

## PRESS / TO OPEN THE ADVANCED INVENTORY SCREEN

Cataclysm DDA Spoonfed: The Guide for Morons  
For 0.A-git

Get it here: <http://www.cataclysmdda.com/>

Download and compile the github version for the most up-to-date experience. There's a compiling guide on the wiki ([http://www.wiki.cataclysmdda.com/index.php?title=How\\_to\\_compile](http://www.wiki.cataclysmdda.com/index.php?title=How_to_compile)), and if that doesn't work read the COMPILING file in the Cataclysm-DDA-master folder.

In the options menu: Don't enable NPCs, they'll fuck up your game. Enable Celsius/Metric/24 hour time if you like that sort of thing. Snap to target is very useful for long-range sniping, but can be disorienting. Make sure static spawn is set to true; this guide is only for static spawn and does not cover dynamic spawn. Turn on autosave; it now actually saves everything, so it's very good to have on in case of a crash. Make sure Circular Distances is disabled because it's stupid and bullshit. You should probably set Skill Rust to something other than Vanilla, because Vanilla skill rust is very annoying. Any one of Capped, Int, or IntCap is better.

If you're playing on a Mac, open the Terminal preferences and enable "Use bright colours for bold text". It's required to see some of the greys in Cataclysm, and it's not enabled by default.

>CharGen

Negative Traits: Addictive Personality, Glass Jaw, Heavy Sleeper, Insomniac, Lightweight, Poor Hearing

Positive Traits: Fast Healer, Night Vision, Quick, Robust Genetics, Melee Weapon Training (Eskrima)

Profession: Scoundrel

Stats: 8 Str, 8 Dex, 11 Int, 10 Per.

World Gen Options: Just go with the default.

World Name: Up to you.

All these negative traits together add up to be very slightly annoying, at worst. The other stuff you get in exchange is game-changingly good. Quick lets you outrun most zombies, ignore low levels of pain, and makes you generally 10% better at doing things. Fast Healer means all of your health heals overnight no matter how low it is. Night Vision increases your vision radius in the dark from 1 tile to 2 tiles, which lets you do things in the dark without being surprise-buttrapped by surprise zombies, and makes ranged weaponry actually useable at night. Robust Genetics means that mutations are 1/3 good and 2/3 random, rather than 1/3 bad and 2/3 random; this is massively useful once you start playing with mutagen.

Scoundrel gives you decent starting clothing, and the incredibly good switchblade. Eskrima is turns your switchblade into a blender that will kill anything. The picklock kit is basically useless.

You want a decent amount of Str because Str determines how much HP you have. High Int lets you read skill books quickly, which means you can spend less time reading and more time gathering loot for the pile. 10 Per is needed to spot land-mines so you don't suddenly blow up for no discernible reason and whine in the thread. Dex isn't that great if you're not trying to make a ranged/throwing monster.

Note that several traits do nothing if NPCs are not enabled. You can load up on these negative traits and gain several points effectively for free, but I don't recommend doing so. It feels too much like cheating to me.

Once you stop always ending up at red torso health at the end of the day, and Fast Healer thus becomes less useful, you might want to drop it on your next character and pick up either Fast Learner, Optimist, or Stylish. Optimist increases all positive morale effects by 25%, and decreases all negative morale effects by 25%. So a

+100 morale effect would become +125, and a -100 morale effect would become -75. Optimist also adds a constant +5 morale effect. Fast Learner is a constant +15 bonus focus, independent of how much focus you actually have. So if you have 100 focus, Fast Learner makes that function as 115. If you have 50, Fast Learner makes that function as 65. Stylish gives you small morale bonuses for wearing fancy clothing, anywhere from +2 to +8 depending on how fancy that particular piece of clothing is and which body part it covers. This won't give you a lot of morale at the start, but once you find a bunch of fancy stuff you can wear all the time it's effectively a large permanent morale bonus. They are all very, very good for accelerating your skill gain.

