

# PRINCE OF DESTRUCTION™



**Design by Tonio Loewald  
Programming by Andrew Barry**

## *Objective*

Welcome to Prince of Destruction, the first game using MARS, the Multi-player Animated Role-playing System. Prince of Destruction is an epic fantasy set in a distant land known as Nestaria.

Through trickery and deceit, the evil Prince Grishnákh has overthrown his sister, the rightful heir to Nestaria's throne. You have been summoned by the Keeper to defeat the self-titled Prince of Destruction, despotic ruler of Nestaria. You arrive in Nestaria atop a huge stone monolith, facing a white-haired magician.

## *Strategy*

You must defeat the evil Prince of Destruction. Along the way you will encounter important clues, fiendish puzzles and deadly traps. Use your skill and wits to navigate the world of Nestaria, vanquish the Prince and return Nestaria to its former glory.

**Before continuing, please familiarize yourself with the commands and gameplay discussed in the "Introduction to MARS" booklet.**

## The Players

Four heroic characters have volunteered for the quest to vanquish the evil Prince of Destruction.



Nanoc has the blood of a warrior in his veins. A fearsome fighter, he can wield the longest of blades and throw battle axes with ease.



Perhaps the most lethal, Thysa is a skilled warrior from the northlands. She can wield most weapons easily and throws her knives with deadly accuracy.



From the elven forests to the West came the legendary Silly. As graceful as the wind, he is rumored to have slain a wererabbit at one hundred paces with a single arrow.



Said to come from the distant Eastern Isles, Ada is a master of the mystic arts. When offered the protection of stronger comrades, she offers a formidable arsenal of spells.

## Of the founding of Nestaria

Nestaria was founded three score and ten years ago by the archmage Nestar, after whom it is modestly named. Nestar sought to create an idyllic society, where creative people could be free from fears of financial hardship, civil strife, disease, and tyranny. Only a magician of his power could have been so successful. In fact, Nestaria became such a Utopia, that its more adventurous denizens, such as yourself, forsook it for the far less perfect outside world. There they sought risk and adventure – and usually found it.

## Nestar's Children

Nestar and his second wife, Elaine, had two children. Grishnakh – their son and the elder of the two – was a moody, capricious youth, who spent most of his time musing as to what he might do when he ruled Nestaria after his father. Imria – their daughter, and the younger of the two, was bookish and seemed to care nothing for affairs of state, or the court.

## Nestar's Legacy

No man lives forever – nor woman either – and following Elaine's death, Nestar could see that the ferryman would soon see him on his way. Despite the advice of his advisers, Nestar concluded that his son, Grishnakh, was in no way suited to rule any place, let alone Nestaria. Nestar, ensuring the loyalty of key members of court, secretly began arranging for Imria to be Queen after his death.

## *Grishnákh takes the initiative*

*It was not long before whispers of his father's plans reached the ears of the ambitious Prince Grishnákh. His father was clearly a senile fool, and the sooner he conveniently died, the better. Whether Grishnákh actually poisoned and smothered his father cannot be known, but Grishnákh was the heir apparent, and most of Nestaria was not ready for the idea of being ruled by a younger daughter rather than an elder son.*

## *The Prince of Destruction*




*Grishnákh did not take long to alienate most of his subjects. Rumors that he consorted with Dark Powers from Beyond abounded, as did horrific tales of animal and other sacrifices. His despotism only contributed to public antipathy for his rule. Soon, a resistance formed, began referring to Grishnákh as the Prince of Destruction in leaflets and chalk signs, and commenced extensive if ineffective guerilla warfare against Grishnákh's rule.*

## *The Keeper*






*Of all Nestar's loyal retainers, only one remained in evidence. The Keeper – who stands at the Convergence and tends the ways between Nestaria and the other domains of humankind – remains, but the vast machinery that keeps open the ways in, out, and around Nestaria has been crippled by the theft of the orb that once powered it. Now, the Keeper summons expatriate heroes, free in the outside world, back to Nestaria to restore the ways, bring Imria to the throne, and destroy the Prince of Destruction. . . .*

## Magic Spells

Casting spells requires initiating a spell (with the cast/shoot key), selecting a spell (look at the center of the ball of energy to identify the type of spell), then pressing the cast/shoot key again. Hold down the cast/shoot key to fire magic missiles.

