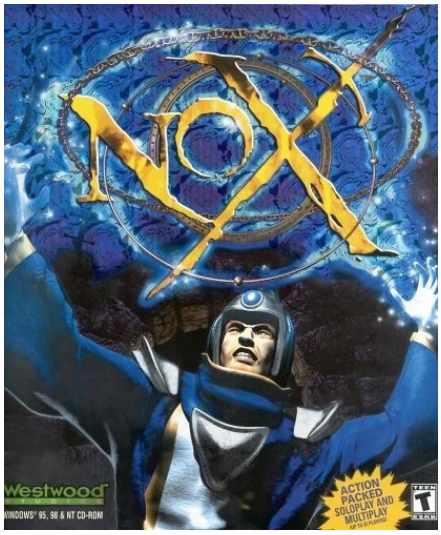
NoX

Version 0.1 by incorrectwombat / dhasenan

Welcome to the Land of Nox!



Nox is a land constantly under threat. The Land of the Dead is a tundra dominated by the undead and the fractious, factitious necromancers. In the South, the various wilds have their dangers, and the ogres frequently raid the human villages. Amid these dangers, there are three human factions trying to make the world safer: the Fire Knights under Lord Horrendous, the Wizards of Galava, and the mysterious Conjurers.

The Grand Necromancer Hecubah is uniting the Necromancers. Only by forging the Four MacGuffins into the Staff of Oblivion can she be defeated. Can these three factions cooperate long enough to save the world?

It would take a miracle. Maybe you can just light-finger the macguffins.

Take 1000 CP. Pick your demographics for free. You're here for ten years, and you've got two years before Hecubah starts the invasion.

Starting Locations

Pick your starting location for free.

1. Dun Mir: The home of the Fire Knights. Wizards are arrested on sight -- when they're not killed instead.
2. Galava: The city of the wizards.
3. Ix: A village near the primary mana mines, a stone's throw from the Conjurers.
4. Brin: An unaffiliated village close to an ogre enclave.
5. The Dismal Swamp: It's a swamp. It's dismal. It's also dangerous, but that makes it good for a reclusive hedge wizard to hermit up in, in case you wanted to learn magic that would normally get you shunned from polite society.
6. The Land of the Dead: A tundra filled with wolves, skeletons, and worse.

Classes

Pick one class for free. You can learn any of them later, including the base abilities, individual spells, and martial powers, but this typically takes years.

For the casting classes, note that your personal mana reserve recharges extremely slowly, allowing you to use a bare handful of spells every few hours. You will need to rely on mana potions, obelisks, and crystal outcroppings to use mana-based abilities reliably.

You may choose to take an in-jump identity to go along with your class or to be a drop-in.

- **Wizard**: Magic specialist in the Galava tradition. Your default mentor is Arch-Mage Horvath.
- **Warrior**: A giant slab of muscle, a member of the Fire Knights. Your default mentor is Horrendous.
- **Conjurer**: You mind-control monsters and can conjure them from nothing. Your default mentor is Aldwyn.
- **Necromancer**: Corpse-smithing. You can conjure and command the undead. By default, your mentor is an independent hedge mage named Isolde.

Perks

Standard discounts: everything for your class is discounted; 100cp entries are free when discounted.

General

Inventory (free): You have an extradimensional inventory space. Its capacity is based on your strength but is quite generous. Even as a weak mageling, you can carry dozens of weapons and outfits.

Keeping Your Mouth Shut (100cp): Wizards, in *my* Dun Mir? It's more likely than you think! You can put on a disguise and just not mention that you're a wizard or a necromancer or whatnot, and people won't immediately suspect you. With even a modicum of caution, you can hide your other affiliations. This doesn't help you serve organizations working at cross purposes to each other.

Scriber (100cp): You may create books to instantly teach spells and martial powers to others. A book so created can be used only once. This takes as much time as it would to teach the spell or power directly; you just frontload the cost. This only works for things you can teach.

Would you like to buy some apples? (100cp): They're smuggled in from my home town of Dun Mir. You have an unusual facility for finding places to purchase goods and services the authorities would rather not be offered. It's almost as easy as looking in the Yellow Pages.

Apprentice (200cp): You may instruct other people in any RPG style class you have and any aspects, powers, or spells of that class that are teachable. You may have two apprentices at a time. A standard apprenticeship takes one year of dedicated, grueling instruction, or five years of night school style teaching. Teaching perks may not reduce this amount of time below one month and half a year respectively.

