and others. They deal damage primarily in unarmed combat, often using transformations to enhance their defensive and offensive capabilities. They begin the game with the Book of Changes, some arrows to turn into snakes, and a robe.

Warpers Warpers specialise in translocation magic, and are experts in traveling long distances and positioning themselves precisely and use this to their advantage in melee or missile combat. They start with a scroll of blinking, the Book of Spatial Translocations, some dispersal tomahawks, a simple weapon of their choice, and leather armour.

Arcane Marksmen Arcane Marksmen are Hunters who use debilitating spells to assist their ranged attacks. They are particularly good at keeping their enemies at a distance. They begin the game with the Book of Debilitation, a ranged weapon of their choice, and a robe.

Enchanters The Enchanter specialises in the subtle art of hexes. Instead of directly damaging foes, hexes disable and debilitate them, allowing the Enchanter to finish the helpless creatures in combat. The Enchanter begins with lightly enchanted dagger, a robe, and the Book of Maledictions.

Mage backgrounds

A mage is not an available character background by itself, but a type of background, encompassing Wizards, Conjurers, Summoners, Necromancers, various Elementalists and Venom Mages. Mages are the best at using magic. Among other things, they start with a robe and a book of spells which should see them through the first several levels.

Wizards A Wizard is a magician who does not specialise in any area of magic. Wizards start with a variety of magical skills and with Magic Dart memorised, from the Book of Minor Magic. Their book allows them to progress in many different branches of the arcane arts. They also get a wizard hat.

Conjurers The Conjurer specialises in the violent and destructive magic of conjuration spells. Like Wizards, the Conjurer starts with the Magic Dart spell, in their case from the Book of Conjurations.

Summoners The Summoner specialises in calling creatures from this and other worlds to give assistance. Although they can at first summon only very wimpy creatures, the more advanced summoning spells allow summoners to call on such powers as elementals and demons. They begin with the Book of Callings.

Necromancers The Necromancer is a magician who specialises in the less pleasant side of magic, drawing initially from the Book of Necromancy. Necromantic spells are a varied bunch, but many involve some degree of risk or harm to the caster.

Elementalists Elementalists are magicians who specialise in one of the four types of elemental magic: air, fire, earth or ice.

Fire Magic tends towards destructive conjurations. Fire Elementalists begin with the Book of Flames.

Ice Magic offers a balance between destructive conjurations and protective charms. Ice Elementalists start with the Book of Frost.

Air Magic provides many useful charms in addition to some unique destructive capabilities. Air Elementalists begin with the Book of Air.

Earth Magic is a versatile school, with destructive, debilitating and utility spells available. Earth Elementalists start with the Book of Geomancy, and some stones to use for the Sandblast spell.

Venom Mages Venom Mages specialise in poison magic, which is extremely useful in the shallower levels of the dungeon where few creatures are immune to it. Their first book is the Young Poisoner's Handbook.

3. List of skills

Here is a description of the skills you may have. You can check your current skills with the 'm' command, and therein toggle between progress display and aptitude display using '*'. You can also read the table of aptitudes from the help menu using '?%', and during character choice with '%'.

Fighting skills

Fighting is the basic skill used in ranged and melee combat, and applies no matter which weapon your character is wielding (if any). Fighting is also the skill that determines the number of hit points your character gets as they increase in levels (note that this is calculated so that you don't get a long run advantage by starting out with a high Fighting skill). Unlike the specific weapon skill, Fighting does not change the speed with which you make your attacks.

Weapon skills affect your ability to fight with specific melee weapons. Weapon skills include:

- Short Blades
- Long Blades
- Maces & Flails
- Axes
- Staves
- Polearms

If you are already good using a class of weapons, say Long Blades, you'll get a bonus to using similar weapons, like Short Blades; this is called crosstraining and is shown in blue in the skill menu. Similar types of weapons are:

- Short Blades and Long Blades
- Maces & Flails and Axes
- Polearms and Axes
- Staves and Polearms
- Staves and Maces & Flails

Being good at a specific weapon improves the speed with which you attack with it. Both the base speed and the best (lowest) possible speed are displayed in the inventory entry for a weapon. Although lighter weapons are easier to use initially, as they strike quickly and accurately, heavier weapons increase in damage potential very quickly as you improve your skill with them. You can check the current delay of your weapon by swinging it at air (using ctrl-direction) and looking at the number in parentheses next to your turncount.

