

>Topic<Welcome to Desert Trek!

The object of Desert Trek is to travel 1000 kilometers across the great Gobi Desert. Your journey will be a difficult one, though, as many dangers stand in your way: hungry cannibals who are relentlessly chasing you, the threat of death by thirst, hunger, fatigue, and health, wild Berbers hidden in the sands who wish to kidnap you, dangerous paths in the desert sands, sandstorms, and thieves traveling in caravans. Do not despair, since there are things to help you out on your journey: oases, friendly caravans, abandoned campsites where you might find a stash of gold, and trading posts where you can purchase supplies and useful items.

There are four turns to a day, which is broken up into morning, midday, evening, and night. Traveling at a normal pace or fast pace, resting, approaching, or avoiding use up a turn. Eating, drinking, using an elixir, or using the binoculars do not use up a turn.

Color Graphics: To have the color graphics work, you must be using system 6.0.4 or later, and have 32-bit color quickdraw. Note: There is a small bug in the program that doesn't release memory if you frequently change your monitor from black-and-white mode to color and back while the program is running. I can't find it anywhere at this time, so I recommend that you don't change from color to black-and-white too much when running this program (don't worry - you can still do it once or twice without problems, or increase the memory setting for the program if you just have to change pixel depth so much).

If you are running Desert Trek in black-and-white mode only, you can set the memory size to 300K.

>Topic<Starting and Saving Games

New Game: To start a new game at the currently selected skill level, select new game.

Resume Game: To resume a previously saved game, use this menu item.

Save Game: To save a game in progress, use this command. The old copy of the saved game will be overwritten.

Save Game As: To save a game under a new name, use this command. The first time you save a game, you'll need to use this command since the game will be Untitled.

Quit: When you've had enough of Desert Trek, this useful little command allows you to use your computer for other purposes.

>Topic<Skill Levels

Selecting a skill level 1 - 10 from the skill level menu will start a new game at that selected skill level. You will get a chance to save the current game in progress if it

hasn't already been saved.

Skill levels determine many factors of the game, such as the distance you can travel per turn, how far the cannibals travel per turn, the rate at which you become hungry and thirsty, the rate at which your camel becomes fatigued and loses health, the probability of certain desert events (finding an oasis, caravan, etc.), the effectiveness of food, water, and elixirs (e.g., how much hunger is reduced when you eat), how much rest your camel gets, any many other things. The higher the skill level, the harder it is to win. Pretty simple, huh?

>Topic<Game Status and Supplies

Thirst: Your thirst increases by at least one for each turn. If your thirst increases beyond the maximum, you perish. Drinking eliminates thirst. Your thirst increases more during the middle of the day, when the sun mercilessly beats down on you, and your thirst increases more per turn, on average, at higher skill levels.

Hunger: Your hunger increases by one (or more at higher skill levels) for every turn you take. If your hunger increases beyond the maximum, you perish. Eating eliminates hunger. Note that your hunger increases more per turn on the higher skill levels, but your hunger increases at a constant rate independent of the time of day.

Fatigue: This measures how tired your camel is. Be careful not to run your camel to death (you can't cross the desert on foot). Resting will give your camel a break (see the commands section for more information). Your camel becomes more fatigued when traveling at a fast pace than a normal pace, and i2^ more per turn at higher skill levels.

Health: This measures how healthy your camel is. Vess healthy your camel, the less your camel can travel per turn. Having your camel drink an elixir will restore some, if not all, of you camel's health. Also, approaching an oasis will restore some of your camel's health. Needless to say, don't let your camel's health reach zero, or you'll be finished. Your camel can become injured during normal travel (higher probability at a fast pace), if you hit a dangerous path and don't avoid it or successfully navigate it, or if you are chased by thieves.

Food: Every time you eat, your food supplies diminish a little. Be careful not to run out of food. You can find food at an oasis, purchase it at a trading post, or, if you're lucky, get some from a friendly caravan. Eating will decrease your hunger, but not as much at higher skill levels.

Water: Every time you drink, you use up some of your water. Running out of water is not advised as you won't last long without it. You can find water at the same places you find food. Drinking will decrease your thirst, but not as much at higher skill levels.

Elixirs: Elixirs restore your camel's health, but you don't get too many so be frugal.

You can buy more elixirs at trading posts. Giving your camel an elixir increases you camel's health, but not as much at higher skill levels.

Gold: Gold, which can be found at abandoned campsites, is used to purchase supplies at trading posts. You may also find gold useful in bribing the guard if you get kidnapped.

