

Guide for ISLE OF THE CURSED PHOENIX

(Pygame version)

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1 Introduction

The wall of fire continues to speed towards the island. Not long, and it will swallow my humble hut here. And I thought I was bad off when I lost all I had in the storm just two weeks ago, which left me shipwrecked on this cursed isle.

The people here are ecstatic. No wonder, for them those flames mean rebirth. Not only is this strange island home to phoenixes, it behaves like one itself! It will burn down to ashes, and then raise again from them. Eternal life — for those native to the isle.

Unfortunately, I am not one of those. The flames will consume me. They probably won't even leave ashes of me behind! Unless I escape them, that is.

Up north I need to go and collect one feather of every of the four kinds of phoenixes. Then I need to find and climb up the Rainbow Mountain. There, at last, I can summon a rainbow bridge with the feathers, and ascend it to leave this Isle of the Cursed Phoenix!

Welcome to Isle of the Cursed Phoenix! You are playing a shipwrecked adventurer. The isle you are on is about to be temporarily destroyed. So you need to explore your surrounding, become strong enough to survive the harsh trek to Rainbow Mountain and find phoenixes and collect their feathers.

1.1 System Requirements

This game requires Python and the Pygame library to be installed. It has only been tested with Python 2.4.

1.2 Interface and Environment

The interface is similar to most roguelikes:

- The upper left area displays a section of the map. You are represented by a white @. The map is only one screen wide, but 3-4 screens high. The fire you're running from will start consuming the map from the bottom up after 100 turns or so.
- Below the map, you see the current place and events that happened after your last action.
- In the upper right, your health and gold are displayed. Keeping the health above 0 is usually a good thing ;-), as is collecting as much gold as you can!
- The empty space below that will display phoenix feathers, magic gems and magic skills you collect. See below for more on them.
- All available actions are displayed in the lower right. You use the arrow keys to move, space to wait in place, shift-q to quit and other letter and number keys to do actions.

2 Gameplay

Your first priority is staying alive while finding phoenix nests. While you are at it, try to collect as many riches as you can. You will encounter monsters, treasure chests, magical gems and secret places on your journey. Sometimes you will see a phoenix flying overhead in some direction. They will always head from or to their nests. Every nest will contain one feather of the phoenix living there. You only need one of each of the different feathers (water, earth, fire and air) to win the game.

Finding a feather lets you select a skill in the domain of that phoenix. For example, if you find a fire phoenix feather, you can select the Blast skill. If you have a ruby, Blast gives you an additional option when you're attacked by a monster, which lets you destroy the poor thing without a fair fight¹. However, doing so risks losing the ruby!

All skills are fueled by gems of the color of their domain (water – sapphires, earth – emeralds, fire – rubies, air – topazes), however some (e.g. Trajectory, an air skill which lets you see if a phoenix is headed from or to its nest) will work at a reduced rate without gems. Be selective in which skills to pick: you only can get 7 out of the 24 skills in total and only 3 per domain.

If you have trouble finding a nest or are interested in some of the more secret places, people in a town (a white star on the map) can help you — for a price! Some places are so remote, however, that even the people in the towns do know of them. Finding them can be very beneficial!

When you explore the map, you'll encounter terrain you can't pass at first — deep forests (dark green &s), mountains (grey ^s) and glaciers (white ^s).

¹My beta tester was rather thrilled by the idea of refusing to give monsters their fair chance and declared Blast his favorite skill.

To pass deep forests you need Tree Hugging or Floating, mountains and glaciers can be passed with either Climbing or also Floating. Just ask your friendly neighborhood phoenixes for these skills. The lava flow (red ~s), on the other hand, can be passed normally. Those who don't know enough water phoenixes might want to bring a good bit of health with them, though.

Should you find yourself near Rainbow Mountain, but without any means to get there, don't despair! Buy some secret maps, or explore the area between the lava and the mountain range.

