Xak [サーク] ™

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The Art of Visual Stage

INSTRUCTION MANUAL

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INSTRUCTIONS

Before starting

▼Creating a user disk

In Xak, there's a functionality that makes it possible to save your game state so you can start from that point the next time you play the game. It's possible to play Xak without preparing a user disk, but as the game disks are write protected, you won't be able to save. It doesn't have to be a new disk, but all the data it contains will be erased, so please be careful when picking a disk.

Apart from saving on a user disk, it is also possible to save in the SRAM of the Pana Amusement Cartridge or the FM Pana Amusement Cartridge. The SRAM is also available in the WOOMB re-release virtual MSX.

▼ Creating a user disk

A user disk can be created as follows. Start BASIC, insert the user disk, enter the following commands and the disk will be 2DD formatted.

Enter the following command using the keyboard:

```
CALL FORMAT
```

and press the ↵ key. On most machines, the following procedure will ensue, but on some it may differ. In that case, please check your computer manual.

```
Drive name (A,B)
```

Please press A.

```
1 – Single sided
2 – Double sided
?
```

Please press 2.

```
Strike a key when ready
```

Please press the ↵ key. After waiting a moment, the following message appears, which means your disk is ready.

```
Format complete
Ok
```

▼ Starting the game

Xak consists of three disks; the demo disk, game disk 1 and game disk 2. If you are playing the game for the first time (from the opening sequence), insert the demo disk and switch on the computer. The opening sequence will start shortly. If you insert game disk 1 at the end of the opening sequence, the game will start in the first town (Feares). If you have saved a game state the last time you played the game and you wish to continue the game from that point, insert the game disk that you used when you were playing the game and switch on the computer. Now, the ‘load menu’ will be displayed. Follow the instructions on the screen to load your data. Now the game will start from the point where you saved the game.

▼ WOOMB re-release note

The instructions about the preparation of a user disk were included mainly for completeness’ sake. The WOOMB re-release automatically comes with a user disk we prepared for you as well as with the SRAM that can be used for saving data. Ignore the information written above.

Instructions

Cursor keys	: Selections, movement (in the directions of the arrows)
ENTER key	: Item and spell usage
SPACE bar	: Confirmation (in menu windows), sword usage
ESC key	: Pause
Function keys	: Refer to the following pages
SPACE bar + ENTER key	: If you press the SPACE bar simultaneously with the ENTER key, the main menu will be displayed.

- Main menu

Operating the main menu

The options that are displayed in the main menu correspond with the functions of the function keys. Select the option you desire with cursor keys up and down and confirm by pressing the SPACE bar. This will have the same effect as pressing the corresponding function key. Please read the description of the functions of the function keys for more details.

・Xak can also be played using a joystick. The functions are as follows:

Joystick directions : correspond with the cursor keys
Button A : corresponds with the ENTER key
Button B : corresponds with the SPACE bar
Connect the joystick to port 1 of your virtual MSX computer.

※ Please note that the functions of the function keys may be temporarily disabled in some special situations - when fighting a boss monster or during a forced scrolling scene, for instance.

The function keys and the game screen

GAME SCREEN

1. In this area, the map you are in is displayed, as well as the player character, the monsters, etc. In short: this is the main game window.

2. Here, the life gauges of the player (P) and the monsters (M) are displayed. The part of the bar that is displayed in green indicates your current life points and the part that is displayed in red indicates the amount of life you have lost. If you have the highest amount of life points possible, you will just see a green bar.

3. Here, your current status is displayed.

LEVEL	Your current level (maximum is 25)
EXP	Your experience points
NEXT	The amount of EXP needed to reach the next level
STR	Combined physical attack power + item offensive power
SWORD	The offensive power of the sword you have equipped
DEF	Combined physical defense power + item defense power
A/S	The defense power of the armor and shield you have equipped
GOLD	The amount of gold you possess

4. In this window, the sword, armor and shield you are wielding are displayed.

(F1) LOAD MENU (To restart from the place where you saved before)

(F5) SAVE MENU (To save your current game data)

SRAM/disk selection

Make your selection with the left and right cursor keys. Press SPACE to move on to the number selection.

If you select EXIT, you will leave the menu.

Number selection

Make your selection with the up and down cursor keys and press the SPACE bar to confirm. Then follow the instructions on the screen. If you press the ENTER key, you will return to the SRAM/disk selection. If you select 'LIST', your current save data will be listed.

- You can save up to eight game states in both the SRAM and on the disk. If you use the SRAM to save data, you will not have to switch disks and such, making the process of loading and saving work a little smoother.

