

VENETICA

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a black and white outfit with a long black glove, holds a large sword. She is positioned in the foreground, looking back over her shoulder. The background is a detailed, hazy illustration of a Venetian city with many bridges and buildings.

Manual

This is the assemblage of the journals that Nesto and Don handed over to me. Their jovial report of the things they encountered on their journey displays an uncanny contrast to my dark and merciless quest. With all my heart I wish I could see this world through their unspoiled eyes, but my adolescent view onto this world has vanished, since that dreadful midsummer night tore apart all that was dear to me. But join me now, and see for yourself.

Scarlett

Midsummer 1538

Somewhere in the Mountains



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1. Foreword

Venetica is a fantasy role playing game. Like other role playing games, there are different objectives you will be trying to accomplish. How you achieve them is up to you...

Your most important goal is to complete the quest Scarlett receives at the beginning of the game. The city of Venice, and eventually the whole cosmic balance, is threatened by an evil conspiracy, formulated by the so-called Undead Five, whom you must defeat.



But these creatures are protected by obstacles, mazes and evil henchmen. Your second goal is to develop Scarlett, your game character, and make her capable of overcoming these barriers. Scarlett is your alter ego in this game, and over the course of the game she changes – much as real people do over a lifetime – but also because of your actions. You can improve skills in combat, magic, stealth, etc. You will collect wealth and treasured objects. And people will learn about your deeds.



Your third goal is to explore the world of Venice. There are numerous goodies, puzzles and special places in Venetica. Part of the fun is in finding them, and discovering this fantasy world. How do you get into the Arsenal district? What's in the Doge's palace? Where are the legendary treasures of the Old Empire?

Many of your decisions cannot be undone, and will define your path and character, so you should think carefully before you make a decision. But still, you should never be afraid to experiment, because although the game is very complex, you can never mess things up completely. So, go everywhere, talk to everyone and just do what you think is right! You will succeed at the end.

About Don: Born of high blood, Don enjoyed a rich education, covering everything from sword fighting to watch making. In contrast to his cousin Nesto, however, he abandoned these illustrious circles early, and began travelling the world, using his knowledge to help the poor.

On the following pages, you will find Don's report, which will explain a lot about moving through the game world, fighting, and using skills.



"My Lord, I am grateful that you entrusted me with a report about how the cautious traveller can survive on the dangerous roads and in the wilderness. My contemporary education will surely be of good use.

Every journey has a beginning. I am sure I will travel far, meet many new friends and fierce foes alike, and, hopefully, rewards await me at my destination! – But before any traveller can set off, preparations need to be made." – Don



2. Installation and Main Menu

Before installing

Before installing Venetica, check the minimum and recommended system requirements shown below. Your computer must meet all of the minimum requirements if you want to play the game without any problems. If your computer meets or exceeds the recommended system requirements, you can expect a significantly improved gaming experience.

Minimum system requirements

- ♦ Operating system: Windows® XP with Service Pack 2 or Vista
- ♦ Processor: Pentium® 4 CPU 2.4 GHz or comparable CPU
- ♦ RAM: 1024 MB for Windows® XP, 1536 MB for Vista, 2048 MB for Vista 64
- ♦ Graphics card: NVIDIA GeForce 7600 GT with 256 MB RAM or comparable
- ♦ Optical drive: DVD ROM
- ♦ DirectX® 9c compatible sound card
- ♦ Free hard drive space: 10 GB

Recommended system requirements

- ♦ Operating system: Windows XP with SP2 or Vista
- ♦ Processor: Intel® Core™ 2 Duo E8200 2,6 Ghz or comparable CPU
- ♦ RAM: 2 GB for Windows® XP, 3 GB for Windows® Vista
- ♦ Graphics card: NVIDIA GeForce 8800 GT or similar Graphics card with 512 MB RAM
- ♦ Optical drive: DVD-ROM
- ♦ DirectX® 9c compatible Sound Card
- ♦ Free hard drive space: 10 GB

Installation

1. Place the “Venetica” DVD into your DVD drive.
2. After the automatic startup, click on “Install Venetica” to start the installation, and follow the instructions on the screen.



Manual installation

If the installation screen does not appear automatically when the DVD is inserted, it is possible that the “autorun” function is disabled. In this case, proceed as follows:

1. Double click on the “My computer” icon on the Windows Desktop or open the Windows Explorer.
2. Double click on the icon for your computer’s DVD ROM drive to display the contents of the Venetica DVD.
3. Double click on the “SETUP.EXE” file to start installation and follow the instructions on the screen.

Running the game

You can run the game by double clicking on the “Venetica” Desktop icon or via the Windows start menu: click on the “Start” button at the bottom left of the screen, then on “All Programs” (possibly also “Programs”), then on “Venetica” and finally on “Venetica” again.

The game’s DVD ROM must be in the DVD drive.

To ensure that the game runs smoothly, you should close all other applications before starting the game. This also applies to programs that run in the background and are not displayed in the task bar (you can usually deactivate these via the icons displayed next to the system clock).

Uninstalling the game

Click on the “Start” button at the bottom left of the screen, then on “All Programs” (possibly also “Programs”), then on “Venetica” and finally on “Uninstall Venetica”. The uninstall routine will start automatically when you confirm the subsequent query with “Yes”.

Need help? If you have problems with the screen display or with running the game, see page 63: Technical Support.



Main Menu

The game starts with the main menu. During gameplay, you can access the main menu at any time by pressing [Esc] and then select [Quit Game]. However, before you do this, you should save first as all unsaved progress will be lost.



Getting started

Select [Start game] from the main menu to begin your adventure. If you already have a saved game, you can choose [Continue] to pick up from where you left off.

"A note to my fellow travelers: Don't just run off into the wild! Take time to examine your surroundings - there are many things around that will make your life easier. Talk to people, listen to what they say, and you will find out many secrets. It's always best to start your adventure with better equipment and a better understanding of things, instead of just running into the next villain's sword." – Don



Loading and saving



You can save and load your game at any time, except during conversations or cutscenes. Choose **[Load game]** to access a list of previously saved games. Then, click on the save you wish to load, and click **[Load]**, or just double-click on the save.

Choose **[Save game]** to save your current progress. Choose the empty slot to save your game, or choose a slot already occupied by another saved game to overwrite it. Click on **[Save]** to save the game, or double-click on the slot.

Auto saving: There are many places where the game is saved automatically. The auto-saved game is displayed on top of the list of saved games.

Settings



Here you can change the settings of the game. There are four sub-categories:

General settings: Lets you enable subtitles or display combat information.

