Welcome to Geneforge!

Geneforge 1 - Mutagen is a unique fantasy role-playing game with a science fiction twist.

You will explore the ruins of Sucia Island, making allies, uncovering secrets, gaining power, and creating an army of powerful, loyal, and expendable creatures. You will uncover a sinister conspiracy and then decide whether to defeat it or join it.

Geneforge 1 - Mutagen's plot is completely open-ended. You can be a good or bad guy. You can make the big choices and change the world, or run in fear. You can help the little people, or you can crush them ruthlessly. The choices are all yours.

This guide will help you create your Shaper, develop your first skills, and go out into the world. Before you start, it's a good idea to check the Helpful Hints section. The advice there is very useful for playing the game.

Note About Computers and Tablets

This is the documentation for both the computer (PC/Mac/Linux) and tablet (iPad) versions. Some details are different for computers and tablets. For example, keyboard shortcuts only apply to the computer version. Parts of the interface with bigger differences will be noted. On computers, to see tips for a button, status icon, etc., move the cursor over it. On tablets, rest your finger on it.

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Chapter 1: Troubleshooting

Should you have any problems running Geneforge 1 - Mutagen, consult the frequently asked questions below. Should you not find help below, go to the Geneforge support page at

http://www.spiderwebsoftware.com/geneforge/support.html

I Have a Big Monitor, and Geneforge Doesn't Fill All Of It. How Can I Change This?

If you want Geneforge to always take up your full monitor, run the game, select Settings on the title screen, and set Game Area Size to Whole Window.

The Game Is Crashing (or Otherwise Malfunctioning). What Should I Do?

Should you experience trouble with Geneforge crashing or with odd behavior such as static in sounds or graphics, there are several ways you might be able to make the problem go away.

1. First, restart your computer and try again. Often, problems only happen once.
2. Sometimes files can become corrupted. If you have a lot of recurring troubles and crashes, uninstall Geneforge (or, if using a Macintosh, throw away the Geneforge application). Don't skip this step! Then redownload and reinstall a fresh copy of the game. This fixes a surprising number of problems.
3. If you are using Windows, download and install the newest version of your video card drivers. These files can easily become corrupted or out of date. You can often find these by going to the web site of your computer or video card manufacturer.
4. Try playing Geneforge with no other programs running. You can also try restarting your machine right before running the game.
5. If any common problems appear, we will tell you how to correct them on our web site. Set your web browser to

http://www.spiderwebsoftware.com/geneforge/support.html

These steps will solve most problems you encounter. If none of these things help, please let us know! If there are any bugs left, we want to squish them! Typo reports are welcome too! Write us at support@spiderwebsoftware.com.

I Want To Back Up Or Transfer My Saved Games. How?

If you are using Windows, go to your My Documents folder. Look in the folder Spiderweb Software\Geneforge Mutagen Saved Games. You will see folders titled 'Save0', 'Save1', etc. All of your saved games are in there. You can then back them up or copy them into the "Spiderweb Software\Geneforge Mutagen Saved Games" folder in a different machine.

If you are using the Macintosh, it is slightly more complicated. Your game save files are stored in your Library folder, which can be difficult to find. To open it from the Finder, press Command-Shift-G to Go To Folder, enter "~/Library/Application Support/Spiderweb Software",

and press Return. Your saved games are in the folder "Geneforge Mutagen Saved Games". Open that folder and your saved games will be inside, in folders named 'Save0', 'Save1', etc.

Chapter 2: The World of the Shapers

The Shapers are the oldest, most respected, most secretive, and most powerful of the magical sects. The Shapers have the power to magically create life. They have held this secret for many centuries. The origin of their powers has been forgotten during the previous centuries of war and chaos. Now, in this time of peace, all one needs to know is that the Shapers rule and the creations and commons obey.

The Shapers can make new life forms from nothing but raw materials and pure magic. They can mold this life to serve their purpose, be it light housework or major warfare. The Shapers are a research-minded people. Many of them spend the bulk of their lives in musty laboratories, trying to unravel the secrets of living things. What makes something alive? What defines how a creature grows? How can they make an animal stronger? Or smarter? Or more obedient?

The Shapers guard the secrets of their powers very closely. To learn their techniques without permission is to court a speedy death, at the hands of a Guardian in the day or an Agent in the night. The Shapers are feared by the normal humans, the commons. And, quietly, sometimes resented.

