

Last Starfighter FAQ

by Adaml

Updated on Feb 1, 2004

THE LAST STARFIGHTER NES FAQ

v1.00 - Completed 6/5/03

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Program Copyright © 1989, 1986 GraftGold Ltd. Presented on the NES by
Mindscape. Designed and programmed by Andrew Braybrook. Based on original
game concept of Hewson Consultants Ltd.

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INTRODUCTION

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This is a quick FAQ to the NES game The Last Starfighter. The game itself does not warrant a full walkthrough, as it is a fast-paced shooter in which the reader would not benefit from a level guide, yet there are quite a few little details in the game that need to be explained. It is rather difficult and confusing to figure out a few aspects of the gameplay, so a short FAQ should be enough to get the player through the game...if you are skillful enough to pull it off.

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FAQ

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Q1: WHY DID YOU DO AN FAQ FOR A GAME THAT NOBODY WILL EVER PLAY?

A: I'm in the process of playing through every NES game and had the misfortune to run into a roadblock with this one. I finally figured out exactly what has to be done to beat the game, so I figured I'd share the wealth.

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Q2: THIS GAME LOOKS FAMILIAR...I THINK I'VE PLAYED IT BEFORE, BUT I'M PRETTY SURE I HAVEN'T SINCE I DON'T OWN THE LAST STARFIGHTER.

A: Mindscape took an old Commodore 64 game named Uridium, slapped a new title screen on it and reprogrammed it as an NES title. Mindscape did the same thing with their Conan NES game, making one wonder why they couldn't create their own, original stuff. There are a couple pics of the C64 game here:
<http://www.vgmuseum.com/pics8/uridium.html>

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Q3: DOES THIS GAME HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE MOVIE?

A: Not really. If you didn't have the manual to the game or see the game's

title screen, there would be nothing to lead you to believe this game was titled The Last Starfighter. Mindscape should have just released the game as Uridium, as I'm not sure that The Last Starfighter is that marketable a movie franchise anyways. Incidentally, Uridium is considered a classic in C64 circles, so they probably would have sold more copies of this game under its original name.

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Q4: WHAT IS UP WITH THE CONTROLS? I TRY TO SLOW DOWN AND MY SHIP TURNS THE OTHER WAY.

A: For a shooter, the controls are a lot more complicated than they should be, but you do get used to them after awhile. If your ship is moving to the right, press Right on the controller to make it go faster or press Left on the controller to slow down. While pressing Left, when your ship reaches its slowest speed, it will turn to the opposite direction and start heading that way.

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Q5: THAT MAKES SENSE, BUT SOMETIMES MY SHIP ACTUALLY ROTATES IN A SPIRALLING MOTION...

A: You know, I didn't find any practical purpose to the rotating. To rotate your ship, hold the A button while pressing Up or Down on the controller. You can rotate it sideways or turn it upside down. The enemies still smash into you whether you are sideways, upside down or normal, so perhaps there are other advantages to turning your ship.

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Q6: DO YOU KNOW WHERE I CAN FIND THE MANUAL TO THIS GAME? I'M INTERESTED TO SEE HOW THEY EXPLAINED THIS GAME AS BEING A 'LAST STARFIGHTER' GAME.

A: Go here for the manual:
http://sardius.fefea.org/manuals/last_starfighter.txt

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Q7: I'VE STARTED UP A GAME AND ONLY AFTER A FEW SECONDS I SMASHED INTO THE BACKGROUND. THE BACKGROUNDS ALSO SEEM TO CHANGE RANDOMLY...IS THIS GAME BUGGY?

A: Those backgrounds are a nuisance. I don't recommend flying through this game, though sometimes you will get chased by a spark and have to speed up to avoid it. This game certainly tests your patience, as you have to take it slow to avoid barriers that look like they are in the background, but at the same time you have waves of ships coming at you that you have to avoid and heat-seeking sparks flying at you. It is a game of repetition, meaning that you have to get used to the level layouts of the game before you get good at it. It's definitely not your typical shooter.

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Q8: ALRIGHT, I'VE PLAYED THE GAME FOR AWHILE NOW AND I CAN'T GET OUT OF LEVEL 1. THERE WAS A "LAND NOW" MESSAGE FLASHING ON THE SCREEN AT ONE POINT.

A: To get the "Land Now" message you have to shoot down a number of enemy ships or ground targets. Once you have knocked out a certain number (usually between 10 and 20 targets), the "Land Now" message will flash.

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Q9: HOW IN THE WORLD DO YOU LAND???

A: This is one of those procedures that took me awhile to figure out, but when you do it once you'll wonder why you couldn't ever figure it out...sort of like figuring out how to walk through the wall to get to Minus World in Super Mario Brothers. Here's how you land: Work your way as far right in the level as you can go. There are several landing zones along the way, with arrows facing to the right on them. However, the only one you can land on is the very last one all the way on the right (you will go as far as you can go and will automatically turn around and head back left).

To land, approach that VERY LAST landing strip from the left side so you are flying to the right. The second you fly over that last strip with the arrows, hold left to slow down and instead of turning back to the left you will actually land, as the ship lowers itself down to the runway. You CANNOT land by flying in from the right side. Once you actually achieve this it will seem easy, but it actually seems really complicated to pull off. They should have just put a designated spot on that last runway that said "Land Here" or something.

