

Korax' Heritage: Scattered Evil

Design Guide

1. Introduction / Base Concept

Korax' Heritage: Scattered Evil is a Total Conversion built on the commercial game *Hexen* from 1995 (version 1.11) and on the Doomsday Engine (a 3D accelerated open-source port) from 2000 (version 0.99.6).

Scattered Evil (sometimes referred to as *SE* in the following) is a single player action game with a strong RPG vein. Gameplay is similar to *Korax Mod*, enhanced through character interaction and quests. Several *Korax Mod* features are carried to the next level, too (more complex character attributes and experience system, advanced shopping system, more spells with a graphical interface).

Gameplay is mostly hub-based with a central town where you can't draw weapons, instead you can get quests, shop for items or sell unneeded ones, learn new spells and information, sleep, eat and drink. Maps are designed in a similar way as original *Hexen* maps and should carry that distinct *Hexen* feeling. The main difference is that all hubs are parts of a greater complex, of which the town is the center. You may be able to proceed only to a small part of a hub at the beginning, and after completing tasks or discovering items in another hub may you only proceed further in the first hub.

There should be a large variety of weapons, artifacts and other items to be found in the dungeons or to be bought/sold in shops. Many of them can't be used under a certain level, some of them can be used only by a certain character class.

Most monsters have several subtypes which differ not so much in looks but in base attributes like strength, speed, HP etc. In case of smaller differences, they're just part of the same monster type, in case of greater differences they'll look different (like slightly altered clothing, different skin color, etc.).

Scattered Evil takes place a couple of months to a year after the defeat of Korax. The base storyline is that Korax' evil minions have been scattered, and there is no more evil to fear on Cronos. At least that's what most people think... in reality, a new cult is forming around a Uber-Heresiarch, with the ultimate goal of re-establishing the old terror. The cult's center is in an underground temple beneath the hills near <TOWN NAME>. A bold hero sets out to get to the truth behind some rumors and finds out more than he wanted pretty soon, and then keeps finding out more and more as the game advances, until around the middle he knows about the cult and the temple and tries to find it. The game ends when he locates the temple, defeats the cult leader and its hordes of minions (and maybe destroys the temple itself as well).

Korax' Heritage: Scattered Evil

Design Guide

2. Gameplay

2.1. Game Start / The Town

The player first chooses a skill level and a character class, then generates his character. At the beginning of the game, he starts in the town, at the headquarters of his order. Here he can wander around and talk to several persons, but he has to talk to the leader of his order to receive the first quest, which is to head out of town and try to see what this talk lately about evil uprising is.

The player receives the first couple of items and experiences from the people at the headquarters. He is free at any time to get outside and wander the town streets, where he may receive sidequests. The only places he can't enter are the headquarters of the other 2 orders.

There is no action in the town, i.e. no fighting, no spells, no monsters. As long as the player is in the town map, the in-screen weapons (or hands) disappear and no weapons or spells can be selected. No one will attack the player, neither.

Once the player has been exploring the town somewhat, he should exit through one of the 3 gates, into one of the 3 hubs you can enter from the beginning. There he should be able to explore a small part of the hub only (either part of the first map, or small parts of several maps). The player should be able to finish a couple of sidequests, but unable to go on until a certain quest has been completed or a certain item has been found/purchased. This forces the player to travel a lot between locations and revisit old places again and again (like in Hexen, just on a larger scale).

After traveling back and forth between different hubs many times, the player solves a row of main quests (and as many sidequests as he likes). In the end he finds out all he needs and can enter the 4th, final hub, which has an entrance from one of the first 3 hubs. Here he defeats the end boss, and the game ends.

Everything below is not yet organized. This is a development version after all.

The Pantheon

There are 3 gods ruling over Cronos, analogue to the 3 major gods of classic Hinduism. Each god corresponds to one of the orders (the Cronos gods do not yet have a name so I use the original Sanskrit names for the moment):

Bramhah the creator - Arcanum (Order of Magi)
Vishnu the keeper - Church (Order of Clerics)
Shiva the destroyer - Legion (Order of Warriors)

Korax' Heritage: Scattered Evil

Design Guide

The base of magical spells

It's based on the theory of intersubjectivity, which claims that the world isn't real, it exists only in one's imagination. Also, there is a higher power (godhead) that projects this seemingly material world into the minds of all beings, that's why every being imagines the same world and that's why they can interact with each other in this world. Now, as to magic, it's nothing but that moment when a certain being lifts this veil from before his eyes and by seeing that this world is not real and he's outside of it, he can modify the fabric of this world, changing just a bit of a thread in the fabric here and there, thus making things that wouldn't be possible after the laws of the world - as long as someone is trapped within that world. After casting the spell, the veil falls back again, and the mage is once again just part of the world, as he isn't enlightened enough to be able to realize for longer periods of time the vastness of the universe and the cosmic illusion (mahyah), without his mind burning out from overload. That's why no mage can cast spells without stopping (represented by the numeral value of magic points the character has at his disposal at a given moment).

