

Flux World™ Manual

Introduction

Flux World™ is an introduction to the concept of Flux-Based Computer Gaming™. Flux-Based Computer Gaming™ is a new concept in computer gaming. The first Flux-Based Computer Game™ will be Flux Warrior™, a game that is currently under development.

Flux-Based Computer Gaming™ introduces many new concepts in computer gaming which may seem strange to the first-time player. The user interface of a Flux-Based Computer Game™ is quite different from what experienced computer gamers are used to, and may, at first, be difficult to learn. In addition, a true Flux-Based Computer Game™ must be in 3-D with the full 3-D freedom of movement in order for the game to work effectively.

Flux World™ is not a true Flux-Based Computer Game™ but rather an introduction to Flux-Based Computer Gaming™. It introduces most of the concepts of Flux-Based Computer Gaming™ in a 2-D game with a user interface based on that of adventure games.

Concept of the Game

When the game begins, you are taken from your home and mysteriously find yourself on a strange planet. You are constantly hunted by beasts, each of which you must kill and present as sacrificial offerings to the various gods of this planet. You are given a weapon to fight off these beasts but, much to your horror, the missiles fired by these weapons do not travel in a straight line, but rather veer off in various directions. It appears that the laws of physics on this planet are not those to which you are accustomed. There is an all-pervading flux which always appears to swallow one of your missiles in one of its vortices.

However, after some experimentation, you discover that the flux can be used to your advantage. You discover that firing a missile in any direction always moves the flux in that direction. Furthermore, you discover that a flux vortex can be used to knock down the beasts which are hunting you. So you decide that, rather than aiming your weapon at the beast that is hunting you, you aim in the direction that you want to move the flux. By doing so you can cause a flux vortex to knock over the beast. Once the beast has been knocked down, an army of friendly soldiers will take the beast to the temple of one of the gods and make the required sacrificial offering.

The object of the game is first to escape from the hideous routine of hunting down the beasts by building observation towers to track the beasts from a distance, and then to escape from the planet by discovering the ultimate nature of the flux.

Playing the Game

At the beginning of the game, you will be taken to a room with a man behind a desk. The man is your "teacher" and will give you information to help you play the game. You may ask him questions about playing the game. Anytime that you need help in the first half of the game, you may click on the '?' icon on the menu bar and then on the Help button to be taken back to this room to ask more questions. This feature will not be part of the Flux Warrior™ game, but has been added to Flux World™ to help the new player learn the concepts of the game.

In Flux Warrior™, as soon as the game starts you will be immediately confronted by one of the beasts, and you must take down the beast quickly or face an early death. However, in Flux World™, the game begins more like

an adventure game. You start by exploring the world, looking at things, and talking to everyone you meet. Only after you have done sufficient exploring and talked to the right NPC's will you be confronted by the first beast. It is at this point that the user interface diverges from that of an adventure game. Once the beast appears, the game goes into *shooting* mode. In this mode, the cursor takes the shape of a reticle or gunsight, with an arrow pointing in the direction that the missile will be fired. Moving the cursor around the screen changes the direction of the arrow and thus the direction that the missile will be fired. Clicking the mouse fires a missile in the direction of the arrow. Note that the direction in which the missile is *fired* will normally **not** be the direction that it will travel.

Your immediate objective is to knock down the beast by moving the flux so that one of the vortices knocks down the beast. For each beast there is normally only one vortex which can knock it down, but it is no problem to determine which vortex that is because your missiles will automatically be attracted to the correct vortex. You fire your weapon by clicking anywhere in the screen. Note carefully which direction the missile flies. To move the flux properly, you must keep clicking in the direction opposite that to which the missiles are moving--that will drag the flux in that direction. When the vortex is aligned with the beast, the vortex will knock over the beast.

As soon as the beast has been knocked over, one or more friendly soldiers will appear to help you to handle the beast. In this case, two soldiers will appear, a Hagorian and a Tragorian. The Hagorian is carrying no weapon, but the Tragorian is carrying a Tripod. The game is now in *commanding* mode. Move the mouse over the screen, and you will notice that the cursor changes shape whenever it is over one of the barracks of the soldiers. The shape of the cursor represents the weapon that the soldier assigned to those particular barracks is carrying. A soldier carrying no weapon is represented by the cross-hair cursor. A soldier carrying a weapon is represented by a cursor representing that weapon. When the mouse cursor is over an area of the screen not representing any barracks, it will take the shape of the prohibition cursor.

