

# Lara Croft

## and the Guardian of Light

Crystal Dynamics developed this version of the popular Lara Croft Action Game franchise. Square Enix published the game for Xbox and Play Station on August 18, 2010. They released the PC version on September 28, 2010. The ESRB rating is Teen.

The game is a departure for the series. It does not have the name "Tomb Raider" in the title. It stresses arcade-style action and cooperative gameplay. Players may play as either Lara Croft or an ancient warrior named Totec. The player must solve puzzles and destroy hoards of monsters.

Lara Croft is on a mission to obtain the legendary artifact known as the Mirror of Smoke. After she discovers the artifact, a gang of local thugs disturbs its sacred seal. This releases the fearsome demigod, Xolotl. His mission is to wreak havoc. Xolotl's appearance has also triggered the return of the warrior Totec. Lara and Totec must battle to stop Xolotl before he can destroy the world.

Many Tomb Raider trademarks appear in this game, including classic weapons such as her Twin Pistols and the Dual Uzis. Also featured are Classic Tomb Raider enemies such as gators and T-Rex dinosaurs; and familiar sound effects such as the fanfare that plays when discovering gems.

New firepower is a remote bomb Lara can set on the ground and detonate at will. Despite his being an ancient warrior, Totec can also use Lara's guns and bombs.

Lara uses a grappling hook gun to attach to rings. This allows her to rappel along vertical surfaces and swing. The grappling hook can also work for Totec, providing him with a tightrope. Totec has a shield to reflect hazards, and Golden Spears that can be hurled into walls, creating makeshift stepping-stones for Lara (Lara may use the Golden Spears as well if you play the game solo).

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## Level One - Temple of Light

You start the game with a cut scene where you have a short introduction to Xolotl and Totec. After the cut scene, you find yourself in a large room. Go up the stairs behind you to the altar. Jump down to a shelf and pick up nine white gems for 1,200 points each. Jump back to the area below and stand in front of the closed door. Place a bomb in front of the moving mechanism on the right and blow it up. Do the same for the mechanism on the left. The door will open.

Go through the door and then up the stairs. You will hear a tinkling sound that tells you the auto save has updated itself. At the top of the stairs, destroy all eight of the urns. Inside one of them is the first of ten red skulls you will be collecting. You may blow up the TNT if you like, for a satisfying explosion. Collect seven white gems. Go up the next set of stairs to the arrow trap. Place a bomb next to it and blow up the trap. Collect three gems just past the trap. After a cut scene where Totec gives you his spear, kill three enemies who jump down next to you for 2,250 points each.

Go through the next door and then up the stairs. Step on the pressure plate to open the door. Blow up the arrow trap on the right for red skull #2. Blow up or jump over the arrow trap on the left. Grab four gems. Go through the opened door. See a tutorial on how to use the spear to climb a wall. Now spear the wall, jump on the spear and jump to the ledge above. Note that you cannot throw a spear while standing on another spear, which means if you want to use a series of spears as makeshift ladders, you will need to find an area that gives you more height. On top is a Healing Fountain. Break all the urns.

Go up the next stairs. A group of five enemies will jump down and attack you. Pick up one gem. Go up the stairs for a grapple tutorial. Blow up the arrow traps and pick up three gems. Destroy the two urns. Go back downstairs to where the five enemies attacked you. Use your grapple to attach to the gold ring on top of the wall above. Climb up the rope, pick up red skull #3 and step on the pressure plate to open the next door.

Go through that door, where four enemies will ambush you. They leave one gem. Blow up, or jump over, the TNT blocking the walkway. Continue up the steps through the next door. Pull the large gold handle all the way out and then run through the doorway before it closes again.

Four more enemies will attack you. The arrow traps may cut down two or three of them. You do not need to go downstairs unless you need to use the Health Pack. They only activate if you are injured and they only restore health partially. On the platform where the spear traps were, shoot a spear into the wall opposite – as near to red skull #4 as you can.

Now back up and take a running jump onto that spear. Now jump up from the spear and toward the skull (both at the same time) to collect the skull and grab the ledge above. Jump up to the platform.

Blow up the two spear traps. Pick up the floating Clay Arrow and five gems. Pull the large gold handle to open the next door and run through the doorway. There is a Healing Fountain in that room. Pick up eight gems. Climb up the ladder and destroy the arrow traps. Fight off the three enemies who ambush you. Pick up red skull #5 and four gems. Roll the two balls off the edge. Climb back down the ladder. Roll the two balls onto the pressure plates to open the next door.

Go through the door and up the stairs. At the stair landing, pick up four gems. In the next room, jump onto the nearest spider pot. Jump from pot to pot and collect all six of the gems. One of the pots has red skull #6. If you can jump between all seven pots without touching the ground, you get a Health Power up. If you fail at this on the first try, you may try again until you succeed.

Now walk close to the edge of the pit for another grapple tutorial. Then grapple the gold ring above the pit and walk over the edge. Lower yourself until you are level with the platform on your left (facing the wall). Start swinging left and right to gain momentum. When the swing to the left gets higher than the platform, release the grapple and jump (both at the same time) to land on the ledge.

The next room contains a moving fire trap. Be ready to run around the central column to stay ahead of the fire-breathing statue. You must pull two large gold handles to stop the fire. First, roll the ball onto the pressure plate closest to the ball. This will stop the fire from blowing up through the grate beneath one of the handles. Place a bomb next to that ball, so that the force of the explosion will push the ball towards the second pressure plate. Then run over to the handle without fire under it and pull out the handle. Now blow up the bomb. The ball should move over to the other pressure plate. Roll the ball onto the other plate and pull the second gold handle. If you can complete the entire process in less than thirty seconds, the game will give you a Clay Owl.

Go through the next doorway and look right for red skull #7 and two gems. Roll the ball over to that doorway. Now *pull* the ball through the doorway and onto the pressure plate to keep the two wooden steps locked in place. Now jump across the gap. Pick up three gems on the other side. To get red skull #8, jump on the earthen jug nearest the door. Shoot a spear just below the skull, jump up on the spear and jump up again to collect the skull.

In the next room, blow up the upper arrow trap. Then jump down and blow up the lower arrow traps. Go back upstairs and shoot a grapple at the gold ring opposite. Walk up the grapple line, swing to get red skull #10 and then pull yourself up to the platform with the impact switch. Now shoot your grapple at the second, higher, gold ring. Walk off the edge and swing until you get the Health Upgrade. Swing, release and jump back to the platform. Shoot the impact switch to open the door. In the next small room, pick up three gems. Now shoot the impact switch again to close the first door and open the next.

When you go through the door, watch a cut scene with Xolotl. After the cut scene, two giants and six smaller enemies will attack you. Hold down your attack button until all of them are dead. They will drop one Ammo Pack, 2 Health Packs and 2 gems. Break all four of the jars.

Now go through the doorway with the bright light. This is your first Challenge Room. Pick up six gems. Shoot the impact switch. Past the gate, spear the wall and jump up to get the Health Upgrade. Stand at the bottom of the stairs, next to the handrail closest to the first gate. Face the impact switch, even though you cannot see it. Shoot toward the switch and run or summersault through the gate before it closes. Go to the wall behind the impact switch. Spear the wall, jump on the spear and jump up to the Ammo Upgrade. Now stand next to the closed gate, shoot the impact switch and run through the gate to exit.

Go up the double stairs and break all of the urns. Go up the next stairs. Along the walkway, as you collect five gems, two giants will attack you. Fire your weapon at them as you retreat down the long walkway. They will leave one Ammo Pack and two Health Packs if you need them.

Ignore the steps on the left for now. Go straight, into the second Challenge Room. Pick up six gems. Shoot the impact switch. Roll the ball onto the pressure plate on your left, as you enter the room. Time your run across the wooden bridge so that the arrows do not hit you. Shoot the impact switch again. Roll the first ball off the pressure plate, and next to the closed gate. Roll the second ball onto the same pressure plate. Run back across the wooden bridge. Shoot the impact switch again to open the gate. Roll the first ball onto the other pressure plate to make the second bridge pop up. Stand where the arrows cannot hit you and then jump across the gap to get the Ammo Upgrade. Blow up the arrow traps and exit the room. Collect the Knife of Itzli on the stairs you passed up earlier, and then enter the last room.

Pull the large gold handle to pull up several wooden platforms. They will stay up for five seconds. Jump across the boards nearest the wall to get to the other side. Quickly pick up red skull #10 and as many of the 8 gems as you can before the moving wall pushes you into the spike pit. Jump up on top of the first moving wall and then quickly jump on top of the second moving wall. Spear the face of the third moving wall, jump on the spear and pull yourself up. Repeat the procedure for the fourth moving wall. Grapple the ring on top of the fifth moving wall and climb up the grapple line to the top. Do not stop moving here. You are still not safe. Run, before a huge rock smashes the platform you are standing on and you start sliding down into the pit. Jump the short step ahead to final safety.

The game will give you an extra reward (Headdress of Ehecatl) if you can finish this entire level in less than six minutes. To move faster, Somersault, (right mouse button). Skip all fights except the first one. Avoid blowing up arrow traps unless necessary. Absorb the hits and keep on moving.

## Level Two - Temple Grounds

You begin the second level on a stone balcony, where the game briefs you about sub-weapons that you can equip. Once that mini-tutorial concludes, head down the steps toward the lower left. You will receive a new objective. You must get inside the Spider Tomb. From the base of the stairs, start by going to your right. Go to the edge of the cliff, where the foliage is thick. There, among the branches, you will find the stage's first Red Skull, along with a few gators. Now return to the base of the steps, and past them, to the edge of the cliff on the other side of the steps.

Search around in the trees here to find some gems. You *will* attract the attention of more gators. Find a low stone pedestal with Red Skull #2. Continue exploring around the edge of the cliff top.

As you move around a U-shaped block wall, you will trigger a cut scene. Some of Vasco's men are (ineffectively) fighting some magicians throwing energy bolts. After those men fall in battle, the magicians will turn their attention to you. Do not go backward! The small U-shaped enclosure behind you is a trap. It contains a truck that will explode. Instead, go right or left, then get behind the U-shaped wall, to the area you have already cleared. Hug the block wall and shoot at the corner with your pistols. The dual pistols have unlimited ammo and will cut down the monsters as they come around the corner. You can roll out of the way if any get too close. When you have killed the last of your foes, destroy both of the intact trucks in the area. Now start walking along the stone bridge. Get ready to knock down two more of the faster mutants. You will come to a place where part of the bridge has fallen down.

Jump across the gap, to land on the lower ledge. Embed a spear in the wall, then jump onto it and from there jump up onto the next part of the bridge. As you continue, keep an eye to your right, where sits a large statue of a head. See Red Skull #3 on top of the head. Throw a spear in the lower portion of that statue and then leap onto it. Jump to the top of the statue to collect the skull. Drop back down and continue along the bridge. At the end, you will trigger a cut scene. Now, you must find the first of three Sun Discs to gain entrance to the Spider Tomb pyramid in front of you.

Begin your hunt by going left (facing the pyramid, at the golden circle). Find a stack of crates near a wall. Blast the TNT crates apart with a bomb and the wall will crumble. This will release six fast mutants. This is not a good place to fight them. Try running/tumbling back to the broken bridge. Go just far enough that you can still see the gold circle and wait. This way, they will come at you from only one direction. This is an excellent fighting position. Kill all six mutants and then return to the hidden area. A Bolt Action Rifle is on a pedestal. As you collect it, two more mutants will attack.

Now look nearby to find a group of square stone pillars. There is an Armor Upgrade resting on the highest pillar. Jump up to collect it by first hopping onto the shortest pillar, then following a clockwise pattern of hops up to the higher pillars. At the top, collect the upgrade. Then drop back down and continue clockwise around the circular walkway that surrounds the pyramid.

