



SIERRA

**GAME
MANUAL**

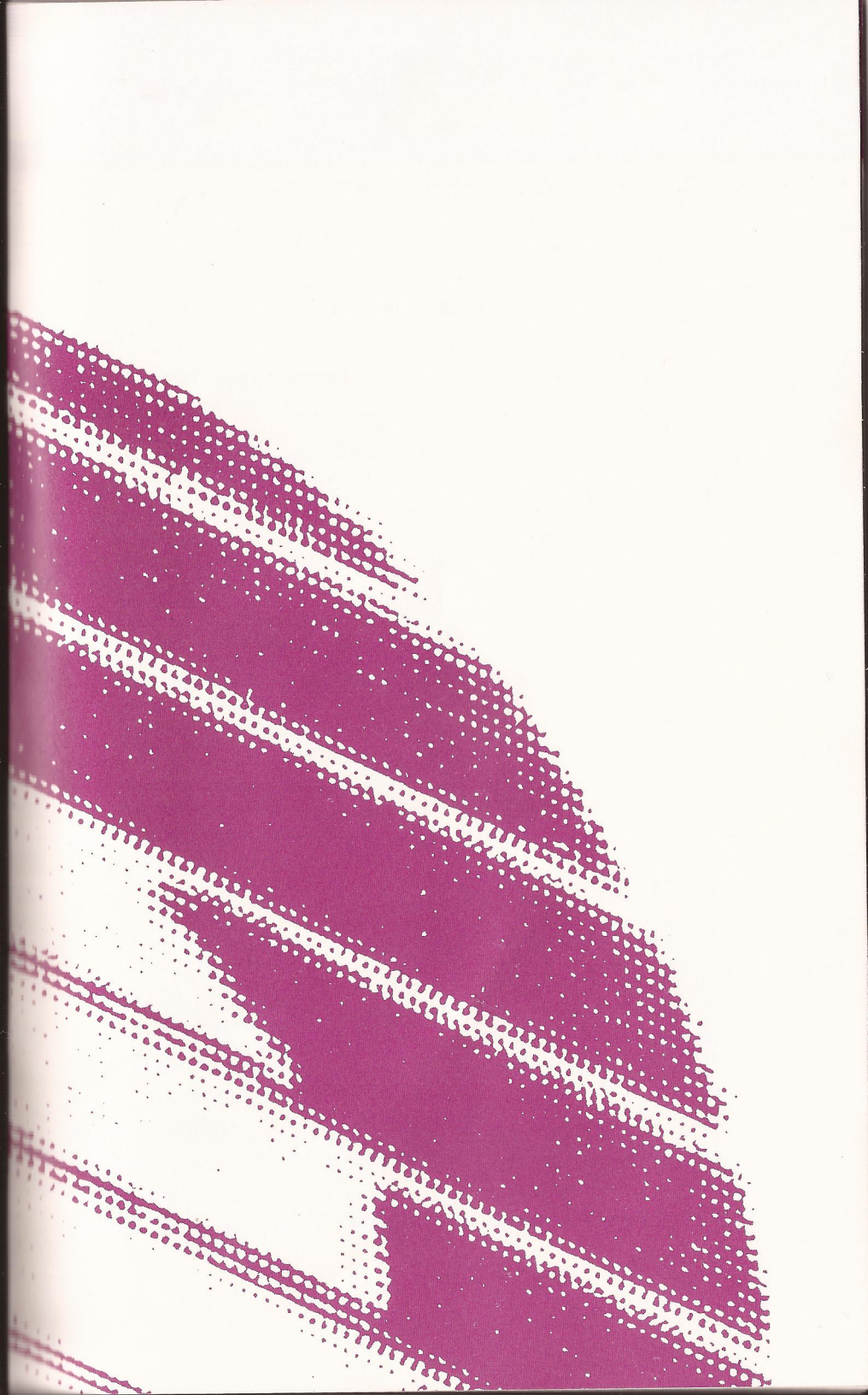


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HOW TO READ THIS MANUAL

Throughout this manual we will use the following ways of representing information:

Menu Commands will be CAPITALIZED. Example: SAVE, RESTORE, QUIT, PLAY

Typed commands will appear as bold type.

Example: 'type **cd \sierra**'

Portions of the command line not meant to be typed will not appear in bold type. For example, in the line 'type **cd \sierra**', 'type' should not be typed.

[Keystrokes] will appear in brackets setting them off from the surrounding text.

Example: [Spacebar], [Tab], [PageUp]

The brackets are not keystrokes and should not be typed.

Two or more keys that should be pressed together will be separated by a hyphen (-). This hyphen is not a keystroke, and should not be typed.

Example: 'Press [Ctrl-I] to view your inventory.'

If a space appears between parts of a command, it is meant to be typed.