Some weapon types have special abilities. Axes are able to cleave through multiple enemies in a single swing, hitting enemies in an arc around the wielder with every attack. Polearms can reach farther and allow the wielder to attack an opponent two squares away, and even reach over monsters. Use the 'v' command to target a specific monster with a reaching attack, or use Autofight ('tab') to reach automatically.

Unarmed Combat is a special fighting skill. It allows your character to make a powerful attack when unarmed and also to punch with the off hand as an additional melee attack. The Unarmed Combat skill continues to increase your attack speed while unarmed until it can be raised no more.

Note that auxiliary attacks (such as a Centaur's kick or a Minotaur's headbutt) are not affected by the Unarmed Combat skill.

Ranged combat skills

There are a number of individual weapon skills for missile weapons:

- Throwing
- Bows
- Crossbows
- Slings

Throwing is the skill for all things hurled without a launcher: tomahawks, javelins, nets, darts, etc. The other skills refer to various types of missiles shot with a launcher. Since stones can be thrown without launchers to some effect, these skills crosstrain:

- Throwing and Slings

Magic skills

Spellcasting is the basic skill for magic use. It affects your reserves of magical energy (Magic) in the same way that Fighting affects your hit points: every time you increase the Spellcasting skill you gain some magic points, and you gain a spell level every time you reach a skill level divisible by 0.5. This skill greatly influences the amount by which casting causes hunger. Spellcasting also helps with the power and success rate of your spells, but to a lesser extent than the more specialised magical skills.

There are also individual skills for each different type of magic; the higher the skill, the more powerful the spell. Multidisciplinary spells use an average of the two or three skills.

Miscellaneous skills

Armour Heavier body armours give more reliable protection from damage but have several disadvantages.

Having a high Armour skill means that you are used to wearing heavy armour, allowing you to move more freely and gain more protection. When you look at an armour's description (from within the inventory), you can see in particular how cumbersome it is. This is measured by the encumbrance rating.

This skill helps to overcome the evasion penalty of body armours, reduces the amount by which heavy armour hampers melee fighting and also somewhat mitigates the bad effects of heavy armour on spellcasting. High Armour skill also increases the AC provided by other types of armour (gloves, cloaks, etc.).

Dodging A high Dodging skill helps you to evade melee and ranged attacks more effectively. This is more easily done in light armour, but can still be useful in heavier armour.

Stealth Helps you avoid being noticed, and makes monsters more likely to lose track of you when you leave their line of sight. Wearing heavy armour penalises stealth attempts. Large creatures (like Trolls) are bad at stealth, except for Nagas, which are unusually stealthy.

Stealth also helps you make a very powerful first strike against a sleeping/resting monster who hasn't noticed you yet. This is most effective with a dagger, slightly less effective with other short blades and Felid claws, and less useful (although still by no means negligible) with any other weapon.

Stealth also improves some melee attacks against confused, distracted, or otherwise incapacitated monsters, though this is much less effective than when the monster is asleep or paralysed.

Note that in addition to the bonus from weapon type, there is an additional stabbing bonus based on the average of your stealth skill and your skill with your wielded weapon.

Shields Affects the amount of protection you gain by using a shield, and the degree to which it hinders you. For most races, 5/15/25 skill is enough to mitigate the encumbrance of bucklers/shields/large shields respectively, though larger races need less skill and smaller races more.

Invocations Affects your ability to call on your god for aid. Those skilled at Invocations have reduced failure rates and produce more powerful effects. Some gods (such as Trog) do not require followers to learn this skill, or use a different skill for their abilities instead (such as Necromancy under Kikubaaqudgha).

Evocations This skill lets you use wands much more effectively, in terms of both damage and precision. Similarly, various other items that have evocable powers work better for characters trained in this skill.

Invocations and Evocations can increase your maximum magical reserves, although both have a smaller effect than Spellcasting in this regard. The bonuses are not cumulative; the highest contribution from Spellcasting, Invocations or Evocations is used.

