

Flow Play Adventure 1 - Duck! Me? - Release 3

Annotated walkthrough

Note that this explains what's going on in detail, it contains lots of spoilers.

COMMANDS YOU TYPE IN ARE FORMATTED LIKE THIS

(I've shown the commands in full, but the usual Inform quality of life abbreviations are available).

Getting started

The bedroom is a safe place. You can freely experiment here without breaking the game and it's a good idea to example everything.

EXAMINE ME

Yes, you are a toy duck. This is fine. The game continues on from some nonsense I made up years ago about a team of toy ducks who where heavily into engineering with Meccano. What's more interesting is that you're damaged, hungry and thirsty. These are the three main things you need to resolve during the game. The stuffing poking out is part of your brain. As you're hungry and thirsty, you must have been out for a while. What's glossed over is that you're about 7" tall. That's to gloss over the fact that some things in the world are probably not scaled correctly. You can assume 7" tall is normal height for this universe. Because you're weak from hunger, you can only carry 4 objects and some things will be too heavy to move.

INVENTORY

EXAMINE HAT

REMOVE HAT

EXAMINE BOOTS

REMOVE BOOTS

You can't remove either your hat or boots, they are part of your anatomy. Again, this is nothing to worry about.

GET LETTER

EXAMINE LETTER

READ LETTER

Part number 8 is a 12½" Meccano girder so it's not surprising it's done some damage. The water is off so that getting a drink isn't trivial and the lighting is off to introduce some dark areas. Edwardian Duck is one of your friends. The bit about the evacuation helps explain the lack of stuff in this place, the lighting and water being off and is foreshadowing later games (should they ever get written).

Note that the badge is UNDERNEATH the table not ON it. This is to hint that you can put things under things.

GET BADGE

EXAMINE BADGE

EXAMINE BLOB

EXAMINE PIN

OPEN PIN

WEAR BADGE

This is your security / ID badge for this place. You do need to wear it to get recognised by the Diagnose-A-Tron later on, just carrying it doesn't work.

GET TORCH
EXAMINE TORCH
TURN TORCH ON
WAIT
WAIT
WAIT
TURN TORCH OFF

While the torch looks like a decent bit of kit, it's actually cheap rubbish. If you pay attention you'll see that it gets hotter when on (you'll only notice this if it's held). After a small number of moves the bulb will fail and if that happens early enough, the game is soft locked. Leave it off until you need it. It has enough life to light the way when you absolutely need it and it also cools off when you turn it off (at twice the rate it heats up). Basically you can manage the bulb life, even though that's a bit annoying.

EXAMINE PILLOW

The pillow is a useful object, but let's leave it here for now.

EXAMINE WALL
EXAMINE FLOOR
EXAMINE CEILING
EXAMINE BED
GO BED
GET BED

The above are just for flavour. You can wander round examining the walls etc. if you like, but it's mostly just giving generic responses instead of "you can't..." or "there's no such things as..." default messages. One thing which annoys me about older adventure games is stuff which is referenced but doesn't actually exist in the game world.

LOOK
EXITS
EXITS OFF
EXITS ON

Both LOOK and EXITS display visible exits. Once you've visited a location, it's name replaces the ... after the corresponding direction. You can turn this on and off using the EXITS command as above.

WEST
LOOK IN MIRROR
EXAMINE SINK
EXAMINE SOAP
EXAMINE TOILET
EXAMINE BADGE

The bathroom is mostly scenery. If you look in the mirror (or EXAMINE MIRROR) you get some more information and as you've seen yourself now, descriptions of some objects change slightly.

EAST
SOUTH
EXAMINE PORTRAIT
SOUTH

This is the first of quite a few corridors. This place is rather old-fashioned, you have long corridors with rooms off them. This may or may not be related to my dislike of open-plan offices. The pictures are all of your friends and are just for flavour. Why they have been left here is unclear.

Aside 1 - Timed Messages

There are three timed messages in the game.

