



Strategy & Tactics: **Might & Magic III**

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The “Isles of Terra” is the setting for the game of Might and Magic III. There are 15 islands, 5 towns, 5 castles, 8 dungeons, 5 caverns and 4 pyramids for you to explore. When you also consider the fact that each town has a cavern underneath it and each castle has a dungeon underneath it what you actually have is 15 islands, 5 towns, 5 castles, 13 dungeons, 10 caverns and 4 pyramids. All of this in addition to the islands themselves and the ocean that entirely surrounds the islands. Needless to say this is an enormous game.

What are we doing here? Throughout the game there is one major quest and numerous smaller quests. Thoughtfully, the folks at New World Computing have provided a special window in the game for you to consult regarding your quests. Here is where you can see exactly what it is that you are supposed to be doing during your journey. It is entirely possible to accomplish the major goal of the game without fulfilling all the requirements of the minor quests. Since the major quest is not readily apparent it is best to begin by attempting to complete some of the smaller ones. As you proceed things will start to fall into place regarding the major goal of the game.

Your ability to maneuver throughout the game depends greatly on the makeup of your party of characters. You will want to have a good balance of strength, stealth, and magic. When you create your party you should have at least two strong characters in the lead, followed by a character with good archery skills and a robber-type of some sort. Next you should definitely have at least two spell-casters. Since there are different spells available to the clerics and sorcerers it is recommended that you have one of each in your party. As you obtain items throughout the game you can control who will fight first in your party. Each character has a rating for “speed” and the fastest individual will strike first during battle. If your strongest player is not necessarily your fastest you may want to equip him/her with some items which increase their speed rating. There are many such items in the game and we will discuss these later on. One of the most frequently asked questions is how to trade items between players. To accomplish this you begin by opening the item inventory window of the character who currently has the intended item in his possession. Locate the item in the inventory list and highlight the item by clicking on it. Next you click on the icon of the character to whom you want the item traded. That’s all there is to it!

Window to the World - Beside the fact that it is very nicely designed, the window through which you view your world provides a much greater function. If one of your party members possesses the ability to “spot secret doors” the small gargoyle in the lower right-hand corner will wave its hand to let you know there is a hidden room behind the wall you are facing. If any of your party possesses the

ability to “detect danger” the bat located in the center of your screen at the top will open and close his mouth in silent warning that an enemy is near. If your party is under the “protection from the elements” spell, one or more of the red jewels in the corners of the window will turn green while that protection remains in force. When your party is “levitating” the winged creature on the left of the screen will slowly flap its wings back and forth. There is another window that will tell you all of the spells that are in effect at any one time. This is the small hourglass icon on the right of your screen. When activated this window not only tells you the day, the date and the time it will list all the spells you are currently using.

A Few Basics - Although each town is configured differently there are some basic similarities in their content. Each town contains an Inn, a Blacksmith's Shop, a Tavern, a Temple, a Training Ground, a Magician's Guild and a Mirror Portal. Each of these will become very crucial to your advancement and you will visit them often.

The Tavern is where you can purchase food and listen for rumors that can be very helpful to you. You can also sit back and sip a “cold one” but be careful, some characters don't handle their liquor well at all. The Taverns are only open between the hours of 6PM and 5AM. If you forget to replenish your food supply your party will quite suddenly starve to death.

The Temple is a place you will probably be visiting frequently. This is where you come to be healed. The Temple can cure anything from simple wounds to death or eradication! The Temple is open at all times.

The Blacksmith's Shop will not only allow you to purchase goods but also to fix any tool you have that may have become broken. It is also the place where you can identify the various items you have found along the way. Of course all of this costs gold. The more powerful the item, the more costly it becomes. A good way to save a great deal of money is to “save” your game just before entering the blacksmith's shop. Enter the shop and pay to identify all your new items. Then exit the shop and decide what you want to keep and what you want to sell. At this point perform a “quit-no save,” re-start your game and go back into the shop to complete your transactions. Over the course of the game this will save you an incredible amount of gold! The Blacksmith's Shop is only open during the daylight hours.

The Training Grounds will enable you to increase to a higher level. When you have gained enough experience points you will need to visit the training grounds and for a certain amount of gold they will provide the training necessary to advance to a higher level. Again, this all costs gold. The higher the level the more gold it costs! If you do not have enough points to advance to the next level you will be told how many points you need before you can train. The Training Grounds are only open during the daylight hours.