For true RPG addicts: If you select “Display combat info”, you will see exactly how much damage you inflict upon your enemies. This can help you find out how much difference your new weapon makes, how much of an effect your “Strength” attribute has, or how well your new combat skill really works.

Display settings: Here you can configure the visual appearance of the game.

If the game runs slowly, you should try turning the display details down. This can greatly increase speed.



Audio settings: Change the volume of music, sound, or speech.

Input settings: Here you can adjust the controls of the game to suit your personal needs.

3. Controls and Displays

“Luckily, we mastered walking and running as little children, so exploring our world should not be too much of a problem. Using a weapon to defeat an enemy, however, is a totally different story.” – Don

Moving the character: You control Scarlett using the keys [W] [S] [A] and [D], and the mouse.

You can move the mouse to change the camera perspective. Moving Scarlett forwards will always result in her moving in the direction the camera points. If you move the camera, you will change the direction in which Scarlett will walk.

Running: Press [Shift] to toggle run on or off.

Using objects: Press the [Default Action] button (left mouse button) if you are close to objects that you can interact with. These can be things to pick up, characters to talk to, doors, beds, chairs, and many other things.

Fighting: Press [E] to draw the weapon you currently have equipped. Now press the Action button to strike. To find out more about fighting, see chapter 5: Combat.

Note: As long as your weapon is drawn, you cannot use game objects like doors.

Rolling: Press [Space] and a movement key to perform a roll in that direction.



These are all the basic controls you will need. As you progress, you will find the [Special Action] button (right mouse button) very useful, as well as the quick slots that you can access with the keys [1] to [7]. For more information see chapter X: The Inventory.

Basic keys

W	Move forward
A	Move backwards
S	Move to the left
D	Move to the right
Shift	Toggle walk / run
Space + W,S,A,D	Roll
Mouse movement	Move camera
Left mouse button	Default action
Right mouse button	Special Action (customizable)
E	Draw weapon
Keys 1--7	Quickslots (customizable)
L	Light lantern

Special keys

Esc	Open pause menu (load, save, options)
I	Open inventory
M	Show overview map
Ctrl + Action button	Loot enemies while still carrying weapon
Q	Cycle weapon types
C	Shortcut to character sheet
R	Shortcut to weapons list
T	Shortcut to items list
Z	Shortcut to Body Skills
U	Shortcut to Soul Skills

Using an Xbox 360® controller

If you would prefer to use an Xbox 360® controller to play the game, you can do so by changing the input in the Settings menu (see chapter 2: Installation and Main Menu).

Moving the character:

Use the left analog stick to move Scarlett, and the right analog stick to move the camera. Scarlett always moves in relation to the camera.

Using objects: Press the “Action button” **A** to interact with objects.

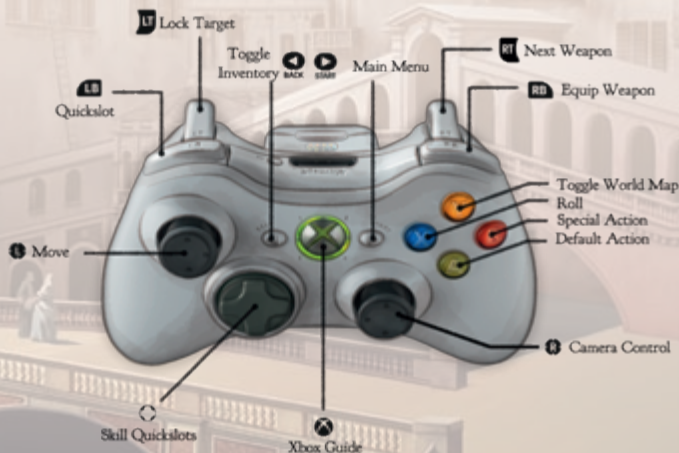
Fighting:

Press **RB** to draw the weapon you currently have equipped. Then press the Action button to strike. To find out more about fighting, see chapter 5: Combat.

Rolling:

Press **X** and a movement key to perform a roll in that direction.

Controller layout



HUD Icons

The icons you can see on the screen are explained here. Note that not all of the icons may be available from the very beginning.



- ① **Health:**
Your physical condition.
- ② **Mental energy:**
Used for Necromancy spells.
- ③ **Twilight energy:**
Necessary to resurrect yourself when you die.
- ④ **Experience points:**
Collect these by defeating your enemies to level up your abilities.

⑤ **Level:**

The character development level you have reached so far.

⑥ **Hint icon:**

Help is at hand, should you need it...

⑦ **Mini map:**

Displays your environment and highlights points of interest.

⑧ **Lantern oil:**

Shows how much oil you have left in your lantern.

⑨ **Time:**

Displays the current time of day.

For more detailed information about health, mental energy, twilight energy, experience points, and your level, see chapter 6: Developing your character.



4. The Inventory

"When out and about in the wild, you should never lose track of your assignments, of the things you have discovered, and the things you carry with you." – Don



Use [I] to open the inventory. It is displayed as a book, with several pages you can access by clicking on the flags in the top row.

Character screen

This page shows all important statistics regarding your character. It is also used to distribute Attribute Points (AP) as soon as you reach a new level. For more details about the character screen, see Chapter 6: Developing your character.

Weapons, items, quest objects

Arms and armour are displayed on the first page. To find out more about them simply hover the mouse over the relevant item.



Note: If you hover the mouse over a weapon, it is automatically compared with the weapon you are currently equipped with. If it is of the same weapon type, an indicator appears in the bottom right of the window, showing if the weapon is stronger or weaker than your current weapon. A positive value means that the new weapon is superior to your equipped one.

General items are displayed on the second page. There is no limit to the amount of items you can carry.

Special quest items are collected on the third page.

To equip a weapon or use an item (e.g. to eat something, or light a lantern), drag its icon onto Scarlett. Alternatively, you can double-click on the icon or drag it into the quickslots that you have at your disposal and press the corresponding button to use an item. Note that consumable items, like food, will disappear after you've used them.

Note: To use the lantern, you can also press [L].

Some weapons or items (like the Moonblade) cannot be sold because you need them for your quest.

To have a weapon or item ready, but not equipped, drag it onto a free slot in your Quick Bar. You can then quickly access it by pressing the corresponding key. Note that the first slot is the "Special Action" slot, that represents the right mouse button. Anything you put here will be activated by pressing the right mouse button.

For a list of weapons and items available, see chapter 11: Things to buy.

Special things you can do here

Refill a lantern: The lantern is very important if you need to move through dark places, especially if you want to find hidden passages or treasure. Note that you also need oil to fill the lantern. To refill it, drag the lantern oil onto the lantern.



Mix a potion: If you have learnt how to mix potions, and if you have a phial, you can drag the corresponding herb onto the “mix potion” icon to create a potion from it.