4. List of keys and commands

Main screen

Crawl has many commands to be issued by single key strokes. This can become confusing, since there are also several modes; here is the full list. Some commands are particularly useful in combination with certain interface options; such options are mentioned in the list. For a description of them, please look into options_guide.txt. For a more terse list of all commands, use '??' in-game. Most modes (targeting, level map, interlevel travel) also have help menus via '?' on their own.

Movement

direction This moves one square. The direction is either one of the numpad cursor keys (try both Numlock on and off) or one of the Rogue vi keys (hjklyubn).

Shift-direction or / direction This moves straight until something interesting is found (like a monster). If the first square is a trap, movement starts nonetheless.

o Auto-explore. Setting the option explore_greedy to true makes auto-explore run to interesting items (those that get picked up automatically) or piles (checking the contents). Autoexploration will open doors on its own except if you set travel_open_doors to false.

G or Ctrl-G Interlevel travel (to arbitrary dungeon levels or waypoints). Remembers old destinations if interrupted. This command has its own set of shortcuts; use ? for help on them.

Ctrl-W Set waypoint (a digit between 0 and 9). Check the option show_waypoints. You can go to a waypoint by pressing Ctrl-G or G and the digit.

Resting

s, Del, . or Numpad 5 Rests for one turn. This is most often used tactically for waiting a few turns. Serious resting should be done with the 5 command, for the sake of your keyboard and sanity.

5 or Shift-Numpad 5 Long resting, until both health and magic points are full.

Resting is the only way to get rid of manticore spikes, but is otherwise indistinguishable from any other action; healing, magic point restoration, etc, proceed at the same rate, whether you're resting or not.

Dungeon interaction

O Open door. This is also done automatically by walking into the door.

C Close door.

Ctrl-direction or * direction Opens/closes a door in the specified direction (if there is one), or else attacks without moving (even if no monster is seen).

< Use staircase to go higher, or use a shop, altar, or portal.

> Use staircase to go deeper, or use a shop, altar, or portal.

; Examine occupied tile and auto-pickup eligible items. Can also be used to pick up only part of a stack with no other item on the same square.

x Examine surroundings, see below. Has '?' help.

X Examine level map, see below. Has '?' help.

Ctrl-X Lists all monsters, items and features in sight. You may read their descriptions and travel to an item or feature.

Ctrl-O Show dungeon overview (branches, shops, etc.).

! Annotate current level. You can enter any text. This annotation is then listed in the dungeon overview (Ctrl-O) and also shown whenever you enter that level again. If you use this command when standing on a staircase, you may also annotate the level that staircase leads to. Should your annotation contain an exclamation mark (!), you will be prompted before entering the level. An empty string clears annotations.

Character information 'display' below means usage of the message area, 'show' means usage of the whole screen.

@ Display character status.

[Display worn armour.

} Display list of runes collected.

" Display worn jewellery.

E Display experience info.

^ Show religion screen.

A Show abilities/mutations.

a Show the ability menu, allowing you to activate an ability or read its description.

**** Show item knowledge. You can toggle autopickup exceptions for item types in this screen. The screen has its own help text.

m Show skill screen. You can get descriptions of present skills from that screen, as well as the aptitudes. The screen has its own help text.

i Show inventory list. Inside this list, pressing a slot key shows information on that item.

I Show list of memorised spells.

% Show resistances and general character overview: health, experience, money, gear, and status, mutations, abilities (the latter three more terse than with the command @, A, a). This is a highly condensed conglomeration of [, ", E, ^, @, A, a, $ on a single screen. Pressing the key of a displayed item views it.

Other game-playing commands

z Cast a spell. Should the spell demand monsters as targets but there are none within range, casting will be stopped. In this case, neither turns nor magic are used. If you want to cast the spell nonetheless, use Z.

Z Cast a spell regardless of available targets.

t Tell commands to allies, or shout (with tt).

Ctrl-A Toggle autopickup. Note that encounters with invisible monsters always turns autopickup off. You need to switch it on with Ctrl-A afterwards.

| Toggle various display layers and overlays. (Console only)

' Re-do previous command

0 Repeat next command a given number of times

Non-game playing commands

? The help menu.

Ctrl-P Show previous messages.

Ctrl-R Redraw screen.

