

Prey's Survival Guide

A How-to-Play Guide for

I Am Prey

NOTE: This is for the 0.9 BETA version of the game, which was submitted for the 2023 SpringThing competition. I was under a serious time crunch and was simultaneously fixing bugs while on active Discord calls with testers while I was writing this. I apologize in advance if anything is missing. The guide in the full, post-comp release will have optimal detail and layout. Thank you for understanding.



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A Warning for Experienced Parser Players

This game makes use of the **SEARCH** command, but not quite in the same way it has been used, traditionally.

Objects in the game are always “in play”, and not added to the game’s world after the player uses **SEARCH** on a container. There are only two possible exceptions, and one has multiple alternative discovery methods, while the other exception is completely optional during gameplay.

The list of **SEARCH** verbs is as follows:

1. **SEARCH**
For containers that have multiple parts, or can be looked through.
2. **LOOK IN**
For containers that open and enclose other objects.
3. **LOOK UNDER**
For containers that can store objects underneath themselves.

SEARCH vs EXAMINE

SEARCH takes a turn to use, and will allow the player to gather usable data about an object. **SEARCH** also reveals **new parkour routes**, but **only if they are accessible from the player’s current position**.

EXAMINE is a *FREE* action, and can still reveal objects within containers.

EXAMINE is meant to be a reflex-based or recall-based review of immediate information.

SEARCH via Exploration

Most applications of **SEARCH** can be alternatively achieved by exploring something. A parkour route does not need to be revealed if the player simply tries attempting to **CLIMB** or **JUMP** there, experimentally.

Additionally, objects “hidden” under something can often be discovered if the player tries to **CRAWL UNDER** the container.

Map of the Facility

The map for the Facility has been provided for the player as an included image file. Please note that parkour routes are not visible on the map, as they are meant to be discovered during Cat Mode (or other difficulty modes, if the player is feeling risky).

For those who prefer to create their own maps during gameplay, it is strongly recommended that this is done during Cat Mode, because it's much more difficult to create a map while an **active NPC antagonist is on the hunt**. There are only two locations that are not accessible to the cat, but the rest of the map can be explored freely in Cat Mode.

For Screen-Reader Users

I Am Prey provides the player with an in-game map and compass system that allows the player to freely explore a replica of the visual map file, without ever costing a turn in-game.

To access this, use the **MAP** command.

The **GO TO** command sets the player's mental compass, which will show the next step necessary to reach the goal set by the **GO TO** command. To check this compass, simply use the **COMPASS** command.

What Happened to GO TO and CONTINUE?

The default TADS commands of **GO TO** and **CONTINUE** have been remapped to the in-game map's **GO TO** and **COMPASS** commands, respectively.

This was done because having an active, hunting antagonist makes it too risky to use the **CONTINUE** command, which would automatically (and recklessly) walk the player into the next room, without any concern for threats and dangers, which must be investigated.

Cat Mode

Cat Mode has no active Predator, and allows the player to freely explore the map at their own pace. When the player is done exploring, they can freely **RESTART** the game, and choose another difficulty mode.

Auto-Sneaking

In the Prey Tutorial mode, there is a system known as “auto-sneak”, which automatically performs the general practices for checking danger before moving in a direction.

It’s not perfect, and it often uses excessive turns, but it’s meant to help demonstrate to the player the sort of risk-averse mindset that will avoid most dangers. As the player gets more skilled, they can afford to take more risks.

To turn off auto-sneak, use the **SNEAK MODE OFF** command.

Nightmare Mode

Nightmare Mode has the The Predator moving at a full sprint at all times. He refuses you any mercy, and you have access to none of your tricks.

Environmental Awareness

The player can use the **LISTEN** and **PEEK** commands to gather environmental clues about The Predator. Other clues can be gathered by hearing muffled sounds through walls, and doors automatically closing.

If the player hears **ominous clicking** sounds, then The Predator is likely waiting outside the room, ready to strike.

Doors

Most doors (other than small ones and the Freezer doors) will automatically close. If the player closes the door behind themselves, then an optimal level of stealth can be maintained. If the door automatically slams shut when The Predator doesn’t expect it, then he will go to investigate.

This can also be leveraged by using the **SLAM DOOR** command, which will create a loud sound.

Additionally, if the player opens or closes doors in view of The Predator, then he will go to investigate.

Tricks

The player has a list of tricks that can be utilized, but only for a limited number of times. The number of tricks available depends on the difficulty mode.

Door Slam Trick

When The Predator opens a door to enter a room, the player has an option to **SLAM** it in his face to stun him. This can be handy when escaping rooms with no alternative exits.