The Airship Captain Loves You (400cp): Fast travel by airship. The captain will drop you off at a moderately safe area every time. Somehow, possibly through psychic powers, they are always ready to pick you up where you need them if you're on an urgent saving-the-world type quest. Otherwise, you can signal them, but they'll be a bit slower to arrive and might have some detours before they can drop you off.

Wizard

Wizards tap into the arcane and change the world's workings on a fundamental level. Their work is of a cold, rational sort, at least on paper, measurements and experiments and standardization.

I Went to School! (100cp): You did! And you learned how to use basic magic and magic staves. Too bad you didn't learn about armor.

Enchanting (200cp): You're simply enthralling, darling. Wait, no. You can craft staves and clothing that have spells built into them. Staves will cast active spells, while clothing has protective, reactive, and restorative spells.

Filled Out Your Spell List (400cp): You have access to the full set of spells and can craft magical traps. Your mana reserves are prodigious.

Mystic Powerhouse (600cp): While normal mages have only a small reservoir of mana that they have to refill from external sources, you're different. Either you have a prodigious reserve capable of channeling even extremely costly spells; or you have a slightly larger reservoir that refills very quickly even without external sources.

Warrior

Warriors are mighty. They have a relatively small, fixed set of abilities, making them somewhat more item-dependent.

Flame of Might (100cp): You are a Fire Knight and have been through their training. It's made you fast, strong, and able to take a beating. You've learned how to use all martial weapons better than any mundane master.

Spit and Polish (200cp): Your equipment is your life, so you have learned how to maintain it. While most people have to go to a vendor to repair their weapons and armor rather frequently, you can keep your gear in tip-top shape on your own and quickly. More than that, you can imbue your equipment with attack riders and passive abilities.

The Heart of a Warrior (400cp): What beats through the heart of a warrior? Bad ass! You can channel your inner badass to a number of effects: stepping so lightly you can walk over crumbling wood floors and avoid triggering traps; spotting those pesky invisible wizards; charging forward like a Bulldozer of Vengeance; and shouting hard enough to scare the magic out of the air.

Legendary Thews (600cp): Jack accomplished all this when he was just a rando sucked into his TV while living in a rusty trailer. You're a cut above. You can give wuxia heroes a run for their money with your skills.

Conjurer

Conjurers work with nature, though unlike druids, their work is sometimes less cooperative. They know themselves and the beasts they work with.

Ranger and Tamer (100cp): You are fluent in the bow and shuriken, and you can tame and train almost any monster with time and patience. If you can just convince that mimic to do something besides pretend to be a chest or attack you for five dang minutes...

Quite the Charmer (200cp): You can charm beasts and monsters, bringing them to fight for you. At first, you can only have a few charmed creatures at once, but your control will increase with years of experience.

The Call of Nature (400cp): You can use natural magic. This allows you to conjure creatures from thin air. A special creature you can conjure is the Bomber, a cute little friendo that you add spells to. Instead of attacking, it runs up to foes to hug them, exploding and unleashing those spells on them.

All As One (600cp): You may partially conjure multiple creatures into yourself, temporarily gaining some of their traits. Their health stacks with yours, their strength with yours, their special abilities become yours.

Necromancer

A necromancer works with decay and death. This might be distasteful to many, and an incautious necromancer can spread diseases through a community. However, the path of a necromancer is not inevitably evil, even if the necromancers of the story are.

Reanimator (100cp): You can animate the dead into mindless minions under your control. You can keep a small number of undead under your direct control. When releasing an undead from your control, you may deanimate it, or you may have it continue performing the last order you gave it.

Conjuration and Control (200cp): The bread and butter of necromancy. You can conjure mindless undead and bring unattended undead under your control. You can use a quick contest of will to wrest undead from others' control.

Deathcasting (400cp): You have a full repertoire of death-related spells and a small selection of basic elemental spells. You can also use a range of magical staves.

Victor Frankenstein Flunked Undergrad (600cp): but you stayed in school and took all your anatomy lessons. You can mix and match body parts and the properties of the undead. You can create undead that retain more of the abilities their living counterparts had, like a nymph zombie capable of summoning a pixie swarm. Creating them initially takes a decent chunk of time in a lab with several fresh corpses of the relevant type. Conjuring them is quite mana-intensive initially, but you can reduce the cost with experience. This also allows you to create fully sapient undead.