Ctrl-C Clear main and level maps.

Dump character to file (name.txt).

: Add note to dump file (see option take_notes).

?: Read the notes in-game.

?V Display version information.

?/ Describe a monster, spell or feature. You can enter a partial name or a regex instead of the full name.

~ or Ctrl-D Add or save macros and key mappings.

= Reassign inventory/spell/abilities letters.

_ (console) or F12 (WebTiles) Read messages (when playing online; not for local games).

- Edit player doll (Tiles only).

Saving games

S Save game with query and exit.

Ctrl-S Save game without query and exit.

Ctrl-Q Quit without saving (with a confirmation prompt).

Stashes

Ctrl-F Find. This searches in stashes and shops, you can use regular expressions and also terms like 'long blades', 'shop', 'altar', 'artefact'. If you are looking for altars to a special god, a search for 'Trog' , etc. works. A string like 'D:13' will list all known items on that level. 'D:1}' will search for items on level 1 only, as opposed to 'D:1', which will also list items on D:10 through D:19. Once the list of all found places is displayed, you can cause auto-travel to go there (press the associated letter) or you can examine the items (press ? followed by the letter).

Item interaction (inventory)

{ Inscribe item (check the autoinscribe option). An empty inscription or inscribing only space will remove prior inscriptions. See Appendix 5. Inscriptions_. You can also inscribe items when viewing them by pressing their slot key in the inventory.

f Fire quivered missile. If some monster is in sight, either the last target or the nearest monster will be automatically targeted. Pressing f again shoots.

F Directly choose an item and fire. Contrary to fi this does not change the quiver.

(and) Cycle quiver to next/previous suitable missile, respectively.

Q Quiver item from a menu.

q Quaff a potion.

e Eat food (tries floor first, inventory next). In the eating prompt, e is synonymous to y.

r Read a scroll.

M Memorise a spell from a book.

w Wield an item (- for none).

' Wield item a, or switch to b.

v Evoke power of wielded item. Also used to attack non-adjacent monsters with a polearm.

V Evoke an item from the inventory. This includes using wands.

W Wear armour.

T Take off armour.

P Put on jewellery.

R Remove jewellery.

Item interaction (floor)

g or , Pick up items. Use a prefix to pick up smaller quantities. As with dropping, Ctrl-F allows you to pick up items matching regular expression.

d Drop an item. Within the drop list, you can select slots based on a regular expression by pressing Ctrl-F, followed by the regex.

d# Drop exact number of items, where # is a number.

D Drop item(s) picked up last.

c Chop up a corpse. In case there are several corpses on the ground, you are prompted one by one. There, you can answer

y, c	yes (chop up this corpse)
n, Space:	no (skip this corpse)
a	yes to all (chop up all corpses)
q, Esc	stop chopping altogether

Shortcuts in lists (like multidrop)

When dropping, the drop menu accepts several shortcuts. The same applies to the pickup menu. In the following, if an item is already selected, the key will deselect it (except for ',' and '-', obviously).

(Select all missiles.

) Select all hand weapons.

[Select all armour.

? Select all scrolls.

% Select all food.

& Select all carrion and inedible food.

: Select all books.

/ Select all wands.

| Select all staves.

! Select all potions.

= Select all rings.

" Select all amulets.

} Select all miscellaneous items.

, Global select (subject to drop_filter option).

- Global deselect (subject to drop_filter option).

* Invert selection. This will allow you to select all items even if you use the drop_filter option.

. Selects next item. (If you have pressed the key of an item in the list, '.' will toggle the next item. This can be repeated, quickly selecting several subsequent items).

; Select last unequipped. Selects the equipment (armour, jewellery, or weapon) you last took off or unwielded.

Level map ('X')

The level map (brought up by 'X' in the main screen) uses the whole screen to show the dungeon.

Esc, Space Leave level map.

? Level map help.

- Scroll level map up.

+ Scroll level map down.

direction Move cursor.

Shift-direction Move cursor in bigger steps (determined by the the option level_map_cursor_step).

. Travel to cursor (also Enter, Del, ',' and ';'). If the cursor is on the character, move cursor to last travel destination instead.

o Move cursor to the next autoexplore target.

v Describe remembered feature or monster under the cursor.