## >Actually Playing The Game

In the Evac Shelter, smash (press s, then the direction you want to smash) one of the benches until it breaks, then pick up and wield one of the generated two-by-fours. Then smash one of the lockers until it breaks, and go pick up the pipe. You just want the pipe to craft a makeshift crowbar, but you can't really smash the locker with just your fists or switchblade, so you need the two-by-four.

Head outside and find a rock, then craft a makeshift crowbar. (press &) Crowbars are crazy useful; one of their applications is letting you open locked doors and windows without smashing them. Makeshift crowbars are worse at crowbarring things than an actual crowbar, so if you find one on a zombie or in a hardware store, pick it up and use that one instead. You can open doors or windows with it by pressing a to apply, pressing the letter assigned to your makeshift crowbar, and then selecting the direction you want to apply it in.

Doors or windows may require multiple applications, and windows may break. If a window breaks, just move to another window, it's not worth the time to clean out the broken glass. You should try to enter through doors if possible, as breaking windows causes noise, attracting zombies. Broken glass in uncleared window frames might cut you or damage your clothing as you go through, which is mildly annoying and can eventually destroy your clothes if you do it enough. Feel free to go through uncleared window-frames in emergencies, though. Clear windows by pressing \* next to a window to bring up the construction menu, then i, then the direction of the uncleared window.

Remember to check downstairs in the Evac Shelter for mostly useless crap but occasional good stuff.

Press " to enable auto-safe mode. Press m for map, figure out where the nearest town is and walk towards it. Don't try to go for any of the big stores in the middle of town or any of the multiple-tile locations, like Public Works or Hotels yet, just stay on the fringes and loot houses for now.

Kill zombies by moving into them; I'll go into more detail about the various zombie types later.

## >Looting

You're looking for clothing with high volume and/or low encumbrance, disinfectant, drugs, water, food, books, and assorted tools like sewing kits/thread/batteries/duct tape, in that order. You're also looking for a bedroom on the fringes of town with all the windows and doors intact, with the bed a reasonable distance from any windows, and with a toilet in the same house. Use this as a home base and dumping ground for all your stuff. If you find a place with lots of good stuff that you can't carry just yet, mark it on your map by pressing N in the map screen and come back later. You should also mark places you've finished looting so you don't waste your time, your home base so you don't forget where it is, and large clusters of monsters so you don't accidentally die. You only need one of each skill book. You'll be hard-pressed to find an upgrade to your switchblade; it's one of the best weapons that can also be used in Eskrima. The combat knife and machete are both better, but you're not likely to find one of those for a while.

If one of the windows in your bedroom gets smashed by you or by zombies, you can board it up. You'll need some sort of hammer, 4 two-by-fours, and 8 nails. Boarded up windows are sturdier than regular windows, but

can't be opened anymore.

House basements often contain much better loot than what you'll find outside. Basements can be full of non-perishable food, guns and ammo, chemistry and crafting components, massive amounts of weed, or nothing at all. It's always worth exploring a house basement, and if you find a basement with a bed, you should move all your stuff there post-haste. Zombies won't wander into basements on their own, so you can sleep there without worrying about getting attacked. Enemies can follow you down stairs, but won't come down if they're not actively chasing you.

Get renewable food by killing animals, butchering them, and cooking the meat. Cooking meat requires a fire, a pot/pan/stone pot, and uncooked meat. Eating uncooked meat can give you parasites, so don't do it. You can find tons of pots and pans inside houses, on top of the ovens. Ovens are the grey # next to refrigerators. Set fires by activating a matchbook or lighter and selecting a square with some kindling on it, like a two-by-four or some splintered wood. You can safely set fires outside of the house, or in an oven. However, it's preferable to set fires outside, so the smoke will dissipate. Inside fires make smoke, which can damage your torso from smoke inhalation if you're not wearing a filter mask. If you have to set a fire inside, make sure it's on a square with an oven, otherwise you'll burn the house down and kill yourself.