Skills

The Skills pages show all the extra abilities you can learn throughout the game. If you move the mouse over a skill, you can see all of its relevant values.

To use a newly learned skill, drag its icon onto the Quick Bar. You can then quickly access it by pressing the corresponding key at any time. Note that the first slot is the “Special Action” slot that represents the right mouse button. So anything you put there will be activated by pressing the right mouse button, which is especially useful for skills you want to use in combat.

For more details about skills, see chapter 6: Developing your character, and chapter 7: Skills.



Quest Log

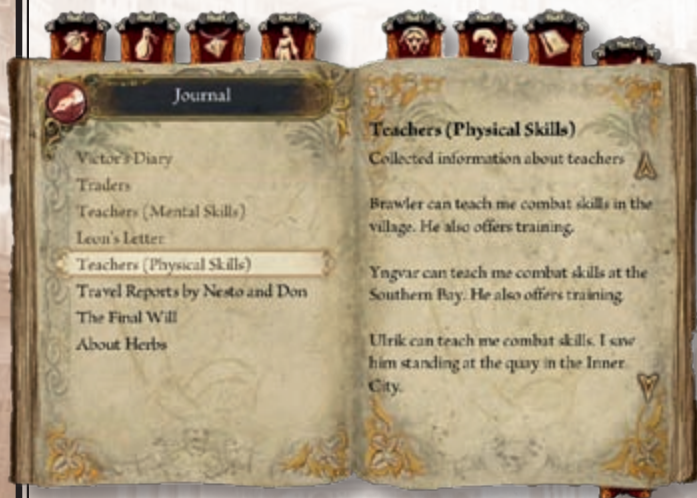


On this page, the assignments you've collected during your journey (quests) will be displayed. If you receive new information about a mission, it will be added to this page. Just click on a quest to see its details on the right hand side.

If you click on [Map Markers], the positions of the important quest characters or objects will be displayed on your mini map, so you can find them more easily when navigating the game world.

Quests that you have already completed can be found by clicking on the check mark icon on the left.

Journal



This page contains all the useful information you've collected during your journey, including books and other readable things. When you see the message "New journal entry" on the screen, you should check your journal to see what you have just learnt, especially if you just picked up an interesting scroll.

Note: There are writings that you cannot read. These are not added to your journal but can be found amongst your items.

How to read books: When standing close to a bookshelf, use the Default Action button to search for interesting books. If there are any, you will receive a message, and the book's content will be added to your journal.



5. Combat

“Combat is so much more than just striking your opponent with your weapon. It is about tactics, your knowledge of your opponent, different fighting styles, and much, much more. Every fighter has his own way to deal with his enemy. So read my advice on how to find yours.” – Don

The four weapon types

There are four very different types of weapons that you can learn to use. You can handle them all from the beginning, but without learning about their special abilities, many of them will not be much of much use to you. (See chapter 7: Skills for more.)



Swords and other blades: The most regular type of weapon you'll encounter. They can be moved quickly, and you will find many of them around. However, the damage they inflict is rather low compared to the heavier weapons.



Hammers and axes: These are the heavy hitters. Hammers are not only useful in combat, but also for smashing open wooden doors. Their strikes are very powerful, and they are best used against enemies with strong shells. However, they are slow compared to swords.



Spear and shield: A defensive combination. The spear's long range keeps enemies at a distance and the shield catches hits automatically, reducing the damage you receive. However, the spear is less effective in close combat, with many enemies around at once.



Scythe: A legendary weapon and the only tool that can kill undead creatures. The Moonblade can also refill your Twilight energy if you defeat an opponent. It is a fast weapon, but it is not easy to improve its power once you encounter stronger enemies.

The Dynamic Quick Bar:

If you equip a weapon of a different type, the Quick Bar slots will change and show the slots available to this type. So don't be confused if an item you placed on the Quick Bar suddenly disappears when you switch to another weapon – it will reappear if you switch back to the previous weapon type.

If you would rather play without the dynamic option, you can disable it in the options menu.

Fighting

Press [E] to draw the weapon you currently have equipped. Use the Default Action button to attack. Scarlett always attacks the enemy that is closest to your camera's focal point, so point the camera at an enemy if you wish to attack.

Note: Many enemies will block your standard attacks, so you should vary your offence to get rid of them:

- ♦ Roll around them and attack their back
- ♦ Use a combined attack which is harder to block
- ♦ Use a skill to stun the enemy or push them away

Using skills in combat

There are many combat skills you can learn. To use them, simply place your chosen skill on the Quick Bar (see chapter 4: Inventory), then press the corresponding button to execute your combat skill. It is recommended to put your favorite skill on the "Special Action" button so you can use it very quickly.



If you die: The Twilight World



In Venetica, death is not always the end – at least, if you have enough Twilight energy left. If you have enough energy to resurrect yourself, when you die, you will enter the Twilight world, where time runs slower. If you press the Action button, you will return to the world of the living.

But, if you're cunning, you can actually use your death to your advantage, as you can reposition yourself at a convenient place before the fight continues - for example, behind an enemy, or outside a group of enemies that were encircling you. (Later, you can even learn to enter the Twilight world at any time.)

If, however, you do not have any Twilight energy left, Scarlett will die permanently, and you will need to load your last saved game. Sometimes, the game will have saved for you automatically, in which case you can choose to continue from there.

The Twilight World: This place of shadows is not only important for combat: it gives you a whole new perspective of game world, and the more you learn about it, the more ways you will find to use it to your advantage. For more information about the Twilight world, see chapter 7: Skills.

How to toggle weapon types: Press [Q] to toggle between weapons of the four different types. The best weapon of the corresponding type is selected automatically. Note that the dynamic quick bar will switch when you toggle your weapon.



Attack tactics

Standard attack: Just hit the Action button.

Combined attacks: As a standard attack can be blocked pretty easily, you may need some more power to break through your enemy's defences. As soon as you have learnt the "Combined attack" skill, you can use your weapon to perform subsequent strikes, each one stronger than the last. It takes some feeling for rhythm to master this skill. (For more about learning skills, see chapter 7: Skills.)

Roll and strike: Many enemies are very good at defending their front side. If you use the "roll" button, you can get at their side or back, and perform a strike they will not be able to block.

The right weapon: Have a look at your enemy and decide what kind of weapon suits him best. Some enemies are almost invulnerable if you use the wrong kind of weapon!

Weak spots: Know your enemy. Every opponent has a weak spot. Try to find it. For some enemies, this might be a very slow attack which you can dodge. Others might be good at defending their front, but leave their sides unprotected. Study your enemy closely, and find his weak spot.

