



🔥 ACTION CASTLE GUIDE 🔥

➤ WELCOME TO... ACTION CASTLE!

☞ The player starts the game with a lamp in his inventory. Player must issue the INVENTORY command to learn this information.

Cottage

➤ You are standing in a small cottage. There is a fishing pole here.

Exits are: Out

🔥 The fishing pole is a simple fishing pole.

☞ The player starts all new games of ACTION CASTLE in this location.

Garden Path

➤ You are standing on a lush garden path. There is a rosebush here. There is a cottage here.

Exits are: North, South, In

🔥 The rosebush contains a single red rose which the player can TAKE or PICK. EXAMINING the rose reveals that it's beautiful. Smelling the rose reveals that it smells good.

Fishing Pond

➤ You are at the edge of a small fishing pond.

Exits are: North

☞ The player can CATCH a fish if he has the fishing pole. There are fish in the pond and the player can only catch one. The fish cannot be eaten (it's raw!).

Winding Path

➤ You are walking along a winding path. There is a tall tree here.

Exits are: South, East, Up

Top of the Tall Tree

➤ You are the top of the tall tree. There is a stout, dead branch here.

Exits are: Down

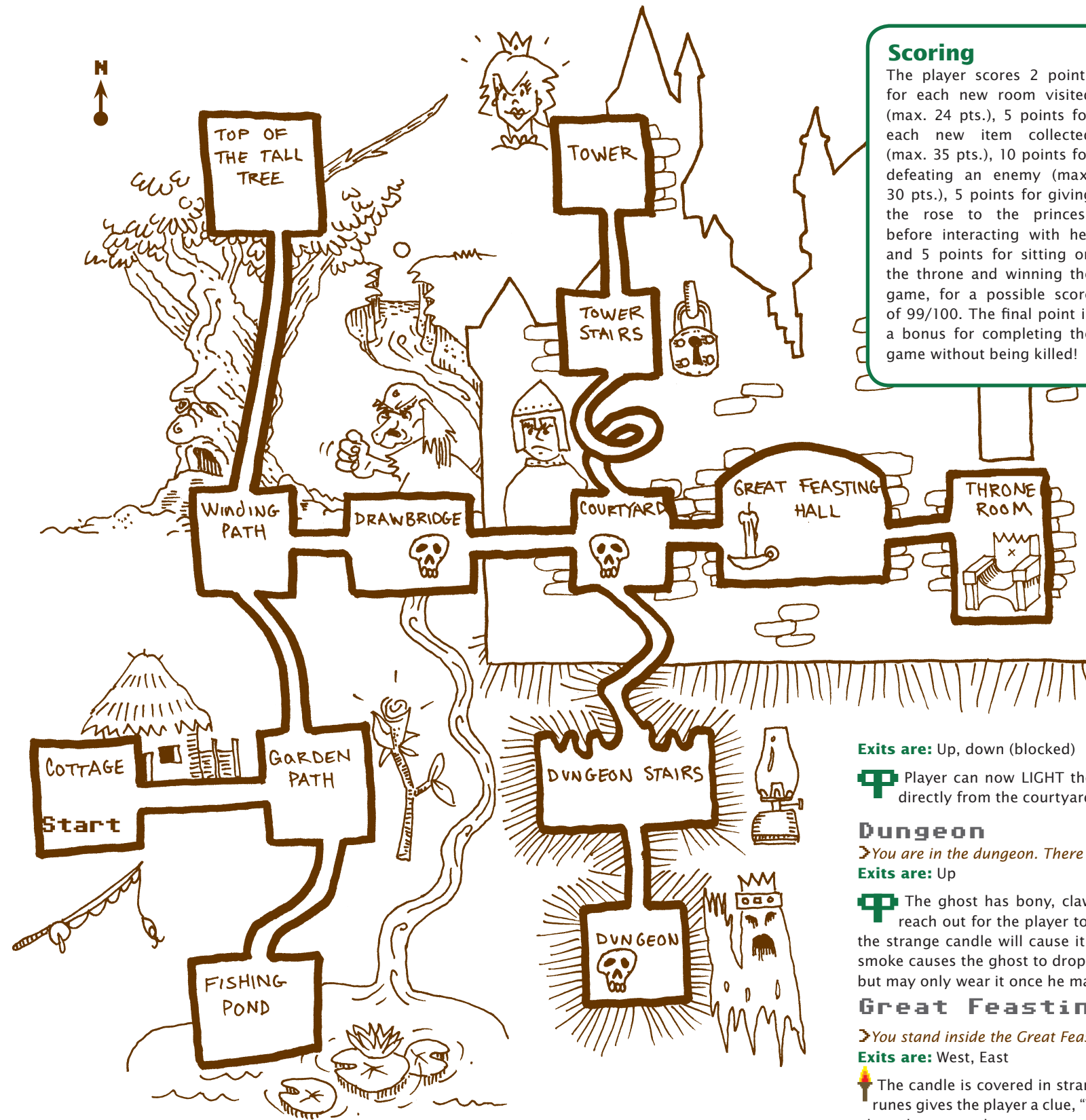
☞ The player can't JUMP down (it's suicide). Taking the dead branch causes it to snap off. It can be used once to HIT or CLUB something, whereupon it will break into pieces and be rendered unusable.