Compass: If you have a compass, a compass symbol will just to the right of the save button (just below the view of the desert). Compasses are exceedingly useful during sandstorms since they allow you to travel in the right direction.

Distance Traveled: This tells you how far you have traveled. You need to travel 1000 kilometers to win the game. A graphical "thermometer" displays how far you've traveled, as well as how far the cannibals have traveled. Keep a close eye on those pesky cannibals.

Cannibals Distance: This tells you how far the cannibals are behind you. You certainly want to keep your distance from them, as they will be more than happy to make a meal of you if they catch up.

Journal: The journal contains a description of your travels across the desert. All events are recorded here, so that you may review your adventure at any time.

>Topic<Desert Events and Locations

Cannibals: The cannibals are constantly chasing you. They are relentless, traveling every turn (when you eat or drink, they can travel a couple of kilometers even though you don't use up a turn), even during sandstorms. The cannibals never need to rest, so stay well ahead of them. If they catch up to you, you've had it.

Wild Berbers: You may be captured by Wild Berbers during you journey. They will keep you in a jail cell. Fortunately, your local embassy won't let you rot there, but they may take a couple of turns to negotiate your freedom (meanwhile, the cannibals will gain on you). You can wait to be released or try to escape. If you fail to escape, you could be killed, or at the very least, set back the negotiations. While waiting, your thirst, hunger, and camel fatigue will decrease somewhat - the Berbers do feed you a little (they aren't cruel). You can bribe the guard, if you have enough gold. If you do bribe the guard, the guard will be generous enough to feed you - your stats (thirst, hunger, fatigue) will go their minimums.

Sandstorms: During a sandstorm, you can't see where you're going - you may inadvertently travel in the wrong direction. If you have a compass, you'll be able to tell which direction you're traveling in. In either case, you will not be able to travel as far in a sandstorm (which I guess is good if you don't have a compass and inadvertently travel in the wrong direction).

Dangerous Path: From time to time, the path ahead will become dangerous. You might be able to negotiate the dangerous path just fine. Then again, you might not, injuring your camel. Avoiding the dangerous path is safest, but doing so may set you back.

Caravans: If you see a caravan in the distance, you can approach, avoid, or ignore them (by just going on your merry way). Caravans can be friendly or unfriendly. Friendly caravans, if approached, may give you food and water, allow you to travel with them, or both. Unfriendly caravans will chase you (backwards), steal supplies, or both. Ignoring an unfriendly caravan doesn't mean they'll ignore you. Trying to avoid an unfriendly caravan may set you back a little, but it certainly beats an encounter with them.

Oasis: At periodic intervals, you may spot an oasis in the distance. Approaching an oasis will allow you to rest and replenish your supplies. All your stats (thirst, food, fatigue) will go to their minimums, your camel's health will increase, and your food and water will be replenished.

Abandoned Campsite: You will occasionally spot an abandoned campsite in the distance. They were probably abandoned quickly, as raiders strike fast and without mercy. This means that there's a chance valuable gold has been left behind. Of course, there's no guarantees.

Trading Post: Trading posts sell food, water, elixirs, compasses, and binoculars. Bring your gold, because prices aren't cheap. In the trading post, click on the item you wish to purchase (prices are shown to the right of the item), or use the Buy menu. You can eat, drink, and give your camel elixirs while in the trading post, so you can max out your stats and supplies if you have enough money. When you have finished shopping, click on the "Exit" button.

>Topic<Commands
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Normal Pace: Your camel will travel at a normal pace. You won't get as far as you would at a fast pace, but your camel gets less fatigued and there's a much smaller chance that your camel will get injured. The amount you travel depends on the time of day - you can travel most a night, least during the middle of the day. Remember, the healthier your camel, the farther you can travel per turn.

Fast Pace: Your camel will travel as fast as possible. If you really need to distance yourself from those pesky cannibals, you'll need to use this command. On average, you can travel twice as far as normal pace, but your camel will pay by becoming fatigued much faster, and there's a higher probability your camel will get injured (and any injury will be more severe).

Approach: Use this command to approach things you see in the distance, like trading posts, caravans, abandoned campsites, and oases. Be careful not to approach an unfriendly caravan! Approaching an object uses up a turn, and you do not travel towards your objective (in other words, distance traveled doesn't change).

Avoid: If you want to avoid something in the distance, like an unfriendly caravan or dangerous path, use this command. Avoiding an object may set you back a little (but it doesn't always, you may still travel forward while avoiding an object), but can certainly be better than encountering an unfriendly caravan or dangerous path.