The Magicians Guild is open during the dark hours of the night. Here you can purchase magic spells to aid you in your journey. However, before you are allowed to use the guild you must first obtain membership. Somewhere in the town or the cavern underneath it you will find the appropriate person who will enable you to “join the guild.” Since it costs gold to join most guilds there is no point in having your non-spell casters join. There is no benefit to having your Knight be a member of the guild since he couldn't cast a spell even if he was able to learn one. As you gain increasingly higher levels more spells will become available to you. Return to the guild after you have “trained” to make certain that you have all the spells that you are capable of casting. The higher your level, the stronger the spells.

If you have played the games of Might & Magic I and II you know that in those games you were required to return to an Inn to save your game. This is not the case with Might & Magic III. In this game you can save at any point along the way unless you are in the middle of combat.

The Inn is probably the least visited place in each town. Here is where the hirelings are waiting for you to add them to your party. Fountainhead has two hirelings as does Blistering Heights. The other Inns are also headquarters for hirelings but these people are being held captive elsewhere. Once you have located and released them from captivity they too become available for hire.

The hirelings come in handy in several ways. You can pay them to travel with your party or you can leave them in the Inn. If you pay them to travel with you they will increase in ability right along with your characters. As they increase in ability they also increase in price. The price quoted is a “per day” charge which can get extremely expensive as you advance through the game. You can dismiss the hirelings at any time and they will check in to the last Inn you visited. You can leave them there until you need them again. However, before you dismiss them check their inventory. Each carries some very strong items which you can obtain for your party members.

There is another aspect of the game where the hirelings can be of great assistance. As you journey throughout the land you will discover a multitude of items that you can use to your benefit. It is not long before you are completely loaded down with things that you “might need some day.” All too soon your backpacks are completely full and you have no room to include any new treasure you may find. If you feel that these items are too precious to part with you can use the hirelings in an Inn to hold them for you. For example—there is absolutely no reason for you to lug 10 or 15 “Precious Pearls of Youth and Beauty” around with you. You will only use one at a time, so store the excess with one of the hirelings at the Inn for safekeeping. Once you’ve used the one you are carrying go back and get another one.

The one place in each town that gets the most use is the “Mirror Portal.” This is a device that allows you to transport between towns and various places throughout the land by speaking a special password. Once you discover these passwords you can transport your entire party instantaneously to almost any area in the land.

Extra Added Attractions - In addition to the basics each town has different specialties that require investigation. Examples of this are the bank which is located in Fountainhead and in the town of Baywatch you will find several merchants willing to train your party in exchange for gold. You can learn skills such as Pathfinding and Mountaineering. If at least two members of your party possess these skills your entire party will be able to enter the dense forests and hills that were previously denied to you.

Taking the Towns by Storm -When you begin the game in the town of Fountainhead you get your first taste of how to best deal with each town in the game. While you investigate the town itself you will encounter, and need to eliminate, at least one set of enemies before you can fully explore the town. Typically the opponents that are out in the open are the least threatening and easiest to conquer. If you have a great deal of trouble disposing with these then you might want to go elsewhere until you gain more strength. Opponents you find behind doors or in enclosed rooms are usually more vicious than those you find in the open. Frequently you will discover that in the enclosed rooms there will be more enemies to deal with at one time. Once you have cleared the town of its inhabitants you are then free to roam at your leisure. When you encounter a closed door attempt to walk through it. If it is locked you will be given a prompt asking which character will unlock the door. Choose the character with the most skill in thievery. If the door is locked a thief would be most likely to be able to pick the lock. If the door still won't open you can attempt to “bash it down.” If your two lead characters are strong enough the door (or wall) will crash in under their charge allowing you access to the room. Once you have examined the town your next step should probably be the cavern underneath the town.

Getting down to it - Every town has a cavern underneath. These caverns hold immense treasure and

powerful spells but are also more dangerous. Here you will encounter a great number of opponents that are usually stronger and more diabolical than those you found up above. In addition to the nasty characters you meet, the caverns themselves can be harmful to your party. You should use your spell casting powers to minimize the dangers of the caverns. If there are pools of poison on the ground, cast either your "levitate" spell or your "jump" spell to go over them. At the same time you can cast a spell of "protection from elements" which will protect you from the poison. This will keep the damage to your party at a minimum while investigating the twisting and turning caverns. Remembering, of course, to re-cast these spells each time after resting.

The Great Outdoors - As you venture out of the towns you will enter a vast world filled with enemies, encounters and discoveries. A marvelous graphic enhancement has been included in M&M III that was not available in either of the two preceding stories; you can see your enemies before you encounter them. Even when you are in the woods or mountains you can quite often catch glimpses of them between the trees. This gives you the opportunity to cast spells or shoot arrows at your foes from quite a distance. As your skills increase it is often possible to eliminate an enemy before he ever gets a chance to get close enough to hurt you. When you are engaged in a fight you will be able to tell how much damage you are inflicting on your opponents in two distinct ways. When one of your party scores a "hit" a splash of red will appear on your opponent. The larger the splash and the longer it remains the more damage it has caused. When you engage in hand-to-hand combat the name of your opponents will be shown in the upper right section of your screen. When they are totally healthy the name appears in green. When they are injured the name turns to yellow and when they are critically injured the name turns red. This is a good way to tell when you are close to killing your foe.