After years of work, study, and testing, you have finally been accepted into the Shapers. You will spend your life advancing their will and delving into their secrets and powers. However, none of those secrets have been shared with you yet.

First, you must complete your apprenticeship. You must spend five years out in a Shaper colony on a remote island, watching their work and aiding their research. The Shapers test their potential members very heavily. The power over life is not something to be given away freely.

After a brief welcoming ceremony and a final night's celebration, you don your traditional garments and board your craft to the remote islands. The journey is two weeks long. You travel on a living craft, a specially modified drayk that will carry you through rough seas to your destination.

After a week's journey, you pass close to a small chain of islands. You consult your chart and find that one of them is named Sucia Island. It is marked on your chart as Barred.

Shapers declare places Barred for a variety of reasons. Experiments gone wrong. Dangerous accidents. Valuable secrets. Whatever the reason, any outsider in a Barred place is punished with instant death. The fate of a Shaper who intrudes is less severe, but still unpleasant.

You stand at the edge of your craft, carefully watching Sucia Island, wondering what secrets lie there. Though you are terribly curious about the secrets the thick woods of the island contain, you do not for a moment consider intruding. As you watch, you fail to notice the sailing ship dead ahead of you, off the southeast coast of the island.

Your craft cries out an alarm, alerting you to the danger. It is a strange ship, of a style you have never seen before. It is in poor condition and the sails are torn and wind-battered. It looks

like it has just completed a long and difficult journey. Its shape is strange, and you are unfamiliar with the design. That is why you don't recognize the weapon on its prow.

It fires a long spear at your craft. The razor-sharp bolt strikes your drayk in the neck. It roars in anger and breathes a bolt of fire at your attacker's craft. The fire strikes the sails, setting them ablaze. The fire soon spreads across the ship.

The battle takes only seconds. Your living craft founders, mortally wounded, dropping you into the water. Your goods and tools sink into the depths. You attempt to swim to surface.

You barely notice that the ship which attacked you is aflame and having extreme difficulty. Your whole being is consumed with the struggle to reach the shore.

Your strength is not enough. You start to sink. But, with one last effort, your living craft assists you. Bleeding from its neck, rapidly dying, it manages to lift you with its head and carry you to a crumbling dock.

As you crawl away from its dying bulk, you realize your grim situation. You are left alone, abandoned, on this forbidden shore. You are alone on Sucia Island.

Who would do this? Who would dare court the certain doom of attacking a Shaper? Who were the strangers who attacked you? Why are they here? And, most importantly, how can you get off of this island?

There are many reasons why an island can be Barred. And not one of them makes you want to linger a moment longer than is necessary.

Chapter 3: Getting Started

When you launch Geneforge 1 - Mutagen, you can select from these options:

Start New Game - Start a new game. You can name your character and choose which of the three character types to play. After you will pick the game difficulty, you will enter the world of Geneforge.
Load Game - Displays a window where you can select and load a saved game.
Instructions - See these instructions.
Settings - Brings up a window where you can tinker with the game's difficulty and other settings. You can also change most of the keyboard shortcuts.
Medals - See the medals you have earned while playing Geneforge.
Credits – See the credits.
Quit – Quit.

Creating Your Character

When you are ready to begin your journey, select Start New Game on the title screen. You will bring up the character selection screen.

Choosing a Character Type

There are three character types in Geneforge 1 - Mutagen: Shapers, Agents, and Guardians. Though these are three different sects, each with its own powers and responsibilities, the outside world refers to them all by one name: Shaper.
Select a portrait to the left to see a full description of the class. To change his or her name, press Delete to erase the name already there and enter your new one.

Choosing the Game Difficulty

Now you can choose how difficult you would like the game to be. If you prefer a relaxing experience, feel free to choose Casual. If you like a real gaming challenge, select Veteran or Torment. If you want the default Geneforge experience, choose Normal.

On Veteran or Torment difficulty, your spells and abilities can harm friendly targets. If you grow unhappy with the difficulty you have selected, you can change it later on using the Settings screen.

Chapter 4: Skills and Training
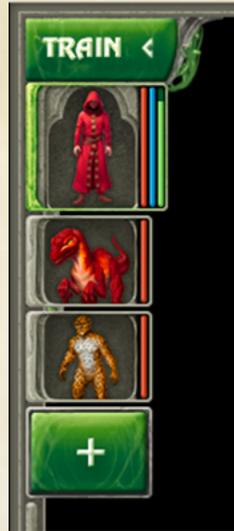
  Like all fantasy role-playing games, you play a character wandering through a hostile world. And, like all such games, your character has a set of statistics that describe how well he or she interacts with the world. These numbers define how tough you are, how strong your magic is, etc.