Get water by (e)xamining the toilet, filling up a watertight container like a plastic bottle or gallon jug, boiling the water from the crafting menu, and putting it into a different container. Or, if the toilet is close to a window, you can just set a fire outside the window and boil the water without having to put it into a container first. Boiling, like cooking, requires a fire and pot/pan/stone pot, and the unboiled water, but also requires water-tight container to put the clean water in. Drinking regular water runs the risk of getting poisoned, food poisoning, and/or parasites, so only drink clean water.

Your toilet will run out of water eventually, so you'll want to go on occasional scavenging runs with a few gallon jugs to get more water to boil. Get gallon jugs from fridges; they'll be full of rotten milk, vinegar, or other crap which you can just unload on the ground from the inventory screen. Don't unload the gallon jugs full of ammonia or bleach; those chemicals are valuable crafting components which will probably be useful later.

## >Encumbrance

Encumbrance is very, very bad. Going over your volume limit causes high amounts of encumbrance. Only go over your volume limit if you're totally sure you're safe, and preferably not even then. Wearing more than one layer of clothing on a body part increases encumbrance, so check to see which parts of the body a given clothing item encumbers and take off clothing that you don't need to be wearing. Torso encumbrance is very bad for your melee effectiveness, so don't melee fight with Torso encumbrance.

## >Early Game Clothing

There are three kinds of clothing in Cataclysm. Clothing you wear for volume, clothing you wear for warmth, and clothing you wear for protection. Some clothing items fulfill multiple roles, like trenchcoats. Trenchcoats are warm, protective, and have a lot of volume, so you want to get a fitted one as soon as possible. Wearing more than one fitted trenchcoat will encumber your arms, but not your torso. Some clothing items have drawbacks, like backpacks, which increase torso encumbrance by one but provide a massive 40 volume. Some clothing items don't have drawbacks, like leather belts and quivers. Both leather belts and quivers offer two free volume and don't cover any body part, so they cannot encumber you or be damaged by zombies.

Wearing more than one item on one "slot" can cause extra encumbrance because of a layering penalty. The more clothes you have on one body part, the more encumbrance layering the clothes causes. For example, wearing two pairs of fitted cargo pants will cause 1 leg encumbrance, even though fitted cargo pants have 0 base encumbrance. Fitted items that have 0 base encumbrance have a reduced layering penalty; you can wear a pair of

fitted cargo pants and one pair of fitted cargo shorts without causing encumbrance, but not two pairs of fitted cargo shorts. If you're unsure about a piece of clothing, just try it on and see what it does to your stats.

You want something to prevent you from getting wet so you don't get negative morale every time you go out in the rain. Umbrellas work great, but take up your wielded slot. Raincoats also work, but cause encumbrance. The best way to avoid getting wet is warmth. Having lots of warmth on your torso lots will reduce the morale penalty from getting wet. For example, if you stack 1 fitted trenchcoat and 2 fitted underarmours, you will only take a -5 morale penalty for going out in the rain. You should also make or find a towel; applying a towel will instantly remove the "wet" morale penalty.

With 3 tailoring, you can craft basically everything you need in the early-game. You can get all the raw materials you'll need by breaking windows, then cutting up the sheets into rags and disassembling the string into thread. Cut up fabric by activating your switchblade, selecting "cut fabric", then selecting the thing you want to cut up. Disassemble items by selecting them in the inventory screen, then pressing D. Get 3 tailoring by reading the book "Sew What? Clothing!" or just by practicing tailoring a lot with reasonable focus levels.

To practice tailoring or to make any clothing, you need a sewing kit, thread, and rags. To practice tailoring, activate your sewing kit and select an item made of cloth or wool; this will consume thread, and if the item is repaired or reinforced, a rag. You'll need some rags to practice tailoring up to 3, but not a whole lot. This will also repair, reinforce, or make items fitted at high skill; around 3 skill is sufficient to do all of that. You can also reinforce/repair leather items by doing the same with leather patches. Repairing plastic or kevlar items is possible, but requires a soldering iron with charges and plastic chunks/kevlar plates, which you can get by cutting up plastic or kevlar clothing.