Weapon skills: There are a number of skills that you can learn to improve your combat abilities. Some will push your enemies away. Others will stun them, and some will just hit them really hard. Find out which skills suit your fighting style best, and learn them. (For more about learning skills, see chapter 7: Skills.)

Necromancy skills: There are many dark spells that will help you to defeat your enemies in combat. (For more about learning skills, see chapter 7: Skills.)

Attacking several enemies at once: If you fight against more than one enemy at a time, always pay attention to their position and health. Finish off one before attacking the next, because no matter how much health points they've lost, their attack will have the same power. Also, note that some enemies will try to sneak behind you while you're fighting another.

Note: There are many people who can train you in different combat techniques.

Defense tactics

Blocking: A very powerful skill. Once you've learnt how to use it, you can hold the block button to parry your opponent's strikes. You can also combine this action with a counter attack. (For more about learning skills, see chapter 7: Skills.)

Rolling backwards:

This is a very quick way to get out of your enemy's range.

Wearing the right armour: No protection is perfect, but there may be times where it is wiser to wear something specific in order to suffer as little damage as possible.

Defensive weapons: If you use defensive weapons, like a spear and a shield, you can keep your enemies at bay. This will not do them as much harm as using a shiny two-handed axe, but it will also significantly reduce the chance that you'll get hit yourself.

Retreating: It is never a problem to back away from an enemy who's too strong. Retreat, restore your health and mental energy, put the right skills onto your quick bar, then go and attack again!



Evading a fight: Not every enemy needs to be attacked. If you walk past an opponent, unheard and unseen, there's a good chance that they will not attack you at all.

After a fight

When the fight is over, be sure to loot your enemies. Many will carry useful items with them. You can also search animals if you learned the "Gut animals" skill. This is especially helpful if you're in a very dark catacomb, and have just defeated a Gripper...

Note: To make your life easier, you can also loot a defeated enemy without sheathing your weapon – just hold [Ctrl] and press the Default Action button.

Fighting using the Xbox 360® controller

If you use the Xbox 360® controller, press **RB** to draw your weapon. Scarlett will always attack the enemy that is closest to her front.

Also, you can press **LT** to lock on to an enemy. Keeping **LT** pressed makes Scarlett adjust all her moves towards this enemy.



6. Developing Your Character

"You fought. You won. You gained experience.

Well done! Now is the time to decide who you want to be, and which way you want to go." – Don

Reaching a new level

When you have reached a new level, your health and mental points will be refilled automatically. Also, you receive 2 Attributes Points (AP) and 10 Skill Points (SP) every time you level up. AP can be assigned to your attributes at any time. To use Skill Points, you need to find a teacher.

Open your inventory and select the Character screen.

You can become a fierce and offensive fighter. Or, you can play defensively and learn to kill enemies with tricks, and evade combat. You can become strong with physical power, or you can focus on the dark power of Necromancy. How you play is entirely up to you!

Health: Your physical condition. If it reaches 0, your character dies. You can regenerate health by eating food or herbs, drinking special potions, or sleeping in a bed (which is actually the cheapest way).

Mental energy: This energy lets you cast Soul skills. You can regenerate mental energy by eating some special food and herbs, drinking special potions, using a bed, or refreshing at wells you find in the game world.



Twilight energy: This lets you resurrect yourself when your health reaches 0. In the beginning, you can only collect enough energy to resurrect once. But this will change. You can only regenerate Twilight energy by defeating enemies with the Moonblade.

SP: Your Skill points. Throughout the game world, you will meet characters that can teach you Body or Soul skills. SP are required to learn them. (For more information, see chapter X: Skills.)

AP: Your Attribute points. When reaching a new level, you receive 2 AP. These can then be distributed among your four attributes immediately after having reached a new level:

Constitution – Increases your maximum health points.

Wisdom – Increases your maximum mental energy.

Strength – Increases the damage of weapon attacks.

Mental Power – Increases damage of magic attacks.

Reputation:

When you do things that are noticed publicly, people will remember you and talk about your deeds. This is displayed as reputation. There is no “good” or “bad” reputation: This value shows only how well known you are amongst the citizens of Venice. Note that some people will only trust you with an important mission if your reputation is high enough.

7. Skills

"Indeed, I did meet some people who thought swinging their sword from left to right would clear their path of their enemies. Let me tell you that I did not meet a single one of them ever again."

In dark times like ours, it will take more to survive: A traveller should have some tricks up his sleeve when facing his foes. Here is my list of physical abilities, as well as the rumors I collected regarding the dark power of Necromancy." – Don



Learning a skill

To learn a skill, you'll need some Skill Points (SP) and a teacher who can instruct you. If the teacher agrees to instruct you, the skill tree will open. It is called a tree because you can only learn stronger skills if you already know the weaker ones. Luckily, there are several points to start from, so you can choose which branch you would like to follow.

Using a skill (keyboard)

To use a skill, open the inventory and select the corresponding skill tab. Now drag the skill you wish to use onto the Quick Bar at the bottom of the screen. If you wish to use it with your Special Action key (right mouse button), drag it to the slot on the very left. Otherwise, it will be accessible using the keys [1] to [7].

Now that you've placed the skill in the corresponding slot, you can use the Special Action button or the number keys at any time during gameplay to activate the skill.

There are also passive skills (marked with [Passive Skill]). As soon as they are learnt, they will change your behavior without you actively using them. For example, the skill "Mix potion" enables you to use herbs and phials to create a strong health potion. When mixing the potion, you do not need to activate the skill.

Using a skill (Xbox 360® controller)

To use a skill, open the inventory and move to the corresponding skill tab using **LB** or **RB**. Use the D-Pad to move to the skill you wish to use and press **X**. Now select the button with which you want to use the skill:

Press **B** to put the skill onto the **B** button.

Press a D-Pad (**○**) direction to assign the skill to the corresponding position.

Now that you assigned the skill to the corresponding button, you can press this button at any time during gameplay to activate the skill.

Don's collection of skills

Note: When opening the skill tree in the inventory, you will find lots of additional information about the skills mentioned here.



Body Skills

Most of those skills will be most useful in combat, while some of them will just make your everyday life easier.



Weapon Mastery: (Scythe, Sword, Hammer, Spear)
A most effective attack. At the end of one strike, you'll perform another. The more combined attacks you perform, the more powerful your strikes will be. Combined attacks are more difficult to block. (Passive Skill).



Blocks: (Scythe, Sword, Hammer, Spear) Keep the button pressed for as long as you want to block your enemy's strikes. When your enemy gets thrown back by your block, take the opportunity to counter-attack!