When you get to the other side of the pyramid, you will find a series of three tall stone pillars. An Ammo Upgrade sits on top of one of those pillars. Throw a spear into that pillar, and then jump up onto the spear and up again to collect the upgrade.

Next to that series of pillars, find a wide river and a broken bridge. When you near the bridge, a hoard of enemies will attack you from the direction of the river. You will see energy bolts coming at you before you can see the magicians who are attacking you. Run back toward your fighting position. They will not *all* follow you. Use the cover at the bridge to fight those who do follow you. Then, continue fighting, all the way around the circle, until you return to the front of the pyramid.

Now, facing the pyramid at the golden circle, go right to where you may have seen some long stone stairs. When you start up those stairs, a large stone ball will chase you back down. As you run back down, monsters will begin attacking to your front *and* rear. Run/tumble all the way back to your fighting position behind the golden circle and wait for them. Included among them is one giant.

After you eliminate the last of them, climb back up those stairs and go to the edge of a nearby precipice. There, you will find a Health Upgrade, dangling. Walk over the edge and hang on to it, to collect the upgrade. Then, pull up, return to the stairs and go back down those stairs.

Go back to the river, where you just cleared away all of those enemies. Step into the water to the left of the broken bridge and you will find Red Skull #4 in the water. After collecting it, walk underneath that piece of broken bridge to find a hidden Health Upgrade. Now cross the stream and then head to the left, along the other bank. Look for two stone pillars. Red Skull #5 is resting on top of the higher pillar. Stand on the low one and face the higher pillar. Toss a spear carefully and hit that high pillar. Jump to the shaft of the spear, then up to collect the skull. In the water, near where the water falls, are three gems. Go back upstream. On your left is a set of double stone stairs up to a long bridge.

Pick one of the two stairways and walk up to the cracked surface. As soon as you step on the cracked part, the bridge will begin to collapse under you. Run along the bridge, jumping from section to section and from one side to the other as necessary. The bridge will continue to crumble. The last jump is far enough that it will leave you clinging to the edge. Pull yourself up.

Here, you will run into a number of monsters that rush you and then explode, once they have absorbed enough of your ammunition. Be careful of trucks around here. You might accidentally blow them apart with your weapons. Destroy all the trucks, but not when you are standing close to them.

With the bridge to your rear, go right, *not* up the steps of the high stone pedestal in front of you. You will find enemies. The lip of the shorter section of the broken bridge, despite seeming like a trap, is an excellent fighting position. Have enemies chase you there and destroy them all. Once the entire area on the right is clear, notice some trucks burning. Check behind one of the trucks to find Red Skull #6. It is next to the wall, in one of the corners that forms the high stone pedestal. After collecting the skull, enter the nearby Challenge Room.

In the room, you see a field of spikes. Start by pushing the nearest ball onto a switch just beyond it. This will cause some spikes on the right to descend. Now head in that direction, pushing the other large ball so that it comes to rest on the plate that you made accessible when you positioned the first ball. More spikes will lower. Now roll the first ball to a plate near the lower right side of the area. You will create a path along the upper left side of the room that leads through the sea of spikes and allows you to grab a relic, the Arrow of Tezcatlipoca, from a recess along the backside of the room. Now exit the room.

Climb the steps to the elevated stone courtyard on top of the large stone pedestal. You will trigger a brief cut scene at the top of the steps. Look to the left to find an Auto-shotgun, among some crates of ammo and TNT. To reveal the Sun Disc, set a bomb at the base of the stone fist. Now go over and stand on the nearby pressure switch. Detonate the explosive. When the bomb explodes, the fist will raise and you can step inside to retrieve the disc. At the base of the stairs, near the TNT, a gate will open. For safety, blow up the TNT now. Go down those stairs and through the newly opened gate.

As you arrive in the lower area at the base of the stairs, you will attract the attention of more enemies. The confined space can make it difficult for you to stay alive. Run back to the area of the broken bridge where you have some room to maneuver and some cover. Most of them will follow you.

When the enemies are dead, continue through the new area. Destroy the parked truck along the way, if you have not already done so. Continue, along the wooden scaffolding. Along the way, note the wall next to you holding an Ammo Upgrade. You can reach it by throwing a spear into the wall, and then jumping onto that spear and up to your prize. Then jump back down to the walkway.

You will come to a wide pit of spikes. If you try to leap directly across, you will die. Throw one or more spears diagonally at the back, wooden wall. Jump onto the shaft(s), and then across the gap to the other side. Now throw another spear at the next wall (just beyond the bed of spikes). Jump onto that spear, and then up to the platform above. You will find the Stone Feather artifact resting on a pedestal. Take it, and then drop back down. Descend the stairs further along the walkway.

You will face more magicians along that bridge. They fire energy projectiles that can turn as you do. Past them, descend some steps to an area with a Health Fountain. There are many gators here. They will pop up out of the ground and surround you, if you let them. Run back to the walkway, so they can come at you from only one direction, and then kill them. At the shallow pool, a large mutant will jump out of the water. Kill him too. Notice the small stone building that he was guarding. There is an open doorway, but do not enter yet. Instead, look toward the roof. Red Skull #7 is waiting there for you. Climb up the riverbank to the left of the building, and then throw two spears into the wall at different heights. Jump up those spears and then over to collect the skull.

Now drop back down and go to the other side of the building. Find a short stone platform with Red Skull #8 sitting on it. Kill the animals that are guarding the skull, collect it and go into the building.

Hit the impact switch to make the first row of spikes come down. Now set a bomb at the base of the switch, walk past the lowered spikes and then detonate your bomb. Continue to a pressure plate with gems on top. Step on the plate to open the gate. Arrive at a room where a cage on the left side of the room is firing regular volleys of arrows toward a large gold handle that you need to pull.

Jump onto the lower stone column. Throw a spear into the higher one. Jump over to push the large ball down onto the floor past the arrows. Push the ball so that it blocks the arrows, and pull the lever.

You will cause the arrow cage to rise into the air, revealing the Sun Disc. Take the disc and then select your favorite weapon. Climb the stairs on the other side of the room.

You will find yourself at the top of the long staircase overlooking the pyramid. These are the same stairs where the stone ball rolled down. This area is again swarming with monsters. Immediately run down those stairs, dodging enemies, all the way to your fighting position at the gold circle. Use the cover there to your advantage and destroy all your enemies.

Now go back to the other side of the pyramid. Work your way upstream to find a series of white square plates serving as stepping-stones across the river. If you can manage to jump along these to the other side of the river without touching the water, you will receive a reward. If you fail the first time, try again. On the other side of the river, go upstream along the bank to pick up some gems. After that, wade in the water at the base of the waterfall to find Red Skull #9 and some more gems.

You have one more Sun Disc to find. Standing at the gold circle, and facing the pyramid, travel clockwise around the path again. Look for some stairs on your left, going down. At the bottom of those stairs, you will disturb a group of enemies. Run halfway back up the stairs and wait. Kill the monsters as they reach the bottom of the stairs. Be aware that two of the fast two-legged ones will attack from the *top* of the stairs. When they are all dead, destroy the last of the trucks, for a reward.

Continue down the walkway. You will see the third disc high up in a nook in a wall off to your left. Move to the broken end of the walkway. This is a good fighting position. There is a short jump to get to the other side. Jump the gap and walk until you come to a set of stone columns. Many gators will pop up out of the ground to surround you, along with a huge Demon Lizard. If you let him, he will grab you in his mouth and eat you. Immediately run/summersault back along the stone pathway, jump over the short gap and wait with your favorite weapon. All of the monsters will come at you from one direction. There, you can easily defeat them, even the Demon Lizard - and get a reward.

Go back to the square stone pillars. One of them has a Health Upgrade on top. Get it by pushing a nearby stone ball over to the base of the pillar. Stand on the boulder and toss a spear at the pillar. Then jump onto the spear and from there to the top of the pillar to retrieve the upgrade.

There are two ways that you can get the disc. From this end of the walkway, you can use your grappling hook to attach to the golden ring, swing over the gap and jump to the ledge on the other side. Throw a spear in the wall and climb up to retrieve the final Sun Disc.

Alternatively, you can go back down the walkway, jump the gap and then drop down to the area on your left. You have to go there anyway, to get the last Red Skull. There are some nasty energy-throwing magicians, along with gators, down there and not much room to maneuver. Even worse, there is not a lot of cover. Absorb the damage, fight as well as you can, and hope you survive.

To get the disc from here, go *under* the walkway, toward the disc. At the base of the stone wall, throw a spear into it. Jump on the spear and then jump up on top of the rock platform. Throw another spear into the wall below the disc, jump on the spear and then jump up to retrieve the disc.

Now drop back down and go toward the stone building. Do not enter it yet. Instead, walk around to its side. Throw a spear into the wall, *or* walk up the stone pillar leaning against another pillar and jump to the top of the building to find Red Skull #10 on top. Drop back down and enter the building.

Inside, you will find a Clay Owl artifact. To get it, stop at the top of the stairs. Look out toward the column where the artifact rests. Throw a spear at the column, go down a few steps and throw another spear into the column. Go all the way down to the base of the column and put one more spear into it. Jump up the spears to the top. Get the owl and exit.

Return to the pyramid. A hoard of spiders will pour from its open doorway. You will have other assorted enemies to deal with as well. Kill them all and then go through the door of the pyramid.

### Level Three - The Spider Tomb

Start down the stairs, and you will come to a wider stone passage. Continue, until you near a wide gap. There is a gold ring on the far side, but you cannot cross just yet because a wave of spiders will emerge from the web-filled pit. Move backwards, firing your weapon. Two larger members of their species will join them soon. The larger spiders are capable of absorbing much more damage. After they absorb enough ordnance from you, they explode into pieces that can cause damage to you. The rock arch at the bottom of the stairs is a good place to stand and avoid injury while you kill them.

After you have defeated the spiders, go back to the edge of the pit. To your right, find a gold handle that you should pull. However, as you touch the handle, a smaller batch of spiders will scuttle up from the pit. Kill them, and then return to the gold handle. Pull it out as far away from the wall as it will go. The stone column on the opposite side of the pit will rise to its full height. Notice the grappling ring on top. It will be useable for only eight seconds, before it drops back down. Fire your grapple to latch onto the gold ring. Then jump out toward the pit, bump against the far wall and then climb up to the top of the ledge on the other side of the pit. Now pass through the waiting archway.

Continue down some stairs. Break a pot at the base of the stairs for ammo, if you need it. Kill more spiders that appear, and then continue. You will come to a fork in the path. Go left for some point-yielding gems. Then return to the intersection and head along the right-hand path to a wide gap.

You cannot leap across this gap. Throw two spears at the wall to create steps across the gap. Jump from one shaft to the other, and then to the other side of the gap. Down the walkway a bit further, you will see a large, angular, weight hanging in the air ahead of you. Notice the short section of ladder attached to its side. Leap to the ladder and the weight will descend a short distance.

A short cut scene shows a bridge below you *partially* extending across a wide gap. There are two other weights like this. Your new goal is to jump on the remaining two weights to extend the bridge across the entire gap. Climb to the top of the weight.

Leap from the weight, back to the left ledge. Then go toward the lower left to scare up two more spiders. Blast them, and then continue along the passageway they were guarding. Step on the pressure plate to open a new gate. Equip your favorite weapon. The gate will lock behind you when you pass through. Many small spiders will attack you in here. Some larger ones will soon join them. Do not be stingy with ammunition. Bombs can give you some assistance with the larger spiders. When you clear away the last of them, a Health Pack should be available.

A large stone ball should have dropped. Roll it to your left, to stop the flame that blocks your progress. Pick up Red Skull #1 from the back corner of the room before you leave.

On the other side of where the flame was, descend some stairs to reach a Challenge Room. Enter the room to find a Flamethrower. When you touch it, a bunch of small spiders will attack you. Kill them all, and then collect any Ammo Packs or Health Packs that you need. Exit the room.

Go down some more stairs to reach a new type of challenge. A pole at the center of the platform has metal rod extending from it, attached to a large ball. The ball is rotating in a wide circle, making a circular black mark on the floor. Go to the other side of the room to see another fire coming out of a hole. Avoid the ball, stay to the edges of the room. A reward is available if you can achieve a hole-in-one. If you put a bomb in the right place, the ball will fly over to block the fire hole in one shot.

Note the line of seven polished grey stones in a line starting from the base of the stairs. Stand at the base of the fifth stone. After the ball has passed, and before it swings around again, place a bomb on the black line directly in front of you, and then quickly get back to the polished stone. Now go to a position between the bomb and the stairs, where you can still see the bomb. Be certain that you have your best weapon equipped. Just as the ball passes by the place where the bomb sits, blow it up. Then, immediately run halfway up the stairs. Spiders will come pouring out of nowhere, from above the stairs, and from below them. Standing on the stairs will keep them from surrounding you. Kill all of the spiders and then check the accuracy of your shot.

If you missed the hole, you can step into the flames to kill yourself and the puzzle will reset. You could also just roll the ball into the hole by hand and get on with the game – your choice. Before you continue, look up at the back wall. There is a low ledge just barely visible. Throw a spear into the wall beneath it, and then jump onto the spear. From there, jump up to the area above and pick up an Ammo Upgrade. Then drop back down to the floor.

Leave the room and go down the next walkway. Kill a few more spiders that appear along your path. You will come to a second hanging weight. Jump onto it. It will drop down, as did the previous one.

Another section of the bridge will extend, far beneath you. A third weight will fall into place just ahead of you. Leap across to it, then from there hop to the stable ledge to the right.

Continue along that ledge and another group of spiders will attack you. You will reach a T-shaped intersection in the path. Go right, and then toward the lower-left. Climb some stairs. You will reach an optional area where three of the large balls swing around a central pillar. Red Skulls #2, #3, and #4 lie in the center of the path of those balls.

Here, you can run past a ball and then start jumping to avoid each of the moving metal rods. If you do this twelve times in a row, without taking damage, you get reward. After you do this, get to the outside of the circle. To collect the skulls easily, blow up one of the balls. The entire mechanism will destroy itself and reveal a Clay Feather artifact. Place a bomb on the black line and quickly back out of the path of the rotating balls. Detonate the bomb when one of the balls passes over. Some spiders will rush you.

Break the nearby urn to reveal a Health Pack, if you need it. Then head back down the stairs. When you arrive back at the T-shaped intersection, go along the other fork. Blow some spiders out of your way as you progress. Step on a pressure plate to open a door into a new room.

In the new room, there are four spike plates positioned near the center of the space. When you step on these, spikes will immediately pop up from the holes. Run or summersault over all four plates, so that all of the spikes are in the up position. This will cause a cubicle along the left wall to open so that you can step inside to collect Red Skull #5. Then descend the stairs along the back-right corner.

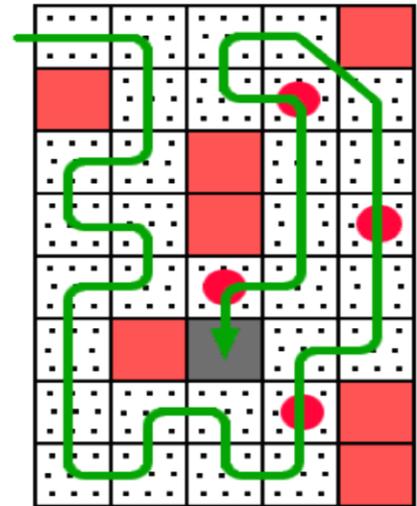
As you reach the base of those stairs, you will find yourself looking across a much wider field of spike plates. Positioned on those plates are Red Skulls #6, #7, #8 and #9. As before, stepping on the plates will cause spikes to appear within half a second. Even *touching* a spike will kill you.

Notice that there are two other doorways out of this room. The game has locked both doors, for the moment. One of the doors leads to a small antechamber that contains Health and Ammo Packs. On the other side of that chamber is a doorway that leads to the rest of the game. To gain access to that small chamber, you must step on the spike plate marked in grey.

The other doorway leads to a Challenge Room. The game will not let you into that room unless you step on all 32 plates in one sequence, so that all of the spikes are up at the same time. This challenge is optional and extremely difficult to accomplish, especially for so early in the game. The game calls this the "Beat a better mouse trap" achievement. When you die, and you will, the game will reset the challenge. The only mandatory task you must accomplish is to step on the grey plate.

However, if you want to try it, start at the upper-left and follow the green line in the picture. Be careful about going around corners. A sweaty thumb on your controller is deadly here. Do not stop, even for a second. When you get to the last (grey) plate, all of the spikes will drop. However, within three seconds they will all pop up again. Run/summersault off the grid as soon as the spikes drop. Only then are you safe.

When you enter the Challenge Room, you will find a puzzle. There is an artifact locked up in a cubby on the left side of the room. The wall opposite the wide pit has wooden planking. Throw a spear into that wooden planking at about the midpoint. Throw another spear into the corner. Throw a third spear halfway between the corner and the edge of the pit.



Along the right side of the room, and halfway along the back, there is a row of spike traps. Run along them, and then leap onto the first spear. Jump to the second spear, to the third, and then to safety near the now-open cubby in the wall. Step inside the cubby to obtain the Stone Lizard artifact. Now exit the Challenge Room, *still careful of the spikes*.

Go through the small anteroom, use any of the Health or Ammo Packs, and then start down some stairs. Partway down those stairs, jump across the gap and continue to a walkway below. Kill some spiders that attack when you reach the bottom of the stairs. Note the gold ring on the stone column nearby. Another spider is lurking on that column, just above your line of sight. You can kill it from the top of the broken section of steps. Then grapple the gold ring. Back off the ledge while facing the ring. Descend to find a Health Upgrade, and then climb back up the wall, where more spiders attack.

Then continue along the stone walkway to a wide stone platform, where more spiders will attack. Included among them is one huge spider. After you have killed them all, pass by the pressure plate ahead and turn right, down the slope to three stone pillars. One of them has Red Skull #10 on top. To reach it, stand three steps up from the bottom of the stairs and throw a spear at the pillar. If you hit the pillar, go close to it and stick another spear just below it. If you missed the pillar and hit the wall behind it, stand close to the *side* of the pillar and stick a spear into it. Then jump up the two shafts to get to the top and collect the skull. Drop down and then go back up to the top of the stairs.

Step on the pressure plate and look to your upper-left, to see a rotating, spike-lined column. The column will stop rotating as long as you are standing on the plate. Throw a spear into the column. Run over and jump onto the spear. The column will start rotating again. Remain on the spear until you can safely leap to the far side. You may also be able to jump up to the top of the column and then jump to the other side from there. Either way, go along the narrow ledge to find a final weight dangling in the air. Jump to it and the weight will drop down to complete the extension of the bridge. Now climb up to the top of the weight, turn to face the narrow ledge, and jump back to it.

Stand on the pressure plate on the walkway and the rotating column will lower. Jump to the top of the column and, from there, to the ledge where you started. If you wait too long, the column will rise again. However, you can place yourself at the edge of the column, wait for it to rotate to the proper direction, and then still survive the jump to your starting ledge. As you arrive, the Mother Spider will attack. Throwing spears at its head works well, but so do bullets. Keep moving so that it cannot grab you with its claws. You will also have to kill many smaller spiders. One shot will knock them out, so you can get back to dealing with the big spider. There is a Health Pack nearby.

After you defeat the spider, you get a Clay Feather. Then descend the stairs to the area near where you collected the tenth skull a moment ago. Previously, there was a wall of spikes between you and the bridge. Now those spikes are gone.

Though you *can* cross over the spikes now, and onto the bridge, you might want to backtrack. Go all the way back to the beginning of the stage. You will have to take a long jump from the platform with the three spinning metal balls, which have magically reconstituted themselves. Stop when you reach the very *first* weight. When you hop onto it, all three weights will start lowering. When they reach their lowest point, you will see a column with an artifact resting on it. You can leap to that column to collect the Scepter of Cihuacoatl. Jump back across all three weights and then to the ledge. Return across the spinning column and down to the beginning of the long bridge.

There is a doorway at the end of the bridge. As you run toward it, a rotating cylinder of spikes will lower. Meanwhile, the bridge will begin to move, so that a gap opens behind you. The bridge will get shorter as time goes by. Have your spear ready and shoot for the containers of TNT above the cylinder. Hit one container with your spear, and that will cause the lot of them to explode. This action, in turn, will knock the rotating cylinder free. Run to the end or the side of the bridge. Drop down and hang from the edge as the spikes pass harmlessly past you, and the cylinder drops into the abyss. Now climb back onto the bridge and head through the door on the far side.

## Level Four - The Summoning

Go down the beautiful trail to the start of a bridge. Turn left, before crossing the bridge. Now walk along the bank of the waterway to the end. Find Red Skull #1 in the water. Now, return along the bank to the bridge and further, along the bank to the right of the bridge. You will find some old growth trees at the far end, and Red Skull #2.

Return to the bridge and cross it. On the other side of an archway, trigger a cut scene. Once that scene concludes, you will find yourself in a large square field, containing a live, angry Tyrannosaur.

The game will reward you for knocking down, or causing the monster to knock down, all 22 of the square stone columns in the field. The game will also reward you for finding and picking up all eight remaining Red Skulls. It is these two tasks, not killing the dinosaur, which is the most difficult.

The dinosaur is slow and lumbering. Your running and tumbling will easily outmaneuver him. To kill the monster, all you have to do is lure him onto each of the three huge spike plates and hit the switch to activate them. Each spike plate will take away a third of the dinosaur's health. One of the plates is ready to activate. Its spikes are in the down position. You must lower the spikes on the other two plates by hitting the impact switches for both of them. Note that the dinosaur spits fire.

To get all of the skulls and knock down all of the pillars, you have to *avoid* killing the dinosaur too soon. Start on your left and do a complete circuit of the edge of the field. When you see two intact trucks, destroy them to get Red Skull #3. Near those trucks is one of Vasco's ammunition dumps. A bit farther up the left edge of the field are two more trucks to destroy for Red Skull #4. Be aware that the Tyrannosaur's fiery breath can blow up the trucks also.

Find Red Skull #5 on a plinth (revealed when a column falls down) near the left impact switch. Find Red Skull #6 in a doorway on the backside of the field, along with a hoard of spiders. Red Skull #7 is on a plinth in the center-rear part of the field. Blow up two more trucks at the upper-right section of the field to reveal Red Skull #8. Next to the trucks in the upper-right, part of the field is another ammo cache. Also, find Red Skull #9 on a plinth near those trucks in the upper-right. After you hit the impact switch on the right, collect Red Skull #10 from the spike plate. Fight more spiders.

If you do not know how many pillars you have left to knock down, or how many skulls you have left to find, check your Inventory to look at your stats. After you have completed all of these tasks, start luring the Tyrannosaur onto the plates. Hit the switch for that plate as he crosses it. When you do, not only will he suffer damage, but also groups of his monster friends will attack you.

If you die during battle, which is possible even with energy packs strewn about the area, you will have to re-destroy any stone columns that have reappeared. Only the columns destroyed up to the point that you activated a checkpoint (accomplished by dealing damage to the Tyrannosaur) will still be broken. When the Tyrannosaur is dead, a cut scene will play.

## Level Five - The Forgotten Gate

Go down the corridor and you will reach a room dominated by eight large golden saucer-shaped pressure plates arranged in a circular pattern. You will also see a large ball at the center of the circle. Push the ball onto one of the plates. A cut scene will show the skull gate lifting slightly, but it will not open all the way, until you put balls on every plate. You will need to explore more rooms to find more balls. Break the urns around the edge of the room to reveal some good treasure, including Health and Ammo Packs.

Start your exploration by going up the stairs along the back-right side of the Plate Room. Follow those stairs around to a stone archway. Although the stairs continue, walk under the archway to trigger a gator attack. Kill them, and then drop down to the nearby area with the large stone column and an impact switch. Hit the switch to lower the stone, revealing three gems. Push the nearby ball onto the lowered column, jump onto the ball and from there jump up to snag the highest of the gems.

Now drop a bomb at the base of the ball, opposite the ledge you dropped down from, but do not detonate the bomb. Now, hit the impact switch again to lift the column. Then detonate the bomb. The ball will fly over to the ledge where you battled the gators. Use that same elevator to get yourself back up to the ledge. Now push the ball back along the pathway, to the Plate Room.

Go back up the stairs and pass beyond the room with the stone archway. The walkway will bring you to a wide gap in the trail. Take a running jump across this gap. On the other side, you will find another large ball on the inside of a circle of round spikes. There is an opening along one railing, so that you can push balls through and allow them to fall down to the Plate Room.

Search the right side of the platform. You will find a square plate and an impact switch. Stand on the square plate and shoot the switch. The plate will rise up to form a column. Shoot your grapple at the ring, and then swing across to land on the platform beyond the dangerous jagged points. As you walk to the center of the platform, mutants will attack you from behind. Turn around and kill them.

Notice a high stone column. Plant a bomb behind the base of that column, but do not detonate it yet. Now stand on the plate to lower the column. When it reaches its lowest point, detonate the bomb and the ball will roll free of the column. Roll the ball onto the switch so that the column stays lowered.

Now plant a fresh bomb at the base of the ball, so that the explosion will force the ball off the plate and into the wall – *not over the edge of the ledge*. Do not detonate the bomb yet. Stand on the lowered column, and then detonate the explosive. The column will lift you up. Jump over to the ledge holding Red Skull #1. Then hang from the ledge and drop back down to the column. From the column, drop to the floor. If you jump directly from the ledge to the floor, you will die.

Back on the platform; find a gap in the stone railing that you can walk through. Drop down here to find Red Skull #2. Collect it, then spear the wall and then jump back up to the platform.

Now push the ball over the edge where the dangerous jagged points are. Grapple the gold ring again, swing out, and lower yourself safely down to the area of the impact switch. Shoot the switch to lower the column. Push the ball back to the chute and encourage the ball to fall down to the Plate Room.

Now go up the stairs to the left of that chute. Stand on the pressure plate to lower the gate. Equip your favorite weapon. When you pass through the arch, the gate will lock behind you. Mutants will attack you from many directions. Put your back to the wall to eliminate one attack vector. Defend yourself until all of them are dead.

Notice the recess in the wall containing a Health Upgrade. Notice the spike plate holding Red Skull #3 on another part of the platform. These two areas are related. You must jump over the first lowered spike plate to land on the one with the skull, and then *immediately* jump back to safety on the platform. You should do this in one smooth sequence. When you get back to safe ground, you will have the skull. You will also have opened the locked grate in front of the Health Upgrade.

Along the rear wall, is a doorway to a Challenge Room. Find a huge pit with a stone column at its center. Spikes protrude all around the stone column. There is a gold ring on the left side of the pit and an impact switch on the right side. Hit that switch to make the column rise, and the spikes disappear. Walk to the edge of the pit and throw two spears into the column. Hit the switch again and notice that the two spears are strong enough to prevent the column from dropping all the way down. Drop a bomb in front of the switch. Now jump onto the shafts and blow the bomb to make the column rise. Pull up to the top of the column. Collect the Stone Arrow artifact. Now jump off the edge of the column to the floor. Alternatively, throw two spears into the raised column and take a running jump to the spears. Then pull yourself up to collect the artifact. The gold ring is redundant.

Outside the Challenge Room, head to the back-left side of the platform. Descend a ladder to a ledge where the Lightweight Machine Pistols are resting. Pick those up, and then climb down the next ladder to a large platform with another field of spikes. An Ammo Upgrade rests at the center of those spikes. Jump over the first plate to land on either of the second plates and then run around the other plates to end up on safe ground. All the spikes will lower, but you only have a few seconds to run and get the upgrade before all the spikes pop up. Once you have the upgrade all the spikes will drop.

Now roll the ball from the back recess, and along the passage to put weight on a plate. Overhead, some wooden platforms will rise into place. Equip your favorite weapon. Continue through the now-open gate, still pushing the ball, and roll it down some stairs. Find yourself back in the Plate Room. As you move around the room, you will trigger a checkpoint and the arrival of a hoard of mutant enemies. Gates will lock you in, but run up the stairs to give yourself a fighting chance. Be ready to kill not only the giant mutant who appears (be careful to avoid his rushes), but also the smaller mutants and the gators that will come to his aid.

When you have defeated the last of those enemies, hear the “ting” sound of another checkpoint. Take a few moments to position the remaining balls on the plates. You are halfway done.

Go back up the stairs on the right, to the area where you saw the ball inside a circle of round spikes. Step close to the spikes to tilt the platform upon which the ball rests. Run around on the outer edge in such a way that the ball rolls through the hole at the center. It will drop to the Plate Room.

Do not follow the ball. Instead, head to the lower left and you will find that wooden ledges have narrowed the gap. Leap across that gap and move toward the lower right. There is a short flight of stairs to climb. The game has positioned arrow traps off-screen. They fire arrows along your path in a specific pattern. Watch the pattern for a few moments until you understand it well. Then start running toward the traps and be ready to leap over arrows or to the side. Get behind the arrow traps. Blow them up with bombs. Find a Health Pack here. There is also a big fight coming up and you need *full* health. Go back down and find extra Health Packs, if you need them. Now head up some stairs to the right and you will see a gap and a wall ahead. Throw a spear at the wall, jump onto the shaft and then jump up.

Now climb a series of wooden ledges to reach another walkway. Find an archway to your right. Pass through that to find a large platform. Break the urns here for treasure. Then climb a high ladder to reach another ledge above. There, you will see an archway leading to the right. Head through the archway and down some stairs to another stone arch. Equip your favorite weapon.

When you pass through the arch, the gate will lock behind you. Break the pots for treasure. As you try to collect the treasure, magicians will magically appear on the ledge to your left. There are many of them. Take a few of them out quickly so that their homing energy bolts do not overwhelm you. Focus on one sorcerer at a time. Roll and dodge swarms of shots that are about to converge on your location. After they are all dead, jump across to where they were. Get the Scepter of Huitzilopochtli relic. Jump back across the gap and then leave the room.

Continue to make your way along the ledge until you come to a doorway. Equip your favorite weapon. Pass through the doorway and fight a huge group of enemies that will pop out of nowhere. After the battle, notice a spike trap at the center of the room. A ball rests on the spikes. Pull a gold handle on the back wall to lower the spikes. Now rush over to the ball, drop a bomb at its base and quickly move off the plates. Pull the handle again. Run and jump on top of the ball to pick up the Health Upgrade. Jump over the spikes to safety. Detonate the bomb to make the ball roll free.

Roll the ball to a point halfway between the spikes and the pedestal, and in line with the pedestal. Drop a bomb at the base of the ball, on the spike side of the ball. Detonate the bomb. The blast should lift the ball on top of the pedestal. The ball should settle in the depression on top of the pedestal and make it lower to the floor. You can manipulate the ball by hand if the shot was not perfect. Then push the ball left, through a chute opening so that it rolls down to a room below you.

Head back to the right and descend the ladder to the platform below. Go left through the room and through the entrance archway to find the ball that you just rolled down from the platform above. Push the ball through the archway, and then settle it on the saucer-shaped pressure plate. That will cause a nearby stone column to rise halfway. Jump onto the ball, then from there leap to the stone column. Pull yourself up, and then forward-jump up to the next stone column, where another ball sits. Roll it over the edge and down to the floor. A huge mutant will appear on the ledge above you. Start shooting him while you are still on the column. He will come down to stand at the base of the column. Now the angle is too great to hit him. Drop down to the lower column and finish him off.

You now have two balls on the platform that you can push back toward the lower left, through the archway and along a passage to reach the top of a chute. After you push the first one down the chute, a mutant will appear on the walkway just beyond the nearby gap. After you have dealt with him, go and get the other ball and send it down the chute. Both balls have gone to the circular tilting platform. Find one more ball before you make the trek back down to that tilting platform.

Jump across the gap next to the chute. Continue along that walkway to reach some stairs that descend to your right. Ignore them for the moment and continue to the end of the ledge, then up some short stairs to a higher ledge. There, at the end on some stone plates that will crumble under your weight, is Red Skull #4 and a gem. To get the treasure safely, run quickly on and off each of the plates.

Now return down the stairs that you passed just a few moments ago. Start down those stairs, shooting three more mutants in the process. You will reach an area with spike plates. Red Skull #5 rests on one of them. You cannot safely run on and off those spike plates. Instead, you must *jump* on and then off, all in one smooth motion. Then throw a spear against the wall beyond the plates. Jump onto it and climb up to the walkway above.

Go along the new walkway, past the top of another chute, and go through an archway to reach a larger room. Here, find a wall of spikes to your left. On the other side of the spikes is another ball. Climb up the wooden ledges to your right. From the top of those ledges, attach your grapple to the gold ring. Swing over the wall of spikes to land on the ledges on the far side. Push the ball onto the pressure plate to lower some of the spikes. Find an Ammo Upgrade in the recess to your left. Carefully pick up the three gems inside the spike field.

If you remove the ball from the plate, the last set of spikes between you and the other side of the room will extend. Push the ball so that it is flush against those spikes. Then place a bomb against the ball but do not detonate it. Go over to the nearby switch and stand on it, lowering the spikes. Now detonate the bomb and the ball will roll free of the spikes, to the other side of the room. Use the grapple ring again to cross back over to where the ball waits. Now push it through the archway, along the passage and down through the chute beyond. That is the last ball you need. Make your way back down to the tilt platform. Monsters will attack you all the way. Tilt the balls through the hole to the Plate Room.

Return to the Plate Room, fighting mutants along the way, and then settle the balls onto the plates. When you have placed the last of the balls, the Skull Gate along the backside of the room will open. Pass through it to reach the last part of the level.

You are now standing in a corridor just ahead of a series of traps. Immediately ahead, are four coffins. Bomb them apart for treasure, including Red Skull #6. Past the coffins, the passage narrows slightly. There are huge spike walls along the left and right sides, defining a deadly corridor.

At first, when you walk between the spikes, nothing bad happens. When you have traveled about halfway down the first row of spike walls, a cut scene shows the jaws of the traps starting to shut behind you. Each trap slams shut a little bit faster than the one before it. Put your controller button in the running position, so that you are ready to go when the game allows your character to move. Running is not fast enough, though. As soon as you can, start tumbling forward, picking up the row of gems as you go. Try to end up on the left side of the trap walls when you get to the end of them, but you cannot stop to rest or think about your next move.

Beyond the trap walls is a short section of fragile stone plates. They will crumble as you put weight on them. Jump to the plate on the left to collect Red Skull #7. Then immediately jump forward, off that plate, and toward the second set of spike walls. There are several gems on these plates as well. Collect them only if they are part of your route forward. You cannot stop, or even slow down.

As you run forward, align yourself slightly to the left of the thick part in the center of the next two sets of spike walls. Run forward through the first eight walls until that eighth one opens, then instantly jump back from that eighth one. It will slam shut again, but the ones behind it stay open.

When you can run forward again, *stay to the left of center*. Run through the last four walls when they open. The last wall will stay closed and you will be able to see a large field of those fragile stone plates ahead. Jump up and down once and then wait. The wall behind you will slam shut, but it will not injure you. Wait a few more moments. The last wall opens allowing you access to the plate field.

As soon as the last wall opens, run straight down the middle. When you get to the first gem, a stone ball will crash through the grid in front of you. Jump over the hole it made. Red Skull #8 is directly ahead. You must keep moving. The plates will crumble under you. Gems sit on some of the plates. Many more balls will crash through the huge plate field as you run through it. Jump left and right.

Red Skull #9 is sitting on a plate at the far right edge of the field of plates. Red Skull #10 is sitting on a plate at the far left edge of the field. These last two are the hardest, because it is so easy to accidentally jump off the edge of the field to your death. Try to approach the skulls head on, and then jump on and off each of those plates to avoid the hole on the other side. When you reach solid ground on the far side, pass through a final doorway to reach the exit.

## Level Six - The Toxic Swamp

You find yourself standing on the other side of The Forgotten Gate. A verdant trail leads down some steps. Before you wander off, shoot your grapple at the gold ring above the door. Collect an Ammo Upgrade. Pick up three gems near three green cabbage-like pods. These plants will explode into a poisonous green mist if you bump them. Then they immediately regenerate themselves. The green mist will damage, or even kill, you or your enemies. Shoot one to find out how far the mist spreads.

Go down the stairs. The trail soon takes a short detour to the right. Take that detour and pick up some gems. Then spear the wall and jump up to a ledge with many more gems. Your relic meter should be almost full already. Stay on the ledge and walk to the other side. You can look over the edge to see where the other fork of the trail goes. Drop down here, on the other side of a row of pods that block the trail. Ready your favorite weapon. As you move further along the trail, a cut scene will play. It shows two or three gators running toward you. Then the cut scene shows the pods exploding and killing the gators. Sometimes, after the cut scene, one of the gators will have survived.

A short distance up the trail is a set of stone steps, just out of sight. Between you and those stairs is a hoard of gators, buried in the ground. To keep them from overwhelming you, tumble all the way to the stairs and stop halfway up. Turn to face back along the trail. Start shooting the gators as they run up the stairs toward you. Avoid any damage using this tactic, and have a full relic meter.

Climb the rest of the stairs to find a group of three more pods, with Red Skull #1 floating in the air above them. Run and forward jump over the pods collect the skull. You should be well past them before they explode. While you are in this area, go up some stairs to the right. Gators will attack you as you circle around a Challenge Room. Climb onto the building's roof to find Red Skull #2.

To the left of the Challenge Room is a broken pillar. Jump on this short pillar and throw a spear at the tower with pods growing on it. Jump to the spear and climb the steps on the side of the tower. Pick up the three gems on top and go back down the ladder to a point just above the spear. Drop onto the spear (Alt) and then jump back to the broken pillar. You should suffer no damage doing this.

Now enter the Challenge Room to find a puzzle. To your left, a flame blocks your way to a small chamber containing an artifact and some gems. Drop down to your right to find a familiar mechanism. A metal ball attached to a metal rod swings around a central post. Place a bomb on the circular black line made by the ball. Run over to the corner on the left, near the single pod. This is a safe corner. Detonate, as the ball passes over the bomb. Carefully roll the ball over to nestle against the three pods forming a semi-circle, so that the plants cradle the ball *closely*.

Then go back over to the corner and shoot the cabbages. The combined force of three plants exploding will launch the ball up onto the ledge. Climb up and push the ball through the fiery opening so that it settles into the slight depression. Go inside to collect gems and the Stone Feather artifact, and then exit.

Now descend the stairs. Five gators will attack you. Continue, across some wooden planks. Just beyond the makeshift bridge, you will trigger a brief cut scene. Then you will come under attack. Run back to the middle of the bridge to force them to come at you inline. If you have the ammo-regenerating relic, and your relic meter is full, this is a piece of cake. Use the machine pistols to put up a wall of lead. Be aware that the two-legged mutants spew poisonous green fumes when they die.

Now look at a large wooden gate ahead of you. Raised poles block your progress for now. Go left and up some stairs to reach higher ground. Shoot enemies and a truck, before going into a building.

Jump onto the pedestal to get the Grenade Launcher. Equip it, and then shoot grenades at the two huge moving gears. After you have hit both gears, a cut scene will show the huge gate outside lowering. Now return to that gate. Another hoard of monsters will come pouring through the gate. Run to the bridge and defend yourself as before. Then go through the gateway.

Past the gate, there is a long causeway with four pillars along the right side. Climb up the ramp to the first pillar, and then carefully jump along the row of pillars, collecting gems. Past those pillars, you will come to a Healing Fountain along the edge of a noxious pit. If you touch the green gas in the pit, you will suffer damage. A rocky dike runs around the pit of poisonous fumes. Follow the dike clockwise, around to the other side. A few of the pods along the way will burst, and mutants will jump out of them to attack you. Listen for the sound of the pods breaking, and then get ready to shoot. At the end of the circle is a Challenge Room. Kill four gators defending the area. Climb to the top of the building, with the assistance of a spear, to find Red Skull #3. Enter the building.

Inside, you will find an area fenced in with high poles. Inside that square prison, sits a ball. Place yourself in line with the ball and the fire. Launch a grenade at the base of the ball to send it toward the fire. The ball should settle in the shallow depression and block the fire. You may need more than one shot. When the ball is properly in place, a panel will slide open on the room's right side. Step into the space to obtain the Arrow of Tezcatlipoca relic. Now exit the building.

Go back along the circular dike until you reach the lower left part of the pit. At that point, go left between two broken sections of rock wall. The game will create an auto-save and trigger the arrival of a giant beast. Run back to the dike, so you have room to fight. He can take many hits. Back away far enough to keep him just at the edge of your vision. Keep firing your weapon and try not to let the gators distract you too much from your giant target. When you finally defeat the monster, a cut scene will show the poisonous gas disappearing.

Now you can clearly see the bottom of two large pits and one smaller one, below the first one you found. Go down inside that first one you found, to find some gems on a square rock shelf. Near that, climb a tall tower to find Red Skull #4. Then go right, back to the area of the dike where the Healing Fountain sits. Along the way, five gators will pop out of the ground and attack you.

Again, go clockwise around the dike. When you near the area where the dike splits left and right, look to the left. Find a tall column with cabbages around its base. Toss a spear into the side of the column from high on the *upper* bank. Then jump onto the spear and up to the top of the column to collect Red Skull #5. When you pick up the skull, two magicians will pop out of the ground on the upper bank of the pit. They will shoot energy bolts at you. Shoot them from on top of the tower.

Go toward Gate #2, to the area that the giant monster was guarding. If a rock arch still crosses that part of the dike, beware the pod hidden behind one leg of the arch. Follow some wooden planks that define a trail into the largest pit. As you reach a large group of pods, a hoard of gators will pop up and surround you. To line them up in single file, tumble your way up the steps to Gate #2. Shoot down the steps at the gators. After you have killed them, continue your careful exploration of the larger pit. Find another square rock shelf. There are three gems on top of it. When you pick up those gems, a couple of poison mutants will pop out of the nearby pods. The dike above that shelf makes an excellent fighting spot. Stand halfway between the Challenge Room and the pods on the lip of the pit. You have room to maneuver, and when you shoot the pods, they will help you kill your enemies.

Now go back down into the largest pit. Near the back corner, you will find a large stone ball. If you want an extra reward, roll the ball over the Healing Fountain at the edge of the first pit you came to. Be aware that this task is harder than it seems. Stand behind the ball with your back to the wall. Push the ball out into the pod field, but stay with your back against the wall. A huge mass of gators will attack. You are safe if you stand where you are. Start spraying the entire area with lead. If your bullets do not kill the gators, the exploding pods will.

Now get the ball up two steep ledges to the dike above. Although it is possible to push the ball up the slopes if you have enough momentum, a better way is to bomb the ball up the slopes. Being careful to avoid bumping any pods, roll the ball over near the square rock shelf where the poison mutants attacked you. Position the ball to the left of that shelf, as close to the ledge as it will go. Be aware that if the ball rolls onto your foot, you will take some slight damage. Place a bomb at the base of the ball, get out of the blast radius and detonate. The ball should jump the ledge. Wait a few moments, just in case the ball is still rolling around in the pods up on that shelf.

Then go up and roll the ball to the area where the plank walkway starts down into the pit. A good place to put the ball is in a nook behind the lower of the four short round wooden posts. The ball will nestle in there as though the game designed that space for a ball. Place a bomb at the base of the ball. Get out of the blast radius and detonate. The ball should jump up onto the dike. Now you have only to roll the ball along the dike, avoiding pods, and then roll the ball over the Healing Fountain to "heal" the ball. You will receive a Health Upgrade for your efforts.

Return to the building down in the largest pit. The building has four short wooden posts in front of it. Go inside the building and down some steps to a maze. You will be working your way through poisonous cabbage plants and monsters, while picking up gems. You will need to get close to two large gears, clanking behind a fence. You must break the gears to open Gate #2. All of the pathways in the maze lead to the same destination and there are no dead ends.

At the beginning of the maze, near the Ammo Dump, you will hear the crunching sound of monsters on their way toward you from inside the maze. Drop a bomb next to the two pods just inside the entrance to the maze and back away to where you can just see the bomb. When the first monster walks inside the blast radius, detonate. Now run back to the corridor at the bottom of the steps. Face the stone archway and equip your favorite weapon. As soon as you see monsters at the arch, put up a wall of lead. Even the large, lumbering giants that shoot energy bolts cannot hurt you here, unless you run out of ammo.

Now go into the maze, picking up gems, until you hear another crunch of monster footsteps. Sometimes a giant will become stuck against some pods, making it easier for you to kill him. However, remember to dodge out of the way of his dying energy bolts. Otherwise, encourage all other monsters to chase you back to the entrance corridor. Dispatch them as you did the first group.

At the end of the maze, you will see one pressure plate inside a wall of pods. You will see two pressure plates behind a gate. Walk between, or jump over, two of the pods to stand on the lone pressure plate. The gate will open to give you access to the other two plates. You are more likely to trigger a pod explosion on the way *back* from the lone switch. If you do, roll away through the gate.

Step on one of the pressure plates. The boards to your left will drop down. Fire a grenade diagonally to hit one of two gears on the left wall. Then move to the other plate and blow up the other gears. A cut scene will show Gate #2 opening. Exit through the now-open gate to the corridor. Equip your favorite weapon. Just outside the door to this building are three energy-bolt-throwing magicians. A good place to defeat them is the fighting spot near the Challenge Room. Blow up the pods to poison the magicians.

Then go up the stairs and through the #2 gateway. Walk along the trail and up some stairs to your left, careful of the pod on your right, to where a stone column has fallen. Walk out to the end of the column and throw a spear into the wall opposite. Now jump onto the spear and up to the polished square stone on the other side. From there look left to see a low square stone platform containing some gems and Red Skull #6. When you step off your polished stone to walk across the field, three monsters will attack.

After you defeat them, walk over to the skull platform. When you get near it, a giant will drop down. Run back over to the polished stone platform, where the view is better and you have a little room to dodge his energy bolts. Shoot everything you have at the giant monster.

After he is dead, explore this small field. Next to a broken bridge leading over a chasm, is a short white stone buttress. Throw a spear into that and then jump up on top of the stone. Stand as far from the wall of pods as you can, grapple the gold ring and walk off the edge. Climb your grapple straight up to grab the Health Upgrade. Then rappel straight down to the black line that runs horizontally across the face of the rock. Start swinging left and right. Your rope will not activate the pods. At the high point on one of the right swings, jump and release to the square white stone on your right. Climb up on top of it.

On the far side of that gap, is a series of wood planks that lead down along a rock wall. Here, more of the pods grow. Walk slowly and carefully down to the bottom of the line of planks. At the bottom of the plank way, a row of pods blocks your progress. Notice the pile of scrap lumber ahead of you. The bare patch of ground to the left of that lumber pile is the only safe place to stand when all those pods explode. Jump over the pods in front of you and land on that patch of safe ground. If the pods explode when you make the jump, stand at the lumber pile for a few moments.

After the gas dissipates, continue up the nearby staircase. At the top, you will hear the crunching sound of pod men breaking out of their pods. Immediately, run back to the safety of the lumber pile and then start shooting. Now, the pods will aid you in your attack. When the pod men are dead, go back up the stairs and then straight ahead. Pass by the stairs on your left to find Red Skull #7.

Now go up either of the lower staircases, to a much wider staircase at the beginning of a stone bridge. A small group of gators will pop up if you go a little left of the steps. Notice a row of holes at the start of the bridge, where spikes will pop up after you pass. Walk over them, to the left of a rock wall that divides the bridge lengthwise. A cut scene shows enemies rushing at you from the other end of the bridge. A stone column will fall, break the stone bridge and cause your foes to fall to their death.

When the cut scene ends, you will find that, no matter where you entered the bridge, the game has placed you just in front of where the monsters fell through the bridge. Immediately, run to your right. *Keep your joystick pushed to the right until the rock wall falls and you pass through to the other side.* On the right side of the lengthwise wall now, run toward the end of the bridge, as close to the wall as you can. Jump over a gap, run some more and then jump over another gap. Red Skull #8 is just ahead. Run through the skull and then veer left, across the bridge until you get to the end.

On the far side of the bridge, descend a set of stairs. When you go down the second set of stairs, four gators will attack. Now go down a third set of stairs. At the bottom, the trail splits. To the left is a small field ringed with pods. Walk a bit closer to that circle of pods. Suddenly, a small army of monsters will pop up in front of you and behind you. Tumble back up the stairs, past the monsters there. Run up to the top of the second set of stairs. Now turn around and fire a hail of lead down those stairs. Dodge energy bolts as necessary. When you run out of targets, creep down to find more. When enemies come running up at you, tumble up the slope out of their grasp. Then fire down at them again. One enormous monster will take a ton of hits to defeat. The large bridge abutment at the top of the stairways is a good place to engage him if you run out of space on the stairs.

When you can safely walk around in the circle of pods at the bottom of the stairs, without monsters attacking you, take the other fork in the trail. Find a tall tower with a ladder on the side. At the top of the tower, find Red Skull #9. Go back down the tower and continue along the trail to find a building guarded by gators. Just below the building, down one last set of stairs, is a dead-end plateau with half a dozen more gators. When you have killed every enemy and all is quiet, enter the building.

Inside the building, notice two gold handles. They correspond to gates near the back wall. The gates prevent you from firing grenades at two large gears. There is just enough time to run from the handles to either of the platforms that give you a clear shot at the gears. Explore the route first. There are two sets of spike plates. Start just in front of the left side of the left set of plates. Jump over the first plate, to land on the second plate and then, immediately, jump to the ledge beyond. This will allow you to collect the two gems without triggering the lone pod, or dying from the spikes.

To get the gems on the right half of the small set of spike plates, summersault over those two plates. You will use this tumbling technique, across *these two plates*, to save time after you pull the handle. Now summersault back across those two plates, jump to each ledge, in turn, and check out the route you will be following. Then go back to either of the two gold handles.

Pull on the handle, tumble over the two spike plates on the right, jump over the gap, run around the corner and shoot a grenade at the gear. Repeat the procedure with the other gear. After you have destroyed both gears, a cut scene will show Gate #3 lowering.

There is an Ammo Upgrade at the end of the larger set of spike traps. Stand in front of one row of traps and face the wall. Jump forward as far as you can and run the rest of the way to the back wall; turn the corner and run all the way back to the safety of the ledge.

Now backtrack to gateway #3. Along the way, at the tower, gators will attack. More enemies will attack you above the second set of stairs. When you go through the gate, you will see a new spinning ball challenge. The challenge is to bomb the ball down the stairs and into a fire hole. Pods or spike traps may injure or kill you along the way. The game will give you a reward if you can accomplish all of this in thirty seconds or less. Dodge around the ball for now and walk down the two sets of stairs to look at the problem more closely. The timer does not start until you release the ball from its metal rod. Do not pick up the gems until you are ready to leave the room. If you take damage while moving the ball the relic meter will, of course go to zero. There are almost enough gems in the room to completely fill your relic meter. You can use that extra help later.

Now, back at the spinning ball, notice the serpent head ornaments on the railings around the room. Stand in front of the pair of serpent heads between the bottom of the stairs and the two pods sitting together. Directly in front of you, on the circular black line that marks the arc of the ball, drop a bomb. Now move left, outside the blast radius, but close enough that you can still see the bomb.

Detonate the bomb just as the ball passes over the bomb. The ball should release, roll down the stairs and all the way to the corner of the ledge near the wall below. Run around the poison fumes, down the stairs and over to the ball. Push the ball over the edge of the ledge, and jump down after it. Now roll the ball diagonally, through the corridor of six pods to the top of the next stairway. Keep holding onto the ball as you push it down the stairs. Let go of the ball as you reach the next set of spike plates, so that it rolls across them to the other side of them. Now roll over the plates yourself. You should have about ten seconds left. Maneuver the ball onto the flame hole to complete the procedure. If you did the whole thing in less than thirty seconds, the game will tell you.

If you somehow died in the room, and the game reset the ball challenge, be aware that you now have an option to collect a Gold Owl artifact near the entrance to this chamber. On the left wall as you enter, find a recess in the wall holding the artifact. A gate locks it inside. Once you knock the ball free, roll it toward the fire hole. One of the tiles on the second set of spike traps is a pressure plate. Set the ball on that plate to open the locked gate. Leave the ball there and go back to get the artifact from the recess in the wall. There may be no way to get this artifact unless you die first - or give up on the time challenge.

Pick up all of the gems, and then go through the passage behind the fire hole to exit outside. Around the corner of the building are a few gems on the ground. As you go to pick them up, four pod men will attack you. Now go to the top of a nearby stairway. Four more pod men will pop up. After you have killed them, continue straight past the wooden planks on your left. In a slight depression, down some stairs, is another tower. Climb up to the top and collect Red Skull #10. When you climb down the tower, two more pod men will attack you. Kill them and then go back to the wooden planks.

Cross the plank bridge to see another cut scene. Afterwards, go and stand on the pressure switch. It will not open the gate. Notice latches to the upper left and right of the gate. You must pull two gold handles to open those latches. Go left, up the steps to find and pull the first handle. Continue up and around the back side of the hill to find and pull the second handle. Then go down and step on the pressure plate again. The gate will still not open. Lara will shout, "Run!" Pods will begin to sprout, starting from your right. They will burst into poisonous clouds even though you have not touched them. Run left, around the same path that you followed when you pulled the handles. Summersault, as you go, to increase your speed and stay ahead of the chain reaction. When you get to the other side of the building, the gate will flop forward, on the ground. Jump down on top of the gate. Run through the opening.

## Level Seven - Flooded Passage

Jump over the gap; go down the balcony and up the stairs. Pull the ball from the recess in the back wall to reveal Red Skull #1. Push the ball along the balcony and around the corner. The ball will shield you from five arrow traps at the end. Roll the ball over the traps to break them. Backtrack to collect any gems you missed. There are 37 traps in this level. Destroy all of them for a reward.

Continue past the traps and walk up to the base of the next stairs. As you pass the first poison pod, a skeleton will appear at the top of the stairs and rush you. Back away and shoot the first pod to make both pods explode and kill the skeleton. Poison kills skeletons and direct hits from your Grenade Launcher will do the job. However, bullets will only collapse them for a few seconds.

The skeleton was guarding a gold handle, positioned in front of an extensive spike pit. The spikes at the bottom are stationary. They will only hurt you if you fall on them. The vertical spike pole has a twin, buried in the holes in the wall on the other side of the pit. Pull on the lever to make the visible spike pole recede into the wall, and its twin pop out, until the handle recedes back into its base. As soon as you let go of the handle, grapple the gold ring just above the pit and quickly walk over the edge of the pit. Hang there until you stop swinging, and the two spike poles reverse their positions. Move up or down to align yourself with the height of the ledge to your right. Start swinging left and right. Jump right and release the grapple (both at the same time) to grab the ledge.

Go down the next steps to discover a large courtyard. There are eight arrow traps along the left wall, off-screen. Walk down to the bottom of the stairs to view the pattern of arrows. Notice that, after each pod regenerates, it stops the next arrow. Between you and the ball are three rows of arrows. The first and third rows of arrows travel as a pair. The one in the middle breaks when it hits the closest pod.

Wait until the closest pod has regenerated, *and* the first and third rows of arrows have just passed you. Then run to the safe side of the ball. Push the ball carefully upstream against the flow of arrows. Stay to the left side of the courtyard. When you have to move left or right around a pod in front of you, wait until it has regenerated – so it will stop the next arrow while you are exposed. A skeleton will taunt you as you near the arrow traps on the other side of the courtyard. He will probably perish automatically, because the arrows will create a constant cloud of poisonous vapor between you and him. Use the ball to break apart all eight traps.

Now go back to one corner of the platform to find a Health Upgrade nestled behind three pods. Shoot the pods and wait for the green mist to disperse almost completely. Then run through the pods and out the other side. Now go back to where you destroyed the eight traps.

To your left, notice three pods in a group. Again, shoot the pods and wait for the green mist to fade almost completely. Unfortunately, when you run past the pods, a large, bulky monster will chase you back. Jump back over the pods and run to give yourself some fighting room. Use the pods to aid you in killing him. When he is dead, go back past the group of three pods and enter a Challenge Room.

The mechanism on the back wall opens in the middle, half going left and the other half going right. Position the ball against the vertical dividing line at the center of the mechanism. Drop a bomb in front of the ball. Step on the plate to make the machine slide open. Now detonate your bomb and step off the pressure plate. The two sides of the machine will grip the ball solidly.

Jump onto the ball, and then throw a spear at the wall. Jump onto the spear, and then pull up to the ledge. Take the Eye of Cipactli artifact. Now jump onto the urn and throw a spear into the wall. Collect Red Skull #2. Drop down, break the urn for its gem and exit the room.

Now go up the stairs on the right side of the courtyard to find Red Skull #3 resting above a pod. Shoot the pod and wait for the vapor to dissipate. Then rush in, jump *up* to snatch the skull and hurry back out. Now grapple the gold ring on the wall. Lower yourself down the wall to collect Red Skull #4. Then start swinging left and right while hanging onto the rope. As your swing carries you toward the far right side of the arc, drop a bomb and quickly detonate the bomb as it drops past the impact switch mounted on the wall. This will cause the gate above you to lower. Ascend the wall, pass through the opening and then continue along the balcony.

The game wants you to find and destroy three hidden urns. The first one is just to your left when the notice appears on-screen. Shoot the urn. Then continue along that wall to a gap. Throw a spear at the wall above the gap, and then a second spear further to the right. Jump from spear to spear collecting Red Skull #5 along the way. As you reach the far side, a hidden magician will begin to throw energy bolts at you. Utilize the long balcony, dodging the bolts while firing your weapon. When the monster is dead, grapple the gold ring. Descend the wall only far enough to collect Red Skull #6.

Continue past the ring and follow the winding path to find the High Power Assault Rifle. It sits just ahead of a doorway. Collect the weapon, use the Ammo Dump and then pass through the opening.

You will find yourself in another room with a puzzle. Do not move yet. Notice the two rows of square white paving stones running in parallel out from the gate. Now move out into the room onto the third full square – no further. When you move to the fourth square or beyond, a large variety of monsters will attack you. The game has locked the gate behind you. While all is still quiet, take out your Grenade Launcher and fire a grenade at the support column just to the right of the arrow trap on your left. The grenade should bounce off the column and destroy the trap. Now, to save ammo, use your spear to break the three urns in front of you and explode the poison pod near those urns. Then, quickly send a grenade into the hidden corner of the room to blow up the second set of arrow traps. You will know you hit the trap if the arrows stop firing. Now break the two urns on your right. Now the room has fewer obstacles. You can run around much more safely. Select a high volume weapon.

The traditional way to get past this room is to move into the center and start firing in all directions at once. That technique does get the job done. However, it lacks finesse. Before you start blasting, take a moment to think about the following alternative approach (green text).

Step forward to the fourth square. Where the ball is now, a huge monster will pop up. A squad of gators will join him. You need to get the giant away from the ball. Let the entire group chase you away from the ball, into a far corner. Then run/summersault over to the ball. Push the ball against the spike wall. Jump on the ball. Jump over the spike wall to the narrow section where the arrow traps were. Now you are safe from their attacks. They have no recourse. Take as long as you like to strategize. Never touch the spike wall, or your death is immediate. Never touch the pressure plate, or the spike wall will drop to expose you to attack. Get from one end of the area to the other by walking behind the pressure plate. Warning: If you die in this room, the arrow traps will regenerate and the attack will start immediately.

Now start clearing the area on the other side of the spike wall. Bullets, grenades, and spears will all go through the porous wall. Some of the monsters will try to hide beyond your view. Some of them will run into the spikes and perish. Kill the skeletons by shooting the pods. The two giants will throw energy bolts when they are alive, and when they die. Stand behind the pressure plate to give yourself room to dodge left and right. Eventually, two of the magicians will appear and start throwing energy bolts. One will be visible, near the entrance gate. The other will stand out of your field of vision. Fire your weapon back down the vector of the bolts coming at you. The corner where the second hidden urn is nestled provides some cover from the bolts. If you have the Golden Scepter of Huitzilopochtli or the Scepter of Cihuacoatl equipped, and your relic meter is full, your ammo will be unlimited. When all is quiet again, step on the pressure plate and run to the far corner. A final few monsters will drop down from the ceiling near the pressure plate.

Red Skull #7 sits on the pressure plate. Pull on the gold handle to open the exit gate. Pass through the gate. It will lock behind you. Walk down some stairs.

At the base of those stairs is an impact switch in front of three walls of spikes. Drop a bomb at the base of the impact switch, but do not detonate it yet. Instead, shoot the switch to cause the first spike wall to drop into some holes. Walk past the new row of holes, and then turn around and shoot the switch again to make the second spike wall drop down. Walk past the second row of holes, up to the base of the third spike wall. Two poison mutants will jump down onto your ledge and attack you. After you kill them, detonate your bomb to lower the third spike wall.

As you walk along the next part of the balcony, two more poison mutants will rush you. Destroy them, and then stand to the left of Red Skull #8, which is floating just above a pod. Spear the wall to the left of the skull. Then explode the pod. Wait five seconds. Jump from the ground to the spear, and then jump from the spear *through* the skull to land on the walkway, suffering no damage.

Enter the Challenge Room on your left. You will see another puzzle. There is an impact switch on the other side of the room, separated from you by a hole in the floor and a low wall. The switch opens a cubby, containing an artifact. To open the cubby, the game wants you to make a double bank shot.

Stand in front of the first polished grey stone on the right side of the room. The stone is part of a wall that runs from the entrance, across the gap to the other side of the room. Fire a grenade from your launcher, diagonally across the room, so that it hits the first column out from the back corner. Your shot should then ricochet to the back wall and then to the switch. Collect the artifact.

Overhead, is Red Skull #9, hanging on the wall. To collect that skull, stand on the highest box of the Ammo Dump. Now throw a spear at the part of the wall where two skeletons are lying in crypts – below the skull. Jump onto the spear, and then jump to get the skull. Now exit the room.

Go to the right and jump across the gap. As you start up the next staircase, a swarm of gators will hurry down to eat you. On the third tier of staircases, one giant and several poison mutants will attack you. At the top, find yourself at the edge of a maze-like area with spike walls dividing the whole area. Find a pressure plate and step on it to lower one of the spike walls. When you pass beyond the holes it dropped into, the gate will pop up behind you and lock you in.

The place where the two pods are growing is the only good defensive area. Do not get too close to the pods or fall over the edge, and you will be ok. Now walk around the corner to see a large square spike plate in front of you. The plate will not activate unless you or an enemy step on the associated pressure plate. That large pressure plate is across a short bridge to your right. As you near that spike plate, though, a huge brute will burst up through the floor. Tumble/run back to your defensive area, firing your weapon all the way. When he dies, dodge the energy bolts. They may hit the pods.

As soon as the brute is dead, three poison mutants will try to attack you through the spike wall. Stand away from the spikes and let them flail their arms. They will hit the pods on their side and kill themselves. Where the giant brute was, are now two skeletons. You may only see one of them until you walk around the corner. Launch grenades at their feet. Two shots each ought to kill them.

Now explore the area to find some urns to break, some gems and some arrow traps firing. Detonate the TNT barrels near the arrow traps, to destroy them. Now find a gold handle and pull it to lower a spike wall to the right. Run over to where that wall dropped into its holes and cross to the other side.

**Bug Warning:** Sometimes, when you are near the gold handle, the game will blow up the TNT, and activate the pressure plate in the next section for you. If so, destroy the arrow traps first, then the skeletons and, finally, the two giants. See below for details on those tasks.

Now, step on the pressure plate to lower another spike wall. Just past the first group of pods, a bridge crosses back to the other side of the spike-lined abyss. Straight ahead, the route is blocked by yet- another spike wall. Buried in the pavement in front of that wall are two giant monsters. As you approach the intersection, they will both burst up and attack you. Unfortunately, there is no better place to fight them than the area in front of the spike wall behind you. Fortunately, touching this type of spike wall will not injure you. There is only just enough room to maneuver out of the way of their energy bolts. Do that, while throwing as much lead down the corridor as you can muster.

After you have killed the monsters, cross the bridge to find some dormant arrow traps. The traps sit to either side of another large pressure plate. Do not step on the pressure plate yet. Stand just in front of it and send a grenade or two up the corridor to destroy the arrow traps hidden there. When the arrows stop coming, set bombs next to the dormant traps in front of you and destroy them too.

Still without stepping on the pressure plate, walk along the hallway to your right to make sure that you have destroyed all of the arrow traps. Between that end of the corridor and the pressure plate, the game has buried two skeletons in the pavement. They will not pop up until you step on the pressure plate. Pick a place to fight them, remembering that they are vulnerable to poison pods and grenades.

Now, along the upper-left part of the abyss, get close to the edge and the camera will pull out to give you a view of an impact switch on the other side. Shoot that switch, to lower the next spiked barrier. Walk on over there and stand next to the switch. Here, the game has given you a huge edge in your next fight. You can open the spike wall, go out and rustle up some monsters, and then run back to the impact switch and hit it before the monsters can catch up to you. Now your enemies will line up, bumping against the other side of the spike wall, and you can hit them with grenades at your leisure.

When you run out of monsters, continue along the passage, until you come to a twin set of spike strips. Step on the pressure plate near the right spike strip, to lower the spikes on the other side of the bridge. When you go through that opening, view a cut scene. The spikes will pop up behind you.

After the cut scene, jump over the gap. Xolotl locked the gate when he disappeared through it, but you can go up some stairs to the left. As you start up those stairs, you will come under attack by monsters. Run back down to the flat spot at the base of the stairs. Be ready to dodge stone balls released by some of the monsters. Do this for all enemies you encounter, until you reach the top safely. At the top is a huge stone hand holding a huge stone ball with spikes on it.

If you step on the pressure plate, the ball will fall out of the hand and roll down the stairs. While you have a few uninterrupted moments, run-through the route you will take after you step on that plate.

Then step on the pressure plate to release the massive spiked ball. Now, quickly run/tumble down the stairs. The spiked ball will be following you, and so will a hoard of monsters. Do not bother to fight them, just run past them, all the way to the bottom of the stairs. Then run to the side, out of the path of the ball. Watch, as the ball crushes all of your pursuers, except for two skeletons. They will regenerate themselves. Shoot the nearby pods to drop the skeletons for good.

The ball will roll past you, crash through the wall and clear the way ahead. Now go back up the stairs to the top. Jump onto the stone hand to pick up an Ammo Upgrade. Then go back downstairs and through the hole in the wall. Go along a short hall to a doorway. Before go through, destroy a final hidden urn and another urn with Red Skull #10 inside. Now go through the doorway.

## Level Eight - The Jaws of Death

This is one of the shortest levels of the game. In most of it, you will be running for your life. Pick up Red Skull #1 in the corner of the platform. Then go up the stairs to reach another platform. Monsters will attack you. The first is an energy bolt-throwing magician on your right. Another monster will come from your front and another from behind you. The game will also add two skeletons and a few others to the mix. When they are all dead, find Red Skull #2 behind a column.

Farther along, you will come under attack by magicians standing on high stone columns to the right of the main causeway. They fire energy bolts, but the bolts have limited range. Determine where the energy bolts fade away. Stand just beyond that point, and then lob grenades down the reverse vector. Past the magicians, just after you pick up the last gem, you will see a cut scene. Have your joystick already in the forward position, before the cut scene ends. As soon as the scene ends, run forward and jump over the gap in the causeway.

What looks like a giant prehistoric fish with arms, will begin to chase you all the way to the door at the end of the level. You do not have time to stop, except for two places noted below. You must dodge around, or jump over, pods. You must jump over gaps in the pavement. In places, magicians will fire more energy bolts from pillars on both sides of the route. Even though the game will give you a reward for killing all of the magicians, this is suicide. Fortunately, for them, you do not have time to stop.

The next Red Skull you find (#3) will be on your left. Farther on, Red Skull #4 is on your right.

Red Skulls #5, #6, #7, #8, and #9 are all on the left side of the causeway. Red Skull #10 is on the right.

Roll over all of the spike traps you encounter.

Soon, you will come upon a wide gap that you cannot possibly jump. On the other side, sits an impact switch. Stop and shoot the switch. A ledge will pop up. Jump on to the ledge. Keep running.

From there more magicians on stone columns will shoot more homing energy bolts at you. Some of those columns will start crashing down across your path. Jump and tumble over them.

You will come to a second gap in the causeway that you cannot possibly jump. Stop and grapple a gold ring on the opposite side of the next gap. Walk over the edge and then pull up to the other side.

Keep running, jumping over volleys of arrows that cross your path. At the end of the causeway, find a wall with a locked door in the center. To the left of the door, step on the pressure plate. Wooden ledges will rise in front of a gold handle on the right. Run onto the planks, pull the handle all the way out and then jump off the ledges before they drop back down. When the two vertical spiked columns start rotating, you are safe. The spikes will shred your malevolent companion into gory chunks. Step through the doorway to complete the stage.

## Level Nine - The Twisting Bridge

After you take a few steps, the game will tell you that an area map is available. Now, go up the stairs to the left. Stop at the gap and shoot the enemies on the opposite side. A giant will appear last. Then jump the gap over to the other side. Pick up the treasure and then return to your starting point at the entrance building. Three monsters will attack you, one from each corner of the rock walls and one in front of the building - out of sight of the camera. After you defeat them, take the stairs down right.

At the bottom, find Red Skull #1. Collect it and then hurry back along the balcony to the corner. Defeat two small monsters plus one giant. Go back up to the entrance building and then down the center set of stairs. When you get to the platform at the base of those stairs, you will hear a loud crunching sound behind you. Roll back up to the top of the stairs, through the legs of the giant. Turn around and shoot hot lead down those stairs, at the giant and the group of his fiends supporting him.

Afterwards, go right and grapple a gold ring. Lower yourself into the pit to collect Red Skull #2. Now climb back up and face the slapdash wooden turntable mounted atop a very tall tower. Shoot the impact switch mounted on that turntable. It will make one quarter of a full turn. Now jump onto that platform and shoot the switch a second time. The turntable will make another quarter turn.

Now jump over to the ledge on the left. Enter the Challenge Room. Inside, step on a stone pressure plate to, temporarily, lower a gate on the far wall. Behind the gate is an artifact. To the left of the plate, on the other side of another locked gate, is a large ball. To open that gate, go to the right side of the room. Note the wide gap here with Red Skull #3 floating above it. Throw spears into the wall and jump along them to make your way to the far side. Alternatively, grapple the gold ring and swing across. On the other side of the pit, roll the ball onto the pressure plate, to raise a wooden platform.

Jump onto the wooden platform and then jump over to the ledge housing the impact switch. Set a bomb at its base, but do not detonate it yet. Jump back over to the wooden platform and then to the ledge where the ball rests. Push the ball through the opening, so that it rests near the locked gate.

Now detonate the bomb and that gate will open. Now push the ball through the opening and onto the first pressure plate. Now go back to the recess and collect the Golden Knife of Itzli.

Exit the room and jump back onto the turntable. Shoot the impact switch twice. Jump across the gap and down the stairs to a grassy platform. When you reach the bottom of the stairs, two monsters will attack from up the stairs behind you and two from the platform itself. After you kill them, collect the High Power Single Shot Rifle, floating in the air to the left of the Health Fountain. Left of the rifle, in front of a stone pillar, but out of camera range, is Red Skull #4.

Go up the stairs to arrive on a platform in front of a locked door. Step on the pressure plate to open the door, and then pass through the doorway. Now you see a large L-shaped room with stone columns. You will now fight a new enemy. His name is Shield Demon. They carry a large, spiked shield that will block your shots. The demon may also use the shield to ram you. Hit the shield with grenades. You must fight a total of three of the demons. However, they only have the one shield between them. A wide variety of other monsters, including skeletons and magicians, will join in.

Equip your Grenade Launcher and run to the top of the "L". Stand with your back to the gold handle and start lobbing grenades back into the main room. When the Shield Demons lose their shields, they are vulnerable to bullets. Watch for magicians shooting energy bolts from the main room and the ledge above the room. The urns around the room have plenty of Health and Ammo Packs.

After you have defeated all enemies, plunder the room. Now pull the gold handle to lift a series of large wooden steps. They will form a temporary wooden staircase. Quickly run over to the planks and jump onto the first one. Then climb up the rest of the planks as quickly as possible, before they drop back down. At the top, throw a spear into the rock wall. Use it to jump up to the higher ledge.

Now walk slowly to the left, along a narrow ledge above the room you were fighting in, for gems and an Ammo Upgrade. Now return to the platform above the room. Shoot the impact switch to extend two more of the wooden steps. Now jump across them and pull out another gold handle, to open a gate left of the impact switch. Now quickly jump back to the platform and run through the doorway.

Climb the stairs. Fight two magicians and two skeletons along the way. Jump to the turntable, run straight across it and then jump off the other side. Step on a pressure plate to turn a higher turntable and lift a gate ahead. Walk through the gateway to reach a solid, grassy ledge.

A Shield Demon up the stairs will attack you here, along with many smaller enemies. The area to the right of the small stone building ahead of you is a good defensive position. After you defeat all of the enemies, go up the stairs onto the ledge. Pull the gold handle to open a gate and go through it.

In this new area, jump to a small wooden ledge, then another, then to a larger ledge. Defeat two magicians and two other monsters. Shoot the switch on the right, jump to the platform with Red Skull #5. Return to the larger ledge, where you just fought the monsters. Jump left along two small ledges, then onto another larger wooden platform. One skeleton and two other monsters will attack.

Shoot the impact switch, it will raise a nearby ledge but lower other ledges farther along the archipelago of ledges. Note that when you raise one, the other hesitates for just a moment before dropping. The game programmers have introduced this hesitation to allow you a moment to jump to the next ledge before the ledge you are standing on drops. In these situations, you do not have time to take a running jump. So, stand on the edge of the ledge, shoot the switch and then jump.

So, from the large platform you are on now, jump to the next small ledge. Notice the small folded ledge nearby. Walk as close to it as you can, shoot the impact switch, and then immediately jump to that next small ledge before your own collapses. Fight a magician when you get there.

Now jump to the larger ledge ahead and fight a skeleton. Spear the wall and then climb up to get Red Skull #6. Now jump to the next small ledge. Shoot the impact switch. Now jump to the small ledge on the left and fight two magicians who throw energy bolts from a larger platform to your right. A small ledge ahead of you separates you from that larger ledge. Continue jumping until you come to a stone staircase. Climb the stairs and jump over the broken part to exit.

Outside, a nearby doorway leads to a Challenge Room. Descend the stairs, and then start along the walkway. Enemies will attack you here. Kill the magician on the wooden platform first. Then run back up the stairs and shoot down to destroy the rest of your enemies. Then take a long jump left to that wooden platform. Spear the side of the building. Jump to the spear and then jump to the top of the building to collect Red Skull #7. Now drop down and enter the Challenge Room.

Inside, at the back of the spike walls, is the Gold Lizard. Walk between the open walls until you get to the closed ones at the end. Walk forward, as three closed spike walls open in front of you. Now *wait*, until the walls behind you close and then open again. Then immediately jump back two spike walls. The walls in front and behind you will slam shut, but the walls where you stand will not close. When the walls ahead of you open again, walk to the end of the open space and two more spike walls will open in front of you. As soon as that happens, jump/roll back three spike walls. Again, the walls in front and behind you will slam shut. When they open again, you are done. All of the walls will stay open now. Collect the artifact and walk casually out of the room to the outside.

Jump across a series of ledges. You will reach another building entrance. On the other side of the next turntable are two magicians. Step inside the building and you will find yourself on a balcony. There are wide ledges floating to the left. Hop along three of them. Jump over to the platform containing an impact switch. Shoot the switch to cause a nearby ledge to extend. Jump onto it to collect Red Skull #8. Jump back to the ledge with the switch on it. Shoot the switch again. Then jump ahead to the small ledge where you were originally. Now jump left to the small ledge there.

Find Red Skull #9 here, which you can reach by shooting an impact switch to extend a ledge. But, when you shoot the switch, the ledge you are standing on will drop. So, stand at the edge of your platform, shoot the switch (out of camera range) and then quickly jump to the newly extended ledge.

Use the same technique for the next, diagonal, jump to a small ledge next to a larger platform with urns on it. Jump onto the larger platform. Stand on the lower-right corner of that platform. Shoot the impact switch one more time (out of camera range) to extend the small ledge. Make a diagonal jump, and then make one more jump to the Health Upgrade. Return to the larger platform.

Note the stone plaza below. You had your original battle with the three Shield Demons in that room. While you are collecting treasure from the urns on the large platform, two more Shield Demons will attack you on your platform. Immediately jump down to the room below to get some fighting space. More monsters will join the Shield Demons. Defeat them all. As soon as you exit the building, four skeletons will attack you from the grassy platform below. Have your Grenade Launcher ready.

Jump back onto the turntable. A cut scene will show the route you must take. Jump off the end of the turntable to the stone stairway. At the top of the stairway, jump straight, to the next turntable. This turntable and the next one do not turn here. You have already turned them earlier in the level. Three monsters will attack you here, one magician ahead, a monster on the left and one on the right.

Now jump ahead to a broken section of stone walkway. One magician and one skeleton will attack you here. Defeat them and then spear the broken section of walkway to your left. Jump on the spear then jump on the walkway. Pick up Red Skull #10. Then jump back on the spear and then jump back to the original broken section of stone walkway.

Jump straight ahead to the next turntable. A giant and a skeleton will attack. Defeat them and then jump straight ahead to the base of a wide stone staircase. Walk straight up the middle of the staircase. The game will freeze you in place until it shows you a fiery ball rolling down the staircase. This is just a preview of what awaits you farther up. Continue up the stairs, dodging a cascade of balls, until you reach the doorway at the top. The stairway will blow up behind you.

## Level Ten - The Fiery Depths

Go down the stairs to trigger a cut scene. Then jump left, along the series of three ledges, until you reach a much larger gap. Here, fire jets rupture from cracks in a wide wall. Walk out to the *farthest tip* of that third ledge, then turn and face the wall with the fire jets. Use your grapple to latch onto the gold ring, and then watch the fire jets. Notice that they flame-on for three seconds. After they start, wait two seconds then walk off the ledge. Then climb straight up to the top. Go left for Red Skull #1. Now go right, to the end of the ledge.

You are standing on a statue column; part of the ledge from where you shot your grapple at the gold ring. The first two ledges you jumped on have statue columns too. Take a running jump to the next column, race across it, and then jump to the last column and stop - to find an Ammo Upgrade.

Then jump back to the big ledge, grapple the gold ring and rappel down level with the lower ledge on your left. Swing right and then left to gain momentum. Release/jump to that ledge on the left.

Now go left, and jump two gaps to the top of a long staircase. Go partway down the next stairs to fight two skeletons. Go back up the stairs, pull the gold handle all the way out, and then run/tumble down the steps, jumping to clear the gap, and run through the door of the Challenge Room.

A stone column rising from a lava pit has an angular walkway around it. Evenly spaced around that walkway are three large golden saucer-shaped pressure plates. Also along that walkway, find three balls. The fire jets along the floor move clockwise. Follow closely behind them, but never touch the fire. The fire jets will move faster as you place each ball. The pressure plate along the back wall is the *only* one that does not sit on a safe ledge. So start with that one. Push balls onto the plates, one at a time. When the final ball settles in place, the column will have lowered enough that you can jump on it and collect the Mask of Ehecatl relic (Health+ Ammo+ Power Speed+). Now exit the chamber.

Continue down the stairs to some columns bathed in fire by three turning statues. Jump along the six spider tiles in a clockwise pattern, for a reward (Ammo Powerup). Avoid the turning streams of fire. Along the way, get a Health Upgrade, from a stone shelf near one of the columns. On another shelf, collect Red Skull #2. Then continue down the stairs.

Watch for waves of flame that project from the wall. Wait for the nearest flames to recede and then follow the subsequent eruptions down the stairs toward the right. You will come to a break. Watch the slowly rotating platforms and jump from one to the next when you can land on a flat tiled surface. Then, continue down the stairway.

Farther on, around a bend, find a circular area with a Chain gun resting on a pedestal at the center. Flames make regular trips around the ring. The ring has Red Skull #3 on the right side and Red Skull #4 along the left side. Two giants will attack you. Run to the top of the stairs and then shoot down.

Go down some stairs and toward the upper right. Jump along another series of rotating ledges. There are four of them this time. Time your jumps carefully. Do not stand on the *last* one too long.

On the far side of that gap, you will find yourself on the balcony of a large courtyard. Two sets of stairs lead to a lower level with several pillars. On the other side of the lower level is an identical balcony, also with two sets of stairs. Fire jets on the thresholds of the doorways will lock you inside the room. There are Health and Ammo Packs inside the urns. If you break them with your spear now (to save ammo), you will easily pick them up as you move around the room battling monsters. The pillars fall down easily. Do not use them for cover. They can injure both you and the monsters.

Switch to a high volume weapon, such as your new Chain Gun. Run around the room blasting away with your gun. Use the stairs and balconies to your advantage. Keep moving; your enemies are much slower than you are. Kill the fire throwers first. Then use your Grenade Launcher on the skeletons. Just as you think the battle is over, another wave of monsters will pop up. The battle is over when the fire disappears from the exit doorway. Go down more stairs. At the bottom, enter a new chamber.

Inside, is a rectangular lava pool. Beyond that, flames erupt from a long, high wall. Go to the left side of the pool, pick up three gems, and then spear the wall. When the flames clear away, run and jump onto the spear. From there jump to the ledge above and pull yourself up.

Cross a wide pit by hopping on circular plates. There are two statues, spewing flames and slowly rotating on columns near the plates. Wait for the fire to pass, and then jump to the second circle. Shoot the impact switch to make the statues reverse direction. Jump one more circle and then shoot the switch again. