

- Game Manual

This document wants to give a brief overview about how to play freelords. As the current version is still a bit unstable and in more or less heavy development the information here can be partly wrong or obsolete, but should be a good start if you just want to have a short look. If you find something which isn't written in this document, but would be helpful to know, send a mail to the developer list [freelords-devel@lists.sf.net](mailto:freelords-devel@lists.sf.net)

Contents:

1. The Splash Screen
2. The Main Screen
  - ◆ 2.1. The Menu
  - 2.2. Keyboard Shortcuts
3. Using the interface
4. Items
  - ◆ 4.1. Basics
  - 4.2. Getting and equipping items
5. Misc information
6. Army abilities
  - ◆ 6.1. Experience and levels
  - 6.2. Medals of Honour
  - 6.3. Fighting

## 1. The splash screen

There are currently seven buttons here: "New Campaign", "New Game", "Load Game", "Load Scenario", "Language", "New Network Game" and "Quit".

The "New Campaign" and "New Network Game" buttons still don't work. There is some basic network support, but it currently just is and does nothing.

"Load Game" opens a file dialog where you have to select a game to be loaded. The game is always saved automatically at the beginning of each turn, this is the autosave.sav entry. If you run into a bug, it would be nice if the development team gets it. 😊

"Load Scenario" loads one of the predefined scenarios. The tutorial level is some guide and shows several advanced features of FreeLords not yet implemented in the normal games.

"Quit" quits the game.

Clicking on "Language" lets you select the language of the game. Select one of the available buttons or enter some different locale in the text field. Should you use th text field, please note that you may get problems when not using utf8 (for simplicity: just click on the available buttons unless you know what you are doing).

If you click on "New Game", another dialog pops up with a lot of buttons and combo boxes etc. There, you can set the parameters for the game. If you want to load a map, click on "Load Map" and then on the now visible "Browse" button. You may select a map file (random.map is the map that was generated the last time) and start the game. If you want to create a new random map, you can specify players and map parameters. The map parameters you can choose are the size, the distribution of the terrain and the tileset. The currently available sizes are "Normal" (100x100 tiles), "Small"(70x70) and "Tiny"(50x50). The distribution is done with the sliders at the right side of the dialog. The numbers are merely the relative percentages, so the sum may exceed 100%, in which case the single percentages will be adjusted correspondingly. For each player you can choose the player type, the player name and the armyset. The available player types are "None" (disable this player), "Human", "Easy" (a very stupid AI that may have units standing around doing nothing) and "Smart" (an improved, though defensive, AI). The armyset determines which armies you can produce. Furthermore, you can select if new armies are produced and the existing armies healed at the beginning of the corresponding player's turn, or if all armies of all players are produced/healed simultaneously at the beginning of a new round. When you are ready, push the large OK button at the bottom.

## 2. The Main Screen

Most part of the screen is self-explaining. The menu is explained in section (2.1). You can scroll the visible part of the map by either using the cursor keys, clicking somewhere on the minimap in the top right corner or moving the mouse over one of the arrows around the bigmap. On the right you have information about your gold, the current round and several control buttons. The meaning of the buttons is:

arrow forward/bw	select next/previous unit which is not defending
arrow + leg	select next unit which can move and is not defending
leg	continue movement of the selected stack
legs	continue movement of all stacks
arrows	center the map on the currently active unit
shield	mark the unit as defending; the unit will be ignored when searching for the next unit
arrow + shield	set the unit to defending and go to the next unit
shield + leg	set unit to defending and go to next unit that can move
question mark	search a ruin or visit a temple (there has to be a hero in the stack to do this)
sand glass	finish your turn

If the buttons are grey, their function is currently unavailable (e.g. because there isn't anything to be searched). If you don't remember the meaning of some of the buttons, have the mouse stay over them for a while; a tooltip will appear.

If you have selected a stack, the single armies in the stack appear on the bottom of the screen. Right-clicking on one of the pictures will display a dialog with more information about the army. The symbols then denote the strength (swords), defense (shields), hit points (hearts), vitality (uhm, strange symbols), and movement points of the unit. They may be colored if they are enhanced or lost (e.g. if the unit is wounded)

### 2.1. The Menu

There are four menu items, "File", "Reports", "Options" and "Help".

In the "File" menu you can load a game, save a game and quit the current game. The difference between "Save As" and "Save" is that "Save" will overwrite the save game which your game is either loaded from or has been saved to last time while "Save As" lets you select explicitly the save file.

The "Reports" menu contains reports about the gold of all players, the armies, the cities and the pending quests your heroes have so far. In the army and city report, just click on one item to move the map to the position of the stack or city.

Under "Options" you can open an option dialog. In the audio options, you can enable/disable music and set the volume. Under video, you can select a resolution and switch from windowed mode to fullscreen and vice versa. Under "misc", you can select if players are announced at the beginning of their turn and toggle smooth scrolling (try it out to see what it is). The "delay" parameter specifies the number of milliseconds to wait after a unit has moved. Useful to watch the computer player do his turn. Clicking on "OK" applies the new options, while "Save" also saves the options in a config file so they are automatically used during then next startup.

In the "Help" menu, you can currently select only an about dialog that scrolls all developers and contributors.

## 2.2. Keyboard Shortcuts

You can use the keyboard to access various functions. The keys are:

- f toggle fullscreen mode
- a open the army report
- c open the city report
- q open the quest report
- g open the gold report
- s open dialog for saving the game
- l open the dialog for loading a game
- Esc deselects the current stack

The cursor keys move the viewable portion of the map around. In various dialogs you can press "Return" to exit the dialog. When selecting a file, Return confirms the selection, Escape aborts it.

## 3. Using the interface

Click on a stack to select it. To deselect it, click on the defend button, select another stack (with the buttons on the right side) or press Escape or the right mouse button. Click on a destination to show the path leading there. You can move a stack by double-clicking on the destination. If you move onto an enemy unit or city, you start an attack. Moving on another of your own stacks will join both stacks (if they can join, i.e., have not more than 8 armies together).

Right-clicking on a city opens a dialog. It shows you the current units you can produce, the tax income of the city, the defense level and some buttons. For the following it should be noted that there are two different kinds of production which a city can have. Basic productions are armies from the default armyset. They are rather weak standard units. Advanced productions are armies that are better and usually more expensive. They can be chosen from the player's own armyset. Now the button's use is the following:

- Upgrade upgrades the city by one level (up to level 4). Costs (current level)\*1000 gold. Each level gives a defense bonus of 20% to all defending units when the city is attacked. Furthermore, the income is increased by 50% and production capabilities are added. On the first level, a city has 2 basic productions, on the second 2 basic and 1 advanced, on the third level 3 basic and two advanced, and on the fourth level 4 basic and 3 advanced production capabilities.

Vectoring

Clicking on this button lets you select vectors for your cities. Freshly produced units will automatically have their path set to the city vector. This way, you just click on the "move all" button to move new units at a destination away from their home city.

**Buy basic** Adds a basic production to the city. You can select which production you want to add in another dialog.

**Buy advanced** Same as buy basic, but adds an advanced production to the city.

Right-clicking on a ruin gives you some information about the id, the location and the name of the ruin. The same goes for temples.

For the following informations, it would be good to distinguish the terms stack and army. An army is a single unit, like a dragon, a fighter etc. Up to 8 armies can be combined in a stack.

If one of your stacks stands on a ruin or a temple and has a hero (!), you can search it. If you search a temple, you may then choose to either get a quest (if your hero currently has none) or bless your armies. Blessing gives all participating armies a once and for all bonus of one strength (unless they have already been blessed, of course). Quests can be given to a hero, who receives some reward upon completion (currently only some amount of gold). A quest may be "search this ruin" or "kill this hero". If you search a ruin, you will certainly first have to defeat the monsters lurking there. If you do this, you will get some reward (currently a random amount of gold).

You can also split stacks. To do so, select one and click on the army icons on the bottom of the screen which you want to deselect. You can now move the selected armies and therefore split the stack.

## 4. Items

Since the 0.3.4 release, FreeLords features items. Items can be worn by heroes to increase or decrease some of their statistics.

### 4.1. Basics

There are four different types of items, namely weapons, shields, (body) armour and accessoires. A hero can equip one item of each type. Furthermore, each hero can carry an unlimited amount of items in his backpack (imagine that the hero has a servant who carries all the stuff for him). Items can increase or decrease each stat by an arbitrary value or can even give the hero special movement or army abilities (such as the Scroll of Waterwalking).

### 4.2. Getting and equipping items

It is not yet possible to get an item as a quest award or by searching a ruin. They are only found in the tutorial. Items laying around can be identified by a special symbol on the map. To get them, move your hero to the location of the item and right-click on the image of the hero at the bottom of the screen. By pressing "i" or clicking on the "Item" button below the image of the hero, you enter the item dialog. There you can now see the items lying on the ground, in the backpack etc. To watch the stats of an item, right-click on it. Draw the item over one slot with the left mouse button to equip it or move it in the backpack etc. Due to technical difficulties, the item is not dragged with the mouse cursor, ignore this and do drag'n drop anyway.