Deadly Injection: This magic weapon can infect its target with a deadly poison. This allows you to pull back from combat while your enemy still receives damage.



Twilight Rift: This skill takes a little while to charge (keep the button pressed) and while you charge it, you are vulnerable to attacks. It slows the enemy you hit down for a limited time.



Death Burst: Uses the Moonblade's deadly energy to generate an explosion that hits all nearby enemies.



Riposte: A very effective alternative to the block: Press and hold the button you assigned this skill to and push the Action button at the moment of Impact to perform a fluid, fast counterattack.



Titan's Blow: A mighty two-handed attack, slamming the enemy to the ground (can be charged).



Covert Strike: Enter a defensive stance to prepare a devastating blow with your spear. Allows you to block almost all melee attacks.



Shield Slam: Slam the target with your shield, causing damage and throwing them to the ground.



Spear Fury: Hit the target with your shield, followed by two successive spear attacks causing further damage each.



Gasp for Breath: This attack takes a second to charge but it is a quick hit, once it has done so. It drives the air out of your opponent's lungs, leaving him breathless for a short time – the perfect opportunity to either turn towards another enemy, or continue your assault.



Shattering Blow: This attack has the potential to throw multiple enemies to the ground, giving you the chance to get into a more favorable position or continue the attack.



The Bluedgeoning: This strike will not hit the enemy, but the ground – with such impact that all the enemies around you will be pushed away. A very good move to use when you're surrounded by several enemies.



Deadly Silence: If you manage to sneak behind an enemy and perform a strike, the effect will be very powerful. (Passive skill)

Note: If you are running, enemies can hear you coming over a longer distance.



From Venice with Love: Deliver an unmistakable message with this blow below the belt causing severe pain and stunning your enemy for several seconds.



Beast Knowledge: A good hunter can harvest precious resources from defeated animals. Some of them can be used, others can be sold for a good price. (Passive skill)

You are running low on lantern oil? The resources of a certain animal might help you out of your misery...



Alchemy: Instead of buying expensive potions from a trader, you can learn to do this yourself. If you have the right herb and a phial ready, open the inventory and create a potion. (For more details see chapter 4: The Inventory)

Twilight Skills – A Mystery

Please bear in mind that I am talking of legends here. I could not find anyone in the whole of Venice who would be bold enough to claim he could teach such skills. Still, you might find this interesting to read:



The Passage: Only Death himself can walk in the world of the shadows. If someone had his skills, they could enter the Twilight world at any time.



Eye of the Lost: Legends say that ghosts roam the Twilight world. Seeing them might be of use if one could move through their realm.



The Whisper: Or how about even hear the voices of the dead - maybe even talk to them? Who knows what the ghosts would have to say...



Unworldly Clutch: What if ghosts still cling to a last possession from the world of the living? And what if you could persuade them to give it to you? But... would you really want to have it?



Abolish Curse: Curses are terrible, terrible things. They have the power to keep people from passing through places and gates. Having the power to remove a curse, to crush it forever, might be a good thing. If you really intend to go to the places that were protected by such a curse, that is...



The Summoning: The ultimate power of the dead would undoubtedly be to bring a ghost back into the world of the living, even if it is only for a short time.

Soul Skills – The Secret Power of Necromancy

Although I do not really believe that this dark craft will work as intended, I did indeed meet more than one person claiming that they can teach the following powerful spells, although they warned me several times that they are forbidden and dangerous to use. Oh, and I was not allowed to reveal their names to anyone. And I will not, for who knows what powers they have that they might use against me...



Raven's Eye: It is not uncommon to see a raven sitting atop a high building, peering into a street from above. With this spell, the necromancer can share its view, and maybe find things hidden from those in the low streets of the city.



Path of the Raven: In times of need, a necromancer may call upon a raven to guide them to their destination.



Ravens' Wrath: Using this skill, the necromancer can summon a swarm of ravens that will hit the opponent from afar. A simple spell, but a perfect introduction to ranged attacks.



Scream of Death: Using a voice other than his own, the necromancer can scare his enemies witless, and they will not be able to move for several seconds. The good thing is that this also works at a distance.



The Plague: Use the forces of Death to attack your target and additional enemies from a distance by infecting them with a horrible disease. This one also works from afar.



Venomous Eclipse: Not only can this very nasty spell be cast from a distance; it will also harm its victim over a long time period.



Blood Toll: This very effective spell lets the necromancer regain his health powers by sucking them out of his opponent.



Blood Vortex: Same as Blood Toll, but this one is inflicted upon a group of enemies, making the necromancer stronger and stronger the more enemies there are in range.



Wasted Years: A necromancer's gem. This spell makes the victim age very quickly and significantly weakens their powers for as long as the spell lasts. This is especially useful against strong opponents.



Deadly Attraction: Using a mysterious voice, the necromancer can get the attention of their victim with this spell. Then they can lure a rogue out of a group of his fellows and... the rest is obvious, isn't it?



The Final Judgment: Who would dare to call Death himself as an assistant in battle? No one, you might argue. Still, this spell is said to exist, and having this strong ally doing his duty to your enemy might be the ultimate weapon.



Mental Defiance: As long as the button is pushed, the necromancer can shield himself from magical attacks.



Enduring Passage: It is said that those with the power of Death himself can learn to stay in the Twilight world for a long time.



Ancestral Horror: With this spell, the necromancer makes his victim see the ghosts of his ancestors, which can really be a frightening experience! Therefore the victim will surely stand still, and not be able move for some time!



Raise the Fallen: Enemies that fell in combat can be re-animated by the necromancer with this spell, albeit only for a short time. Still, they can be an invaluable aide in a tough combat situation.



Burst To Life: Leaving the Twilight world can happen silently. Or, by using this spell, it can happen with a huge explosion that will harm all standing too close to the necromancer.



Echoes of Twilight: Those roaming through the Twilight world will find that everything around them happens at a very slow pace. Those using this spell can enhance this condition even when they have left the Twilight world again.

8. Exploring the world

About Nesto: As with his cousin Don, Nesto grew up on a rich estate and learned much about fighting and fine arts. Nesto, however, very much enjoyed his life amongst the nobles, and quickly spent his money on the joys of life. He was never known for a heart of gold, or a sense for justice.

On the following pages, you will find Nesto's report which will tell about the mysterious world of Vennetia, its inhabitants and its secrets.



"My Lord, I hope you will be most satisfied with my report about this city, and will grant me the amount of ducats you promised, and maybe even a little more..." – Nesto



Nesto's Venice journal

I made the mistake to first encounter Venice by night, and that way the city showed me its true face, or rather faces, from the beginning: bloodthirsty villains, seeking to kill me and rob me of my possessions. This city is not what it once was. It is no more the shining capital of free merchants and citizens, marveled by the rest of the world. It has fallen, and it has fallen deep.