※ When you boot the game with disk 2 or 3, the load menu will automatically be displayed.

(F2) EQUIPMENT MENU (choosing your weapons)

Select the type of arms with the up and down cursor keys and use the left and right cursor keys to select a specific item. Repeat this procedure to choose all specific arms. The equipment that is floating a little above the others is the one that is selected. In some cases, a star mark is displayed right next to the name of the item, which indicates that the arm has been enchanted. To leave the menu, select EXIT and press the SPACE bar. The arms you are wielding will be displayed in the window at the lower right of the screen and the effect of the arms on your status will be numerically displayed in the status window.

(F3) ITEM MENU (to select the items you wish to use)

Select an item using the cursor keys, confirm with the SPACE bar and cancel with the ENTER key. You can select more items by repeating this sequence. If you have selected an item, its color will change. The items in the first row of the item display window can be used as equipment. Some items can be used along with others and some items can't. You can't use more than three items at the same time, so you should try various combinations.

The other items are to be used at a specific time. You can only carry one of these. Some can be used only once, so be careful when using one.

In short, you can walk around with three items you can equip and one usable item at the same time, which makes a total of four items.

To leave the menu, select EXIT and press the SPACE bar.

(F4) SYSTEM MENU (to make changes to the game system)

Select an option with the up and down cursor keys and confirm with the SPACE bar.

1. Change name

You can change the name of the main character. However, you can use no more than eight characters. Press ENTER when you have entered the name. After having confirmed the name with either Y or N, you can return to the menu using the SPACE bar.

2. Game speed

With this, you can alter the speed of the player character, the monsters et cetera in the game.

Make your selection using the cursor keys and confirm with the SPACE bar. “NO WAIT” is the highest setting possible. Please note that the speed difference can be quite big in certain places.

“NORMAL” is the speed to which the game is set at the beginning. When you encounter monsters that are really fast, set the speed to “SLOW” and the game will run at half the normal speed.

“CHANGE CPU” can be used to switch between Z80 (standard speed) and R800 (faster game processing).

3. BGM mode

You can enter the BGM (short for BackGround Music) mode with this option.

With the up and down cursor keys you can select UP (+) or DOWN (-). Confirm your choice by pressing the SPACE bar; the music number will increase or decrease by one. After a moment, the song will start playing. If REP is set to OFF, the next song will start playing after 90 seconds. If REP is set to ON, the song you selected will be repeated. Please note that not all songs are available in the BGM mode. If you select EXIT, you will return to the system menu.

INTRODUCTIONS

Introduction to the game

★ Conversations

To start a conversation with the people in towns and similar places, just touch them. They will automatically start talking to you. Once you're done with the conversation, press the SPACE bar.

★ Shops

If you enter a shop, a picture of the person who runs the will be displayed, along with a menu. If you wish to buy something, select 'BUY' using the cursor keys and press the SPACE bar to confirm. Then, select the item you wish to buy in the same way.

Select EXIT and confirm with the SPACE bar to return to the previous menu. Select EXIT again in this menu to return to the game screen.

※ If you enter a shop for the first time, the 'BUY' option may not be displayed immediately. In this case, you will have to start some conversations (e.g. with the shop owner) first. The 'BUY' command will be displayed afterwards.

★ Houses

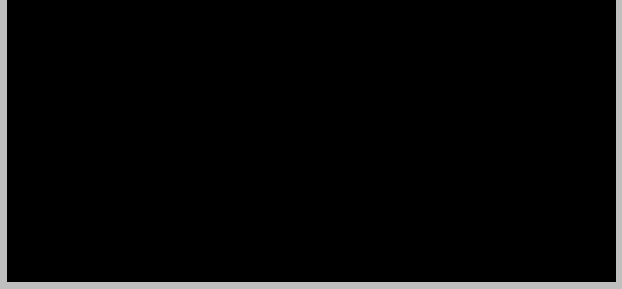
If you enter a house, a picture of the inhabitant and a message will be displayed. Sometimes, a triangle mark is displayed, which indicates that the message has not ended yet. If you press the SPACE bar, the next part of the message will be displayed. If you are done with the conversation, select EXIT in the menu.

★ Equipping yourself

You can buy swords, shields and armors in shops. If you wish to equip yourself with one of these, press the F2 key and follow the instructions.

★ Using your sword

Press the SPACE bar to draw your sword; release it to lower it.



★ Fighting monsters

To fight the monsters in the game, press the SPACE key in order to draw your sword and then bump into them. However, you can't use your shield properly with your sword drawn, so your defensive power will be decreased.