Example: 'type **cd \sierra**' (the space between **cd** and **\sierra** should be typed as part of the command)

The term 'diskette' is used to refer to either 3.5" or 5.25" data storage disks.

GETTING STARTED

README FILES

PLEASE NOTE: If there is a README file on your game diskette, it may contain important information and instructions that were not available at the time the documentation and other materials for this game were printed.

MS-DOS README Instructions

Note: The readme file is on the STARTUP disk.

You may read this file during installation on some games. For other Sierra games, do the following:

From DOS, change to the drive containing the startup disk. Then type **more<readme** to see the README file on-screen.

Example A: **more<readme** or

Example B: **more<read.me**

AMIGA README Instructions

Boot your system with Workbench. With the STARTUP DISK in your diskette drive, double-click on the **SIERRA** disk icon, then double-click on the **README.DOC** icon.

MACINTOSH README Instructions

With the STARTUP DISK in your diskette drive, double-click on the **README** icon.

ALL SYSTEMS

Make Back-ups

It is always advisable to make back-up copies of your master program diskettes to increase the life of the masters and guard against accidents. Follow your computer's instructions to make copies of all game diskettes.

Create a 'Save Game' Disk

Even if you will be playing from a hard disk, you may want to format a blank diskette for saving games. Follow your computer's instructions to format a blank diskette and keep it handy for saving your game as you play. For some helpful tips on saving games, see 'Saving Your Game' (page 19).

MS-DOS Systems

Installation Options

IMPORTANT: In order to play your Sierra Game, you MUST have a hard disk.

For some games there are two Hard Disk Installation options to choose from:

Complete Install

will copy the contents of all game disks to your hard disk. Choose *Complete Install* if you want to install the entire game.

Small Install

will copy only the contents of the STARTUP DISK onto your hard disk. As you play the game, you will be prompted to insert other game disks as necessary. The Install procedure will recommend *Small Install* if you do not have the minimum amount of storage space available on your hard disk for the entire game.

Note: this option is not available for all Sierra games.

Installing Your Sierra Game

1. Make copies of the set of disks you will be using to install and play the game.
2. Find the diskette entitled STARTUP DISK. Place this diskette in your floppy drive.
3. Type the letter of the drive containing the STARTUP disk followed by a colon and press [ENTER]. Then type INSTALL and press [ENTER].

Example: **a:** and press [ENTER]. Type **install** and press [ENTER].

MS-DOS Systems

4. You will be asked to type the letter of the hard disk on which you want to install the game (usually c). Type the letter and press [ENTER].
5. The install program will then examine your system's equipment and select the best of the available options. If you're satisfied with the options selected for you, press [ENTER] to confirm those choices. If you wish to change any or all of the preselected options, highlight the option you wish to change and press [ENTER]. Follow the prompts at the bottom of the main window to complete the installation process.

NOTE: If you wish to view all the installation options, type install - m at step 3 above.

Loading Instructions

From the game directory, type the game initials (example: **sq4** for Space Quest IV) and press [ENTER].

NOTE: The game initials will ALWAYS be the same as the game subdirectory name.

AMIGA

Hard Disk Installation Options

PLEASE NOTE: RENAME your copies of all game disks to remove the words 'COPY OF' from the disk name. If the words 'COPY OF' are not removed from the disk names of ALL the copies, the system will continue to ask for the original disk, and will not run the game.

There are two Hard Disk Installation options to choose from:

Complete Install

will copy the contents of all game disks to your hard disk. Choose *Complete Install* if you want to install the entire game.

Small Install

will copy only the contents of the STARTUP DISK onto your hard disk. As you play the game, you will be prompted to insert other game disks as necessary. The INSTALL procedure will recommend *Small Install* if you do not have the minimum amount of storage space available on your hard disk for the entire game.

Installing Your Sierra Game

1. Boot your system with Workbench, and insert the STARTUP DISK into Drive DF0.
2. Double-click on the disk icon, then double-click on the **INSTALL** icon.
3. Follow the on-screen prompts to complete the installation.

Note: If your hard drive is not device DH0, be sure to change the default destination directory to the correct device. For instance, on the Amiga 3000, the default destination directory should be changed to WORK.

AMIGA

Loading Instructions

From Diskettes:

NOTE: YOU MUST HAVE TWO DISKETTE DRIVES TO PLAY FROM DISKETTES.

1. Insert the DUAL FLOPPY PLAY DISK into drive DF0:.
2. Turn on your system.
3. Insert GAME DISK 1 into drive DF1. You will be prompted to insert additional disks as required.

NOTE: THE DUAL FLOPPY PLAY DISK MUST REMAIN IN DRIVE DF0.