Taverns: My favorite. Taverns are great places to refresh, hear the latest gossip, and receive the odd quest. Furthermore, they are one of the few places that are safe at night. When rogues and bandits roam the streets, what could be better than a fine glass of wine and the company of a beautiful woman?

Garrisons: The place to meet your friendly watchman from next door. The outer and inner cities feature garrisons that are still in use, while the Arsenal district has long been abandoned. The guard captains will be happy to give keen adventurers assignments, and let them do the guards' work for them.

City Court: I did not visit the Judge myself, for honorable as I am, there was of course no need for it. Still, from what I have heard, this is the place to pay your dues for the lesser, or bigger, crimes you committed... and were caught doing.

Markets: As Venice is a city of traders, there are numerous places where interesting things can be purchased. It should be noted that different traders will place different values on things you might offer them. (For a list of items, see chapter X: Things to buy.)

Guilds: Old crafts dwell in this city, and a newcomer might consider joining one of them, thus receiving a place to sleep, new friends to trust, and many an assignment to accomplish and get rewarded for. Note, however, that each guild has a certain aim that should match yours: Fight for revenge, use magic to talk to lost ones, or just see the world and earn some money?



Peoples' homes: You have no right to break into the homes of honest citizens. But if you do... you might find things of high value.

Canals: Gondoliers seem a bit shy in this city! Maybe you need to do them a favor first? Well, for the time being, you can still swim around... and find lots of secrets!

Note: While swimming, you cannot draw your weapon, and you can only use few items and skills.

Wells: Drink from them to refresh your mental energy! ("Good for your spirit" or so they say) But some do not work... you should find out why!

Places to avoid

Catacombs:

There is a dark world below the city, a place where you'll meet gruesome creatures and find legendary treasures of the Old Empire. Be well equipped, take a light with you, and don't believe in ghost stories, if you intend to go down there!

Old wooden doors can be destroyed using (very) heavy weapons.

Rooftops: It's a different world up here, shared by bandits, fierce creatures and other inconvenient encounters. But the roofs of Venice are also pathways to objects of value, be they on the roofs themselves or behind open windows which the ruthless visitor can use to secretly slip into (or out of)...

Arsenal district: This was once the gigantic production yard of Venice, capable of building several war galleons in a single day. This was long ago, though. Nowadays, only the core facilities still work, guarded by the Doge's principal Largo. Since the guards have abandoned the streets, the Arsenal district has become a place of gangsters and danger, by night and by day. Although you never really get a feeling for time in the dark alleys.



Night and day

Time waits for no one. It passes from day to night and back again. Remember that night time is especially dangerous. Rogues hit the streets at night, looking for people just like you. It might be a good idea to find a cozy tavern for the night, have some beers, and then rest and refresh your energy until the next morning.

Letting time pass: You can use chairs or beds to let time pass. A display appears that lets you select when you want to stand up again. If you use a bed instead of a chair or a bank, you will also regenerate energy while you sleep.

If you explore the city, make sure you find all the places and people of interest. Don't rush off into the underground if you do not feel prepared (and have no lantern with you). Try to fulfill the easier tasks first and make sure that you are well equipped for the more dangerous ones. And remember that there are places everywhere where you can lie down and refill your energy for a very small budget.

9. People

While some might say that all people should be treated with respect, I am more fond of selecting those who will help me get on with the things I need to do. Why waste my time with the dumb or the unimportant?

Speaking personally, I cannot recommend talking to the ordinary citizens of Venice. They do not know much and thus do not have much to say. A traveller will quickly find out the important ones in the masses, and will undoubtedly ignore the rest.



It might not be worth noting, but still it should be obvious, that there is no reason whatsoever to attack a citizen. If there is a special situation where you wish to challenge them to a fight, do so by talking to them and make sure they understand what you are going for.

Note that some people will get angry at you if you do not treat them with respect. This can lead to them refusing to share secrets with you, or worse. But with most people, there is always a way to set things straight again.

Trading: Many people you will meet are traders of some sort and will have goods for sale. They will also buy items from you. You want to see what they have? Just ask them!

Skills: You will not find any schools or training grounds in Venice where you can just go and learn a new skill - you need to find the trainers yourself. If you ask people, you will surely find out where to look for them.

Quests: With problems everywhere, many people will ask you for help, and most of them will have a reward for you if you can be of assistance. Find out about the people's troubles to gain money, experience, reputation, or a special item.

Robbing people

Of course, you would never want to break into a citizen's house, would you? But if you were to ever find yourself in the situation where you happened to be burgling a house, you would first need to unlock their door - a tricky thing that only very skilled people can achieve. Should you be trained, and should you succeed, you'll also need to be aware of the fact that somebody might be at home. And should you be spotted by that somebody, you should definitely avoid stealing anything, or it might damage your precious reputation!

So if you decide to rob an innocent citizen (which, I must admit, can be very rewarding), you should make sure that nobody is at home, or at least that you remain unseen.



Picking locks – with help:

As you are not trained in picking locks that protect doors and chests, you will need some help. Provided that you have the tools, the helper could show you in which order to use your lock picks to crack the lock.

Picking locks using the Xbox 360® controller:

Just press the button whose color resembles the color of the lock pick (X, Y, A, B).



People you should know



The Doge:

The elected ruler of this city. Supposedly anyway. Nobody could tell me for sure if this Doge was rightfully chosen by the city council or if other, less legal incidents brought him onto the throne. What I was told, though, paints a dark picture. This man has let the city crumble down to its foundations. The only things that are still under his care and protection are the trading center and the docks where his warships are assembled. The citizens have been left to fend for themselves.



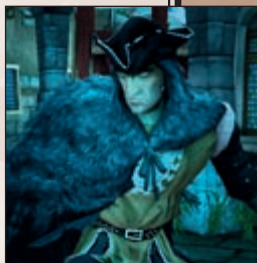
The guards:

Due to the Doge's lack of money, the night watch guards have been dismissed, leaving the city a mess by night. The remaining troops seem too shy to arrest villains and help the people of Venice. They seem to prefer activities that concern the Doge's moneybags instead. However, this might be an opportunity for the keen adventurer, as the guards will reward those who will do the work for them.



Rogues:

Fierce villains can be found at every corner of the city. There are the lesser ones, sneaking through the streets by night, and rushing back to their quarters by day. And then there are the more important fellows, hiding in special places, with a plan of their own. Working together with them can be dangerous, and you may need to ignore your conscience, but it might be well worth your while!



