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About This Game

Swords and Sorcery - Underworld is a party-based, first person view role-playing game with turn-based combat and a square grid 3D environment. The art was made by a professional comics illustrator.

Abstract yet deeply tactical combat, with distance and timing management. Your characters can evade or enter the melee, wait and take their turn a little later, hide, order the group forward or back. Many combat options will depend on positionning choices you make.

Characters will develop a variety of abilities and strengths that depend on their class. Knights, for instance, learn Ambidextria, Powerhouse and Berserk as they develop.

40 spells (Priest and Sorcerer, outdoor and indoor, combat and non-combat).

Over 100 illustrated enemies, many of which have one or two special abilities that offer varied challenges. Some, for instance will summon new enemies. Some will throw bombs, turn characters to stone or lock them in an inferno until the battle ends... If they survive that long...

250 items, many with magical or otherwise valuable properties.

Three towns to discover and travel back to for food, equipment, healing and other services offered by NPCs.

Many unique NPCs that will offer quests, help your party gain in strength, guide you or deceive you.

Traps, puzzles, slides and teleports add a variety of non-combat challenges. Puzzles are largely integrated in your interaction with the game world.

Dynamic world map illustrates 20 levels as they are discovered.

40 fullscreen story illustrations.

Find books to read that contain clues for quests and flesh out the backstory.

A bestiary allows you to collect notes on monsters containing clues for quests and indications as to how to defeat the monster described.

