


The obelisk to the right here is inscribed with a useful piece of information. It could be a clue as to what to do next, or instructions on how to perform a special move. Anything, really. Read all obelisks for top results in Thor's game.

There are all kinds of treasure chests in Thor, with varying qualities of booty inside. The big red ones (as seen above) contain extra weapons, such as bows and staves, to add to Thor's arsenal. Others harbour food, keys, magic gems, spells, and all manner of other gubbins. Red ones and black ones are the best. Just like Fruit Pastilles.

All waterways in Thor run, like lots of water in real life, following a current. The drag of this current makes it harder to control Thor (obviously), and can lead to some tricky scrapes in combat as you try to position your plucky Arab only to have him washed away by a stream. Run through the eau to avoid the worst tidal excesses.



Arabian Knight Fever

The story of **the Story of Thor** was best described by Madness in their 1980 hit **Baggy Trousers** with the words "Baggy trousers, great big sword/ Adventuring around a strange fantasy environment invaded by an evil marauding horde". **We catch his new adventures...**

Gaze upwards and you'll notice a gaggle of giant mutant rats. It's easy enough to avoid confronting this particular group. Just don't read the sign in the middle of the room which warns you about them. Then they don't appear.

SINCE SINBAD, THE LAST PRINCE OF ARABIA, CLEARED THE COUNTRYSIDE OF SKELETONS, DRAGONS, CYCLOPS' AND TOM BAKER, THINGS HAVE REMAINED PRETTY QUIET IN THE VALLEY OF HORRORS. BUT WITH SINBAD NOW A WRINKLED OLD CODGER WHO CAN BARELY POINT HIMSELF IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION FOR THE TOILET LET ALONE FIGHT OFF THE RAVAGES OF MONSTERS THE KINGDOM NEEDS A NEW PROTECTOR. AND THAT PROTECTOR IS YOU, YOUTHFUL THOR, A STRAPPING YOUNG LAD, TYPICALLY BLONDE AND PALE-SKINNED FOR THE ROASTING HOT SUN-FRIED REGION. WELL, IT DOESN'T SEEM TO MATTER THAT THE MAIN DEFENCE OF THE REALM IS A PONCEY KID WHO'D LOOK MORE AT HOME IN THE LINE-UP FOR BOYZONE THAN THE ARMY WHEN YOU'VE SEEN NEITHER HIDE NOR TENTACLE OF ANY MONSTER IN THE AREA FOR THE LAST THIRTY YEARS. WELL THINK AGAIN, YOU LILY-LIVERED SANDNIKS, FOR THE LAST THIRTY YEARS, I – THE DEPOSED NEMESIS OF THE VALLEY OF HORRORS – HAVE BEEN PLANNING, SCHEMING AND CREATING, AWAITING MY TRIUMPHANT RETURN. HAHA, YOU MODERN ARABIANS HAVE BEEN SPOILED BY YOUR EASY LIVING AND NEW-FANGLED WAYS. YOU ARE POWERLESS AGAINST THE OLD MAGIC, AND THIS IS MY DOMAIN, I, WARLOCK RAY HARRYHAUSEN! I HAVE NO NEED FOR SILICON GRAPHICS TECHNOLOGY WHEN MY ARMIES OF STOP-MOTION ANIMATED DEMONS JUDDER ALONG THEIR PATH TO WAR. FOOLS! HOW CAN YOU KILL WHAT IS MADE OF CLAY, BORN OF THE DEAD EARTH OF EARTH?

And once Arabia is mine, I shall stoop to conquer the realms of Industrial, Light and Magic. Kwa-ha-ha-haaa!

But of course this wouldn't be any fun without issuing the customary challenge to you, feeble adventurer. My legions are in place, baggy pants, and if you want to save the miserable lives of your human compatriots now is the time to seek me out in my lair – if you dare!!

AND NOW A WORD FROM SATURN MAG

Hello there. Of course, proper Sega players will know that this isn't the first time Thor has been asked to save the lives of his neighbours. The Story of Thor, his first outing, was released on the Megadrive about a year and a half >>

>> ago. The basic premise of the game remains similar. It's an action RPG, which means whilst there's a great deal of wandering around and puzzle solving, it's all done through an action character interface, allowing plenty of scope for combat (of which there is lots) and laying as much importance on joypad skills as IQ. Nearly. For Thor players can expect a lofty level of intellectual challenge from this game. That doesn't mean you'll be asked questions on your specialist subject or hard sums or anything. It's just that in order to get anywhere you've got to use a bit of lateral thinking, and try a few things that you'd normally think of as cheating a bit, such as using enemies as platforms and the like. But, following the normal pattern for RPGs, you can't just sharpen your sword and wade in against the marauders. Oh no. First, you've got to find the magic elemental spirits (detailed elsewhere in this Showcase) who aid your progress with their magic elemental prowess. Only then, fully allied, are you ready for the main mission. But, because it's an RPG with a big map you're free to explore any time, it is possible (like in the first game) to get into the action with only a paltry couple of elementals instead of the full complement. And then you'll die.

Thor, whilst still awaiting translation from the Japanese for this country and America (and the rest of the world apart from Japan, presumably) is just about finished, and it looks pretty corking already. The graphics aren't totally groundbreaking, for sure, but there's plenty of visual effects on offer and the main in-game ones are lovely and detailed. Whether the challenge and quality of the game live up to the promise of the pre-production version remains to be seen. Rest assured we'll bring you full details concerning its quality in a future issue. Probably the next one, in fact.



The picture to the left shows Thor's village chief lamenting the strange and fatal illness which has suddenly befallen his daughter. Luckily your little pixie has powers of healing, so you're able to awaken her. And then everyone likes you and you can go back to fighting monsters without receiving any thanks at all from anyone.