Key	Description	Notes
	Prepare/Cast	Prepare or cast a spell.
	Last Spell	Modify a prepared spell.
	Next Spell	Modify a prepared spell.

Ada has six spell options. These are selected by preparing a spell and then selecting the spell you wish to cast (with the appropriate keys). Simply holding down the shoot/cast key causes the standard magic missile to be cast (repeatedly). You can recognize the currently selected spell by the symbol that flashes in the middle of your spell “orb”.

	<b>Blade Barrier</b>	Creates a vortex of spinning blades.
	<b>Multimissile</b>	Fires a cluster of four destructive orbs.
	<b>Magic Missile</b>	Fires a single destructive orb. (Default)
	<b>Wall of Lightning</b>	Conjures a wall of deadly lightning.
	<b>Blue Sandestin</b>	Conjures a winged blue sandestin that attacks the nearest enemy. Casting this spell costs a hit point.
	<b>Rapid Travel</b>	Rapid straight-line travel. Select this spell and hold down the cast key to activate.

## *General Hints*

**Practice on wimps.** Master combat by picking on easy opponents. Goblins and hobgoblins are the easiest opponents. You can graduate to poleax-wielding guards and the black and silver clad officers later.

**Get tough before you get going.** Get up to at least level 3 before you start trying to get too deep into the story. You gain levels by reading. (Okay, so it's not very realistic – but it's more realistic than getting better at picking locks by killing monsters.)

**You can turn on the run.** You can turn while walking or running (forward or backward). Get used to the movement controls as quickly as possible!

**Parrying works!** In melee, defending works! Try parrying your enemy's first blow then striking immediately afterwards. (Tough enemies can smash right through a parry, but the damage will be reduced.) The elf and mage cannot defend.

## *Character Hints*

**Nanoc is tough.** His strength is being able to take blows, so don't be afraid to take on enemies in close. With plate armor, a good sword, and tasteful accessories, Nanoc can shrug off most attacks. Don't forget your throwing axe; it becomes a lot more effective at higher levels.

**The elf is fragile.** The elf can slaughter bad guys at range, but – even with a good sword (yes, he can use most swords) – he should avoid melee. Winning the game as the elf is harder than with Nanoc or Thysa.

**Thysa is lethal.** Thysa has the most effective selection of attacks (an accurate long range attack combined with good melee capacity) but suffers from not being able to use most armor.

**It's not easy being green.** Don't try playing the magician until you're pretty confident or playing the multi-player game. We don't guarantee you can win the game as the magician – we haven't.



## *Melee & Movement*

**Close in for melee.** If you're having trouble hitting an opponent in melee, try moving closer or further away. Close with poleax-wielding guards! Close with poledudes<sup>†</sup>! Their close-in "butt-stroke" attack is weaker than their slash.

**Be ready to run!** Stay near a door (or the edge of the map) in tough fights; you can always run away!

**Time your attacks.** Time your strikes against weaker adversaries such as goblins and hobgoblins so as to hit them as they close into range. A skilled player can kill almost any number of goblins or hobgoblins without taking a scratch.

**Monsters vary in strength.** Don't assume that since one monster of a given type, such as a spectre, couldn't penetrate your armor means you can ignore all such monsters. Monsters vary greatly in toughness.

**Two-handed play is easier.** Use your right hand on the numeric keypad and your left hand for combat/spell-casting. Some players prefer using their right hand for everything (except special controls, such as save) but you should at least try two-handed play – it makes timing blows much easier.