  You will have two sorts of characters: Your Shaper and your creations. Your Shaper is your main character. If it dies, the game is over.

  Creations are monsters you make to fight for you. They obey you totally (usually). You can make some of them, have them fight for a while, absorb them, and then make different creations as desired.

  During the game, to see or improve your statistics, press the Roster/Train button at the top left. Then select the character or creation to see and train. You can also right-click a character in the roster to train it.

		Magic Skills	Weak
Level	16	Battle Magic	2
Skill Points	0	Mental Magic	2
Exp.	20496	Blessing Magic	3
Health	83/195	Spellcraft	1
Essence	69/94	**Shaping Skills**	
Energy	98/98	Fire Shaping	2

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Skills & Training — **Abilities**

Strength	8	Battle Shaping	2
Agility	6	Magic Shaping	2
Intellect	4	Healing Craft	3
Essence Mastery	4	**General Skills**	
Endurance	8	Leadership	4
Combat Skills	Strong	Mechanics	16
Melee Weapons	8	Stealth	1
Missile Weapons	9		
Quick Action	11		
Evasion	8		

You are now training this character. Use the '+' buttons to spend skill points.

Training a Shaper

Each of your characters has a level. This number, usually from 1 to 20, determines how strong your character is.

To increase your Shaper's level, kill enemies and complete quests. This earns experience. When you have enough experience, your level goes up. If you complete a more difficult task, you get bonus experience. If a foe or quest is too far below you, you won't get experience.

Your creations gain levels in a different way, described in Chapter 5.

When you gain a level and your Shaper is selected, the button at the top left turns to "Train." Press it (or type '?', or right-click the Shaper) to see the Character Info Window and start training.

Changing Your Name

To change your character's name, select its portrait on the training window.

The Training Window

In your Shaper's training window, you will see a list of your character's most important attributes:

Level - An important overall number that defines how strong you are and how many adventures you have successfully concluded. You start at Level 1.

Experience - How much experience you have earned. When you accumulate enough experience, your level goes up. You get most of your experience from killing enemies and completing quests.

The amount of experience you gain for completing a quest or beating a foe depends on how tough it is in relation to you. If it is a lot tougher, you gain more experience. If it is weaker than you, you gain less. Mouse over the experience bar to see how much more experience you need to reach the next level.

Skill Points - When you gain a level, you earn ten skill points. Skill points are like currency; you have to spend them to raise your skills. To do this, press the plus button to the right of a skill's name.

Health - A number that determines how far you are from death. When you take damage, this number goes down. When you are healed, it goes up. If it reaches 0, you die. To increase this number, gain levels or train your Endurance.

During a battle, there are a number of ways to restore lost health. For example, some abilities can heal you, or you can use a Healing Pod.

Essence - Essence is the raw material Shapers use to create life. It is stored within you and comes out when you cast a powerful spell or make a creation.

The amount of essence you have is determined by your Level and Essence Mastery skill. When you make a creation, you spend some essence, and your maximum amount of essence goes down by the cost of the creature. If you have 100 essence and make a creation that costs 40, you can have at most 60 essence until the creation dies.

Essence is also used to cast spells. Thus, if you make a lot of creations, you will be able to use fewer spells. To restore essence and health, return to a friendly town. There are also pools that restore your essence and health when you stand near them.

Spell Energy - Casting a spell weakens you, and it takes time to regain your strength. Each spell reduces your spell energy. If you don't have enough spell energy, you can't cast spells. Spell energy comes back to you with time. Spell energy increases with your level and your Intellect.

Your Skills - The rest of the statistics window displays all of your character's base statistics. If you have enough skill points, increase a statistic by pressing the '+' button to its right. As you buy more of a skill, the cost increases.

These abilities are divided into five base categories. The first group is your main statistics, which are more expensive and strongly affect how your character functions.

The next three categories are Combat, Magic, and Shaping. Your character class will make one of these categories cheaper and one more expensive.

The General skills give you ways to travel through the game without combat. It is possible to beat Geneforge without ever attacking an enemy, if you are cunning and invest heavily in these skills.

To see what a skill does, hold the mouse cursor over it.