Title: Swords and Sorcery - Underworld - Definitive Edition
Genre: Adventure, Indie, RPG
Developer:
OlderBytes
Publisher:
OlderBytes
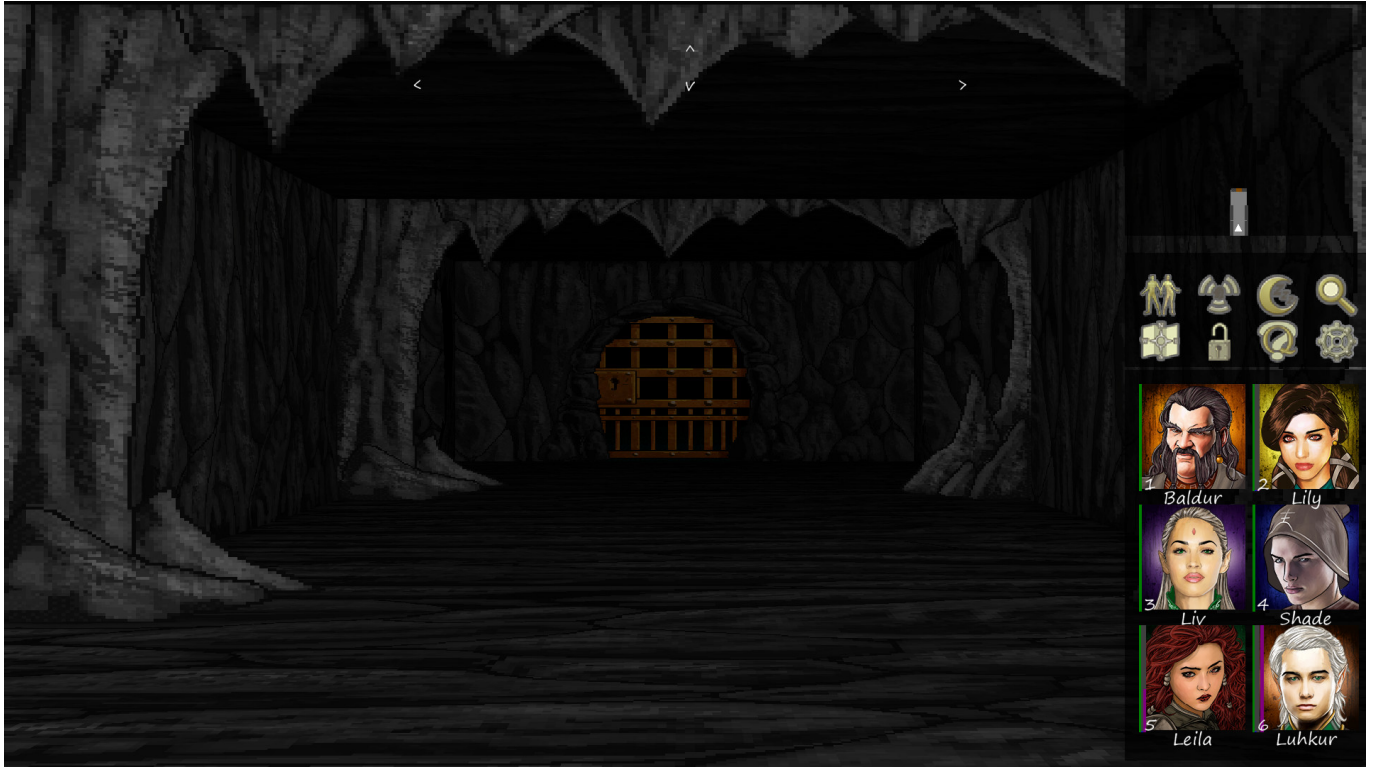Release Date: 15 Dec, 2015
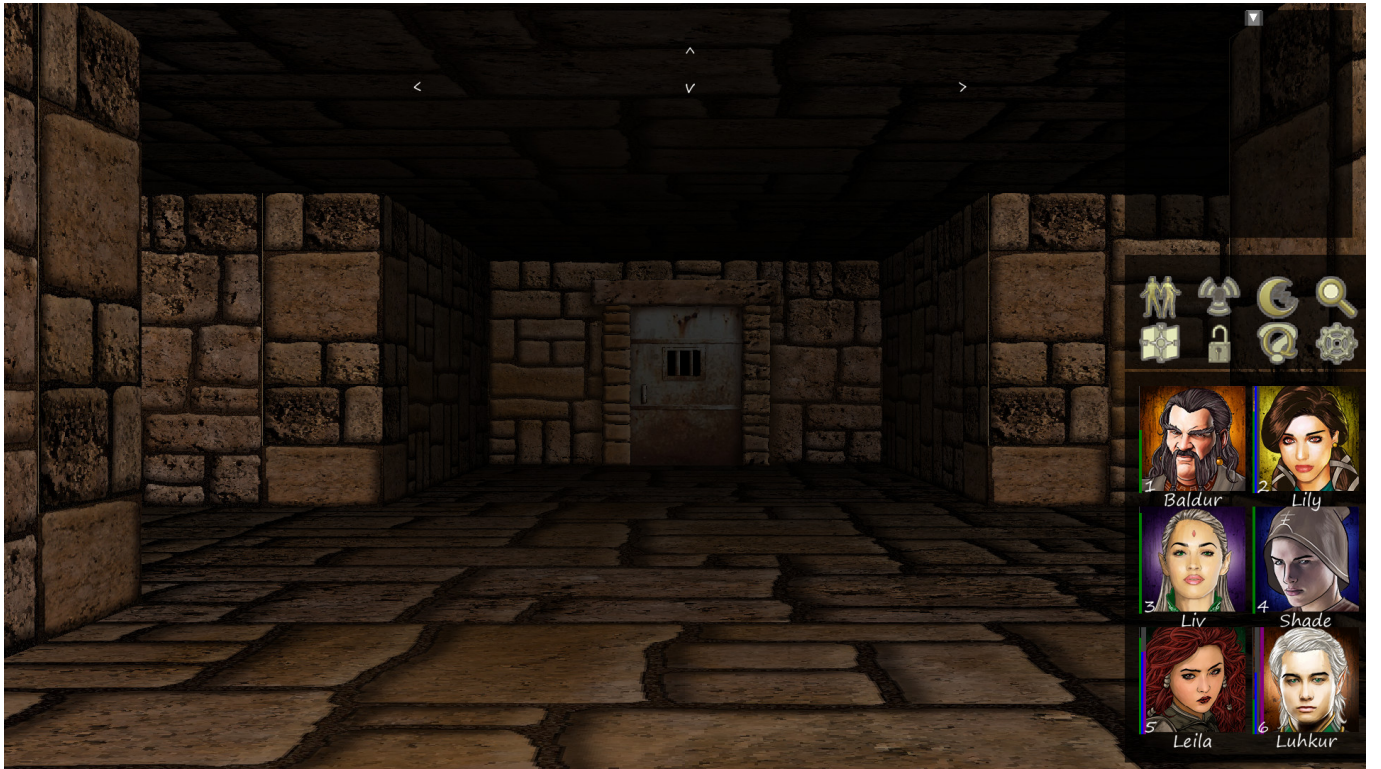
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Minimum:

OS: Windows XP or better

Processor: 1.6 Ghz

Memory: 1024 MB RAM

Storage: 200 MB available space

English,French

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Great old school crpg experience, quite tough,but really satisfying and rewarding when you make some progress and become more skilled with your party management.
I could write a wall of text about this game but there are others who can do that much more eloquently than I.
Developers like these guys deserve our support, its obvious that they care about their game and are activlely engaged with their community. There are alot of people that will probably just not get what this type of game is all about, but for those that do they are in for a rewarding and addictive experience.

Highly recommended !. Coolest game in a while. I totally reccomend it. If you played and enjoyed any of the Might & Magic games you will feel right at home here.

I'm in a game hole now that I'm finished with it.

I hope there is more depth to character build, dungeons and story in the expansion. That doesn't mean this game doesn't have depth, but you can tell the designer wants the game that comes in the box with three 5-1\/4" floppy disks instead of one. Any gamer from the 80's recognizes what I'm trying to say. Bigger!

I appreciate a game designer that recognizes where it came from. Thanks Older Bytes.. I played Bards Tale in 1985. Lovely game.

99 Barbarians. Only being able to save in the Adventures Guild. The eerie music from the temples.

Brian The Fist. El Cid. A bard that needs to take a swig of his wineskin before playing some musical tunes. Four mage classes. A mad monk that fights with only his hands and feet.

I could go on. A masterpiece. Played it again for 60 hours a few years ago when the original games were included in the later and mostly useless comedic Bards Tale remake.

Between 1985 and this day I have always asked why no developers have wanted to create something like that. Where are the mainstream Bards Tale games?

So huge, HUGE credit to OlderBytes for not only asking the question but for putting their money in and developing this gem.

A dungeon crawler, turn based combat. Grid based movement. Locked doors. Treasure. Healing. Items.

Experience points. Exploring.

Exploration is one of the game's best points. You would think that map design on a grid is pretty easy. But I can tell you about some awful, awful games where the maps were obscene or even \u2665\u2665\u2665\u2665\u2665\u2665\u2665. The maps in this game feel really well thought out. They really made me want to explore every nook and crook and are quite varied.

I reckon the game developer must be a proper gamer himself as in every town I visited, the place I wanted to visit first was the last place I found. Last place - each time. Diabolical game design or bad damn luck for me? I am talking about the shop or that one time I needed food. Where the heck are they?

The games graphics are very competent and unusual. Encounters can be interesting as the bestiary is quite varied. The game is smarter than it looks. Old school game play has been upgraded in some ways, such as requirements to plan ahead and create holy water for your priest. My Thief had a Stun option. I loved my thief as once hiding in the shadows he could one shot kill some nasties. He was also able to find daggers that had extra assassin damage - lovely. I can't imagine having a party without a priest as healing in the midst of battle was crucial to my experience.

Undead. More of those folks than in an episode of The Walking Dead. Another thing new to the genre is that my party had to be "Blessed" before they could apply any damage to the foul creatures. I even came across a lava\/ fire area I could not traverse

until I remembered I had a "levitate" spell. Cool.