**Look for the unusual.** It usually means something. Don't forget to search unusual looking things. You seldom find anything – but if you don't, look you'll never find anything.

<sup>†</sup> "Poledude" is our internal name of the guys with polearms.

## *An Brief Introduction to Prince of Destruction*

This section contains a brief walkthrough through the initial few areas of Prince of Destruction. The walkthrough begins after we have selected to play Ada, the Mage, and have started the game.

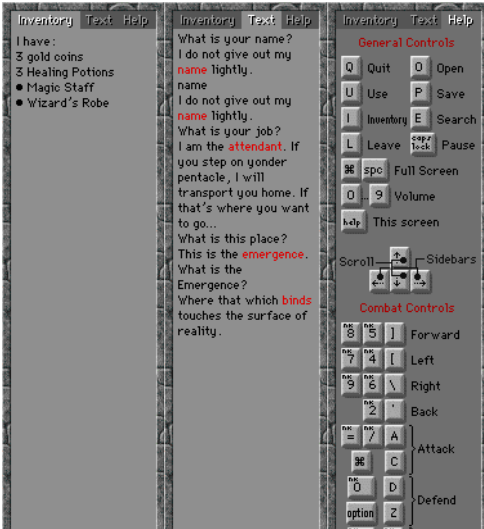
You begin the game atop a huge monolith that lies somewhere in the northern mountains of Nestaria. You have been summoned here by the Keeper, a wizened sage who has brought you here in a desperate gamble.






To speak with the Keeper, use the keypad to walk toward him. Once within range, press **T** to open a Talk window, then type what you wish to speak. He will answer questions that he understands.

Press **I** to examine your inventory. You will see a list of possessions in the sidebar to the right. Press **I** to display your inventory directly on the screen.





Press  again to display recent conversations in the sidebar and again to display a list of commands. Use  and  to select each of these three different views the map of Nestaria.

Once you are finished speaking with the Keeper, step onto the pentagram to go home. A distant tone is all you'll hear as your body is wrenched to a distant land...



You awake with a start as ozone and nausea assail your senses. Glancing about, you find yourself in an ancient stone room; a table sits against the north wall, a shiny key set upon its surface, and a familiar symbol is mostly obscured under the dust covering the floor.



Curious, you walk over to the table and pick up the key. Well-crafted and light, it is well oiled... a new thing in this ancient place. You pocket it for safekeeping.

Finding the exit locked, you try your newly found key; it turns smoothly in the lock. Peeking outside, you find the door guarded by a burly soldier armed with a large pole-axe! Taking a mental inventory, you realize that you are not strong enough to take such a heavily armed guard. Taking a deep breath, you make a run for it!



Running along the path outside, the scenery is familiar. You are in a canyon to the northeast of Ardeford, not far from your birthplace... but something is wrong. You slow to a halt, your chest heaving. The silence of nature screams its warning as several grotesque humanoids step out of the trees...

## *Credits*

Programming *Andrew Barry*

Design *Tonio Loewald*

Graphics & Animation *Tonio Loewald*  
*Pamina Loewald*

Music *Matt Donovan*

Sound *Tonio "Hahar!" Loewald*  
*Andrew "Ugh" Barry*  
*Pamina "Oh No!" Loewald*

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MARS • Controls Quick Reference			
⬆	Forward (5 8 ])	🔊	Sound Volume (0..9)
⬅	Left (4 7 [)	👁	Search
➡	Right (6 9 \)	💬	Talk
⬇	Back (2 ' )	👉	Use
🗡	Melee Attack (⌘)	👜	Inventory
🔫	Shoot/Cast (opt.)	📁	Open
🛡	Defend (ctrl)	📁	Save (P)
🌀	Select Spell (<>)	📄	Change Sidebar (←→)
🏃	Run (Shift)	⬆	Scroll/Select (↑ ↓)
⏸	Pause (Caps Lock)	EXIT	Quit

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