1. Message about aftershocks. This is just flavour and the messages get less frequent as time goes on.
2. Message about hurrying up and sprout brandy. Again, this is just flavour and was added as a nod to a former colleague who likes text adventures. It's shown if you remain in one location for a sufficient number of turns.
3. Message about footsteps and laughter. This is foreshadowing later games, someone has stolen something while you were not looking. It fires on move 37 for no good reason.

Aside 2 - The Microwave

During initial development (in 6502, prior to converting to Inform), I added this as a test case for a container with a door. Unfortunately a microwave has strange effects on microwaving non-food items (look up what happens if you microwave soap for example) and rather than implement messages for microwaving every object in the game, I changed it to be a teleporter. Converting a microwave to a teleporter is very much the sort of thing Duck & friends would do, so that's reasonable in world, but it's frustrating from the puzzle design perspective. The dial controls the destination, but the player can only figure that out by experimentation. It's possible to "microwave" a critical object to somewhere you can't access without the object.

I guess I could have pinned a list of numbers and locations to a wall somewhere, but I didn't. As things stand the player has to figure this out by trial and error and restarting the game.

On the positive side you don't need to use the microwave to complete the game, but starting from the kitchenette you could use the following commands to see how it works.

EAST
GET SPICES
WEST
OPEN DOOR
PUT SPICES IN MICROWAVE
CLOSE DOOR
TURN DIAL TO 1
LOOK IN MICROWAVE
EAST
WEST

The door needs to be closed for the microwave to operate. The jar of spices is a red herring, so it's safe to use for experiments. Location 1 is the pantry.

The full list of locations is as follows.

1. Pantry
2. Reception

3. Study
4. Meeting Room
5. Geothermal Power Plant
6. Staircase (Ground Floor)
7. Test Laboratory
8. Research Kitchen
9. Store Entrance
10. Medical Room
11. Landing Bay

I'm going to avoid using the microwave in this walkthrough at the expense of a lot more wandering around.

Getting something to eat

(Assuming the player is still in the kitchenette).

EAST
EXAMINE PACKET
GET PACKET
OPEN PACKET
EXAMINE CRUMPET
EAT CRUMPET
EXAMINE ME

Self-toasting crumpets are Duck lore from the past, so I had to throw that in. The crumpet will remain hot indefinitely because I didn't implement it cooling down. Once you've eaten it you're stronger and the carry limit increases to 6 items from 4.

Housekeeping 1

There are quite a lot of objects here, most of which are useful. So get's grab what we need and deposit them somewhere more central for ease of access later. OK, the player wouldn't know where to place them, I'm just trying to make this walkthrough less tedious to write.

EXAMINE CELLAR
GET CELLAR
EXAMINE POT
GET POT
WEST
DROP LETTER
EXAMINE GLASS
GET GLASS
EXAMINE TONGS
GET TONGS
EXAMINE GLOVES
GET GLOVES
WEAR GLOVES
EXAMINE MAGNET
GET MAGNET

OK, that's all we can carry for now. Let's find somewhere to deposit some of these. Wearing the oven gloves doesn't count towards the carry limit.

NORTH
EAST
EXAMINE PORTRAIT
EAST
EXAMINE PORTRAIT
EAST

Which brings us to a junction. This seems as good a place as any to deposit some things.

DROP CELLAR
DROP POT
DROP GLASS
DROP TONGS
DROP MAGNET
DROP TORCH

Exploring 1

SOUTH
EXAMINE PORTRAIT
WEST
EXAMINE DOCUMENT
READ DOCUMENT
EXAMINE MONITOR
EXAMINE LIGHTER
GET LIGHTER

The document hints that there might be an item of clothing that can somehow transform into something else. That's a bit of a heavy hint which was added following player feedback. If you keep examining the monitor, you'll eventually see all 8 videos (they appear at random) and some reference what happened at early virtual ABUG meetings during COVID. "MonkeySpace" is where humans live. The document tells you that we're in the "DuckSpace Advanced Research Centre".

EAST
SOUTH
EXAMINE SIGN
EXAMINE DOOR
EXAMINE TOUCHSCREEN
EXAMINE PATTERN
GET PATTERN
READ PATTERN

The pattern suggests that this game may involve some knitting. It looks like you'll need to know a password to open the door. Note that if you enter the correct password without having discovered it in game, that won't work.