Additionally, during a chase, the player can **SLAM** a door just before he passes through it. A special choice selection might appear in this case to provide the player with a bonus action.

If this trick runs out, then The Predator will always control the door when passing through.

Annoying Sink Trick

The Predator absolutely hates the sound of sink running water. He will be distracted when the player opens a sink's tap, and will be compelled to turn the water back off.

Reservoir Dive Trick

The player can dive in the Reservoir to make a daring escape. If this trick runs out, then The Predator will grab the player before escape can be made.

Suit Parts

There are **seven** parts of an environment suit, which will grant escape through the emergency airlock. These include the helmet, torso, bottoms, left glove, right glove, left boot, and right boot.

There is also a **fake helmet**, which will reveal itself only when the player tries to take it.

Chase Sequences

When the player is spotted, a chase sequence begins. If the current room has more than one standard (and/or parkour exit), then the player will get two turns to find a way to evade. The Predator will follow the player into the next room. The chase can last for **five rooms** (assuming standard circumstances) before The Predator finally catches the player. Large rooms like the Storage Bay and Hangar are large enough to allow the player to extend the chase for a little longer, but results may vary.

Parkour During Chase Sequences

Depending on the available exits of a room, The Predator will have varying levels of patience for parkour antics. Generally, if there are two or more standard exits from a room, he will not permit parkour or climbing of any kind.

Predator Exit Control

The Predator controls the last exit he passed through, which denies access to the player. This becomes a serious problem in a room with only one exit and no alternative parkour exits. In situations like this, the player can **SLAM** the exit door as The Predator attempts to enter, assuming the **slam door trick** has not been depleted. While he is stunned, the player can escape without death, or find somewhere to hide in the room.

The Hangar and Storage Bay are both too large for The Predator to control the exits, so these rooms are the exception to this rule.

Hiding While In Sight

If the player attempts to hide while The Predator has visual, then hiding will fail. The player must hide *before* The Predator enters the room.

Parkour Noise

Climbing and jumping on things for parkour is a major source of noise. The Predator will be listening for this, and will home in on the noise.

Falling dangerously will cause the most noise, and will give The Predator a **bonus turn**.

UNDO and Randomness

The player can use **UNDO** if they prefer, but any randomness will resolve the same way, if the player takes the same actions.

For this reason, the survival of the player does not depend on randomness, and the player is given a wealth of opportunities to maintain control of the situation.

Complete Index of Verbs

The following is a complete list of the verbs which are necessary to complete this game.

These are listed with **VERB NAME** (type of target object) notation.

GO (compass direction name)

Direction names include north, south, east, west, up, down, in, out, etc.

Travel can be abbreviated with:

N S E W N E S E N W S W U D

CLIMB UP (platform name)

Abbreviation: **CL**

CLIMB OVER TO (platform name)

CLIMB DOWN TO (platform name)

CLIMB UP INTO (aperture name)

CLIMB OVER INTO (aperture name)

CLIMB DOWN INTO (aperture name)

JUMP UP (platform name)

Abbreviation: **JM**

JUMP OVER TO (platform name)

JUMP DOWN TO (platform name)

JUMP UP INTO (aperture name)

JUMP OVER INTO (aperture name)

JUMP DOWN INTO (aperture name)

GET DOWN / GET OFF

GET OUT / GO OUT

GO IN / ENTER (container)

PARKOUR / ROUTES

Lists known parkour routes.

LOCALS

Lists surfaces in reach during parkour.

ROUTES FULL

List all known routes and nearby surfaces.

GO TO (room)

COMPASS

MAP

Opens and closes the text-based map.

OPEN (door or container)

CLOSE (door or container)

SLAM (door)

Slams a door shut. More on this, later.

EXAMINE (object)

Abbreviation: **X**

SEARCH (container or platform name)

Abbreviation: **SR**

Can reveal new parkour routes.

LOOK IN (container)

LOOK UNDER (container)

TURN ON (object)

TURN OFF (object)

TAKE (item)

DROP (item)

WEAR (outfit name)

TAKE OFF (outfit name)

LOOK AROUND

Abbreviation: **L**

Gives a description of surroundings.

LOOK THROUGH (aperture name)

PEEK THROUGH (aperture name)

Shortened to: **LOOK THRU**

PEEK (compass direction name)

Allows the player to look into other rooms.

LISTEN

Listens for environmental sounds.

SNEAK (direction name)

SNEAK THROUGH (aperture name)

WAIT

Passes a turn.

UNDO**SAVE**

For player convenience.

RESTORE

Loads a save file, for player convenience.

RESTART

Starts a new game.