Every area of the outdoors has at least one certain type of villain indigenous to the area. Each type of villain has it's headquarters located somewhere within the region you find him. You will earn major experience points by finding and destroying these headquarters. After you've destroyed their headquarters they will be forced to leave the area and will not return.

Once you have eliminated the enemies that are lurking around you will find a seemingly limitless supply of new discoveries. There are gypsy huts offering goods and services, magic wells and fountains, talking heads and buried treasures. Every time you make a new discovery you will be given a dialog box asking whether or not you want to investigate further. It is a good idea to save your game before you partake in any of these new offerings just in case your discovery turns out to be a negative experience. If you discover a permanent fixture that turns out to be a real asset , i.e., a well or fountain, make a note of it's location so you return to it again as often as you like.

The Entire Terra-tory - The game has been constructed in a manner that makes the places that are the easiest to get to the least demanding in terms of defeating opponents. The more difficult the area, the harder it is to gain entrance. Although you are free to adventure in any direction you desire, most of the free-standing dungeons require a color-coded key that can only be obtained by exploring another area. If your party has sufficient strength to obtain the key this indicates that you are either ready or very close to being ready to "hold your own" in the dungeon that requires that key.

You can keep track of your progress throughout the land by consulting the map. To view the map, press the "M" on your keyboard. This will give you a map that shows black squares where you have not yet explored and colored terrain where you have already been. Refer to your map frequently and use this as a guide to make certain that you explore every square on the map. You can never tell which square will divulge some treasure or secret that will come in handy.

Once you acquire the "Wizard's Eye" spell you will be able to see the areas that you have not yet explored as well as all the places you have been. This spell does not require very many spell points and

it will show things that you would not be able to find otherwise. Use this spell as often as possible and you will find a great deal more than if you were to explore without it.

Sample every item offered to you but remember to “save” before indulging so that you can “quit-no save” if it turns out to be a mistake. Some of the wells are poison, some of the gypsies will rip you off and some of the items offered for purchase will be no good.

Take plenty of notes as you go. There are many messages scattered throughout the land and they will eventually enable you to solve all of the puzzles in the game. Most of them won’t mean anything at first but sooner or later you will find a need for them.

Easy does it - The easiest order of progression after thoroughly exploring Fountainhead is to leave the town and explore the area immediately surrounding it. There is a road which leads due south and this will take you to your second town—Baywatch. After exploring Baywatch continue traveling south and you will find the last town on this island—Wildabar. Each of these towns is progressively tougher to conquer and the areas surrounding the towns are infested with progressively more sinister adversaries. However, the rewards for conquering these areas are great. Once you have succeeded in taming these three towns and the areas in between, you will have most of the information that you need to allow you to traverse the rest of the globe. If you get into a situation that is too much for you, retreat and try another area until you are stronger. If any of your party is killed during your travels simply go to the closest town and enter the temple. Your comrade will be brought back to life for a “slight fee.”

A few steps off the road between Fountainhead and Baywatch is a free-standing dungeon known as the Temple of Moo. Inside this Temple is an area where your entire party will be promoted to “Crusaders.” You will need to obtain this promotion as it is necessary before you can enter any of the castles.

Kings Castles - Of the 5 castles only three of them are inhabited by Kings. The other two are haunted by the ghosts of two famous wizards. These wizards both require your help to release their spirits so that they can finally go to their eternal resting place.

As with the towns, all of the castles have some basic similarities. Each of the three Kings will ask you to perform the same task; however, each King wants you to perform this task for him only. Each King has an assistant who will ask you to find ancient relics and return them to him. All of the castles have hidden rooms which contain secret treasures. These rooms are only visible by using the “Wizard’s Eye” spell and are only accessible by casting the “teleportation” spell.

Each of the three active castles has a massive treasure that can be gained by solving a puzzle. The solution to this puzzle is revealed in the dungeon of that castle. Every castle requires a password to gain access to the dungeon. There are statues placed throughout the castle that will provide the clues necessary to solve yet another puzzle and obtain the password.