WEST
EXAMINE FEDORA
WEAR FEDORA
EXAMINE CARD
PRESS FEDORA

EXAMINE KEY

It's a hat with a card stuck in the brim with "Press" written on it. It's a press hat. PRESS FEDORA and it transforms into a key. I was worried that this was a bit opaque, but nobody complained about this little puzzle, so I guess it was OK.

EAST

NORTH

NORTH

EAST

EXAMINE PORTRAIT

SOUTH

Study 1

EXAMINE BLACKBOARD

READ EQUATIONS

EXAMINE PAPER

GET PAPER

EXAMINE DESK

PUSH DESK

EXAMINE CERTIFICATE

GET CERTIFICATE

DROP CERTIFICATE

EXAMINE SAFE

EXAMINE KEYPAD

EXAMINE CABINET

OPEN CABINET

UNLOCK CABINET WITH KEY

OPEN CABINET

GET WOOL

EXAMINE WOOL

The paper is trapped under the desk leg. Perhaps we'll need to figure out how to get that out later on. People have been known to write important information on paper.

The wall safe probably contains something important and we'll need to know the key code.

The wool reinforces the idea that knitting is involved.

We missed a few rooms out getting to the junction, so let's explore those now.

Knitting

NORTH

WEST

WEST

WEST

NORTH

EXAMINE BASKET

OPEN BASKET

EXAMINE NEEDLES
GET NEEDLES
EXAMINE BLACK WOOL
GET BLACK WOOL
KNIT
EXAMINE BLANKET
DROP NEEDLES
DROP PATTERN
DROP KEY
DROP BLANKET
GET BASKET

The blanket shows the word “CABATOLIN”. That’s the password for the front door. It’s a tribute to “Dick Barton and the Cabatolin Diamonds” in which the female protagonist has to follow a knitting pattern to reveal a map or clue.

The basket can be use to contain things and hence carry more items.

KNIT PATTERN also works.

Another clue?

SOUTH
WEST
NORTH
GET PILLOW
SOUTH
EAST
EAST
NORTH
EXAMINE PERISCOPE
LOOK THROUGH PERISCOPE
EXAMINE ROCK
PUSH ROCK
EXAMINE PAPER
READ PAPER

The image in periscope is disturbing because it’s a Smurf and the protagonist has a fear of such things. The emergency broadcast channel is needed to make good use of the radio, but you can manage without knowing this in advance.

The front door and beyond

The logic for handling the sewing needle was wrong in release 2. It worked well enough to play the game, but wasn’t completely right.

SOUTH
EAST
GET TORCH
GET TONGS
GET MAGNET

SOUTH
SOUTH
TYPE CABATOLIN
OPEN DOOR
SOUTH
EXAMINE STREAM
EXAMINE ROCK
GET ROCK
PUT ROCK IN BASKET
PUT LIGHTER IN BASKET
EXAMINE BOTTLE
READ NOTE
DROP NOTE
GET BOTTLE
PUT BOTTLE IN BASKET
TURN TORCH ON
GET NEEDLE
TURN TORCH OFF
GET NEEDLE
DROP MAGNET
PUT NEEDLE IN BASKET
NORTH
NORTH
NORTH

The stream has been polluted by a chemical leak due to a pipe breaking during the earthquake. When you take the rock from the stream (assuming you have the tongs) the tongs dissolve, indicating that the stream is highly toxic. If you put anything else in the stream it dissolves and is gone from the game. This can soft lock the game, so take care. You're prevented from entering the stream.

The note is just flavour. It's there to justify the milk bottle being outside the front door (this will make no sense to the younger generation).

The light level is dim here, that's why you won't see the needle without the torch being on and providing more light. The magnet is needed to lift the needle from the crack between cobbles.

You do have to type the password in full. It isn't implemented as an object in Inform, so the usual 6 significant characters doesn't apply.