Spells

Sleep

Target falls asleep for a limited time. Probability of spell success and sleep time depend on player level, player stats, foe stats, saving rolls etc. (this goes more or less to all spells).

Convert

This spell converts one or several monsters, if successful. Converted monsters will behave in the same way summoned monsters do. They'll also keep their current EXP/HP etc.

Hour Glass

Slows down the world around the player. This gives a much greater advantage than just accelerating the player, since this way not only are you better able to control your character, but you also need less superior reflexes to dodge the (much slower flowing) projectiles of your foes.

Stop Time

This makes the whole game world and all effected entities to stop for a short time, in which the player can move around freely. since time is stopped, nothing can be killed or destroyed, but hits will be registered (e.g. if you hit a stained glass window twice and an Ettin 5 times, the one will shatter and the other die the moment the spell ends).

Wall of Fire

Creates a continuous, 64 units high wall of fire that spreads outwards in a circle from the player's body. If it hits a wall, an elevation over 64 units, water or slime, it'll stop in that area.

Korax' Heritage: Scattered Evil

Design Guide

If it hits ignitable objects (like trees), they'll burn down. If it hits monsters or NPCs, they'll suffer a certain amount of damage for every second they spend in the range of the flames.

Potions

Weapons

There are basically 2 kind of weapons, melee and ranged weapons. There are a couple of different types of both melee and ranged weapons. Some weapons are "combo weapons", meaning depending on certain conditions they can be used for melee or ranged attacks. Under a certain type, there might be any number of specific weapons.

Weapons can be magical in different ways. They can produce magical attacks by default (or through enhancements), or be enchanted through magical spells or items to have better physical abilities.

Melee weapons

There are 3 different types of melee damage: cut, crush and pierce. Depending on the weapon type, one or several types of attacks are possible. For a simpler real-time fight system, different attack types are omitted. This means a weapon that can cause different damage types will cause a certain amount of damage in all damage types at once.

Axes

Cause cut and crush damage, exact amount and proportion depends on the specific weapon (and its enhancements).

Swords

Cause cut and pierce damage, exact amount and proportion depends on the specific weapon (and its enhancements).

Hammers

Korax' Heritage: Scattered Evil

Design Guide

Cause crush damage, exact amount depends on the specific weapon (and its enhancements).

Staffs

Cause crush damage. Staffs can be fitted with a blade at their end and cause pierce damage as well afterwards.

Ranged Weapons

Crossbows

Staffs

SDK

Once SE is completed (or a short time afterwards) a complete SDK should be out. It should include:

- all share- and freeware editing tools we used ourselves (WadAuthor, WinTex, etc.)
- all custom config files for these editors (like hexen.wcf for WadAuthor)
- a short documentation with the SE-specific features/options/objects for these tools

Music

There is a base music in all maps (except maybe a couple of places where there is silence as an effect). When entering a special area of a map (like a shop in the town), there is a different music. At certain special occasions, a dedicated music piece can play as well (like longer conversations with certain NPCs, etc.)

There is also a pool of dedicated battle music pieces, from which one is chosen randomly every time the player enters a combat of any significance (the exact definition of combat

Korax' Heritage: Scattered Evil

Design Guide

stands yet to debate, it could be any kind of fighting, but also only starting with a certain number of enemies active around the player at a given time point, etc.).

Preferred music format is MP3 or a similar format. CD Audio would need too much space and MIDI isn't sufficient for our purposes. A special music engine is needed that can always engage the right music piece. It should be able to mix the music pieces, i.e. when there is a change the one should be slowly silenced over 1-2 seconds and the new one should get louder from zero to normal volume over the course of 1-2 seconds, too.

Mage's spells

The Mage will have no physical weapons except for 1 single staff. This staff can be charged with a variety of spells that can be then directly launched from the staff w/o using any mana/magic/whatever in the process, simply draining the charges. Recharge is a long and tedious process that needs a peaceful and quiet place (like an inn's room). If you make a charge spell, it happens in a second in real time but several hours will pass in game time.

The only other means of attack for the mage will be spells he can cast directly with his 2 hands and will require magic. Such combat spells he'll have to learn only once from a book, a scroll or some other source (this takes some game time), and then he has them handy at all times, as long as his Magic level is high enough to cast it.

The 3rd type of spells the mage can cast are time-consuming spells that have a long-time effect (like enchantments). These spells have to be first memorized, then depending on the spell certain things have to be prepared etc., and then the spell is cast. If you want to cast the spell again, you'll have to re-learn it again and do all the other stuff too.