Chapter 5: Your Creations

The greatest power of the Shapers is the ability to create and alter new life forms. It is their most important secret. Any outsider who tries to use Shaper powers is likely to receive a visit from an assassin in the dead of night.

Creations are also your greatest weapon against the threats of Sucia Island. If you never make any pets, you will have a difficult time escaping alive.

You learn how to make creations by using skill canisters. The first pet you can make, the fyora, can be found in the second section that you enter (Abandoned Vale). To make more advanced creations, you need to train the shaping skill for that creation (so to be able to make clawbugs, you need to increase your Battle Shaping skill).

Making Creations

To make a creation, press the Make Creation button (button with a '+', to the far left, under your characters' portraits) to bring up the Edit Creation screen. You can only make creations when you aren't in combat.

Select the sort of creation you want from the choices available. Each type of creature has a base cost in essence. You will see a description of each creature when you select it.

When you've picked a creation type, press the OK button to make and train it.

Training Creations

You can train a creation when you make it. You can also train it later by selecting its portrait and pressing the Roster button at the top left. You will see the creation training window.

This window shows all of the creation's base statistics. It also shows how much essence it costs. Essence spent to make or improve a creation is used up and unavailable for spells until the creation dies.

You can give each creation a symbol to tell different ones apart in combat. To do this, press the Symbol button on the creation's portrait.

Press the Quill button to the upper right to rename the creation.

You can select statistics and abilities to the upper right to spend essence improving the creation.

Creation Skills

Each creation has five statistic buttons. Select one to give the creation a level and improve one of its statistics, making it more effective in battle.

Each creation also has two trainable active abilities (which can be used in battle) and two passive abilities (which are always active). Select one of these to gain it.

Each active ability has a cooldown. It can only be used once every three turns in battle.

Creation Levels

As you encounter more difficult foes, you will want to have higher level creations.

To increase a creation's level, increase your base skill for that creation. (For example, increase your Magic Shaping skill to give all your artilas a higher level.) You can also train the creation on its training window to increase its level.

Absorbing a Creation

If you are tired of a creation, press the "Absorb Creation" button on its training window to be rid of it. You will reclaim 2/3 of the essence you spent on it.

Rogue Creations

Creations are under your control. However, they are not entirely without a will of their own. If a creation is damaged, there is a chance it will run away. Worse, in stressful situations, a creation will occasionally go rogue and turn against you for a few rounds.

The more creations you control at once and the higher a creation's level is, the higher the chance of it going rogue.

If you increase your Shaping skills, all of your creations will be easier to control.

Chapter 6: The Geneforge Screen

When you start playing Geneforge 1 - Mutagen, you will see the game screen. It has several windows, each of which gives different information.

The Terrain Area

This is where you play the game. You will see your characters, their surroundings, your enemies, and so on. To scroll your view of the terrain, drag the terrain with your cursor, use the arrow keys, or move the cursor to the edge of the screen. If you don't like the terrain view scrolling when your cursor is at the edge of the screen, this can be turned off in Settings.

To see the names of all visible characters (and any status effects that afflict them), hold down the Tab key.

In the terrain area, north is to the upper right and west is to the upper left. To see a reminder of this, hold down the Tab key.

The Party Roster

Your Shaper and all of your creations are depicted here. To the right of each portrait, you will see bars which represent how much health, spell energy, and (for your Shaper) essence you have remaining.

To pick a character or target it with a spell, you can select it in the roster (or on the terrain area). You can also type '1'-'8' to select individual characters.

When your characters have a special magical effect (like haste, blessing, etc), it is indicated with a special icon to the right of its portrait. To learn what a status does, move the mouse cursor over it.

To change your group order, drag characters up and down in the roster.

To see information on a character or train it, select it and then press the Roster/Training button to the upper left. You can also right-click a character in the roster to train it.

Automap

This is a map of the area you are currently exploring. The blue dots represent your characters. The red dots are enemies and the green dots are allies and neutral creatures (like livestock).

If you select a spot on the automap, you will instantly shift the terrain view to that spot on the map.

Mouse over the map to mark all areas you have seen in gray. The Tab key will also reveal this.

When you find areas of interest, they will be marked with a '?' button on the automap. Move the cursor over one of these icons to see a reminder of what can be found at that location.

Automap Buttons

You can use the leftmost button over the automap to open or close it. The buttons to the right are:

Change Formation - Change the arrangement of your group of creatures when they move.
World Map - See a map of the entire game world.
Journal - See your quests, special items, codex entries, and bits of text you have recorded.
File Menu - Load or save the game, enter cheat codes, and change the game's settings. The different settings are described in Chapter 10.