Items

Adventurer's Kit (free): A sturdy outfit, a framed haversack, and a walking stick. You've also got a few hundred gold pieces to help you on your way. Not enough to kit you out properly, but you won't starve to death too soon.

Obelisk of Mana (100cp): This obelisk rapidly recharges your reserves of magical power. You may configure which types of magical power it recharges, including a preference order. The obelisk has a reserve roughly equal to the amount of that power reserve you had when you first gained it. With enchanting or magitech skills, you may be able to improve the functionality of an Obelisk of Mana — using it as a converter from mechanical or electrical power, siphoning its reserves into a much larger storage unit, or the like. This will be easier if you have multiple obelisks to combine.

Arcane laboratory (200cp): A lab that contains everything you need to do proper spell research. This doubles your enchanting speed and allows for researching novel spells and enchantments.

Morphic menagerie (200cp): A farm capable of caring for all your creature friends. It's got keepers capable of caring for them and a free supply of feed for them. You (or a follower or companion) may also use this space to train creatures; it's ideally suited for the task.

The Library (200cp): A collection of nearly all spells. This isn't instant-teaching spell books, but it's enough description and theory that you can learn the spells rather fast. Cataclysm-scale spells won't appear here. Arcane and nature spells only. Updates for new worlds and magic types.

Alchemy engine (200cp): It's a machine that endlessly produces potions. It comes with recipes for mana, health, and poison-curing potions and can produce a total of ten per day. It can produce other potions if you have a recipe, and tinkering can increase the rate of production.

Endless Morgue (200cp): A morgue containing an endless supply of common bodies. Every day, a new selection of a few uncommon bodies crops up, and every few weeks, a rare body becomes available. By default, the selection is weighted half toward the current jump, half toward past jumps, but you can change the settings.

Enchantment Emporium (300cp): A warehouse addon, this shop sells a variety of enchanted objects.

Companions

Import (100cp/200cp): You may import four companions for 100cp or an unlimited number of companions for 200cp. Each imported companion receives 600cp.

Someone new (100cp): Anyone who's not a mentor and not Hecubah.

Mentor (200cp): You recruit one of your mentors. Hecubah is not a valid option. ...Oh, fine, you can recruit Hecubah, you evil bastard you.

Drawbacks

There is no drawback limit.

Get back in your Pokéball (+100cp): In canon, a random guy was sucked through a space-time portal to land on the Airship with nothing but his trusty television to speed him on his journey. When he offed Hecubah, he was transported back to his rusty trailer. Now you, too, can return to a rural trailer park when you finish the plot! You know, in case you prefer poverty in the US Midwest over life as the Hero of Nox. You'll also return if you deliberately delay in facing Hecubah for more than one year. In either case, you'll be unable to get back to Nox, and you'll be stuck in relative poverty.

No-Time Toulouse (+100cp): Hecubah is starting her invasion in two weeks, not two years.

Self-taught (+100cp): You have to learn on your own. Your mentor would have given you access to lab space, housing, spell books, starting enchanted gear, and likely one of the components of the Staff of Oblivion, but you'll have to manage that yourself.

Vendor Trash (+100cp): All the items you loot are basic weapons and armor. Useful very early on, but before long, you'll be hauling dozens of crude iron swords to the nearest shop to sell.

Minion of Hecubah (+200cp): You are bound to Hecubah's service. This isn't mind-control or anything like that; you are merely in her domain, under her watchful eye. She doesn't trust you at all and will only teach you begrudgingly, but she's the best teacher for necromancy. With several years of exemplary service, she may come to trust you. Your out-of-context supernatural powers are bound from hurting her until an hour after you tender your resignation, an action that immediately alerts her.

What Inventory? (+200cp): You do not benefit from the Inventory perk until the end of this jump. Your other extradimensional inventories are only accessible in inhabited areas where you are welcome. Anywhere in a town (if it's not hostile to you), anywhere in a building that you live in, but not in an abandoned crypt or the wilderness. Maybe you can get a mule?[1]

Fashionista (+200cp): It's a minor concern to find clothing that has the right enchantments, fits you, and is protective enough. Now you're extremely concerned about fashion as well. You'd rather

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1This prevents you from transferring items, but not from accessing non-item aspects of the inventory, if there are any. You can't transfer items into your warehouse from the field, but you can use its medical bay, take a shower, etc.

go around in your underpants than wear something you don't find sufficiently chic. You'll probably have to make your own, or work closely with the artisans creating your attire. Expensive and time-consuming.