From Hard Disk:

1. Load Workbench and double-click on your hard disk icon.
2. Double-click on the **SIERRA** drawer.
3. Double-click on the **Sierra Game** drawer.
4. Double-click on the **Sierra Game** icon.

Amiga 1000

Loading Instructions Without Hard Disk

1. Boot your system with Kickstart.
2. When the Workbench disk appears on-screen, insert the DUAL FLOPPY PLAY DISK in Drive DF0.
3. Insert GAME DISK 1 in Drive DF1.
You will be prompted to insert additional diskettes as required.

NOTE: THE DUAL FLOPPY PLAY DISK MUST REMAIN IN DRIVE DF0.

Note for experienced Amiga users: This game will search all drives for game information. If you have more than two floppy drives and/or a RAM disk, you may load additional game disks in these drives to save time.

MACINTOSH

Hard Disk Installation

You must have a Hard Disk in order to play this Sierra game. For some games there are two Hard Disk Installation options to choose from:

Complete Install

will copy the contents of all game disks to your hard disk. Choose *Complete Install* if you want to install the entire game.

Small Install

will copy only the contents of the STARTUP disk onto your hard disk. As you play the game, you will be prompted to insert other game disks as necessary. The INSTALL procedure will recommend *Small Install* if you do not have the minimum amount of storage space available on your hard disk for the entire game. Choose *Small Install* if you want to install STARTUP files to your hard disk for ease of play, but do not have enough disk space to install the entire game.

Note: this option is not available for all Sierra games.

1. Place the back-up copy you have made of the STARTUP Disk in the diskette drive.
2. Double click on the INSTALL icon, and follow the on-screen prompts to complete the installation.

Starting Instructions

After completing the INSTALL procedure:

1. Double-click on the **Sierra** folder.
2. Double-click on the **Sierra Game** folder.
3. Double-click on the **Sierra Game** icon.

PLAYING YOUR SIERRA GAME

ALL SYSTEMS:

Using a Mouse

To activate the icon bar, move the cursor to the top of the screen.

To position the on-screen cursor, move the mouse to the desired position.

To move your character, position the cursor and click the mouse button.

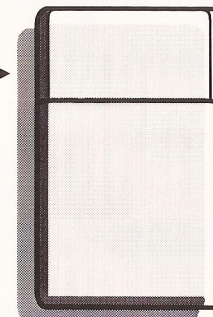
To execute a command, click the mouse button (multi-button mouse users, click the *left* button).

NOTE: TANDY USERS: Be sure to install your mouse driver before booting the game if playing outside the Deskmate environment.

For more detailed mouse instructions, see below.

1 - Button Mouse

[ENTER] →



[SHIFT - CLICK]

[OPTION - CLICK]

Cycle through available cursors.

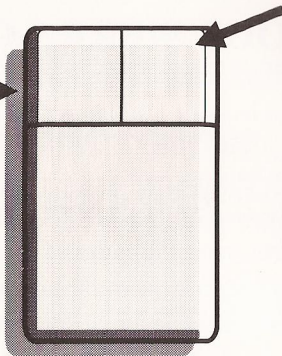
[CTRL - CLICK]

[COMMAND - CLICK]

Toggle between WALK and last cursor chosen.

2 - Button Mouse

[ENTER]



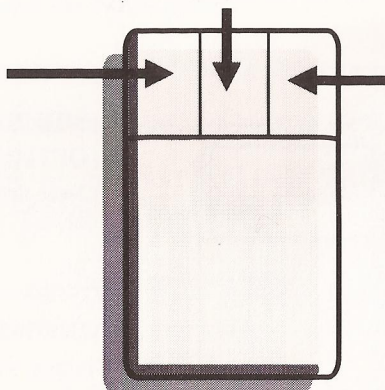
Right-click
Cycle through available cursors

[CTRL - CLICK]
Toggle between WALK and last cursor chosen.

3 - Button Mouse

Middle-click Toggle between WALK and last active cursor.

[ENTER]

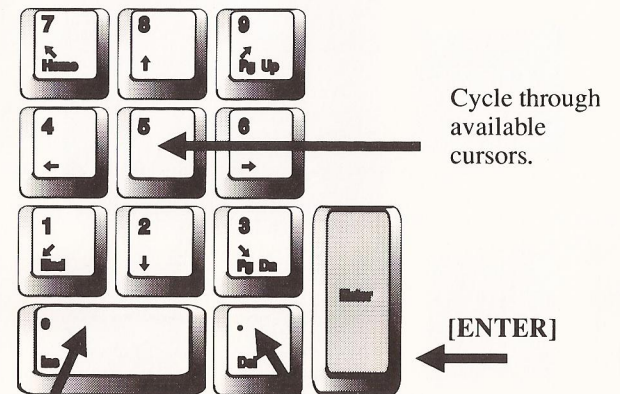


Right-click
Cycle through available cursors.