### Specific Clothing of Note

A filter mask will let you kill smokers easily. You have to learn the recipe from a skill book before you can make it, though. Check what recipes books contain by inspecting them in the inventory screen.

A pair of sunglasses will get rid of the -1 perception Glare effect from bright sunlight. Ballistic Glasses will prevent Glare and prevent Boomer bile from effecting you.

Placing a blanket on the square you sleep on will provide warmth during the nights and prevent you from constantly waking up due to the cold. You can easily make one even at 0 tailoring skill; find a sewing kit, cut up clothing/sheets until you have 20 rags, then craft it.

Trenchcoats are great. Okay protection, 24 volume, you can find them on zombies or in dressers, craftable at 3 tailoring, what's not to like?

You can't craft cargo pants without finding the recipe in a book, so pick up a couple off of zombies in case yours breaks.

All of the Survivor gear is really, really great. Get tailoring and fabrication up to 5 or 6, and you can make a suit of armour that's low-encumbrance, high-volume, and high-protection; it's everything you could possibly ask for in clothing.

### >Sleeping

Once it gets dark, head back to your bedroom base. Board up or duct tape the windows through the construction menu if you can, shut all the windows and the curtains if you can't. Boarding up the windows is preferred because duct tape is valuable. Windows have three states: open, closed, and closed curtains. You can see and move through open windows, you can see but not move through closed windows, and you can't see or move

through windows with closed curtains. You can shut the curtains of a closed window by closing it again. Close all the doors, too. You don't want any zombies to see and attack you while you sleep. If you have time and know how to make a lightstrip, disassemble a flashlight, make a lightstrip to read by and read a skill book until you get tired.

Boarding up or taping up windows sets them into the closed curtains state permanently, and also reduces the amount of smell that will leak through them. This is good for reducing surprise nighttime zombie attacks.

Again, get a blanket and place it on the square you sleep on.

### >Skills

Mental Focus is the percentage of exp you gain from doing something that raises your skills. If you played with the exp system before, think of it like always having a full exp pool, but training a skill only gives you (focus)% of the exp you would have gained for doing something. You don't have to keep your focus at 100 all of the time, but you don't want to have it always be at 20, either. Keeping your morale up is actually useful now. High morale will increase focus regeneration, but low morale will actually make your focus degenerate. Being in pain will also decrease focus regeneration, as will reading skill books. Addictions will send your morale very low very fast with constant cravings, so avoid getting addicted.

You train skills by using them; you train skills faster when you have high focus. Don't go to sleep with high focus; without a constant morale bonus or malus, it'll just regenerate to 100 (120 with Optimist) while you sleep anyway.

### >The Crafting System

Check the "Skills used" indicator at the top of the crafting screen. This is the skill that determines success when crafting the selected recipe, and you need at least the recipe's difficulty in levels of skill to make this recipe. Fabrication is used to make stuff like weapons and ammo, Tailoring is used to make clothing, Electronics is used to make electronics, Cooking is used to make food and chems, etc. You also need to have the skills shown in the "Required skills" indicator, as well as the requisite level of the used skill to know the recipe at all.

### >Recipes and Books

You don't start out knowing everything you need to know to survive in the apocalypse. You need to learn how to make a whole bunch of necessary things. Books are your best friends; they can give you combat skills without having to actually risk your neck, crafting skills without having to grind out massive amounts of crap, and give you important recipe knowledge. You can find a large amounts and wide varieties of books in libraries and schools, a smaller amount and variety in houses, and specific kinds of books in some stores and other areas.

One of your first goals should be to find the book "What's a Transistor?" commonly found in electronics stores. This book will bring your electronics skill to 3, and most importantly teach you the recipe for a lightstrip. Lightstrips are a very efficient source of a low amount of light, perfect for reading books when there's no ambient light. You can get the parts to make a lightstrip by simply disassembling a flashlight. Once you get a lightstrip, a bunch of books, and a reliable way to get meat and clean water, consider holing up for a few days and just reading the whole time.

