WUMPUS GAME

About

- Wumpus draws from 1973 Hunt the Wumpus, with growling clues in grid caves.
- Originally written by Neo on a C128 simulator when he was 11, as homework for his programming class.
- Ported to Stellar BASIC 1.0 in 2026.

The history traces back to Gregory Yob, a University of Massachusetts student, who coded the original in FORTRAN IV in spring 1973 on a PDP-10 mainframe. Frustrated by flat-grid “hide-and-seek” games like Hunt the Hurkle (1972) and Mugwump, Yob built a twisty cave system for immersion, drawing from D&D-like exploration. It exploded in popularity via the People's Computer Company newsletter and Creative Computing magazine (1975 BASIC port), becoming one of the first widely shared PC games alongside Hammurabi and Lunar Lander. Ports appeared everywhere – TRS-80, Apple II, Atari, even modern remakes – and it influenced roguelikes (ex. NetHack has a wumpus), AI logic puzzles (the “Wumpus World” in Russell & Norvig's AI: A Modern Approach), and Discord's adorable dragon mascot.

Developer's Commentary

Neo says

I wrote this program in about 30 minutes. Its a random small light game.

The WUMPUS and the exit door was supposed to start at the walls but I just made it spawn anywhere in the room (to keep the program smaller). It feels weird having a random exit door anywhere, but it's simpler this way.

Appledog says

I made some QOL changes such as making sure the wumpus and the exit don't spawn on top of the player. Mostly I tried not to modify Neo's code too much but there were a few issues because he didn't have access to the system when he wrote the code (!!). For example he didn't know there was no support for negative numbers.

Of special note are lines 310 and 330:

```
  310 IF E > 100 THEN GOTO 5000   : REM CAUGHT WRAP-AROUND FROM MOVING WEST
OF 0
  330 IF F > 100 THEN GOTO 5200   : REM CAUGHT WRAP-AROUND FROM MOVING SOUTH
OF 0
```

The issue here is that Stellar BASIC 1.0 is a TinyBASIC, and therefore it does not support negative numbers. The test here is if it rolls over into negative numbers, it will appear as 65535 or such.

Also, the lines such as:

```
  6030 IF I > 100 THEN LET I = A - E
  6040 IF J > 100 THEN LET J = B - F
```

are part of an absolute value comparison. You may ask why 100 was chosen as the number to test for the rollover. We could have used 16, 20 or 1000– any number greater than the biggest possible number on the grid, 15 (i.e. 15-0).

The original code did not have rollover detection, and I asked Neo if this was intentional. He said no. So I quickly drafted the code at 5000-5500 to do rollover detection. I also came up with the RAND to move the WUMPUS since Neo's code relied on a differential (which relied on negative numbers). So I did it to (ex. E < A) to compare the position that way. A minor but useful change.

Program Listing

```
10 PRINT ""
20 PRINT "WUMPUS GAME"
30 PRINT "BY NEO (C) 2019"
40 PRINT ""
50 PRINT "THERE IS A WUMPUS IN THE ROOM."
60 PRINT "FIND THE ESCAPE DOOR OR DIE."
70 PRINT "WHEN THE WUMPUS MOVES, YOU WILL KNOW."
80 PRINT "0 IS NORTH, 1 IS EAST, 2 IS SOUTH, 3 IS WEST."
90 PRINT "GOOD LUCK"
100 LET A = RAND(16)
110 IF A = 8 THEN GOTO 100
120 LET B = RAND(16)
130 IF B = 8 THEN GOTO 120
140 LET C = RAND(16)
150 LET D = RAND(16)
160 LET E = 8
170 LET F = 8
180 LET G = 0

200 PRINT ""
210 PRINT "YOU ARE AT: "E,F
215 GOTO 6000
220 INPUT "MOVE WHERE? ", G
230 IF G = 0 THEN LET F = F + 1
240 IF G = 0 THEN PRINT "YOU MOVE NORTH."
250 IF G = 1 THEN LET E = E + 1
260 IF G = 1 THEN PRINT "YOU MOVE EAST."
270 IF G = 2 THEN LET F = F - 1
280 IF G = 2 THEN PRINT "YOU MOVE SOUTH."
290 IF G = 3 THEN LET E = E - 1
300 IF G = 3 THEN PRINT "YOU MOVE WEST."
```

```
310 IF E > 100 THEN GOTO 5000
320 IF E > 15 THEN GOTO 5100
330 IF F > 100 THEN GOTO 5200
340 IF F > 15 THEN GOTO 5300

350 IF E = A THEN GOTO 1000
360 IF E = C THEN GOTO 2000

370 LET W = RAND(3)
380 IF W = 1 THEN GOTO 500
390 GOTO 200

500 LET Z = RAND(10)
510 IF Z > 4 THEN GOTO 550

520 IF A < E THEN LET A = A + 1
530 IF A > E THEN LET A = A - 1
540 GOTO 570

550 IF B < F THEN LET B = B + 1
560 IF B > F THEN LET B = B - 1

570 PRINT "THE WUMPUS MOVES CLOSER..."
580 IF E = A THEN GOTO 1000
590 GOTO 360

1000 IF F = B THEN GOTO 3000
1010 GOTO 200

2000 IF F = D THEN GOTO 4000
2010 GOTO 200

3000 PRINT "OH NO! THE WUMPUS ATE YOU!!!"
3010 GOTO 4010

4000 PRINT "HORRAY! YOU ESCAPED!"
4010 PRINT "GAME END"
4020 GOTO 9001

5000 PRINT "THERE IS A WALL TO THE WEST."
5010 LET E = 0
5020 GOTO 350

5100 PRINT "THERE IS A WALL TO THE EAST."
5110 LET E = 15
5120 GOTO 350

5200 PRINT "THERE IS A WALL TO THE SOUTH."
5210 LET F = 0
5220 GOTO 350
```

```
5300 PRINT "THERE IS A WALL TO THE NORTH."
5310 LET F = 15
5320 GOTO 350

6000 REM WUMPUS WARNING -- MOD BY APPLEDOG
6010 LET I = E - A
6020 LET J = F - B
6030 IF I > 100 THEN LET I = A - E
6040 IF J > 100 THEN LET J = B - F
6050 IF I = 0 THEN PRINT "YOU HEAR A STRANGE GROWLING!"
6060 IF J = 0 THEN PRINT "YOU HEAR A STRANGE GROWLING!"
6070 GOTO 220

9001 REM END
```

Bugs

There is a quite rare *(but also quite shiny!)* bug in the code! Oh no! If you can find the bug, let us know and you will have your name added to the WUMPUS GAME HALL OF FAME below:

WUMPUS GAME HALL OF FAME

- Appledog
- Neo
- **u/Zerve from reddit's r/FantasyConsoles**