< Cycle through up stairs.

> Cycle through down stairs.

^ Cycle through traps.

_ Cycle through altars.

Tab Cycle through shops and portals.

I Cycle forward through all items and piles.

O Cycle backward through all items and piles.

G Select another level (by branch and depth) to view the map of.

[View the previous level.

] View the next level.

! Add an annotation to the current level.

Ctrl-C Clear level and main maps (from temporarily seen monsters, clouds, etc.).

Ctrl-F Forget level map.

Ctrl-U Restore forgotten level map.

Waypoints can be set on the level map. You can travel to waypoints using G. The commands are:

Ctrl-W Set waypoint.

W Cycle through waypoints.

Travel exclusions mark certain spots of the map as no-go areas for autotravel and explore.

e Set travel exclusion. If an exclusion is already present, change size (from single square to full field of vision); after that, remove exclusion.

Ctrl-E Erase all travel exclusions at once.

E Cycle through travel exclusions.

Examining surroundings ('x')

When roaming the dungeon, the surroundings mode is activated by 'x'. It lets you look at items, monsters or other features in line of sight.

Esc, Space, x Return to playing mode.

? Special help screen.

* or ' Cycle objects forward.

/ or ; Cycle objects backward.

+ or = Cycle monsters forward.

- Cycle monsters backward.

direction Move cursor.

. or Enter Travel to cursor (also Del).

v Describe feature or monster under the cursor. Some branch entries have special information.

> Cycle downstairs.

< Cycle upstairs.

_ Cycle through altars.

Tab Cycle shops and portals.

Targeting

Targeting mode is similar to examining surroundings. It is activated whenever you fire projectiles, evoke a wand or cast spells which use targets. All of the commands described for examination of surroundings work, with the exception of Space (which fires).

Esc or x Stop targeting.

? Special help screen.

Enter Fire at cursor direction (also Del and Space).

. Fire at cursor position and stop there. This can be useful to avoid damaging allies, or to avoid losing arrows.

p Fire at previous target (if still in sight).

f Smart-firing: fire at previous target, if it is still in sight; and else fire at the cursor position. You can start shooting at an opponent with 'ff' and then keep firing with 'ff'.

: Toggle display of the beam path.

(and) These two commands allow you to change ammunition while targeting. The choice is subject to the fire_order option. Usually, you change missiles according to your launcher; i.e. when wielding a bow, (and) will cycle through all stacks of arrows in your inventory.

Shift-direction Fire straight in that direction.

5. Inscriptions

You can use the { command to manually inscribe items; alternatively, you can also inscribe when viewing items from the inventory (done by pressing the item's letter). This adds a note in curly braces to the item description. Besides simply allowing you to make comments about items, there are several further uses.

Inscriptions as shortcuts

You can use inscriptions to define shortcuts for easy access to items, regardless of their actual inventory letter. For example, if an item's inscription contains "@w9", you can type 'w9' in order to wield it. Instead of the 9, any other digit works as well. And instead of 'w'ield, any other command used for handling items can be used: 'e'at, 'r'ead, 'q'uaff, e'v'oke, 'f'ire, etc. Using "@*9" will make any action command followed by '9' use this item.

Safety inscriptions

Inscriptions containing the following strings affect the behaviour of some commands:

!* Prompt before any action using this item.

!w Prompt before wielding and unwielding this item.

!a Prompt before attacking when wielding this item. Non-weapons and ranged weapons prompt automatically. Also, if you answer 'y', you won't be prompted again until you switch weapons.

!d Prompt before dropping this item.

!e Prompt before eating this item.

!q Prompt before quaffing this item.

!r Prompt before reading this item.

!f Prompt before firing or throwing this item.

!W Prompt before wearing this armour.

!T Prompt before taking off this armour.

!P Prompt before putting on this jewellery.

!R Prompt before removing this jewellery.

!v Prompt before evoking this item.

!Q Prompt before explicitly quivering this item.

=g Pick this item up automatically if autopickup is on.

=f Exclude this item from automatic quivering.

+f Include this item in automatic quivering.

=F Exclude this item when cycling ammunition.

+F Include this item when cycling ammunition.