Using a Keyboard

To position the on-screen cursor or move your game character using a keyboard, press a direction key on the *numeric keypad*. To stop your character, press the same direction key again. To execute a command, press [ENTER]. To move the on-screen cursor or game character in smaller increments for exact positioning, hold down the [SHIFT] key and use the arrow keys. For more detailed keypad instructions, see below.

Numeric Keypad



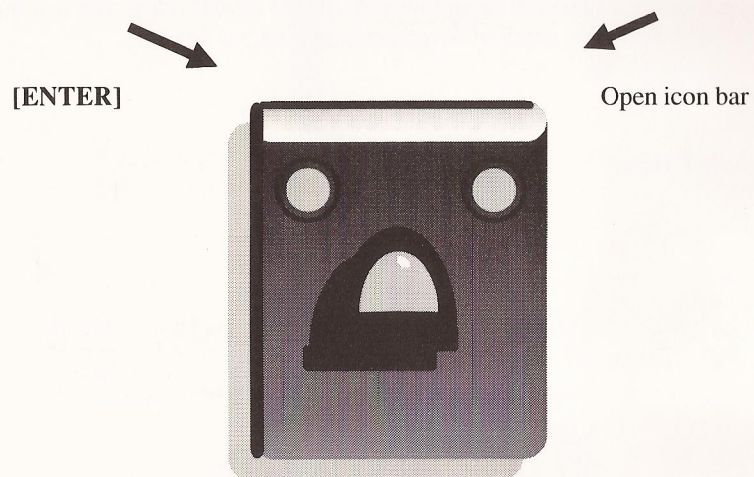
Cycle through available cursors.

Toggle between WALK and last cursor chosen.

Open icon bar.

Using a Joystick

To position the on-screen cursor using a joystick, move the stick in the desired direction. To execute a command, press the FIRE button. For more detailed joystick instructions, see below.



PLEASE NOTE: With the exception of mouse-only items, all playing instructions beyond this point are for keyboard. Mouse or joystick commands may also be used. Please reference the section above for mouse and joystick equivalents to keyboard commands.

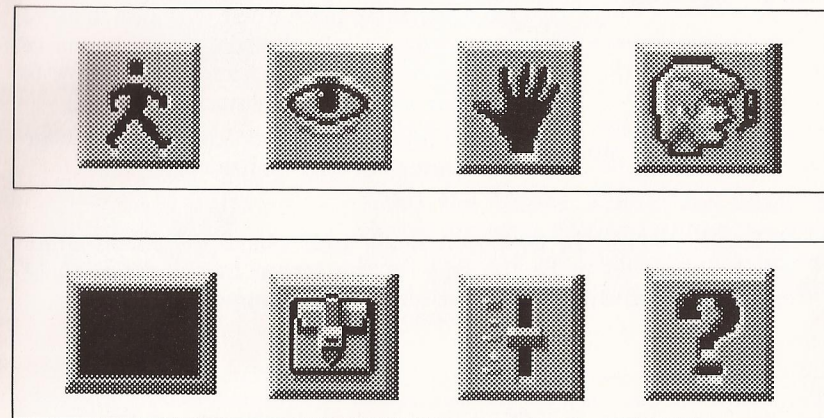
Using Icons and Cursors*

Note: Listed below are standard Sierra icons and cursors. Additional icons and cursors may be available in your game — for more information, please use the HELP icon and cursor explained below.

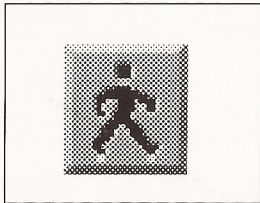
At the top of the screen is an icon bar containing several icons that can be selected to execute the command choices available to you.

To open the icon bar, press [ESC] (or, on the Macintosh, press either [ESC] or press [tilde]) or move the mouse cursor all the way to the top of your screen.

Some icons will have a menu of choices. Use the [Tab] key, arrow keys or mouse cursor to move between choices within an icon menu.

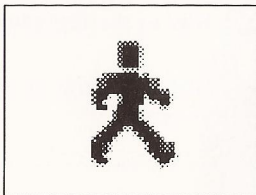


***Note:** There may be a slight variation in the appearance of this icon from game to game. If you are unsure of an icon's purpose, click on the icon with the HELP icon (the question mark located at the right end of the icon bar).



The Walk Icon*

Choose *Walk* when you want to move your character from place to place on-screen. A *walking* character will move as far as the edge of the screen, avoiding obstacles in its path.

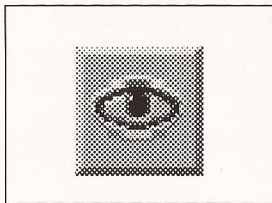


The Walk Cursor* (mouse mode only)

When you choose *Walk*, the cursor will change to a walking figure. Place the feet of the figure at the place where you want to move your character and click the mouse button or press [ENTER]. Your character will move to that spot, avoiding any obstacles in its path.