Fighting is wrong, yet still monsters persist in perpetuating the cycle of violence. Kill them all, that'll show the pesky blighters. Kill two of them here.



Hard thor

Thor isn't just the Protector of Arabia because he's friendly with a couple of fairies. In fact, despite his hair, he's quite tough. Especially with his sword. For unlike other RPG characters, Thor studied at the Streetfighter School for the Arabian Martial Arts, where he learned the ancient lexicon of Special Moves. But he's a forgetful one is our Thor, and sometimes he needs to consult the carved obelisks littered around the game for tips on how to perform them. Some obelisks (with the acest tips written on them) are hidden away in tricky secret areas, and they're well worth seeking out. But for you, the prospective player, here's a quick rundown of Thor's staple manoeuvres.

STAB: Press the attack button quickly and Thor jabs his sword out. Doesn't do lots of damage, but you can quickly repeat the process.

SLASH: Keep the attack button held momentarily before release for this more potent swipe, which decks most opponents, but doesn't kill many.

JUMPING KICK: Airborne enemies, and tall ones, and ones climbing walls, and some other ones, are particularly vulnerable to this quite weak attack. Run towards your enemy with a double-direction-press and attack. You'll run your foe straight through for multiple hits, ending in a harsh slash.

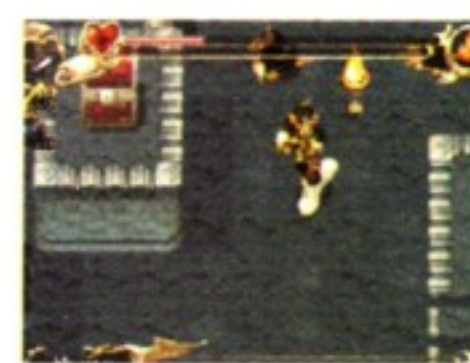
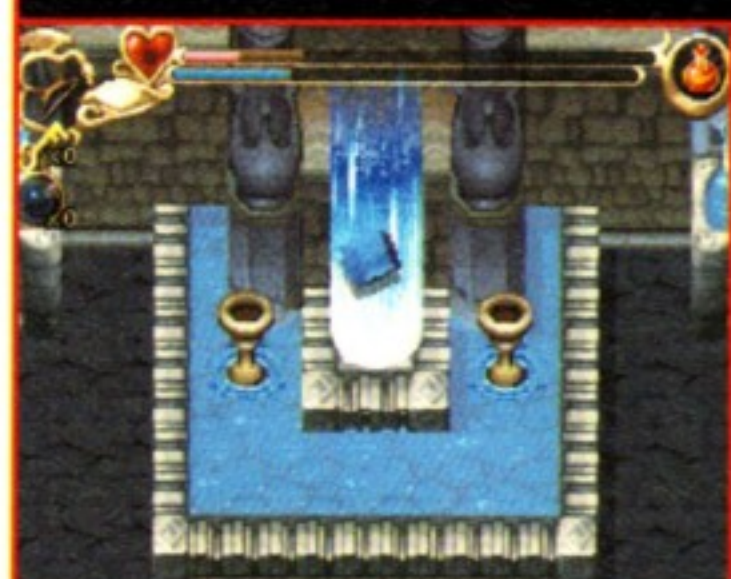
SOMERSAULT HACK: Pull off a kind of Sonic Boom movement for this action. Good for avoiding attack whilst causing serious damage, but hard to make it connect.

SMITE: Whirl the joypad in a circle and hit the fire button and Thor exhibits the most powerful attack in his arsenal, spinning his sword around in an arc and decking anything in its path. Causes fair damage (although not loads), but very useful for getting out of a corner.

Serving spirits

Thor isn't exactly defenceless. In fact, he's a bit tasty, if you know I mean. Put it this way, if you spilt his pint of sand juice you'd be well advised to get him another one in sharpish. Unless you're a big skinhead, in which

case you should check to see if he's with his mates before laughing at his wet kecks and calling him a girl. For Thor's pals are fairies. Now if someone told you their best friends were fairies you'd probably avoid them anyway, ever keen to avoid a potentially dangerous nutcase. But Thor's friends are *real* fairies, that he's found at the bottom of his garden. Don't laugh – it's *true*. The initial thrust of Thor's quest is to find the six elementals whose magical powers are essential to Thor's triumphant progress. Each elemental is imprisoned by the evil minions of Harryhausen, and once freed remain the loyal servant of our hero. Being naturally shy his cohorts stay out of view until his magic armlet shoots a Summoning Bolt against the element which corresponds with the elemental required (ie water for the Water Spirit, a hole in the floor for the Shadow Spirit) Each elemental is equipped with three magic functions. Two of these are generally attacks, with the third being a unique skill, such as healing or stretching through gaps. But the thing with fairies is that they're magical creatures, and require a steady supply of spiritual manna energy to maintain their corporeal presence. Luckily Thor has a blue bar full of the stuff, and is only too happy to share it around. Simply having an elemental escort costs manna, and using their powers costs even more. Once all your manna is gone the elemental disappears. But once your elemental disappears your manna returns to full power, allowing you to summon them again! Hooray for the fairies!



Family thor tunes

The music in Thor was written by none other than Yuzo Koshiro, also responsible for the soundtracks featured on Streets of Rage 1,2 and 3 and Shinobi on the Megadrive. He's a popular man in his native land, where his CD remixes of game music sell strangely well. For Thor he's gone all John Williams and written a classical-sounding score to enhance the fantasy atmos. Well done, that chap.



The bosses in Thor are as ugly as they are gargantuan. Each has a number of attack patterns and takes a lot of damage before, like Undine here, kicking the bucket. But as with most games bosses there's always a workable system to their downfall.