Use Binoculars (Buy Binoculars): If you have binoculars, you can use them to scan an empty horizon for objects (caravans, abandoned campsites, trading posts, oases) or to try to ascertain the characteristics of an object you see in the distance (is that caravan friendly, is that trading post open, is that oasis a mirage, is there a way through that dangerous path, is there gold at that abandoned campsite). Binoculars may become useless over time, as the desert sands aren't kind. Binoculars can be very useful if you are trying to find a source of supplies when you are low, or if you want to figure out if what you see is real/friendly/useful. You can only use binoculars once a turn (except when you spot something on an empty horizon, in which case you can use them once more on the same turn).

Clicking on this icon will buy binoculars at a trading post.

Buy Compass: Clicking on this icon will buy a compass at a trading post. You will know you have a compass if the compass symbol appears between the cannibals distance and gold amount. Compasses are exceedingly useful during sandstorms since they allow you to travel in the right direction.

Eat (Buy Food): If you are very hungry, eat some food. Your hunger will decrease, and the amount will depend on what skill level you're playing. At a trading post, clicking on this icon will buy food. Eating does not use up a turn.

but the cannibals will get a bit closer to you while you eat.

Drink (Buy Water): If you are very thirsty, drink some water. Your thirst will decrease, and the amount will depend on what skill level you're playing. At a trading post, clicking on this icon will buy water. Drinking does not use up a turn, but the cannibals will get a bit closer to you while you drink.

Rest: Resting will reduce your camel's fatigue, but uses a turn (and you obviously don't travel anywhere). The amount of rest your camel gets is determined by the time of day (more rest at night, less during the middle of the day) and the skill level you're playing. Objects you see in the distance stay right where they are when you rest since you don't go anywhere. Oh, resting during a sandstorm doesn't give your camel as much rest.

Elixir (Buy Elixir): If your camel is injured, give your camel an elixir to raise your camel's health. The amount will depend on what skill level you're playing. At a trading post, clicking on this icon will buy an elixir. Administering an elixir does not use up a turn, but the cannibals will get a bit closer to you while you do so.

The following commands are used when you are being held captive by the wild Berbers:

Pay Bribe: If you have the gold and need to escape quickly, you can bribe the guard. Bribing the guard has the added benefit of reducing your hunger, thirst, and camel fatigue to zero.

Wait: If you have time to wait (the cannibals are far behind), or don't have the gold to pay the bribe, you can wait for your embassy to negotiate your release. Your hunger, thirst, and camel fatigue will decrease as you wait, since the wild Berbers do feed you a bit.

Escape: If you do not have the gold to bribe the guard, and you don't have time to sit and wait for your embassy to negotiate your release (the cannibals are close behind and just about to catch up to you), you can try escaping the prison. One of three things may happen: you may escape, you may be killed during the escape, or you may fail and remain in jail. A failed escape attempt will prevent the embassy negotiations from progressing that turn.

The following commands can be used at the trading post (in addition to eat, drink, and elixir):

Exit Trading Post: After you have finished shopping, use this command to exit the trading post, which can be selected from the menu or Exit button on the trading post screen.

Buy Item Menu: To purchase supplies at the trading post use the Buy menu or

click on the item you wish to purchase on the trading post screen.

>Topic<Game Options

Sound: If you have system 6.0.2 or later, you can optionally have digitized sound.

View High Scores: The top 10 high scores for each skill level is kept. Selecting this command will bring up a window that allows you to see them all, one skill level at a time (the currently selected skill level is displayed when first bringing up the high scores window). To change the skill level you're currently viewing, click on the skill level number you want to see, or press that number on the keyboard (0 will show you skill level 10).

You can clear the high scores for the skill level you're currently viewing by clicking the Clear button. If you want to clear the high scores for all skill levels, click Clear All. Pressing return or clicking OK will dismiss this screen.

Your final score is based on a number of things, including whether or not you win, the total distance you travel (before dying), the distance the cannibals are behind you (if you win, or die due to something other than the cannibals), how much gold you have, and the total number of moves taken (the fewer the better).

Export Scores: This feature allows you to save the high scores to a file.

Import Scores: This feature allows you to load a previously saved high scores file. This allows you to share high scores with a friend, or keep your high scores when upgrading to a new version of Desert Trek. When loading scores, you can either replace all the current high scores with the scores in the file, or combine the two lists. A combined list keeps the 10 best scores for each skill level from the two lists.

Save Journal: This command allows you to save the journal as a text file. The journal is the description of your journey across the desert. The text file can be viewed and printed via Teachtext or any other text editor or word processor.