The combat itself is quite interesting and requires full concentration as it is easy to get whacked if you assume spamming Attack will get you through. Combat is almost like little puzzles where you need to figure out who to go forward, who to heal, who to drop out of melee. There is even one option that allows one party member to protect another. My priest has a spell that allows her to read minds in combat which then builds up your Bestiary. At this point, I can't be sure whether this is useful in game or useful building a Steam Achievement. Still interesting reading the text.

It's not all hugs and kisses though. Just one thing.

One shot kills. Save scumming. I hate it and this game positively encourages it.

I would really love to know how many fights other gamers can go before saving. Really. What is the record so far?

It breaks the immersion of what could be a fantastic game. Behind every nook and cranny there is an encounter that can wipe out your whole party and kill you stone dead. No notice. No warning. Return to "GO". Behind every nook and cranny and even in nooks you have even visited before. It's the random encounter generator or level list or something.

Something that can really spoil the flow of the game. It stops me from giving this a "I love this game" to "I recommend you try this game".

I will ponder on this final criticism of the game for now as I would like try it out for more.

Other thoughts?

Loot. Would be nice if some encounters left behind food or water.
Scrolls that can raise the dead if your party finishes an encounter a few men short.
Encounters that leave behind food you can eat and heal yourself.
Cough - some directions in town?
Some unique save locations instead of save anywhere - would help immersion.
Better armour\/ equipment\/ spells of mages. Those guys just die all the time.. If you are looking for a dungeon crawl with old-school flavor mixed with some modern sensibilities, with a heavy dose of abstracted turn-based combat challenges, you really owe it to yourself to at least give S&S: Underworld a closer look. There's a lot of game there - a pretty epic quest all-told. Plenty of enemy types, maps, quests, puzzles, and items to contend with.

Combat can be challenging, but usually requires skillful application of skills, spells, and items with a little bit of luck to prevail. Almost every enemy type has some kind of special ability to deal with, so just applying brute force only works in simpler encounters.. Coolest game in a while. I totally reccomend it. If you played and enjoyed any of the Might & Magic games you will feel right at home here.

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Sorry, but difficulty level has nothing to do with this. Even the tutorial is just unplayable in the sense of "hey every opponent will one-shot you" kind of diffculty.

The developers explained in the discussion forum how to act on those kind of enemies - imho did they plan\/implement it the right way? No.
Having to save characters constantly afte being one-shotted, being it a "unconscious" state or being completey dead makes no difference here - is just bad gameplay.
True tactics can only come into play if you have more than a binary state of your characters.

Sorcerer are on level 1 not even able to use a range spell? Well... what?

Refund.. If you grew up playing games like Bard's Tale and Dungeon Master, you'll probably quite enjoy this indie throwback to the golden days of dungeon crawling. It's definitely a challenge, I've played many hours before it came to steam and getting beyond the third level down presents a learning curve but ultimately proves to be very rewarding.

Good luck!. Six man party hex-based movement with turn-based combat dungeon crawler. There are not many games around in this genre, so I take what it's there. And this one is a decent one, it may not have animated monsters but arts are really nice. And Swords and Sorcery - Underworld is complex enough to keep me entertained. Bugs free also.. tl;dr - This game plays exactly like a game from the late 80s. Start out pathetically weak with no armor or weapons to speak of and pray to the RNG gods your entire party isnt 1-shotted. You're going to have to grind for gold and XP before you can even think about going and doing anything. Nice hand drawn art, minimal stereotypical sound, and some weird UI choices. Its not terrible, but it's not great either. Besides the cool images during conversation scenes, theres not muct to set it apart from the crowd. If it had come out in 1989, it'd be great, but modern grid-dungeons have come a long way since then. I'm only recommending it for hardcore fans of the genre who like games like the early Wizardrys where theres a lot of RNG luck and grinding just to stay alive.