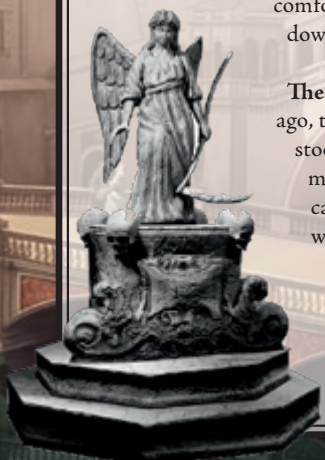
The Undead Five:

Rumors, just rumors. People say there are five individuals who have become immortal and who are now using their powers to overthrow the order of our world... Well, I for my part did not meet any undead creatures along my way, so I cannot confirm any of those tales. Honestly, I think that when times are dark, stories just get darker.



Legends

I should not forget to mention some of the most common legends told among the citizens of Venice. Some of them sound strange and unsettling, and luckily they were told to me in a comfortable tavern, with good wine to wash them down.



The legend of the Old Empire: A long time ago, they say, buildings of an ancient Empire once stood, where now there are the buildings that make up Venice. Strangely though, no historical book mentions this empire with a single word. Still, there are many artifacts of unknown origin: old blades, coins, and many ruins, and they are found around, and deep below, the city of Venice.



The Protectors: The more mystically inclined people tell stories about an ancient order of people who found out that our world is pervaded by unseen streams of energy that come from another, darker world. Where these streams meet, the energy is strongest, and the danger of the two worlds blending becomes great.

The order that called themselves “The Protectors” installed special statues in these places to prevent powers from this other world entering ours. As long as these statues are intact, they say, our world is safe. If they were to be destroyed, nameless creatures could spring to life and spread fear and destruction around our realm.

The Abyss: Deep below the city of Venice, legend says, there is The Abyss, a place where this world meets another. From this place, it is told, once came a most powerful book: the Black Grimoire, an assemblage of spells that, in the wrong hands, could change the cosmic balance forever.

10. Creatures

Animals

Many animals, especially the smaller ones, need not be considered dangerous, as they will either ignore you or run away. Other, bigger animals however might consider you a threat, or even prey, and will attack you.

Different animals have different ways of attacking or defending, and you need to find the best way to deal with them. You should also try to find the weapon that best fits the creature, especially if it has a hard shell that needs to be crushed.

Other animals attack in swarms, so when attacking one of them, you need to take care of the others.



Heart of Darkness: Some enemies take more killing than others in order to be taken care of permanently as those you've defeated will be replaced by fresh ones. The clue to this is to pursue your goal relentlessly.

Human opponents

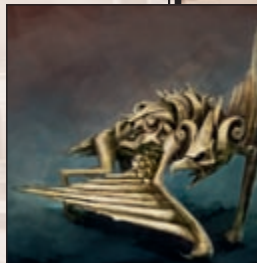
Humans tend to fight a bit more cleverly than animals. If you just strike madly at them, they will quickly block your strikes and perform a counter attack. Also, if there are others nearby, they will join the fight, so you should scout the situation before taking on an enemy.

Legendary creatures... just fables?

The attentive reader will already have noticed that I do not believe in bedtime stories about mysterious creatures. Still, people talk a lot about eerie sightings lately, so I will add this topic to my report.

Some talk of ghosts that attack innocent people and, being ghosts, cannot be harmed at all. Others say they saw corpses rising from the earth and roaming through sewers and catacombs. And some even claim to have seen "Lectors": demons bred for the sole purpose of finding magic books and scrolls, detecting powerful words and use their sharp claws and teeth to defend what they have found. It is said that no mortal blade of a mortal man could kill such a demon.

Even though I am well aware that this might sound strange, I must admit that I have lately encountered two mysterious creatures, albeit in the dark, that would match the description of lectors. But, well, I had been drinking, so I will never know how much of this was just my stimulated imagination.



11. Things to buy

“There is much to buy in Venice, but how to earn the ducats to purchase them? There are numerous ways to get rich: Always search defeated enemies. If they carry things that seem useless to you, sell them to someone who might be interested in them. Explore the world. Old treasures can be found in many places (especially the dark and dangerous ones – why else would they still be dark and dangerous?).

Look for people who might need your help. They will reward you if you assist them. And finally... it is always possible to take what you need, especially if you manage to break into peoples' homes. But don't get caught!” – Nesto

Weapons

For each of the four weapon types, several weapons can be purchased.

Swords: The type of weapon you will encounter most frequently. It is the most common weapon used in the region of Venice. Therefore you will not only be able to purchase lots of those – you will also be able to take them from several enemies you defeat.

Hammers and axes: While hammers are also quite common in the Venetian region, battle axes are mostly used by foreign warriors from the East. Therefore it might happen that you will first acquire such a weapon by defeating an opponent. Hammers are generally more expensive than swords but the damage they deal is superior as well.

Spears and shields: Apart from Venetian guards (who will not be too eager to hand them over to you), warriors from faraway lands are masters of this powerful combination. Therefore it might take some time until you hold such a weapon in your hands for the first time.



Legendary weapons

We have all heard the legends. But did we see any of these weapons in daylight, carried by a proud warrior? No. Still, stories are always attractive, so I will list my favorites here.

The Moonblade: This weapon is said to be unique, so of course it is not available for sale. However there might be people who can increase the power of this blade with occult rituals. Arguably there is a shop in the Inner City where these powers are known...

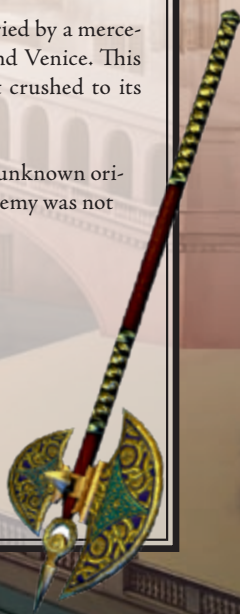
St. Anthony's Legendary Sword: A blade full of magic power that once belonged to Saint Anthony, founder of the Order of the Holy Seal, before he was murdered by his enemies.

The Imperial Sword of Blood: A cursed weapon of the old empire, capable of increasing the health of its bearer when an enemy is hit.

Zamazar's Wrath of the East: A magical blade carried by a lord from Constantinople that was able to increase the mental strength of its bearer when an enemy was hit.

The Hammer of Truth: A long lost war hammer carried by a mercenary from a distant land who once was called to defend Venice. This weapon, too, is said to transfer energy from those it crushed to its bearer.

Spear of the Screaming Souls: A very old weapon of unknown origin that is said to strengthen its bearer's power if an enemy was not quick enough to evade its stab.