Merchant conspiracy (+300cp): Any personal equipment that a merchant could repair degrades quicker than you'd expect. You normally could expect to go through a small legion of doom before needing to get a vendor to fix your Grand Silver Greatsword of the Leech, but now it's more like a squad. And if you're a whiz at fixing things in the field, that only extends the durability to normal, and it takes a merchant to fix it fully. Better pack heavy.

Scenarios

The Staff of Oblivion

The Staff of Oblivion is the mightiest weapon in all of Nox, so powerful that it was split into three pieces and distributed among the major human factions. Your task is to unite the pieces and forge it anew. The defenses have been improved significantly, and Hecubah is also hunting for the pieces.

Reward: The Staff of Oblivion. It's indestructible and will kill even mighty individuals in mere moments. Against demigods, it might take a couple minutes of continuous fire. This version scales with your power level and recharges fast without an external power supply.

Critically endangered

There are a lot of undead around. Your task is to fix that. You won't have to spend years tracking down the last skeleton or anything silly like that; just kill enough that people could ski all through the frozen wastes in the north and not see one, and regular humans can maintain crypts without worrying about running into a zombie.

You **can** take this with Friendly Neighborhood Necromancer, in which case it's recommended to finish this scenario first.

Reward: Aura of Life. You can activate an aura that damages and slowly disintegrates undead around you. By focusing on it, you can increase the intensity or the radius temporarily, maxing out at rapid disintegration with several kilometers of radius. It's less effective on powerful undead and only slightly disrupts the defenses of anyone stronger than you.

Unification

The Fire Knights kill wizards on sight. The wizards kill Fire Knights on sight. Neither of them are keen on talking to the Conjurers. Your task is to form a federation of all three.

Reward: You gain a small academy, either imported with you on new jumps or attached to your warehouse. This academy is staffed with followers who can train people in Galava-style wizardry, Ixian conjuration, and the Fire Knight arts.

Friendly Neighborhood Necromancer

Necromancers are generally considered evil. Your job is to turn necromancers into a useful part of society receiving some level of acceptance -- more, at least, than being driven out of town with arrows in their hide. They need to be accepted in one major town, not necessarily everywhere.

Reward: In future settings, your supernatural abilities that are not innately harmful will be generally accepted and respected. You'll be immune to social biases against them, and you can get them to be widely accepted with just a little work.

Notes

- Isolde is an original character. It's there for people who want to be a necromancer, but not a thrall of the BBEG.
- Enchantment / Imbuement is not a power you get in game. It may canonically be an ability of shopkeepers alone.
- Canonically, the protagonist was living in a small trailer when their television sucked them in and deposited them onto the Airship. He had to loot two of the three components of the Staff of Oblivion.

Magic

Conjurer spell list

- Charm Creature: take control of any creature for which you have a beast scroll. This creature counts against your control limit.
- Cure Poison: just what it says on the tin. Magical poisons may require more mana to cure.
- Fist of Vengeance: summon a giant stone fist from the sky to smite your enemies.
- Force of Nature: conjure a glowing ball of the fury of plant life that will rebound off surfaces and damage anything animate it touches.

- Greater Heal: like healing, but a lot of it.
- Infravision: see invisible things and pierce low-light conditions.
- Meteor: conjure a flaming ball of rock to smite your enemies.
- Pixie Swarm: conjure several tiny pixies to orbit you. They will attack anything hostile to you that's nearby and then vanish back to their home dimension.
- Poison: a quick-acting poison that drains a creature's health over time. Somehow this even affects magical constructs so long as they're animate.
- Stun: halt a creature in its tracks.
- Toxic Cloud: summon a cloud of gas that poisons anything crossing through it.
- Vampirism: drain life force from another creature to heal yourself.

Wizard spell list

- Anchor: prevent a target from teleporting for a few minutes.
- Channel Life: convert your life force to mana.
- Confuse
- Death Ray
- Detonate Seen Traps
- Dispel Undead
- Drain Mana
- Earthquake
- Energy Bolt
- Fear
- Fireball
- Force Field
- Fumble
- Haste
- Invisibility
- Invulnerability
- Lightning
- Lock
- Missiles of Magic
- Obliteration
- Reflective Shield
- Ring of Fire
- Run
- Shock
- Swap Location
- Pull / Push / Telekinesis

- Mark Location / Teleport to Marker
- Teleport to Target
- Trap
- Trigger Trap
- Wall