_____

This is an true-to-the-late-80s turn based dungeon crawler with interesting hand drawn graphics. The graphics are rendered in great detail, with plot scenes being shown with static full screen brightly colored comic book-style art.

 When I say "true to the late 80s", I mean it. Unlike many other games that took what was great about that era's RPGs and left the rest, Underworld really makes you feel like you're playing a game created in 1990 but with a unique art style.

Your characters start out pitifully weak with nothing but an extremely low level melee and ranged weapon. No armor, no gold, One slap of the RNG god and you're going down to a random encounter due to how pathetic your characters are- one hit knockdowns are the norm until you reach level 2 and\/or get some better armor and even at level 2 they're very common.

Fortunately theres an "unconciousness" state that incapacitates a char before death, but one hit while in that state and its off to the temple to pay a fee for res. To get even semi-decent, you're going to have to run around town grinding random encounters for gold to get your chars even marginally equipped. I feel like I'm playing the early Wizardrys here. Did I mention how much I *hate* grinding? I did way too much of it in the actual 80s, I guess. There's a reason many RPGs dont have grinding anymore, its not fun to most people. Fortunately, there is an item repeatably dropped by a certain random enemy type you can trade to the guard blocking the catacombs for 100g and 20xp. Unfortunately, you have to run all over hells half acre trying to encounter that specific enemy type. Oh, and you can't just level, you have to train which costs gold. And it takes a *lot* of XP to level, but all you get out of it is 3 skill points.

Theres a mini-map in the corner (thank god), and apparently a larger world map that has places of interest marked. I still like making notations on maps - guess it comes from my graph paper and pencil days. Still, the minimap is nice - no graph paper needed. Once you get yourself equipped, you can head off to the catacombs and continue the plot, which revolves around a giant demon somehow being released and taunting the party when you leave the inn. Of course you are told by someone that your party has a great fate, which is, of course, to try and stop the demon.

Theres also sidequests. I'm currently doing a fetch quest at level 2. Level 2 seems to be a bit easier, not so many one hit knockouts. If this game progresses like most of the 80s games, you should get strong enough that the grinding isn't as required once you're out of the early game, but its still annoying and not a good start to the game.

The UI has some weirdness. Like most games of this style theres a bunch of quick icons on the HUD (char sheet, rest, system etc). I find it odd however, that in order to cast a spell you must go to the spellcaster's char sheet, then hit enter, then select the spell, but theres a quickbar icon for the tutorial. Which is a player going to use more? The tutorial, or the spellbook? But yet theres no quickbar "cast spell" icon?

Also, to pick a locked door, you must bump into the door, which flashes "locked" on the screen. Then you must select the "unlock" icon. If you fail the picking, instead of just hitting unlock again, you have to bump into the door, get the "locked" message, then hit "u" or click the "unlock" icon all over again.
For some unknown reason, when you fail picking a lock, it makes the same sound as the noise of someone going unconcious in combat. Which sounds like a punch\/swing, and then a thud like someone getting hit and dropping to the ground. When you fail to pick a lock. Why? The first time I heard it, I thought there was a trap that went off. But no, thats just the noise it makes. The sound of succeeding to pick a lock is what youd expect, a metallic tumbler shifting and *click*. So why the weird fail sound?

Speaking of sounds, they are minimal at best. Theres a nice bird sound when you're in town. However, it plays even in areas that would be considered "inside". The rest is just the typical grunts, clangs, swoosh, growls and so on that are standard in RPGs. Nothing like that cool weird chant the brigands made in Wizardry 6.

Overall, Underworld is just OK. If you're a fan of the genre, its worth picking up ON SALE. But I hope you like grinding..
UPDATE: I have changed my review from negative to positive. I took a break from this to play some other games and have come back to try it again. UNfortunately, it's been long enough that I can't remember how to get back to where the specific crash issues occured, so I'm going to start a fresh game. I still experience the freeze ups just not as often, but am going to attribute these to the possibility of my graphics card not playing nicely even though it should. I've had a couple of other odd experiences outside of this game that may be related. Just remember experiences may vary from one PC to another.