3 Reference

3.1 Symbols

Color	Symbol	Meaning	Description
dark green	.	Idyllic Plains	A boring, but safe place.
light green	.	Plains	Many things can be encountered here.
yellow	.	Barren Plains	Dangerous, but rewarding.
light green	&	Forest	Lots of trees, lots of elves, too.
dark green	&	Deep Forest	What might be hidden here?
light blue	~	Shallow Lake	Beware of drowning!
dark blue	~	Deep Lake	Is there something in the depths?
red	~	Lava	A smith's dream. Bring health!
light green	;	Grassy Hills	Might contain mines!
yellow	;	Hills	Dangerous version of the Grassy Hills.
white	*	Town	Knowledgeable locals.
various	=	Secret Place	What might they be?
red	#	Apocalypse	Don't let it catch you!
various	—	Phoenix Nests	Feathers included.
grey	^	Mountains	Get in the way.
white	^	Glaciers	Solitude. Recommended real estate for mages!

3.2 Skills

The following skills exist (all divisions follow Python rules, i.e. are integer divisions if both operands are integers):

3.2.1 Water

Mirage Reveals hidden buildings around you automatically. Radius is $\frac{sapphires+25}{30}$.

Reflection Reveals the stats of monsters encountered. Reveals up to monster strength $\lfloor (\sqrt{sapphires} + 1) \times 20 \rfloor$. Monsters are typically 10 Str apart, beginning with Str 10 for goblins.

Healing Allows you to heal outdoors when not in an encounter. Consumes a sapphire per healing action. Health gained is $50 + \lfloor 4 \times \log_{1.25} sapphires + 1 \rfloor$.

Pool of Life You avoid drowning in lakes. Also, lakes heal up to $1 + \lfloor 3 \times \log_2 \text{sapphires} + 1 \rfloor$, depending on the depth of the lake.

Cure Heals you $\lfloor 2 \times \log_{1.75} \text{sapphires} + 1 \rfloor$ per turn.

Water Shield Lets you resist damage in hot places, like lava. $25 + \text{sapphires}$ percent are resisted, with 75% max.

3.2.2 Earth

Tree Hugging Lets you walk through deep forests. Also increases you chances to find an emerald in forest by $5 + \lfloor \sqrt{\text{emeralds}} \times 2.5 \rfloor$ percent points.

Survey Increases the number of gems you can theoretically find in each tile by $\frac{1}{4} \sqrt{\text{emeralds}}$ times.

Gem Trade Lets you trade emeralds for other gems in every outdoor place. Chance to get two gems for an emerald is $\lfloor 3 \times \sqrt{\text{emeralds}} \rfloor$.

Greed Gives you $\lfloor \text{gold} \times \frac{1}{10000} \sqrt{\text{emeralds}} \rfloor$ gold interest every turn.

Stone Skin Lets you resist $5 + \text{emeralds}$ percent of almost all damage. Capped at 50%.

Mining You can mine in mines for gems. Chance to find a gem pocket instead of a gem are $\frac{\text{emeralds}}{2}$. Capped at 50%.

3.2.3 Fire

Blast You can destroy enemies without a fight. Has a $25 - \frac{\text{rubies}}{2}$ chance to cost a ruby. Capped at 5%.

Scorched Earth Lets you burn down trees and evaporate lakes at the cost of a ruby per action. Strength is $\lfloor \frac{1}{5} \log_2 \text{rubies} + 1 \rfloor + 1$ times normal.

Minting Creates gold when walking in lava. Amount created is $\frac{\text{rubies}}{3} \times 25$. Capped at 750.

Climbing Lets you access mountain and glaciers. Chance to find treasure when exploring mountains is $\frac{\text{rubies}}{5}$ percent. Capped at 10%.

Fiery Aura Kills enemies less than Str $\text{rubies} \times 2$ automatically. Capped at Str 150.

Forging Creates rubies when walking in lava. Amount created is $\lfloor \frac{1}{3} \sqrt{\text{rubies}} \rfloor$. Capped at 3.

3.2.4 Air

Trajectory Lets you see whether a phoenix is heading towards or away from its nest. Chance is $10 + \textit{topazes} \times 2$. Capped at 90%.

Angility Increases your chances to run away from monsters. Chance is increased by $5 + \textit{topazes}$ percent points. Cap is +50%.

Peace Avoid fights entirely, having monster hand over their gold. Chance is $\textit{topazes}$. Capped at 100%.

Wind Control Slows down the apocalypse by $\frac{\textit{topazes} \times 3}{5}$ percent. Capped at 60%.

Conjuring Lets you create topazes out of thin air, regardless where you are. Chance is $\sqrt{\textit{topazes}}$. Capped at 10%.

Floating Lets you access all terrain and evade traps. Chance to evade traps is $\textit{topazes} \times 2$ percent. Capped at 100%.