Buttons, Text Console

Press the combat button to the lower left to start or end combat.

Use the buttons to the right of the combat button to toggle your default attack between melee and missile weapons. If your Shaper's default attack is missile and you don't have a missile weapon equipped, you will cast Firebolt.

Press the Use Ability button (with a lightning bolt) to use an ability or an item in your pack.

Press one of the bar of Quick Use items to create a shortcut to a spell or item in your pack. On Windows or Macintosh, right-click (or Command-click on Mac) a Quick Use button to clear it. On tablets, hold your finger on the Quick Use button and drag it up off the bar.

Press the backpack button to the lower right to see your inventory and get items.

Text Console

Type 't' to open or close the text console (on iPad, open or close it in Settings), in case you want more information about what is happening in the game.

Chapter 7: Playing the Game

All locations you have learned about are displayed on the map. Drag the map to see all of it. Select the region to travel to.

Travel

Most of your time will be spent paying attention to the terrain screen, moving around, searching chests, managing creations, talking to people, and looking for trouble.

Selecting Characters and Moving

Select a spot on the terrain area and your party will move there. They can move to any space that has been mapped out.

If you want to move your characters individually, press the combat button in the lower left corner. In combat mode, you can move your characters around one at a time to set up for a battle or sneak past an enemy.

Objects, Locks, Traps

You will find many usable objects in Geneforge. Books on pedestals. Boxes. Dressers. Traps. Select an object to use it.

Not all levers and boxes are immediately usable or openable. Some are locked. You can use living tools to pick most locks. The higher your Mechanics skill, the fewer tools you need to consume.

You will find many glowing canisters in Geneforge; the first is in the building just east of where you start the game. These valuable artifacts are called Skill Canisters. They were created to magically alter the user. They can improve your skills or give you new magical powers.

There are many sorts of traps and mines in Geneforge. Some are deactivated by using special items or machines nearby. Others are disarmed by using them directly. You will usually need a sufficient amount of Mechanics skill to disarm a trap.

Talking

You will meet many friendly and interesting people in Geneforge. Talking to them is a great way to figure out what is happening on Sucia Island and to advance the story.

When you hold down the Tab key, the name of each visible character will be superimposed over its graphic on the terrain screen. Interesting characters tend to have specific names (like 'Joe') as opposed to generic ones (like 'Guard'). To approach a character and speak with it, click on it.

During dialogue, you can select different options. If something strikes you as interesting, press the Record button at the lower left corner to save it (the Journal button on the main screen brings up your records). To end a conversation early, use the check mark button. Certain urgent conversations won't give you this option.

The serviles of Sucia Island will sometimes ask you your opinions on various issues. There is no right or wrong answer to these questions, but the cumulative effect of all of your answers will affect how the serviles react to you in the future. If you constantly say how worthless and unimportant serviles are, don't be surprised to find that they like you less.

Shopping

Sometimes a character will offer to buy and sell things. If you choose to buy things, you will see the shopping window. Press the Buy button next to an item to purchase it.

If you choose to sell things, your inventory window will appear. Select an item and its sale value will change to 'Sell'. Select the item again to cancel selling it. Each shop only has so much money, however. A shop won't buy an item it can't afford. When you close the inventory window, all selected items will be sold.

You can sell every item in your junk bag by pressing the appropriate button.

Theft and Crimes

Some items in towns are owned by people nearby. If you take items when they can see you, you are committing theft, and they don't appreciate it. If you attack them directly, they will be even more upset.

If you commit too many crimes, the town will rise up and attack you. The amount of things you have to do wrong to be attacked varies from town to town.

Saving and Loading

You will frequently want to save the game. Saving the game makes a 'snapshot' of your progress.

To save the game, press the Settings button (or the Escape key) and select Save Game. This brings up the Save Game window. You can then choose a slot to save the game into. You can also bring up this window by typing Control-S. (Command-S on Macintosh.)

Later, you can load that saved game and continue to play from that point by selecting Load Game on the title screen. While playing, to load a saved game, press the Settings button (or the Escape key) and select Load Saved Game. This brings up the Load Game window. You can also bring up this window by typing Control-O. (Command-O on Macintosh.)

Whenever you move from one area to another, the game is automatically saved. This saved game is called Autosave.

You can't save the game during combat.