ORIGINAL POST: I only give this a negative recommendation because it suffers from constant fatal errors. If these were corrected I would say it is a fun and challenging game for its style and genre. However, I played the game past level 5 when it starts to make sense and becomes somewhat easier, but it just becomes too much work and less play to be enjoyable. because this is hasn't had any updates for over a year and is stated as Definitive Edition still having these issues is a big detractor.

The developer has stated some of these issues are related to Win 10 and to apply a fix listed in a post. I have done this and the reponse from the fix was there were no issues with my system. I have experienced three types of fatal errors which are likely all the same at the root of it all. The three types of errors I experienced were:

1) Game freeze with no error or debug message which required closing the window and killing the process.;
2) Out of Memory causing the game to close upon clicking OK. I'm not sure what language the game was written in, but I've seen tons of these in programs written in C and C++.
3) Fatal crash with a debug window. I've had this happen twice, one at the entrance to the Lake and in the Goblin Hall.

```
##############################################################################################
FATAL ERROR in
action number 1
of Draw Event
for object scr_block:

DoAdd :2: illegal array use
at gml_Script_monsterspecial
##############################################################################################
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
stack frame is
gml_Script_monsterspecial (line 0)
gml_Script_defend
gml_Script_combat
gml_Script_write_monsters
```

gml_Script_paintwalls
gml_Object_scr_block_Draw_0

I really want to like the game more but it has gotten to be a major pain to play. I tried saving often, but when it crashes within 5 minutes (literally) of startup saving every 10 steps, again, is a detractor. I hope Sovereign doesn't have theese issue as I'd like to play it too. I like these type of games.. If you have fond memories of old RPGs such as Wizardry, Might and Might 1, or Bard's Tale, this may be the game for you. I bought and finished this game within the past week with the 20 hours played that you see here and it brought back some great memories of playing those old games. The game plays the most like the original Might and Magic and Bard's Tale 1. You create a party of 6 adventurers and you need to go back to an Inn to rest and also visit a Trainer to level up. It does have a reasonable automap feature that automatically annotates important locations for you.

Like many of the old rpgs, the first few levels are the toughest and if you understand the game system and know how to use your abilities and spells it gets easier as the game goes on. I thoroughly enjoyed this game but my only warning is this game may not make as much sense to people who did not grow up playing games like Bard's Tale and Might and Magic in the 80's.. OK - I made it through about 1/3 of this game and really wanted to like it. However I just got bored. Its clearly a homage to the Might and Magic Series (similar ideas to World of Xeen) however you are better off just playing that series rather than this game. There is no animation, no voice, very few NPCs - the world is pretty bland and lifeless. I understand that its the product of a small shop however it didn't capture my interest. You pretty much use the same battle tactics over and over while progressing through a pretty shallow story grinding away through levels. Playing this actually inspired me to go back to an old Might and Magic Game for another playthrough. The quality of those games still shines today. My advice - if you want a grid based crawler like this game, just go play the best (Might and Magic games). GOG has them running nicely on modern machines.. Really good old school 'blobber'. It's a little rough around the edges sometimes, don't expect AAA dungeon textures, but it's got charm and that crucial feel of exploring a dangerous area where every step counts. If you played any of the recent crop of grid-based dungeon romps like the Grimrocks and wished they had turn based combat, get this game. If you like the Etrian Odyssey series or Dark Spire on the DS, get this game. If you liked the more recent Elminage Gothic or M&MX, get this game.

Look past the textures and the lack of flashy animations and there's a great game with challenging and varied turn based combat here. Very glad I bought it and I've already got more enjoyment out of it than a lot of AAA games released recently.

A couple of tips- save OFTEN early on and make sure to (D)rop your squishies out of melee range if they start combat in it.

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