You can recover life power by standing still. There are, however, places where your life power will not be recovered due to evil magical power.

★ Obtaining and using items

You can obtain items by buying them in shops, receiving them from people or simply by picking them up. Press the ENTER key to use an item (select the item in the item menu first).

★ Using magic

You can buy magic in the magic shop. Like items, magic can be used by pressing the ENTER key. However, magic can be used only once.

★ Opening doors

If you wish to go through a door, just walk into it. Usually you can open it this way. Some doors may be locked; you will need a key for those. To open a door with a key, use the key by pressing the ENTER key.

Introduction to the adventure

★ Conversations

The people in the towns know all sorts of things, so it is wise to talk to them in order to gather information. Information is very important for making progress in your adventure. Some people could be in trouble and it may be wise to try and help them. Something good might happen.

★ Enchanting weapons and armory

In the world of Xak, weapons and armor can be enchanted. Enchantments will make your sword more powerful and your armor more solid. Furthermore, ghosts and undead monsters can't be harmed unless your weaponry is enchanted. If your armor is not enchanted, you run the risk of getting seriously hurt. It's wise to have your weapons and armor enchanted as soon as possible. You can do this in the magic shop.

★ Battle

It's not wise to fight creatures of a level higher than yours. If you try to go on and on without gaining experience, you will certainly die sooner or later. Fight battles of your own level. If you encounter a new monster, for example, you should carefully approach and if it turns out to be stronger than you, you should either gain some more experience or equip yourself with stronger weapons and armor and then try again.

★ Save frequently

You may suddenly walk into a strong opponent that beats you. Therefore, it might be wise to save frequently, e.g. every time you obtain an item or when you have just gained a level.

Some words from the developers

The opinion of Hideyuki Yanagishima, game designer

The opinion of Yasuhiko Nakatsu, programmer

Thank you very much for purchasing this game! The delay of about three months that was estimated after I finished assisting in the development of the PC88/98 versions (I'm writing this in September), turned out to be almost nonexistent (the original schedule was quite tight) and it looks as if the MSX2 version will be ready at the planned release date at the end of the year (and, was it actually released then?).

The VR system we developed for the PC88/98 worked without any problems (well, there were some problems with the PC88), but the MSX VDP (video processing LSI) is *very* slow (if only the VDP was twice as fast, we could make even more fabulous games), we had to decrease the screen size a little in order to reach a speed that can be compared with the PC88 speed (well, not completely, but that was to be expected). What do you think of it?

Let's explain this excuse. This game uses a dot matrix of 512x192, which uses all VRAM (the background pages are stuffed with character graphics, sob sob). Therefore we didn't have any memory left to use for techniques to hide irregularities in the screen, which is the reason why some noise can still be seen sometimes. We're sorry for this.

However, we could implement the PC88/98 graphics almost completely, so please forgive us the aforementioned imperfection (you'll probably notice that no dots are corrupted or deformed or anything like that).

There's only little space left for me to write in, but let me write about another two or three sales points of this MSX version before stopping.

First of all, the game can be played almost perfectly with just a joypad. If you have SRAM, you can proceed through the game without having to touch the computer itself at all.

Furthermore, we haven't started work on the boss characters yet at the moment of writing, but we are planning to make some small adaptations to the PC88/98 versions, so please look forward to these battles.

Well, let's meet again in the next game that will use a new VR system (be it an original or a Xak 2). Goodbye!

The opinion of Hitoshi Suenaga, graphic designer

To everybody who bought the MSX2/2+ version of XaK, thank you very much!!

How did you feel about the graphics of the MSX version, which differ slightly (?) from the PC88/98 versions? Wanting to make an MSX-only version of Xak, I designed some shop graphics and monster graphics especially for the MSX. What did you think about those? I would really like to know your opinions on this as a reference for future developments so please send us the questionnaire and write something like 'I had liked it better when the same graphics as on the PC88 were used' or 'I am glad the MSX version is original' on a corner. Please, you would be a great help!

Once again: thank you all for purchasing this game!

(I'm sorry for my handwriting, by the way).

- Suenaga -

Problems and user support

We have taken all precautions to deliver this game to you in a good state, but in case something is not working properly, please check the following:

★ Are the computer and the display connected correctly?
★ Is the game disk inserted correctly?
★ Did you accidentally switch off the power while pushing other buttons?

You were advised to take the game to the store where you purchased it and see if it worked properly on similar machines. If the game did run properly on another machine, there might be something wrong with your computer. Now, you should contact the WOOMB support division.