On the Macintosh, double-click near the edge of the screen to walk off that edge.

PLEASE NOTE: In keyboard mode your character's destination will be assumed to be the edge of the screen in the direction of movement, and will walk off the screen if not stopped.



The Look Icon*

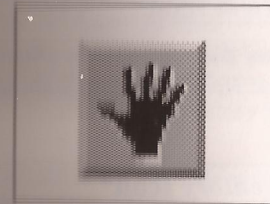
Choose *Look* when you want to have your character look at something on-screen.

*Note: There may be a slight variation in the appearance of this icon from game to game. If you are unsure of an icon's purpose, click on the icon with the HELP icon (the question mark located at the right end of the icon bar).



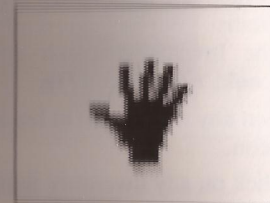
The Look Cursor*

When you choose *Look*, the cursor will change to an eye. Place the eye at the desired place on the screen and click the mouse button or press [ENTER]. If there is something to be seen at this place, a message will be displayed.



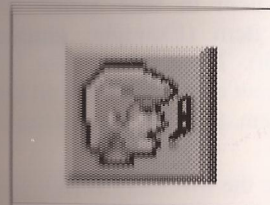
The Action Icon*

Choose *Action* when you want your character to manipulate an object.



The Action Cursor*

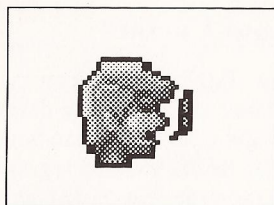
When you choose *Action*, the cursor will change to a hand. Place the hand at the desired place on-screen and click the mouse button or press [ENTER]. The necessary action will be performed.



The Talk Icon*

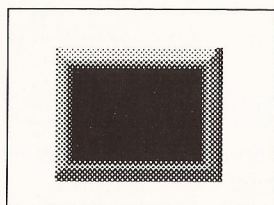
Choose *Talk* when you want to initiate a conversation between game characters.

*Note: There may be a slight variation in the appearance of this icon from game to game. If you are unsure of an icon's purpose, click on the icon with the HELP icon (the question mark located at the right end of the icon bar).



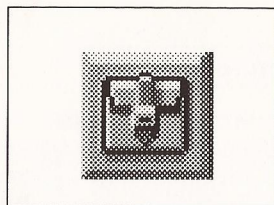
The Talk Cursor*

When you choose *Talk*, the cursor will change to a talking head. Position the TALK cursor on the person (or thing) you want to speak to, and click the mouse button or press [ENTER]. If conversation is possible, your character will talk, or a conversation will begin.



The Item Icon*

The *Item* icon shows the last inventory item you selected. Choose *Item* when you want to see or use this item.



The Inventory Icon*

Choose *Inventory* when you want to see and select from the items you are currently carrying. Within the Inventory screen are several options: **?**, **Look**, **Action**, and **OK**.

Choose **?** and click on any menu icon to learn the function of the icon.

Choose **Look** and click on any inventory item to get a description of that item.

Choose **Action** and use the *Action* cursor to use an inventory item to take action on another inventory item (Example: putting jewels into a pouch). To select an item for use, click on the arrow icon, then click on the desired inventory item. (See Inventory Object Cursors, below.)

Choose **OK** to leave the Inventory screen and return to the game.

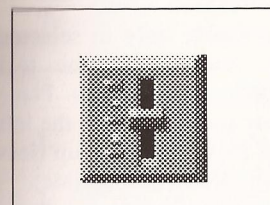
***Note:** There may be a slight variation in the appearance of this icon from game to game. If you are unsure of an icon's purpose, click on the icon with the **HELP** icon (the question mark located at the right end of the icon bar).

Inventory Object Cursors*

Each item in your inventory has a special *object* cursor associated with it. Each of these cursors looks like the object it represents. *Object* cursors can be used to perform game actions with your inventory items.

To use an *Object* cursor in the game, follow the steps below:

1. From the game, choose the Inventory icon from the icon bar, or press the [Tab] key.
2. Move the arrow cursor to the inventory item you want to use, and press [ENTER]. The cursor will change to look like the item you have selected.
3. Choose the OK icon. You will exit the inventory screen to the game.
4. Move the *Object* cursor to the place on-screen where you want to use the inventory item and press [ENTER].



The System Icon*

When you choose the *System* icon, several options will be displayed: **SAVE**, **RESTORE**, **RESTART**, **QUIT**, **PLAY**, **TEXT** (in some games), **VOLUME**, **SPEED** and **DETAIL**.