Quicksave

There is also a Quicksave slot, which you can use to very quickly save and load your game. Press the F3 key to quicksave, and press the F4 key to load that saved game.

Stealth

Sometimes, you might want to try to sneak around extremely dangerous enemies, like pylons or drayks.

Every enemy has a radius at which it can detect you. When you increase your stealth skill, it temporarily reduces this radius by one combat space per point of skill.

This delay is temporary. When you see a '?' over an enemy's head, your stealth kept it from noticing you, but the delay won't last forever.

No matter how much Stealth you have, if you get close enough to an enemy, it will see you.

Exploring the World

When you reach the edge of the region you are in, you will see a shaded area on the ground. Step on that area to leave the region.

You will then be on the world map. Select a new region to make it your new destination. Select the region again to enter from a different direction. Then press the 'Travel' button to go to it.

Every region starts out as red on the world map. When you have cleared a region, it turns green. What you need to do to clear a region varies. Some are cleared by crossing them. Others are cleared by destroying a powerful foe or a certain number of guards. Clearing a region means that you can pass through it when selecting a new destination on the World Map.

All of your creations need to be near your Shaper to exit an area.

Chapter 8: Combat

When you meet someone you want to attack or when something attacks you, you enter combat mode. If you are attacked, this mode starts automatically. You can also enter combat by pressing the Start Combat button (or the 'f' key).

Combat is split up into rounds. Each character gets one turn per round. Faster characters act first. High Agility helps a character to act sooner in combat.

Ending Combat

When you are through with combat, press the End Combat button or type 'f'. If there are no enemies visible, combat ends immediately. Otherwise, it will end after the current round. Note that if there still is a foe nearby, combat will immediately begin again.

Action Points

Each turn, a character has a base of 8 action points (fewer if encumbered by heavy armor). Increasing Strength enables you to wear heavier armor without being encumbered.

Moving one space costs one action point.

If you have any action points left, you can attack, cast a spell, or use an item (so you can still attack even if you have only one action point left).

Attacking or casting most spells deducts 9 action points. A few faster spells only cost 6 action points. Using an item or drinking a potion takes 5. Getting or equipping an item costs 4. The number of action points you have left is indicated on the party roster. When all of your action points are gone, the next character gets to act.

To end a character's turn early (if you don't want it to do anything else), select the space it is standing in or press the space bar.

Attacking and Abilities

To attack a foe, select the space it is standing in. You will attack with your current default attack. Your default attack can be with your base weapon or an equipped missile weapon. You can toggle between the two default attacks by using the two buttons on the far left on the button bar (or typing 'w').

After you attack or use an ability, you can no longer move during your turn. You can still use abilities or items.

Abilities and Items

While your default attacks can be very effective, you will frequently want to use your characters' abilities. These can do damage, bless your characters, curse your foes, or heal damage.

To have your active character use an ability or item, press the Use Ability button (or type 'a'). Select the ability you want to use.

When a creation uses an ability, it won't be able to use it again for a cooldown period of three turns.

Targeting An Ability

Some abilities will need to be targeted. To target a foe, select the space it is standing in. If the spell targets an area (circular or cone shaped), move the cursor onto the terrain to see the area that will be affected. To target one of your characters (for healing or blessing), select that character's portrait (or type '1'-'8' to select the character in your roster).

Note that on Veteran or Torment difficulties, your attacks that cover an area will affect both friends and foes.

Damage and Armor

When a character is hit, its health will go down. When it reaches zero, the character will die.

Damaged characters can be healed during combat with healing abilities, healing pods, and healing spores.

Wearing Armor

Some equipment (like armor), when worn, reduces the damage you take from enemy attacks. The protection is expressed as two percentages, one for physical attacks and one for magical attacks.

These resistances are applied one at a time. So if you have two pieces of armor that give 50% protection from physical attacks, you don't get 100% protection. Instead, one piece reduces damage by 50%, and then the other piece reduces the remaining damage by 50% again (for total protection of 75%).

Status Effects

Your characters can be exposed to a variety of status effects, some beneficial, some harmful, most of them related to combat. Some effects (like blessings) are gained by casting spells or using magic items. Others, like poison, are inflicted by hostile spells.

When a character has an effect, an icon will appear to the side of that character's portrait. Move the mouse cursor over the icon to see a full description of the effect and how long it will last.

On desktop computers, you can see all of a foe's resistances and status effects by right-clicking it.