Another very important recipes you want to find is the Filter Mask. It's in a variety of books, and it's a very efficient form of environmental mouth protection. Wearing a filter mask will let you stop worrying about smoke all the time, as well as reducing the chance of getting a cold or flu.

### >Killing Zombies

Kill zombies by leading them into a shrub, pit, or abandoned car and stabbing them, funnelling zombie packs through a window-frame and stabbing them, or taking them on one-on-one and stabbing them.

Moving through shrubs/window-frames/shallow pits/car frames takes 4 times as long as usual, so avoid doing so yourself while leading single zombies through shrubs and funnelling packs through window-frames. If you find a shopping cart, wheelbarrow, luggage cart, or other such single-tile draggable "vehicles" you can use them as a portable shrub! This is especially powerful when using melee attacks, as dragging a cart only reduces your movement speed, not attack speed. You can constantly force zombies chasing you to move into a 400-movement-point square, allowing you to attack them with near-impunity.

Don't pull more than you can chew; if you're in doubt, don't engage. All zombies will revive after about 6 hours if you don't butcher them, so after you're done killing everything attacking you just pick over the loot and butcher/smash all the corpses. Butchering usually takes longer, but raises your survival skill; shocker zombies and zombie scientists can also drop CBMs when butchered. Don't butcher these zombies until you have 3 survival; they'll drop super-cool bionics at 3 survival, but not beforehand. Instead, smash their corpses and mark their position on the map. Smashing can be faster or slower than butchering, depending on the damage of your wielded weapon; once a zombie corpse is "pulsed" it won't revive.

Zombies can potentially cause a bite wound or bleeding, which will be listed in the effects menu on the character screen (press @). If you're bitten and "the wound feels really deep", retreat. You need to deal with the bite before it gets infected. Ideally you'll have found some disinfectant or a first-aid kit from a house bathroom, and can just apply it to the bitten area of your body, which is highlighted in blue. If you don't have either of those, you'll have to cauterize the wound and hope it works before you take too much pain. Cauterize the bite by applying your switchblade and selecting cauterize; this will cause a lot of pain, which reduces your speed, so do it when you're safe and take painkiller right after. If you don't cauterize a bite wound before it becomes infected, you need to take antibiotics to cure the infection or you'll eventually die. Bleeding is less serious; you'll just take damage over time to the bleeding body part, and it can be stopped by a rag, bandage, or first-aid kit. A bandage will be used up, but a rag will turn into a "blood soaked rag", which can't be used for anything until you clean it. You may need to use multiple rags or bandages. You can also stop the bleeding with cauterization, but the pain from cauterization is probably worse than the damage from bleeding.

Taking more than 1 aspirin or other painkiller at a time doesn't do anything more than taking only 1; take 1 aspirin every 12 minutes for maximum effect. Stronger painkillers will last longer than aspirin, so be sure not to overdose to avoid wasting valuable drugs.

Zombie Dogs are fast, jumpy, dodgy assholes, and come in regular, rotten, and skeletal flavours. They move very erratically, so dragging them through shrubs is hard but possible. Preferably you should get inside and lead them through a window frame if possible, but don't go through a window frame yourself to do so. They can also cause bite wounds and bleeding.

Shocker Zombies are just horrible. They throw electricity, which will paralyze and damage your whole body, and if you hit them in melee you'll be paralyzed and damaged. You absolutely need to fight these guys one-on-one, because otherwise you'll be swarmed to death while paralyzed. Drag them away from other zombies, lead them into a bush or window, and kill them.

Brutes are faster than you at 0 pain, have large amounts of health, and are more dangerous melee combatants than your average zombie. Fortunately, you're much more dangerous in melee.

Skeletons have a lot of cutting armour, so your switchblade won't do much damage at all. Fortunately they also don't have too much health, so you can just kill them with the switchblade. If you like, you can pick up a hammer or another kind of bashing weapon to kill them. Skeletons are also hard to hit with ranged attacks, and won't

smash windows.