Choose **SAVE** when you want to save your game in progress.

Choose **RESTORE** to restore a previously saved game. For more instructions on saving and restoring games, see page 19 through 21.

Choose **RESTART** to begin the game again.

Choose **QUIT** to stop playing and return to DOS.

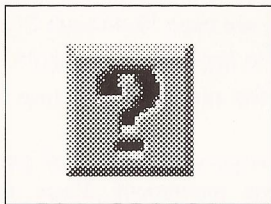
The **SPEED** lever adjusts the speed of your character's on-screen movement. Place the cursor on the lever and hold down the left mouse button as you move the lever up (faster) or down (slower).

***Note:** There may be a slight variation in the appearance of this icon from game to game. If you are unsure of an icon's purpose, click on the icon with the **HELP** icon (the question mark located at the right end of the icon bar).

The **VOLUME** lever adjusts the sound volume of the game music. Place the cursor on the lever and hold down the left mouse button as you move the lever up (louder) or down (softer). **NOTE:** On systems using only an internal speaker, **VOLUME** will not adjust sound level, but will toggle sound on (up) and off (down).

The **DETAIL** lever adjusts the amount of non-essential animation in the game; if your computer system is running the game too slowly, you may want to adjust the game detail to eliminate non-essential animation. Place the cursor on the lever and hold down the left mouse button as you move the lever up (more detail) or down (less detail).

The **TEXT** lever, available only in selected games, adjusts the amount of time text messages will remain on your screen. Place the cursor on the lever and hold down the left mouse button as you move the lever up (less reading time) or down (more reading time).



The Help Icon

Choose ? and click on any menu icon to learn the function of the icon.

Pausing Your Game

If you wish to pause the game, select the **System** icon from the icon bar. The game will pause until you select **PLAY** to resume play. Alternatively, just bringing up the icon bar will also cause the game to pause.

SAVING YOUR GAME

IMPORTANT!! If you do not wish to save to your hard drive, you must have a separate formatted diskette ready before you can save a game. Since each disk can only hold a limited number of games, we recommend that you have more than one disk formatted, in order to assure adequate space for save game storage. To allow for errors in judgement and creative exploration, we recommend that you frequently save your game in progress, and that you save several different games from different points as you play. You will always want to save your game before encountering potentially dangerous situations. You should also save your game after you have made significant progress. You may name your saved games using standard English phrases. For example, if you are standing on a beach, you might call your game 'standing on beach', or simply 'beach'.

Saving to a Floppy Disk

1. Choose the **System** icon (slide lever) from the icon bar, then select **SAVE**. The Save Game menu will appear.
2. If you are playing from a hard drive and saving to a floppy drive, you will be prompted to insert your Save Game diskette into your floppy drive (example: a:).
PLEASE NOTE: The first time you attempt to save a game to a floppy disk while playing from the hard drive, you will need to change your default save game directory as follows: using your [Tab] key, select **CHANGE DIRECTORY***.
3. Press [Ctrl-C] to clear the command line, and type the name of your floppy drive.
4. Insert a blank formatted diskette in your floppy drive.
5. Select **OK**, and press [ENTER].
6. Type the description of your saved game, and press [ENTER] to save the game.

* The term 'directory' refers to directories, drawers and folders.

Saving to Hard Disk

NOTE: If you choose to save games to your hard disk, we suggest that you create one or more save game directories or folders on your hard disk. See your computer's instructions for creating directories.

1. Choose the *System* icon (slide lever) from the icon bar, then select SAVE. The Save Game menu will appear.
2. If you wish to save the game to a directory* other than the one you are currently playing on, select CHANGE DIRECTORY*. Press [Ctrl-C] to clear the command line, and type the drive and name of the new directory*.
3. Select OK and press [ENTER].
4. Type the description of your saved game, and press [ENTER] to save the game.

Restoring Your Game

1. Choose the *System* icon (slide lever) from the icon bar, then select RESTORE. You will be prompted to select the game you wish to restore.
2. Highlight the desired game and select RESTORE.
3. If the game you wish to restore is in a different directory, select CHANGE DIRECTORY, then type the name of the directory* you wish to restore from.

* The term 'directory' refers to directories, drawers and folders.

Quitting Your Game

To stop playing, choose the *System* icon from the icon bar (slide lever) and select QUIT.

Restarting Your Game

To restart your game at any time during play, choose the *System* icon (slide lever) from the icon bar and select RESTART.

Message Windows

Message windows will appear at various times during the game. When you have read the message, press [ENTER] to remove the window and resume play.

NOTE: Some message windows are program controlled, and cannot be cleared by pressing [ENTER]. These windows will clear automatically, dependent on your text speed setting (see TEXT LEVER, page 18).