Armour

Note that armour is generally only produced by order (for the city guards, for example) and is therefore not for sale. However, a capable smith will turn some armour you might get hold of into something that will fit Scarlett. The most common ones are listed below.



Standard clothes:

These do not offer any protection at all.



Leather mail:

A common type of armour. It offers basic defense against most types of weapons.



Banded mail:

This type of armour leaves you vulnerable to sharp objects but is very effective against blunt ones.



Plate mail:

The strong metal is an effective help against most weapons but can be pierced by staff weapons.



Hunter's mail: This very light mail of African origin enables its bearer to evade staff weapons and is said to protect against magic attacks. It leaves its bearer vulnerable to sword attacks though.

Miscellaneous things to buy



Food: Most food will replenish your health. Some special food might even restore your mental energy.



Beer and wine: They have their advantages... and their disadvantages.



Lantern: An important item to lighten the dark paths and corners.



Lantern Oil: Needed to refill the lantern.



Alchemist's phial: Required to mix potions.



Storm potion: This elixir makes you run faster. It is extremely rare.



Treasure map: Allegedly, a treasure map leads to a treasure. You will need a shovel to dig for it, though.



Flask of Faith: A flask capable of preserving water's ability to replenish mental energy.



Herbs, mushrooms, other consumables: There are many of nature's gifts around for you to collect. To find out their effects you... just try them.



Magic rings: Sleeping is good for your health and your mental energy. Certain rings are too, or so legend has it.



Shovel: Venice is a city made of stone, with streets of stone and only a few gardens, and thus a shovel is not a very common household tool. But keep your eyes open, and sooner or later you will find a place to acquire this useful thing.

Health potions: Special potions can be mixed by the guild of the Hooded Wings, but they will ask you to bring them some special herbs first. You can also mix potions yourself if you have learnt the skill and possess phials.

Things to sell

Remember that the merchants will not buy your items for the same price they sell them but, rather, for a significantly lower one. The merchants of Venice use the phrase "profit margin" for this.



Animal skin, antiques, used weapons: Look out for traders who are especially interested in what you want to sell, as some will offer a better price than others!



Valuables: Diamonds, rings, necklaces and the like will always find a buyer.



Imperial coins: Most traders will change them into ducats for you.

Things that can't be bought but can be looked for



Rings of Power: These rings supposedly contain magic jewels that can increase the power of a certain legendary weapon...



Weapons from enemies: Sometimes you will meet enemies that carry stronger weapons than you. If you defeat them, take what's rightfully yours!



Lantern oil from animals: Certain animals produce a glowing substance that you can use to refill your lantern.



Never-ending lantern oil: Deep in the dark, creatures are said to loom that can produce light that never fades.



Legendary weapons: As no one has found any of them yet, it won't be too easy to get hold of them...

How to dig for treasure: If you would like to dig for treasure, use your shovel as you would use any other object: Open the inventory and either drag the shovel onto Scarlett, or place it into your quick bar and then use the corresponding key (or Special Action button) to activate it. And if you really are at the right spot, you will be rewarded with... whatever it is your shovel finds down in the earth.

12. Troubleshooting

Up-to-date hints, information about patches or updates, and general news about the game can be found on www.venetica-game.com.

General

Should you experience problems related to the display or the performance of the game, or if the game crashes, you can either change the game settings (see chapter 2: Installation and Main Menu) or your computer's system settings.

The game does not run at all.

(This means you can't see the game's start menu where you can select "start game", or the game crashes after you selected "start game".)

First you should check whether your PC meets the minimum requirements for Venetica (see chapter 2: Installation and Main Menu). If it does not meet the minimum requirements, the game will probably not run.

Was the installation successful? Maybe your hard disc was full. In that case you will need to remove Venetica, free some space on the hard disc, and install the game again.

Do you have the latest version of DirectX installed? The game requires DirectX to run correctly. You can install this application from the game DVD if it was not installed automatically during the normal installation process.

Is other software running that might interfere with Venetica? You should check your firewall and antivirus software and settings.

Are you using the latest drivers for your graphics card? Please make sure that you are using all the latest drivers for your hardware.



NVIDIA (GeForce graphics cards): www.nvidia.com

ATI (Radeon graphics cards): www.ati.com

If the problems persist, make sure that you are using the standard settings, because functions such as “ATITruform”, “Full screen antialiasing (FSAA)” or deactivated “VSYNC” can lead to display errors.

The game runs very slowly.

You can change the game settings (see chapter X: Installation and Main Menu) and set the display values to their minimum.

How to reach the email support: supportintl@ntp-ag.com



13. Credits

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PhysX
by NVIDIA



Scaleform



EPILEPSY WARNING

Please read before using this video game or allowing your children to use it. Some people are susceptible to epileptic seizures or loss of consciousness when exposed to certain flashing lights or light patterns in everyday life. Such people may have a seizure while watching images or playing certain video games. This may happen even if the person has no medical history of epilepsy or has never had any epileptic seizures. If you or anyone in your family has ever had symptoms related to epilepsy (seizures or loss of consciousness) when exposed to flashing lights or patterns, consult your doctor prior to playing. We advise that parents should monitor the use of video games by their children. If you or your child experience any of the following symptoms: dizziness, blurred vision, eye or muscle twitches, loss of consciousness, disorientation, any involuntary movement or convulsion, while playing a video game,

IMMEDIATELY discontinue use and consult your doctor (particularly since experience of any of these symptoms could lead to injury from falling down or striking nearby objects). Parents should ask their children about the above symptoms – children and teenagers may be more likely than adults to experience these seizures.

PRECAUTIONS TO TAKE DURING USE

- Do not stand too close to the screen. Sit a good distance away from the monitor, as far away as the length of the cable allows.
- Preferably play the video game on a small screen.
- Avoid playing if you are tired or have not had much sleep.
- Make sure that the room in which you are playing is well lit.
- Rest for at least 10 to 15 minutes per hour while playing a video game.

WARNING: AVOID DAMAGE TO YOUR TELEVISION

Do not use with certain television screens and monitors. Some televisions, especially front- or rearprojection types and plasma screens, can be damaged if any video games are played on them. Static images or pictures presented during the normal course of playing a game (or from putting the game on hold or pausing) may cause permanent picture-tube damage, and may “burn in” to the screen, causing a permanent shadow of the static image to appear at all times, even when the games are not being played. Always consult your television screen or monitor manual or otherwise the manufacturer to check if video games can be played safely.

CUSTOMER SUPPORT

For questions about the game or in case you are experiencing any technical problems, please contact dtp entertainment AG's customer services via the email address below:

supportintl@ntp-ag.com

You will typically receive a reply within 1-2 business days. However, response times may vary considerably during busy periods.

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