Your object at this point is to command the soldiers in the correct order. You command a soldier by clicking on its barracks. In the Flux Warrior™ game, a left-click fires a missile, a right-click commands a soldier, and a mouse-over provides a description of an object. In Flux World™, a left-click is used to command a soldier or take any other action, and a right-click cycles through the cursors, just as in an adventure game. This allows the player to converse with NPC's and use inventory items, just as in an adventure game. In the Flux Warrior™ game, conversation with other characters is not permitted. The reason for this will become obvious at the conclusion of the game.

Each soldier has a particular task to perform. In Flux Warrior™, if the soldiers are commanded in the wrong order, the beast will get up and you will have to try again. In Flux World™, if the soldiers are commanded in the wrong order, in some cases you may get a message telling you that another soldier must perform his action first, but in any case the beast will not get up. The Hagorian's task is to carry the beast to the temple, while the Trogorian's task is to make a sacrificial offering to the god of the temple. So you first click on the Hagorian's barracks, and then you click on the Trogorian's barracks. When you click on the Hagorian's barracks, the Hagorian will carry the beast to the temple. When you click on the Trogorian's barracks, the Trogorian will make the sacrificial offering.

Gods, Precincts, and Beasts

The planet that you have been banished to is divided into several precincts, each with its own god, temple, and beast. You start the game with three precincts, but more are added as the game progresses. The original three precincts are as follows:

Troforia: This is the precinct where you start the game. Troforia is a lush land with flowing rivers and plentiful fruits. The beast of Troforia is the Narulung, which somewhat resembles a bull. The Troforian vortex is very round and resembles a turnip.

Carfurgia: Unlike Troforia, the precinct of Carfurgia is rather barren. Little vegetation grows in Carfuria; the ground is covered mostly by rocks, dirt and sand. The beast of Carfurgia is the Shultung, which somewhat

resembles a large ram. The Carfurgian vortex is very angular and resembles a gyroscope or a child's top.

Skefalia: Unlike the other two precincts, Skefalia is a welcoming place. It is neither lush, like Troforia, nor barren, like Carfurgia. And the beast of Skefalia, the Gothanten, is unlike either of the other two beasts. The Gothanten does not hunt you, and you do not try to kill the Gothanten to make an offering to a god. Furthermore, the god of Skefalia does not demand any sacrificial offerings, as do the other gods. Skefalia may be thought of as a precinct to practice your skills for the other precincts. The Gothanten, which somewhat resembles a large dog, playfully chases you to its precinct to help you practice your navigation skills. There is no specific vortex associated with Skefalia, so no vortex can knock down the Gothanten. You may practice your marksmanship by dragging any vortex to the Gothanten, and the Gothanten will playfully roll over and play dead when a vortex is aligned with it. (In Flux World™, this only works with the Troforian vortex.) It will also playfully roll over and play dead to alert you to various things. In either case, a soldier will carry the Gothanten to the temple and make a mock-offering, after which the Gothanten will playfully run back to your side.

In Flux Warrior™ there are a total of eight precincts in the game. At various points in the game, new precincts will be added based on certain triggers. By the end of the game you will be shuttling back and forth among all eight precincts, performing various tasks. The game will end when you acquire a spacecraft and are able to escape the planet.

In Flux World™ there are only six precincts. The game is divided into two levels, with a very short third level. In the first level, you travel among the three precincts listed above. In the second level, you are mostly finished with the first three precincts and travel among three new precincts. In the third level you will return home and find out what it was all about.

Formal and Informal Speech Styles

As in most places, there is both a formal and an informal speech style in Flux World™. You can select which style you want by clicking on the '?' icon on the menu bar and then clicking on the Formal/Informal button. Here are a couple of examples of formal speech style and their corresponding equivalents in informal style:

Formal Style

May the Flux strike you down.

May the Flux carry you far from here. Go fluk off!

Informal Style

Fluk you!

Advancing in the Game and Completing the Game

The object of Flux World™ is to escape the world in which you find yourself and return home. You accomplish this by gaining the approval of the gods. To gauge the gods' approval of you, click on the '?' icon on the menu bar. This will bring up a bar graph showing the degree to which you have earned each of the god's approval. When your approval rating reaches 100% for each of the gods of the first level, you will advance to the second level. When your approval rating reaches 100% for each of the gods of the second level, the gods will allow you to return home. Currently there is no numeric score to measure your progress in the game. Since progress is measured by approval of the gods, a numeric score would be redundant. However, a numeric score can be added to the game if there is sufficient demand for one.

In Flux Warrior™ there is no bar graph showing the approval of the gods, since this is not the true objective of the game. However, I have added this device to Flux World™ to allow the player to gauge his progress. The true objective of the game is to achieve mastery in understanding and using the power of the Flux. This is, in fact, what the gods' approval ratings actually indicate.