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Q10: GREAT, I FINALLY FINISHED LEVEL 1. WHAT IS UP WITH THE BONUS GAME BETWEEN LEVELS?

A: The manual calls this THE FUEL ROD CHAMBER. There is a pyramid of lights and starting at the bottom you will see the bottom 2 squares flashing alternately. One has the word QUIT in it while the other has a number. The number is a bonus score. You have to press A or B while the number flashes. If you press it while the word QUIT is flashing, the bonus level is over. If you press the button while the score is flashing, you move up to the next level, where QUIT and a higher bonus score are flashing faster. Move your way up the pyramid and try to get all the bonus scores. Even if you don't manage to get any points in the bonus round it doesn't affect the game.

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Q11: I FINISHED THE BONUS ROUND AND NOW HAVE TO ESCAPE WHILE THE COMMAND SHIP BLOWS UP. IS THERE ANYTHING I HAVE TO DO HERE?

A: Nope. You are on auto-pilot, though you can move your ship up and down as it is flying ahead of the explosion. The explosion is explained in the manual as being caused by you activating the "Death Blossom" by playing the bonus round. The "Death Blossom" is an "explosive device" that "vaporizes the Command Ship." Good to see that Mindscape did get creative when writing the manual.

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Q12: NOW I AM IN LEVEL 2...IS THERE ANYTHING SPECIAL I HAVE TO DO IN THIS LEVEL?

A: Every level is finished in exactly the same way. Spend the first part of the level destroying ships and ground targets, then when the "Land Now" message appears, make your way to the last runway and land.

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Q13: HOW MANY LEVELS ARE THERE?

A: There are 15 Levels in the game.

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Q14: SO I HAVE TO GO THROUGH AND DO THE SAME THING 15 TIMES TO WIN THE GAME?

A: Exactly. And just so you know, it gets harder as you progress. Some of the later levels in the game require you flying through passages about the size of your ship. Perhaps this is where the rotating of your ship comes in handy, though I did play through the whole game without rotating the ship, so it is not a necessity.

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Q15: IS THERE A PASSWORD FEATURE IN THIS GAME?

A: No, but there should be something. The levels are really short if you know what you are doing, but playing through a whole 15 levels on only 5 lives is near impossible.

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Q16: HOW MANY CONTINUES DO YOU GET?

A: None at all. You do earn extra lives as you beat levels, but once they are gone you are finished and have to start over from the beginning.

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Q17: ARE THERE ANY WORTHWHILE FEATURES TO THIS GAME?

A: There is 2-player alternating gameplay. Player 1 has a blue ship and Player 2 has a green ship. It would have been interesting to have this game as a 2-player simultaneous game, but probably would have been impossible to pull off and have it be the same game, due to the speed at which your GunStar travels.

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Q18: THAT'S IT FOR FEATURES? NO CHEATS OR ANYTHING?

A: Pretty much, unless you consider a high scores screen, called "The Hall of Fame," a feature. The high score to beat is 500,000 by ALX. This is notable, as the main character in the movie, played by Lance Guest, is named Alex Rogan. There are a couple other registrants in the Hall of Fame that might be interesting to anyone familiar with the movie.

This is one of the few games I would actually recommend playing on an emulator because of save states. I don't think I would have beaten it otherwise. There are no known Easter Eggs for this game, although there are a few Game Genie codes.

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Q19: GIMME THE GAME GENIE CODES!!

A: Sure:

Both players start with 1 life:
PANENLIA

Both players start with 6 lives:
TANENLIA

Both players start with 9 lives:
PANENLIE

Player two starts with 1 life:
KEEAVLSA

Both players have unlimited lives:
SZVPATVG

Player one start on level 5:
GAVEKLAA
GZVENLSA
GZNAOLSA

Player one start on level 10:
PAVEKLAE
GZVENLSA
GZNAOLSA

Player one start on level 14:
IAVEKLAE
GZVENLSA
GZNAOLSA

No shaking:
GXUPLGSA

Not really sure what the No shaking thing is all about. If someone tries it, send me a line.

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Q20: IS THE ENDING ANY GOOD?

A: I don't want to give anything away, but let's just say if you have a good hearty yawn right as the ending sequence plays out, you will most definitely miss it.

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Q21: ISN'T THE MOVIE ABOUT A KID PLAYING VIDEO GAMES OR SOMETHING?

A: Yes, actually. The hero, Alex, is a boy who actually masters a video game called "Starfighter," which turns out to be some kind of training simulator that was created to train star fighters. Since he excelled at the game he is picked to fight in the battle against Xur with other star fighters. You get the full explanation in the manual. And to think that The Last Starfighter is an NES game about a movie about a kid playing a video game.

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Q22: HOW CAN I LEARN MORE INFO ABOUT THE MOVIE?

A: Go here: <http://us.imdb.com/Title?0087597>

There is also a FAQ for the movie, which is where I got the info on the game Uridium: <http://www.paulbunyan.net/users/wayland/arcade/laststar.html>

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www.gamefaqs.com
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