TIPS FOR ADVENTURERS

LOOK everywhere. Thoroughly explore your surroundings. Open doors and drawers. Look closely at all objects you encounter or you may miss important details.

EXPLORE each area of the game very carefully, and **DRAW A MAP** as you progress through the game. Make a note of each area you visit, and include information about objects found there and dangerous areas nearby. If you miss an area, you may miss an important clue!

GET objects you think you will need. You can see an inventory of items on hand by choosing the *Inventory* icon at any time.

USE the items you have picked up to solve problems in the game. Different approaches to a puzzle may bring about a different outcome.

BE CAREFUL, and remain alert at all times — disaster may strike in the most unlikely of places!

SAVE YOUR GAME OFTEN, especially when you are about to try something new or potentially dangerous. This way, if the worst should happen, you won't have to start all over again from the beginning. Save games at different points, so you will always be able to return to a desired point in the game. In effect, this will enable you to travel backward through time and do things differently if you wish.

DON'T GET DISCOURAGED. If you come to an obstacle that seems insurmountable, don't despair. Spend some time exploring another area, and come back later. Every problem in the game has at least one solution, and some have more than one. Sometimes solving a problem one way will make it harder to solve the next, and sometimes it will make it easier.

If you get stuck, you might try backtracking to an earlier point in the game, then choosing a different path.

If all else fails, you can write to us for hints. You can also buy the Sierra Game Hint Book from the dealer who sold you the game, or order it directly from Sierra On-Line by calling or writing.

For phone number and address see the *Customer Service Guide*.

BRING ALONG SOME HELP. You may find it helpful (and fun) to play the game with a friend. Two (or more) heads are better than one at interpreting clues and solving problems.

PROBLEM DISK? Technical Help (MS DOS only)

Note: If you are using DOS 4.0 or 4.01, and your hard disk partition is greater than 32 megabytes, you may get a warning message which mentions SHARE.EXE. You may ignore this message; SHARE.EXE is not required by Sierra products.

If the game colors seem dull or washed out, please try adjusting your monitor's brightness, and contrast before assuming the program disks are faulty.

If you receive any of the following messages while playing your Sierra game:

CRC ERROR:

this message means you have a bad disk. It stands for Cyclic Redundancy Check, a way to check for errors.

DATA ERROR READING DRIVE A:

this message means you have a bad disk.

GENERAL FAILURE READING DRIVE A:

this message means you probably have a low density floppy drive and are trying to read incompatible high density disks.

INSERT DISK #_:

(when you have inserted that disk) means you may need to create a boot disk. See BOOT DISK INSTRUCTIONS, below.

OUT OF HUNK:

this message means you may be running RAM-resident programs such as Windows, Sidekick, a DOS shell, or other programs that remain resident in your computer's memory even when you are not using them. Booting your computer with a BOOT DISK will solve this problem. See BOOT DISK INSTRUCTIONS, below.

SECTOR NOT FOUND READING DRIVE A:

while reading any MS-DOS game disk means you have a bad disk. See REPLACING DISKS, below, for more information.

BLANK SCREEN PROBLEMS

If, after loading the game, you see only a blank screen: You may have made incorrect graphic or sound support choices during the Install procedure. Rerun the installation, and choose again.

If, after loading the game, you see only a blank screen with a mouse pointer: You may have one of the newer SoundBlaster cards without CMS chips installed, and you may have selected GameBlaster support during the Install procedure. Reinstall, selecting AdLib support.

NOTE: Sierra's programs require a large amount of memory (RAM) in order to function properly. If you have problems and want to see how much memory is available through DOS, type: CHKDSK [ENTER]. One typical system will have:

655360 Bytes total memory (640K)
597842 Bytes free (584K)

If the free memory is below 573440 (560K), please use a boot disk.

If you attempt any of these solutions and the problem persists, call SIERRA TECHNICAL SUPPORT for assistance at:

(209) 683-8989 in the U.S.

or

734-303-171 in the U.K.

Boot Disk Instructions for MS-DOS computers

Booting your computer system with a Boot Disk before you play your Sierra game will keep any TSR (Terminate-and-Stay-Resident) programs from being loaded into memory.

PLEASE NOTE: THE FORMAT COMMAND MUST BE USED WITH CARE TO AVOID ERASING ALL STORED INFORMATION ON YOUR HARD DISK. PLEASE FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS BELOW EXACTLY.

Formatting From A Hard Disk

1. Insert a blank disk into Drive A:.
2. At the C: prompt, type: **format a: /s** [ENTER].

Note: If your A: drive is a 5.25" high density drive, using a low density disk, type: format a: /s /t:40 /n:9 [ENTER]

Note: If your A: drive is a 3.5" high density drive, using a low density disk, type: format a: /s /t:80 /n:9 [ENTER]

3. Follow the DOS prompts.

Formatting From A Diskette Drive

1. Insert your original DOS system disk in Drive A:.
2. At the A: prompt, type: **format a:/s** [ENTER].
3. When prompted, insert a blank disk into Drive A: and Follow the DOS prompts.