● Disk check

This game consists of four disks (including the user disk). In case of a disk change, please check if you didn't accidentally put in the wrong disk.

● Sound

The FM PAC (MSX MUSIC) is supported. The game works well with an RF cable, a PIN cable or an RGB cable. Those who use a FM Pana Amusement Cartridge should set the volume to 'medium'. On some machines, there may be some noise in the music. On such machines, you should try to balance the PSG and FM volume until you get the best sound.

● User support

- After reading the disk, the loading process stops
- The screen is corrupted and/or corrupted graphics appear
- The game doesn't start at all

If something like this occurs, or in any other case the game doesn't start, we are very sorry, but your disk is probably damaged. In the past, you could send the damaged disk to Micro Cabin for a replacement; nowadays you should contact the user support of WOOMB.net. However, your disk would only be replaced by Micro Cabin if you had been so kind as to fill in the questionnaire that came with the game, so you were advised to send that in as well.

◎ What if your disk was broken?

If your disk was broken due to improper treatment, the disk could be replaced for 1500 yen (about €10,-) by sending cash to Micro Cabin. You were also advised to carefully wrap the disk into something soft before sending. The WOOMB re-release, however, is not provided on physical disks, so this problem will not occur anymore.

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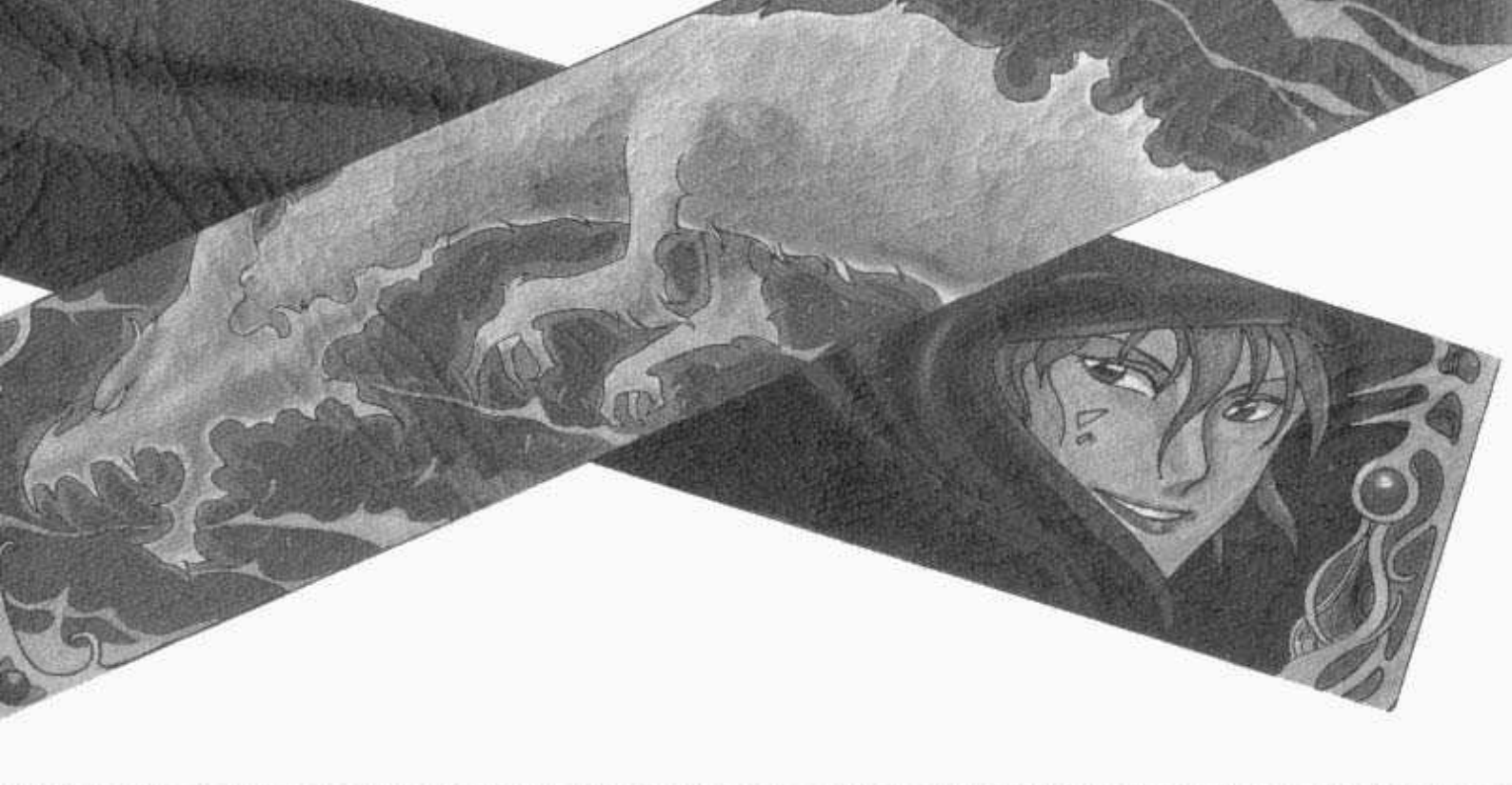