Drawbridge

➤ You are standing on one side of a drawbridge leading to ACTION CASTLE. There is a mean troll here.

Exits are: West, East (blocked)

☞ The player can drive off the hungry troll by feeding or giving the fish to it. The troll will attack and kill the player if he stays here for too many turns, or if the player tries to attack the troll. The troll is warty, green and hungry.



Scoring

The player scores 2 points for each new room visited (max. 24 pts.), 5 points for each new item collected (max. 35 pts.), 10 points for defeating an enemy (max. 30 pts.), 5 points for giving the rose to the princess before interacting with her and 5 points for sitting on the throne and winning the game, for a possible score of 99/100. The final point is a bonus for completing the game without being killed!

Tower Stairs

➤ You are climbing the stairs to the tower.

There is a locked door here.

Exits are: Down, up (blocked)

☞ The player needs the guard's key to access the tower.

Tower

➤ You are inside a tower. The princess is here.

Exits are: Down

🔥 The princess is beautiful, sad and lonely. She awaits her prince.

☞ She will talk to the player if given a rose.

Attempting to kiss the princess causes her to respond with "Not until we're wed!" The princess slaps the player if he is rude to her. TALK TO PRINCESS ABOUT... enables the parser to reveal information about the ghost ("My father haunts the dungeon as a restless spirit."), the crown ("Only the rightful heir to the throne may wear it!"), herself ("I cannot leave this tower until I am married!") or the throne ("Only the king may sit on the throne). If the player tries to marry the princess before gaining the crown she tells the player. "You're not royalty!" After gaining the crown she says, "My father's crown! You have put his soul at rest and may now succeed him!" Once the player has the crown, he may PROPOSE to or MARRY the princess. She will accept and place the crown on his head.

Dungeon Stairs

➤ You are climbing the stairs down to the dungeon. It is too dark to see!

Exits are: Up, down (blocked)

☞ Player can now LIGHT the lamp. While the lantern is lit the player can go directly from the courtyard to the dungeon by going down.

Dungeon

➤ You are in the dungeon. There is a spooky ghost here.

Exits are: Up

☞ The ghost has bony, claw-like fingers and wears a crown. The ghost will reach out for the player to stop his heart if the player lingers here. Lighting the strange candle will cause it to give off a strange, acrid-smelling smoke. This smoke causes the ghost to drop its crown and flee. The player can take the crown but may only wear it once he marries the princess.

Great Feasting Hall

➤ You stand inside the Great Feasting Hall. There is a strange candle here.

Exits are: West, East

🔥 The candle is covered in strange runes. Deciphering, translating or reading the runes gives the player a clue, "The runes seem to be a spell of exorcism." Once the player has worn the crown, entering the feasting hall will reveal it full of revelers celebrating the new ruler of ACTION CASTLE.