Down and Dirty - The 5 caverns are scattered throughout the land of Terra. Each of these is home to its own insidious brand of villain. As with all the other areas in Terra the caverns contain many treasures. These treasures are very jealously guarded by a wide assortment of Mages, Witches, Dragons, Cyclopes, Insects and various forms of Undead. They are well worth exploring once you are strong enough to withstand their inhabitants. You will find not only treasure but many clues which will lead you to your ultimate goal.

The caverns are usually large and entail a great number of twists and turns that lead you through and around the different chambers. If you have the “detect monster” spell you can cast it frequently to reduce the number of unpleasant surprises you are likely to encounter while exploring these caverns.

When opening a locked door or breaking into a hidden room it may be to your advantage to pre-position the arrow so that it is pointing to the “cast spell” window. This will frequently enable you to cast a spell at any adversary who happens to be lurking on the other side of the door or wall before they can strike your group. If you take the time to move the arrow to the “cast spell” window after you’ve opened the door you are usually too late to strike the first blow. Another way to quickly get the upper hand is to immediately press the “C” on your keyboard. This also activates the window for casting a spell and it may be easier for you to press this key than the time it takes to reach for the mouse and press the button.

Deepest, Darkest Dungeons - The 8 free-standing dungeons will supply you with the major items necessary to win the game. This is probably why each of these dungeons provides you with enemies that are meaner and more difficult to kill, and puzzles that are more challenging to solve.

Here is where you will find some of the Orbs that the Kings have sent you to retrieve as well as the Hologram Sequencing Cards needed for the game’s ending. Search these dungeons carefully and you will be well rewarded. You may have to return several times to reach a point where you are strong enough to defeat your opponents but eventually you will be able to tour the dungeons without worry of being attacked.

Speaking of Enemies - There are many battle techniques and as you discover your magical abilities you will no doubt create your own style of fighting. Be certain that when you enter a potentially dangerous area that your party is well rested and has their full allocation of hit points and spell points.

Every monster in the game requires a specific number of hit points to defeat that species. Additionally each type of monster is effected differently by the different types of attack. Some are more resistant to fire, some are resistant to poison, some are more resistant to cold. When you possess the “identify monster” spell you can cast it to learn some specifics about the monster but you will not be able to discover what type of attack will do the most damage. This can only be done by trial and error.

One method of winning some of the tougher battles is to use some of the magic properties available throughout Terra before you engage in battle. There are several places in the land where you find wells or fountains that can dramatically increase your resistance to damage, greatly increase your strength or increase your number of spell points. If you are going into an area that is known to have extremely tough monsters you might visit one or two of these places to enhance your capabilities before you start out.

When you have advanced far enough in the game you will be able to obtain the “Lloyd’s Beacon” spell. This is a magic spell that can instantly transport your entire party to a pre-set destination. If you set your Lloyd’s Beacon to one of the places you know will give you strength you can instantaneously return to this location when you need to. Quite often when fighting a group of monsters there will be a break in the action just after you have killed one monster and before the next one attacks. You can use this break to cast the Lloyd’s Beacon spell and immediately obtain aid. If you have two spell casters who possess this spell it is very efficient to set one of the beacons at the location of aid and the other to return you to the battle at hand. This way you can zap out, get stronger and zap back to finish the fight and emerge victorious.

Defense, Defense - Probably the most important part of winning any battle is the manner in which your characters are equipped. There are literally thousands of different items that can be used to increase your character’s armor class as well as his/her efficiency in battle. There are weapons, armor, jewelry, footwear, helmets and numerous other items. Each of these performs a specific

function and not all characters are able to use all items. As you begin discovering the more advanced weaponry you will find that they quite often have a “modifier” in the name of the weapon. For instance, a rapid crossbow is not only a crossbow but will also add to the characters speed. A precision dagger will increase the characters accuracy. As described earlier, identify each of these items until you are familiar with their attributes. If you use these items correctly you can optimize the effectiveness of your party.

Pyramids - The 4 pyramids will lead you to the area where your game will conclude. Just as with the towns, castles, caverns and dungeons the pyramids vary in their level of difficulty. The easier a pyramid is to get to, the easier it is to conquer. You will need to explore each pyramid thoroughly. Even when you are able to enter the last area of the most difficult pyramid make certain that you have gained access to every area before proceeding any further.

You will not be able to enter the final room until you have completed the major Quest and become an Ultimate Adventurer. Once you have accomplished these two things you will have the items necessary to gain access to the last room. However, this is not to say that you have all the items necessary to win the game.

And finally... Once you have succeeded in winning the game you will be shown an “award-winning” finale and given a final score. Obviously, the more minor quests you were able to complete the greater your score will be. When you receive your score you are requested to send it in to New World Computing at the address provided so that your name can be entered in the annals of history.