Chapter 9: Inventory and Items

To get and use items, bring up your character's inventory screen. Press the pack button in the bottom right corner or type 'g'.

To pick up an item from the ground, select it. It will be moved to your pack. To drop an item, select it to pick it up and then select the ground area to drop it.

To equip a weapon or garment, select it from your pack to pick it up. Then drop it on your character. To then unequip it, select it and then put it down somewhere else.

To see a description of an item, move the mouse cursor onto it.

To use a magic item, press the Use Ability button when the inventory window is closed.

Special Items

Pods and spores are special one-use items. When you use a pod, it helps your main character in some way. When you use spores, they help you and all allies standing near you.

Batons are reloadable missile weapons. Each baton fires a different sort of thorn and can only be reloaded with that sort of thorn. If you fire an empty baton in combat, it automatically reloads it if you have that sort of thorn in your inventory.

You will also find special items like keys that don't appear in your inventory. These are listed in the Journal window.

The Junk Bag

You will frequently find items that you want to take back to town to sell. To make this process easier, you have a junk bag. You can stuff all your unwanted junk into it for easy selling when you return to town.

To open the junk bag, select 'Junk Bag' on the inventory window. You can then put stuff into the junk bag. You can also hold down the Control key (Command on Macintosh) and select an item to move it to the junk bag.

When you are selling items in town, select 'Sell All In Bag' to instantly sell all of the stuff in your junk bag.

You can only take items out of your junk bag when you are in a friendly town.

Chapter 10: Geneforge Settings

You can edit the game settings from the title screen. In the game, you can also change them from the Game Menu. (To open this, press the Gear button to the upper right or type Escape.) Some of these will not be available on tablets. These are:

Difficulty: Casual/Normal/Veteran/Torment - Determines how powerful your foes are. You can only change this after you have loaded a saved game.

Scrolling Speed: Normal/Fast/Slow - Sets how quickly the terrain view scrolls when you move your mouse to the edge of the screen.

Warning Before Pause In Combat: On/Off - Turns on/off a warning when selecting a character to end his or her turn in combat.

Ability Animation Speed: Normal/Fast – Sets how fast your character's animations play, in case you want to speed up the game.

Cursor At Edge of Screen Scrolls View: Yes/No – Determines whether you can scroll the game view by moving the cursor to the edge of the screen.

Resolution and Window Size - Choose whether you will be given the chance to set window size at start up or not.

Graphics Extra Details - Turn on and off extra graphical effects.

Game Area Size: Normal/Small/Whole Window - By default, to improve performance, Geneforge will only use up to a certain amount of a large monitor. Change this setting to alter the maximum amount of screen space the game will use.

Full Combat Grid: Draw/Don't Draw – Sets whether the floor grid in combat covers the entire visible area. This slows down the game but makes combat a bit clearer.

Sound Volume - How loud the game's sounds are.

Background Sounds: On/Off – Toggles the game background sounds.

Set Keyboard Shortcuts - You can change the keyboard shortcuts for most common actions. A few keys (like Control/Command keys) are reserved.

Chapter 11: Final Notes

It has taken us twenty years to remaster Geneforge, and it's long overdue. Geneforge is one of our most successful, beloved, and innovative games, a true cult classic, and we're thrilled to freshen it up and keep it alive.

We have tried very hard to be respectful to the game while restoring it. We've tried to maintain as much of the old game system as we can. When the game is hard, we've left it hard. When it gives you the chance to make mistakes, we might have softened things a little, but you can still make gigantic errors. In short, we've tried to maintain the scruffy, unforgiving, old-school game design tradition Geneforge came from.

When we wrote Geneforge, we didn't know how successful it would be. We had no idea where the story was going, or that there would be five full chapters in the saga. It's been a lot of fun to go back to the game knowing what we know about where it is going. We have added more details, quests, and characters to flesh out the world and make this a good first chapter in a long story.

I'm often asked what Geneforge's inspirations are. Two works that made a huge impression on us are the movie eXistenZ, by the great David Cronenberg, and the Eden trilogy of books by Harry Harrison. But, of course, most of my ideas come from a lifetime of obsession with current events, history, politics, and my own musings about power, war, and responsibility.

To everyone who supported us over the last few decades, thank you so much. Extra thanks to our artists, our testers, and all of our generous Kickstarter backers. We are some of the luckiest people in the world, and we hope to keep bringing you these weird creations for many years to come.

- Jeff Vogel
January, 2021