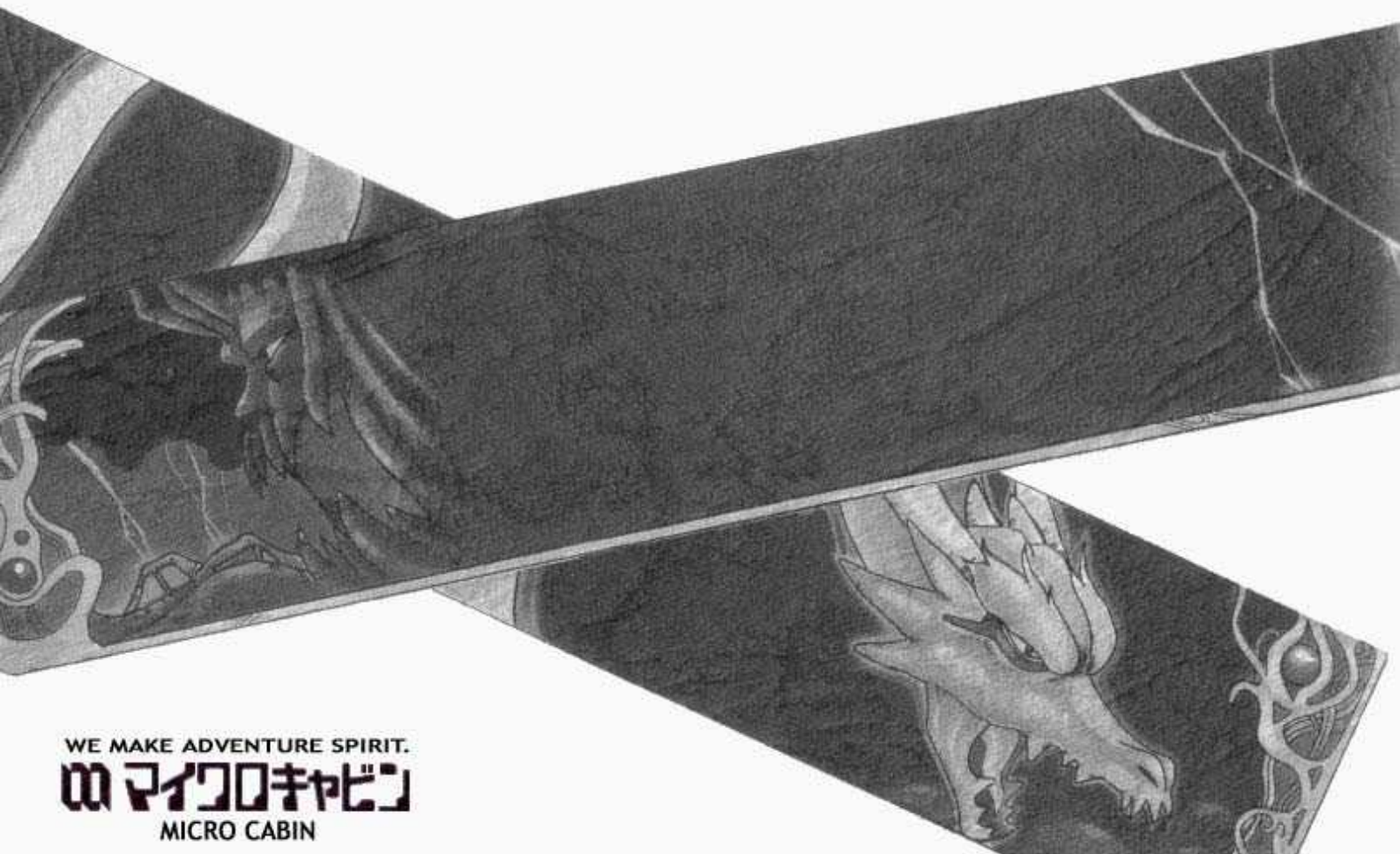

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