Dealing with the snake

DROP PILLOW
GET BOTTLE
DROP BOTTLE
GET ROCK
EAST
EAST
NORTH
DOWN
DOWN

TURN TORCH ON
SOUTH
EXAMINE PLATE
PUT ROCK ON PLATE
GET ROCK
NORTH
UP
TURN TORCH OFF
SOUTH
GIVE ROCK TO SNAKE
EXAMINE SNAKE
WEST
TURN TORCH ON
GET LAMP
REMOVE LIGHTER
LIGHT LAMP
TURN TORCH OFF
EXAMINE LAMP
DROP TORCH
REMOVE GLOVES
DROP GLOVES
PUT LIGHTER IN BASKET
EAST
EAST
EXAMINE CRATE
GET CRATE
EXAMINE JACK
GET JACK
WEST
SOUTH
EXAMINE GUN
GET GUN
NORTH
NORTH
UP
READ MESSAGE
SOUTH
WEST
WEST
DROP ALL
GET LAMP

The snake is a “subtractor” which is different from an adder. The name foreshadowed a puzzle in a discarded sequel. I liked the puzzle, so this might appear in the future. The snake has a mineral based die, but does require it’s food hot. Subtractors make great guards as they can be rather territorial in the wild, but make great pets if cared for and well fed.

The crate being upside down is a hint. The word “Smoffo” refers to the leading brand of Smurf repellent in DuckSpace. None of your cheap supermarket own brand Smurf repellent here, it’s not worth the risk.

The lamp is a proper adventurer's lamp. It will provide light indefinitely once lit.

Exploring 2

EAST
EAST
NORTH
NORTH
EXAMINE FLOOR
NORTH
LOOK NORTH
SOUTH
UP
SOUTH
EXAMINE PORTRAIT
WEST
EXAMINE PORTRAIT
NORTH
EXAMINE WORKBENCH
EXAMINE MACHINE
EXAMINE PLIERS
GET PLIERS
EXAMINE DIAL
EXAMINE BUTTON
PRESS BUTTON
SOUTH
EAST
SOUTH

When you press the button you hear a noise off into the distance. So perhaps something happened somewhere else.

The dial setting only causes cosmetic changes to the game world when the button is pressed.

1. A mosaic appears in the landing bay.
2. A carving appears in the staircase sub-basement.
3. The image in the periscope changes.

The only other effect is that the order vegetables appear is changed.

Research kitchen 1

EXAMINE NOTEBOOK
READ NOTEBOOK
EXAMINE BLENDER
OPEN LID
EXAMINE TAP
EXAMINE BUTTON
WAIT
EXAMINE ONION

PUT ONION IN BLENDER
EXAMINE CARROT
PUT CARROT IN BLENDER
EXAMINE ARTICHOKE
PUT ARTICHOKE IN BLENDER
PRESS BUTTON
CLOSE LID
PRESS BUTTON

What we have learnt is that the “smart” blender is a prototype and only works if its one recipe is followed. Of course, we don’t know what the ingredients are in game, but out of game we need celery, onion, carrot, artichoke, salt and pepper.

For the WAIT command above, repeat until all three vegetables have appeared. These appear wherever you happen to be at the time, which is why I moved straight to the research kitchen to keep the walkthrough clearer.

Next step is probably to find the celery. If you’re working through the game, you’ll probably end up doing quite a bit of back tracking as it becomes clearer what objects might be needed. I’m going to shortcut that a bit for the walkthrough for brevity.

Celery

NORTH
NORTH
DOWN
SOUTH
WEST
WEST
GET PILLOW
GET CELLAR
GET POT
GET GLASS
EAST
EAST
NORTH
UP
UP
UP
UP
LOOK NORTH
LOOK SOUTH
LOOK EAST
LOOK WEST
GET ON TABLE
EXAMINE JAR
PUSH JAR
DROP PILLOW
PUSH JAR
EXAMINE CELERY
EXAMINE LABEL

GET CELERY
GET OFF
DOWN
DOWN
DOWN
SOUTH
SOUTH
REMOVE LABEL
OPEN BLENDER
PUT CELERY IN BLENDER
PUT SALT IN BLENDER
PUT PEPPER IN BLENDER
DROP CELLAR
DROP POT
GET THREAD
CLOSE BLENDER
PRESS BUTTON
PUT GLASS UNDER TAP
OPEN TAP
GET GLASS
EXAMINE JUICE
DRINK JUICE
DROP GLASS

If you eat any of the vegetables, you'll soft lock the game. Also, don't remove the condiments from their containers until you need them. If you do, you'll have to carry them round in your wings because if you drop them, you can't be bothered to pick them up again. The the implementation of salt and pepper was way too much work.

