• Consider carefully what kind of game you want before you begin because, once the game has started, the difficulty settings cannot be changed. If you want a full all-out combat game, for example, set the story line to off, set combat to difficult, set puzzles and cyberspace to very easy. If, on the other hand, you want a good mind game without excessive gun-toting to distract you, set combat to very easy, story line to difficult (full story with a time limit), puzzles to difficult, and cyberspace to suit your level of dexterity.

• Read the manual. Let me say that again. Read the manual. If you read no other game manual, read this one. Don't make me say it again.

• You can reduce SHODAN's security presence on a level by destroying cameras and computer nodes (large glowing red pillars, usually in groups). Many doors and recharge stations are blocked by "SHODAN Level Security"; once you have reduced or eliminated security levels, these items become accessible.

• Switch off cyborg conversion chambers as soon as possible. Once turned off, they become essentially reincarnation stations; whenever you are killed you are immediately returned to the chamber and restored to near full health. Remember, sometimes the best thing for you is to is to let your light go out, especially if your hemmed in by foes.

• If you are using the plot at all, take your time. The important thing to remember about System Shock is that it is not a pure shoot-'em-up; if you don't find certain things, you simply can't move on and retracing your steps is not at all easy.

• Learn the keyboard commands right from the start. You will need two hands (though ideally three) to control the game and the mouse controls are simply too imprecise. The two things you should do with the mouse are aim your weapon and steer in cyberspace.

• Use the message input on the full-screen map to mark important items. Mark all elevators, plot points, restoration chambers and health/energy recharge stations. If a door is blocked, mark it on the map along with why it is blocked. For example, if SHODAN-level security if blocking the door, you will be able to come back to it when you have reduced the security on

the level (by blowing up cameras and CPU nodes). Also, if you lack access privileges for a door, mark what level of access you need and come back when you get those privileges.

• If you really don't want to be concerned with hunting for hidden doors, turn on the onscreen help which points to everything you should act on, including false panels and hidden switches. If it feels too much like cheating, just consider it a really useful feature of your neural interface.

• In cyberspace, keep an eye on your Software Integrity. If it runs out (due, for example, to attack by defense systems) you will be dumped back into the real world with extremely high fatigue and considerable health damage. Use your Recall software to be returned to the cyberspace entry port if your disintegration looks imminent.

• While in cyberspace, periodically check your shields; they have a tendency to turn themselves off. Make sure you activated them any time you have some breathing room. Also remember that your software weapons are not aimable like in the real world; they always go to the center of the screen.

• System Shock gives you superior control of your body position; use it! Lean around corners to do battle, sidestep in and out of danger, or duck if necessary. Once you get the hang of it, you can do battle with almost none of your fragile flesh exposed to enemy attack.

• If you have the CPU power, play in full screen mode. Trust me its worth it.

• Read ALL logs and e-mail; you cannot win the game without them if the story is engaged.

• Keep weapons fully loaded at all times (unload by double clicking on the image in the "Weapon" screen and reload by clicking on the ammo you want), you never know when you'll need a whole clip. Also, many weapons have different kinds of ammo, make sure you are using the one you want.

• When blowing up CPU nodes remember that SHODAN thinks these are pretty darn important and will throw everything it has against you in retaliation. Be ready for an all-out attack. If you're really stuck and the conversion chamber has been reset, pull a Butch and Sundance and run into the crowd guns blazing. If you know there is no need to return to the area around the nodes and the restoration chamber is a safe distance away, what the hell, stand in the middle and drop a grenade at your feet--vive la moire, we die togezzer!

• I will not mention any game specific hints but this one. When visiting the Reactor Level, take care of what you know you need to (turning on the shields and the laser safety override). DO NOT waste time trying to destroy the reactor. That's for later and you are definitely not armed for it. Save yourself the hour or two I wasted.

Terror Trax
• Luckily, even if you screw up royally, just start from the beginning and use the fast forward key to get to your next major decision point.

• There are a number of endings available. The BEST ending involves where the two plotlines converge at the medical Vampire's Laboratory. The next best ending is where both the vampire and the electrical ghost Suggs are destroyed separately but you do not get to the lab. Most of the other endings involve one of your agents getting killed.

• There is never any real penalty for listening again to some clues, whether it is a phone call analyziation or Suggs' first meeting (where the dialogue goes so fast it is hard to follow). Take the opportunity to analyze all of these, if only to better understand what's going on.

• Certain bad choices are pretty obvious -- like, for example, shooting the electrical ghost when you first meet him. Others are less obvious. In general, it is better to stay in the apartment with your male agent and search everything rather than go outside and try and chase the fleeing Doctor (which can lead to his capture but not the two-agent ending) and don't go to the hospital (your male agent gets killed if that happens, you have no control over that). However, if you do let your male agent get killed by going to the hospital, make sure if the female agent tries to rescue him you have her kill him before he puts the bite on her.

• Since the game is short, there are a few details that can be fun to make sure you catch. When the two agents are introduced, after you've seen the sequence before, make sure to hit pause a lot and read the words appearing as they fly by on the screen. The game had some cute concepts never really used -- like the "language" of TRAX agents (rotters = zombies, etc.) and the reason why when you first see the female agent her picture comes in kind of wavy. Make sure to get killed once by Suggs by trying to shoot him -- the electrical discharge killing your agent is particularly a nice effect. Oh, and there's nothing like loosing both your agents and having the disembodied interface mask tell you that not only are you fired, but if you tell anything about TRAX, they'll hunt you down and knock you off.

Legend of Kyrandia 3

• There are some clues hidden in the intro movie, especially about a specific use for Malcolm's "Favorite Toy"

• If you talk to someone and get a negative response, try a different setting on the Moodometer--there is no penalty for multiple tries.

• The carpet in the sewer is very important. Stand on it and click around, and it might take you somewhere.

• The process of getting ingredients for the Fish Creme Sandwich machine will get you lots of points, but there is a much quicker route to getting a sandwich, which involves a young boy talking gibberish. Tempt him with a toy.

• If you don't have a disguise, stay away from the castle and the "transporters."

• To pick up the mime disguise, you have to get him to take a bath first: try something "fished" from the water in the sewer.