## 5. Misc Information

This is some unsorted information about FreeLords.

- Each unit costs money every turn. This is the "upkeep" data in the army info screen.
- Sometimes, heroes will offer to work for you. Hiring them will cost you money, however, they are quite powerful, allowing you to search temples/ruins and giving other units a +1 strength bonus in combat.
- Although ships can move and fight on water, embarking/disembarking does not work yet.
- Units heal 1/10th of their hitpoints per turn +1 for every point of vitality above 5 (-1 for every point below 5), but at least 1 HP.
- Negative gold amounts won't make your units run away, but you can neither buy additional productions nor upgrade cities nor will armies be produced.
- You have (usually, not in the tutorial) won when you have defeated all other players.
- You can earn money by searching ruins, having many cities, finishing quests or pillaging cities.
- When a city is taken by another player, the advanced productions are removed while the basic ones are kept. If you pillage a city, the level of the city is decreased or (basic) productions are removed. For this, you get some gold. Razing a city destroys it permanently.
- Cavalry loses its attacking bonus when not attacking on grass
- ships in cities have their attack strength halved

## 6. Army abilities

Besides the obvious abilities of armies (hitpoints, strength etc.), each army has two special boni, the move bonus and the army bonus.

The move bonus reduces the number of movement points required to cross a certain terrain to two. Therefore, while a mountain usually needs 6 movement points for crossing, the mountain move bonus reduces this cost to two points. If a unit has the water move bonus, it may also cross water, which is usually prohibited.

Furthermore, an army can have one of several army boni. They give this army some additional special abilities, which are

Ship	the unit may only move on water or within cities
Hero	gives all other units +1 strength bonus in combat; may search temples and ruins
Cavalry	If the unit is on the attacker side and the defender is located on open terrain (grass, not within cities), the unit gets +1 strength.
Anticavalry	The unit doubles its strength against cavalry
Regeneration	Unit heals one hitpoint per combat round and is completely healed at the end of combat.
Assassin	The unit has a chance of 1% of scoring an instant kill on a succesful hit during combat

### 6.1. Experience and Levels

If two stacks battle each other and some armies are killed, their XP values (= how much XP they are worth) are added to a pool and evenly distributed among all surviving enemy armies. When a unit has gained enough experience, it can advance a level. You need ten experience points multiplied with the current level to advance one level, i.e. a level 5 unit needs 50 experience to advance. Whenever a unit has collected enough experience, a dialog will pop up and ask which stat to raise permanently.

## 6.2. Medals of Honour

There are three medals of honour which will occasionally be given to units. They are displayed at the upper left edge if a unit has these medals. Each medal can only be awarded once and sticks to the unit until it dies.

The Medal of Damage (round and blueish) is earned if most of a unit's attacks have resulted in a hit during a fight. It increases the strength by one.

The Medal of Defense (red cross) is assigned if a unit has hardly been hit during a battle. It increases the defense by one.

The Medal of Honour (yellow star) is awarded if a unit has taken part in 10 battles. It increases the number of hitpoints by 4.

## 6.3 Fighting

When two stacks of different players meet, a fight starts. First thing to note is that all stacks surrounding the attacked stacks are drawn into the battle. However, this affects only stacks that can move on water if the attacked unit is located on water, or stacks that move on land if the attacked unit is on land. If a city is attacked, all units are thrown into battle.

A fight always ends after 30 rounds. If neither the attacker nor the defending stack has been destroyed, it ends with a draw. A round consists of each army selecting a victim and attacking it. First, all armies of the attacker attack, then the surviving defenders. Each army selects a random adversary. Then the attacking army's strength and the attacked army's defense is calculated, taking into account terrain bonuses or e.g. heroes. After that, for each point of strength, the attacker strikes once. The higher the defence, the lower the chance that the strike will hit (in detail, it is  $1/\text{defense}$ ). For each successful hit, the attacked army loses one hitpoint.

One further thing to note is that all armies are separated into close-combat and ranged-combat units. Closed combat units of one side can only attack close-combat units of the other side (unless there are none, then they will strike the ranged combat units). Ranged combat units can hit everything, but prefer (2/3 chance) to strike enemy close combat units.

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