Throne Room

➤ This is the throne room of ACTION CASTLE. There is an ornate golden throne here.

Exits are: West

☞ The player can only SIT on the throne if he married the princess and is wearing the crown. Once the player has worn the crown, the Throne Room is full of courtiers, guards and other subjects. The player wins the game once he sits upon the throne. "You sit on the ornate golden throne. The people cheer for the new ruler of... ACTION CASTLE!"

Courtyard

➤ You are in the courtyard of ACTION CASTLE. There is a guard here, blocking the path east.

Exits are: West, East (blocked), Up, Down

☞ The guard blocks the path east that leads to the throne room. The player may HIT the guard with the branch to knock him out. He carries a key that may be taken once the player incapacitates him. The guard is brandishing a short sword. The short sword may not be taken. Once the player wears the crown, the guard will awaken and drop to a knee and hail his new king.



Parseley games are based on the old text adventure parsers from the 1980s. In this version, a person replaces the computer, and a map and an outline of the adventure to be played replaces the software.

One person (most likely you) is the parser – this title comes from the old name for the programs running text adventures (also called parsers). It's your job to relay the game information to the players. You will describe what the player sees, the results of the player's actions and anything else appearing in the game. You will also keep track of the player's location, inventory and score. Refer to yourself as "I" when talking to the player. Everyone else in the game is a player. Or more accurately, THE player – that role is shared amongst all the participants. Refer to the player as "You" during the game.

You need at least two players to play a Parseley game. There is no maximum number of players, making Parseley an ideal activity for parties, conventions and other large gatherings of geeky folk who are into this kinda thing.

How It Works

The first step is to welcome the players to the game, usually by announcing the name of the Parseley game. Once this is done, state the player's starting location, what he sees, any objects in the area and the exits from that area to other locations. During the game, you can skip over this information once the player has traveled to it a few times.

Cottage

```
You are standing in a cottage. There is a fishing pole here. Exits are: out.
```

Each player, in turn, offers one command. A command is a one- or two-word action, usually in the form of <verb> <noun>. Go West. Climb Tree. Smell Rose. Wear Crown. Commands can be a bit more complex, such as Give Fish to Troll. If the command is acceptable, relate the results to the player:

```
> Examine pole
The Fishing Pole consists of a stick, some string and a hook.
```

```
> Take fishing pole
You now have the fishing pole.
```

```
> Exit cottage
You leave the cottage.
```

When a player issues a command, play passes to the next person in line whether or not that command was acceptable. Each person playing the game gets one turn, then play loops back to the starting player. If the player travels to a new location, tell the player the name and description of the location, notable contents and exits out. This continues until the game is won or everyone gets frustrated and goes home.

If the command is unacceptable, nonsensical or far too complex, respond with a syntax error. If the command uses the correct language but doesn't make sense, a response might look like this:

```
> Eat fishing pole
You cant eat that!
```

```
> Go fish
You cant go that way.
```

```
> Catch fish
There are no fish here.
```

```
> Cast the fishing pole
I dont know how to cast something.

> Hello
Hi.
```

Basic Commands

The following commands are useful in most games of Parseley and are used to interact with the environment.

- **Directions:** Go, Exit, Leave, Enter, East, West, North, South, Up, Down

The player can say GO WEST or just say WEST. LEAVE or EXIT may be used while in a room with only one exit.

- **Sensory:** Look, Examine, Search,Take, Drop

LOOK is used to repeat a room's description, contents and exits, while EXAMINE gives the player a description of a person or object.

- **Interaction:** Talk, Kill, Light, Wait, Wear, Use

The player can also TALK TO <person> ABOUT <topic>.

Special Commands

There is another set of commands that are available in every Parseley game and which are used to interact with the game itself.

Help: The HELP command lists all the special commands: Help, Inventory, Save, Load, Restore, Score, Quit

Inventory: INVENTORY gives the player a list of what he is carrying. Worn items are noted as well.