Spitter Zombies are about as fast as you are, and can throw acid. The acid effect will hit your tile; move out of it ASAP. Acid will also destroy items on that square, and damage other zombies that stand in it. Don't stand in the hurty stuff, move the Spitter through shrubs/window-frames if you have the chance.

Shrieker and Boomer zombies are just annoying. If you get bile<sup>TM</sup>d, you can apply saline solution or eye drops to remove the effect. If you don<sup>TM</sup>t have either, retreat. Don't let shriekers shriek too many times; shrieks will attract other zombies to your location.

Smokers generate heavy amounts of smoke, so ideally you<sup>TM</sup>ll have a filter mask before you have to kill one of these. If you don<sup>TM</sup>t have a filter mask, don<sup>TM</sup>t worry too much, but coughing is very annoying.

Tough, Fat, Decayed, and Crawling zombies aren<sup>TM</sup>t very notable. Fat zombies have more health and armour, tough zombies have a bit more armour and do a bit more damage, decayed zombies have less health, crawling zombies are slower. There<sup>TM</sup>s nothing really special about these guys.

Don't melee hulks. Run from hulks. If you have to kill a hulk, prepare beforehand and do not pull the hulk before you're ready. Kill hulks with fire. Get some hard liquor and make some molotov cocktails, and dig some pits beforehand to drag the hulk into. If you haven't found a shovel to dig non-shallow pits, you can just make a stone shovel out of some rocks, string, and a stick. Activate the molotov to light it on fire, (t)hrow it at the hulk to light it on fire, then drag it into the pits and plink at it with a gun if you've found one. If the hulk stops being on fire before it dies, hit it with another molotov.

Zombie Scientists are generally pushovers. They can drop acid vials, acting like Spitter spit but in a smaller area, and have a radioactive gaze that doesn<sup>TM</sup>t do anything much. They<sup>TM</sup>ve got weak melee skills and low health and can drop bionics when butchered, so they<sup>TM</sup>re basically just walking loot.

>Long-Term Goals, in no particular order:

Loot lots of stores for lots of stuff. Libraries and schools are good places to find skill books. Mil. Surplus stores have army gear and rations. Liquor stores have lots of alcohol, pharmacies have pills, gun stores have guns, grocery stores have non-perishable foods, banks have a random cool thing in the vault, etc.

Get a welder from a hardware store, public works, or garage, then make a deathwagon out of the vehicle wrecks you find on the road. You'll also need a wrench, a hacksaw, lots of batteries, and Mechanics 3, but those are mostly easily attainable.

Find the recipe for a Welding Rig and make one, then install it as well as a storage battery and some solar panels on a vehicle. Free welding and vehicle repairs forever!

Get 18 mechanics and make a vehicle with THREE ENGINES, promptly crash into a house and die.

Set up a CBM: Power Battery home manufacturing lab with the electronics crap from turrets and burnt out bionics from shockers, become a 100+ bio-power cyborg.

Set up a forge and craft yourself a katana and samurai armour like the weeaboo you are. Or, if you<sup>TM</sup>re more into medieval europe, you can make some plate mail and a broadsword.

Find a bunch of purifier in case of really horrible mutations, then roll around in radiation/drink a bunch of mutagen to become an uberpowerful monster person. I personally recommend the Alpha flavour of mutagenic serum, but it<sup>TM</sup>s very resource-intensive to craft.

Raid military outposts for ID cards, guns, and useful bits for electronics crafting and tons of 9mm from turrets. Use the ID cards to get into the bunker, and a jackhammer to get into the loot vaults; it's not really worth spending an ID card to open the doors.

Find some science ID cards, then raid labs for bionics, weapons, map data, and lots of turret loot.

Raid mines and temples for artifacts, become Indiana Jones.

Loot mansions for medieval melee weapons, lots of books, jewelry, and other rich person stuff.

Raze fungal spires and triffid groves to prevent them from taking over the world.

Wear a fursuit and pretend you're really a werewolf.

Wear a dinosaur suit and pretend you're Barney.