NOW YOU NEED TO CREATE A CONFIG.SYS FILE FOR YOUR BOOT DISK:

4. Insert your formatted blank disk into Drive A:.
5. Type: **a:** [ENTER].
6. Type: **copy con config.sys** [ENTER].
7. Type: **files=20** [ENTER].
8. Press the [F6] key, then press [ENTER].
You should see the message: **1 File(s) copied.**

IF YOU ARE USING DOS VERSION 4.00 OR VERSION 4.01, FOLLOW THE STEPS BELOW TO CREATE AN AUTOEXEC.BAT FILE. IF YOU ARE USING A DIFFERENT VERSION OF DOS, GO TO MOUSE DRIVERS, BELOW.

Creating An AUTOEXEC.BAT File For MS-DOS 4.0 and 4.1

1. Type: **a:** [ENTER].
2. Type: **copy con autoexec.bat** [ENTER].
3. Type: **set comspec=c:\command.com** [ENTER].
4. Press the [F6] key, then press [ENTER].

Mouse Drivers

If you will be using a mouse to play your Sierra game, you must copy your mouse driver onto your Boot Disk. Refer to your mouse manual for information on how to install your mouse driver, or call Sierra Technical Support for assistance at (209) 683-8989 in the U.S or 734-303-171 in the U.K.

IMPORTANT!! After you have created a boot disk, you must *reboot* your computer with the disk, leaving the boot disk in drive a:, press [ctrl]-[alt]-[del] at the same time. Your computer will now reboot, with a: as the default drive. Type c: [ENTER] to change back to your hard disk. Follow the instructions in the manual to start the game, and have a great time!

If you have created a Boot Disk and booted your system with it before playing your Sierra game, and your problem is still evident, something else is wrong. Call Sierra Technical Support for assistance at (209) 683-8989 in the U.S or 734-303-171 in the U.K.

SOFTWARE PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

Questions and Answers

Q. Is it okay to copy your friend's software?

A. No, it's not okay to copy your friend's software. Software is protected by copyright law, which says that you can't make copies without the permission of the copyright holder. Copyright law is written this way to protect software programmers and publishers and the investment they've made in their products. The creative teams that develop the software — programmers, writers, graphic artists and others — also deserve fair compensation for their work. Without the protection given by our copyright laws, they would be unable to produce the entertainment, educational and productivity software that adds so much to our daily lives.

Q. That makes sense, but what do I get out of purchasing my own software?

A. When you purchase authorized copies of software programs, you receive additional benefits, like user guides and tutorials, quick reference cards, the opportunity to purchase upgrades, and technical support from the software companies. For most software programs, you can read about user benefits in the registration brochure found in the product box.

Q. What exactly does the law say about copying software?

A. The law says that it is illegal to make or distribute copies of copyrighted material, including software, without authorization. If you pirate software, you may face not only a civil suit, but also fines of up to \$50,000 and jail terms of up to 5 years.

Q. So I'm never allowed to copy software for any reason?

A. No, you are allowed to make one backup copy if one wasn't included in the box with your original disk. Copyright law prohibits you from making additional copies of the software for any other reason without permission of the software company.

Q. What happens when I no longer want my software? Can I give my old programs to someone else to use?

A. If you have a legal copy of a software program, you can sell it or give it away. But if you do, be sure you pass on the documentation and back-up disks, and remember—you may not keep a copy for yourself.

Q. Do these rules apply to bulletin boards and user groups? I always thought that the reason they got together was to share software.

A. Many bulletin boards and user groups offer participants shareware or public domain software, which is a perfectly acceptable practice. Some software companies also offer special demonstration versions of their products through bulletin boards and user groups. In some instances, these may be copied. In any event, it is the responsibility of the bulletin board operator or user group to respect copyright law and to encourage participants to do the same.

Q. What about schools and professional organizations?

A. The same copyright responsibilities that apply to individuals also apply to corporations, schools, and professional organizations. No one is exempt from the copyright law.

Q. I'll bet most of the people who copy software don't even know that they're breaking the law.

A. Because the software industry is relatively new and because copying software is so easy, many people are either unaware of the laws governing software use or choose to ignore them. It is the responsibility of each and every software user to understand and adhere to copyright law. If you are part of an organization, see what you can do to initiate a policy statement that everyone respects. Finally, as an individual, help spread the word that responsible computer users should be "software legal."

For more information on ways to stay "software legal," write to:

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Suite 901
Washington, DC 20036**

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