Save/Load/Restore: SAVE stores the player's current location, inventory and status at the moment the game is saved. If the player dies, LOAD SAVE or RESTORE GAME will return the player to the save point. Clever players will save a game before doing something risky, preventing them from having to do everything over again. Players are limited to three saves per game. Whenever the player saves or loads a game, be sure to let him know how many saves are left!

Score: SCORE tells the player his current score. This is a number (usually from 0 to 100) based on inventory and accomplished goals.

Quit: QUIT quits the game.

Winning & Losing

All Parseley games have a victory condition that ends the game. Although it can be a tortuous journey to this end point, playing the game as designed should always bring the player to the end. There should never be a place where the player gets stuck and cannot continue.

Winning a Parseley game usually results in a perfect score of 100. Scoring is up to the parser and the specifics of the Parseley game played, but it's usually there for comedic/nostalgic value.

```
> Sit on throne
You sit on the throne. The people cheer your name, welcoming you as their new king.
Congratulations! Your score is 99/100!
```

Parseley games are lost when the player dies (either due to a monster, trap or a foolish command such as KILL ME or JUMP CLIFF. When this happens, the parser should announce that the player has died and what the score at the time of death. The parser should ask if the player wishes to restart the game or load a saved game (if available).

```
> Kill me
You have died. Thanks for playing! Your score is 15/100. Would you like to load your saved game?
```

If the player dies without having a save game present, this occurs:

```
> Kill me
You have died. Thanks for playing! Your score is 15/100. Would you like to restart the game?
```

Bells & Whistles

Parseley is a puzzle game at its heart, but it's also entertainment. Think of it like karaoke—the act is more about entertaining the crowd than singing well. As the parser, you run the show and are must both challenge and entertain the players. This is easier than you might think.

1. Be cruel, but fair. One of the great things about text adventures (and why they're remembered so fondly) is that the puzzles were annoying but logical, the parser stupid but reliable. Do not coddle the player by allowing sloppy grammar, complex commands or jokes. Respond the way a computer would (albeit a computer with a sense of humor). If the player issues a proper command but at the wrong time, let him know with a small clue. For example, in this exchange:

```
> Marry princess
The princess will only marry royalty.
```

The player now knows that he might be able to marry the princess if he can become royalty. Compare that to this comedic exchange:

```
> Kiss princess
*slap* I'm not that kind of girl!
```

The princess lets the player know that she's a woman of virtue. When this happens in my games, I make a slapping sound and respond as the princess. It's funny!

2. Be loud. Chances are you're going to play Parseley with a large group in a noisy environment. This is no time to be a wallflower. You're going to have to SPEAK LOUDLY to be heard above the din. Now, this doesn't mean you have to make sure the people are paying attention -- that's on them. It just means you need to be able to be heard.

3. Be funny. Most of the humor actually comes from the player of the game. Their expectations colliding with your results generates a lot of humor. You don't have to wink at the crowd, tell jokes or act like a clown. But stay aware of what the player says to you. If there's any room for misunderstanding, irony or wry humor, take advantage of it. In my experience, physical gestures, funny voices and sound effects go a long way to make the game come alive as a kind of comedic performance art.

```
> Take princess
*slap* I'm not that kind of girl!
```

4. Be consistent. The hardest thing to do is to keep track of everything. The game works best when you can do it all from memory, without writing things down or consulting maps or game rules. So learn it! And when you do, be consistent in your responses to the player. Every action has a reaction, whether it's a valid response:

```
> Take key
You now have the key.
```

A question:

```
> Use key
Use it on what?
```

A syntax error:

```
> Make a copy
I don't know how to make things.
```

Or something funny.

```
> What does the key look like?
A key. Dummy.
```

Credits (version 1.3)

```
Parseley design and production: Jared A. Sorensen
User interface and production: Luke Crane
Action Castle scripting: Jared A. Sorensen
Logo Graphics: Manning L. Krull
Cartography: Tony Dowler
Quality Assurance: Thor Olavsrud
```



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