=R Do not offer to swap out this ring if another one can be removed instead.

!D Prompt before performing an action that might destroy this item. If you're attempting to destroy an item thus inscribed by turning it into a snake, or burning it in the name of Trog, the game won't even ask you for confirmation but will ignore the item. However, it won't protect against lava or deep water accidents.

You can use the autoinscribe option to have some items automatically inscribed. See options_guide.txt for details. Some examples are:

    autoinscribe = royal jelly:=g autoinscribe = wand of heal wounds:!v

Artefact autoinscriptions

Artefacts are automatically inscribed with abbreviated descriptions of their properties. The inscriptions use the following general ideas:

rXXX signifies a resistance; e.g. rF+ (a level of fire resistance), rN+++ (three levels of negative energy resistance), rC- (cold vulnerability).

+XXX signifies an ability you can evoke via the 'a' command. E.g. +Fly (evocable, temporary flight).

-XXX signifies a suppressed ability. E.g. -Cast (spellcasting forbidden).

XX+6 means a boost to some numerical stat (similar with XX-2, etc.). E.g. Slay+3 (+3 to accuracy and damage of melee and ranged combat).

For more information, examine an item (by selecting it in your (i)nventory); each property of an artefact will be listed and described.

6. Dungeon sprint modes

Dungeon sprints are short, faster-paced variants of Crawl that aim at more of a "coffee break" style of gameplay. They can be accessed from the main menu, and save files coexist with regular game saves. Sprint modes all use the basic Crawl mechanics, but with certain aspects of the game sped up. All sprint games take place on a single map. The most noticeable speed change is much more rapid experience gain, as well as piety growth. Many sprint modes focus on some specific aspect of the game, and several introduce variant mechanics or items unique to that mode. In all of the sprint maps, you win by finding and escaping with the Orb of Zot, but the conditions for finding the Orb vary.

Sprint I: "Red Sonja" Red Sonja, originally called "dungeon sprint 1", is the original dungeon sprint map, putting the quest for the Orb of Zot into a single level.

Sprint II: "The Violet Keep of Menkaure" Menkaure has stolen the Orb of Zot and hidden it away in his keep; can you find it?

Sprint III: "The Ten Rune Challenge" Originally introduced in the 2010 tournament, this sprint map places 10 runes and the Orb of Zot in a single dungeon level.

Sprint IV: "Fedhas' Mad Dash" Fedhas' Mad Dash is a shorter sprint map, a contest organised by Fedhas Madash. The monsters are Fedhas-themed; watch out for the many flavours of Oklobs! As usual, your goal is to find the Orb of Zot and then escape.

Sprint V: "Ziggurat Sprint" Ziggurat Sprint focuses on the Ziggurat mechanic. The map consists of a sequence of open-layout rooms of increasing size and difficulty, each with many monsters around some theme; rooms are connected by transporters. The starting room provides powerful equipment for getting started, as well as altars. If you can make it through all rooms, you will be taken to a room with the Orb and some exit stairs.

Sprint VI: "Thunderdome" In the Thunderdome you face a large set of monsters, including many uniques, in a cross-shaped arena. Monsters appear in rounds, with boss rounds every 5 rounds (every 3 after round 27), and the final boss at round 27. If you kill every monster in a normal or boss round, you will get some gold, arena points, and a bit of time to rest. In a lightning round, to win you just need to survive. A variety of interesting items are available for purchase in shops along the sides – don't miss the QUAD DAMAGE! To win this sprint, kill the final boss, and the Orb will appear.

Sprint VII: "The Pits" This map is a "traditional-style" sprint map that embeds the quest for the Orb of Zot into a dungeon level with three runes.

Sprint VIII: "Arena of Blood" In the Arena of Blood, also known as "meat-sprint", you are a vessel of Makhleb, wielding Makhleb's immensely destructive Axe of Woe against a large variety of meat-based monsters in an open arena. To win this mode, kill the Meatlord, pick up the Orb of Zot, and escape.

Sprint IX: "|||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||" This mode, also known as "linesprint", puts the entire game of Crawl in a single winding 1-space corridor, with each region as one straight line. Fight your way to the middle of the map to claim the Orb of Zot. Escape with it, or continue onwards to collect all runes first.