The label is of course a reference to Unwell from Hartlife NFP. Mt. Absolom is a celery town. They have an annual celery festival. Stop reading this and go listen. Now.

Now that you're hydrated, there's a task which you're now capable of, that is, threading a needle, so let's move on to that.

Medical attention

NORTH
NORTH
DOWN
SOUTH
WEST
WEST
GET BASKET
NORTH
EAST
EXAMINE SPEAKER
EXAMINE SLOT
EXAMINE BUTTON
PRESS BUTTON

GET SLIP
EXAMINE SLIP
READ SLIP
WEST
NORTH
EXAMINE CYLINDER
EXAMINE MECCANO
EXAMINE WALLS
EXAMINE VALVES
EXAMINE SLOT
PUT SLIP IN SLOT
EXAMINE DRAWER
THREAD NEEDLE
PUT NEEDLE IN DRAWER
CLOSE DRAWER
EXAMINE ME

If you're still dehydrated, your wing-eye coordination is off and you can't thread the needle. If you just put them in separately, the Auto-Repair-Ulator throws an exception.

You're now back up to full health, what next?

Getting out of here would seem to be favourite, but you haven't seen an obvious way out yet, but there are unexplored locations.

Exploring 3

SOUTH
SOUTH
EAST
EAST
EAST
EXAMINE BENCH
EXAMINE RADIO
EXAMINE DIAL
EXAMINE SWITCH
PRESS SWITCH
TURN DIAL TO 4
PRESS SWITCH

While you can do this before you've had medical attention, you won't remember the "left-wing down a bit" trick to get the radio tuned to the emergency broadcast channel (4, from the paper under the rock).

The message from Edwardian Duck basically tells you how to finish the game. You also get part two of the code for the safe (31393737), but where's the first part of the code? Perhaps we don't need that and can just use the flare gun we found earlier?

Signalling for help 1

WEST
WEST

WEST
GET GUN
EAST
EAST
NORTH
NORTH
FIRE GUN
LOAD GUN
DROP GUN

OK, we haven't got any ammunition for the flare gun. More searching required.

Exploring 4

DROP BASKET
SOUTH
DOWN
DOWN
EXAMINE DOOR
KNOCK DOOR
OPEN DOOR
IN
EXAMINE BOTTLE
EXAMINE STICKER
EXAMINE BUCKET
GET BUCKET
EXAMINE CUE
GET CUE
OUT
UP
UP
SOUTH
WEST
WEST

Still no ammunition, I wonder what's in the safe?

Study 2

EXAMINE JACK
EXAMINE TUBE
EXAMINE VALUE
PUT CUE IN TUBE
GET JACK
GET CRATE
EAST
SOUTH
PUT CRATE UNDER DESK
TURN BUCKET OVER

PUT BUCKET ON CRATE
PUT JACK ON BUCKET
LOOK
PUMP JACK
CLOSE VALVE
PUMP JACK
GET PAPER
READ PAPER

OK, so now we have both parts of the safe code.

End game

INPUT 4455434B31393737
EXAMINE FIREWORK
GET FIREWORK
DROP PAPER
DROP PLIERS
NORTH
WEST
GET BOTTLE
EAST
EAST
NORTH
NORTH
DROP BOTTLE
PUT FIREWORK IN BOTTLE
REMOVE LIGHTER
LIGHT FIREWORK

You didn't need the flare gun after all.

Author's end notes

This walkthrough is far from optimal, it can be done in just over half the number of moves used here. But this walkthrough also misses out some things you can try, for example.

1. Wandering about in the dark.
2. Throwing things into the stream.
3. Eating the vegetables (and condiments).
4. Examining more of the scenery.
5. Trying to let of the firework when held or indoors.
6. Checking out the celery artworks.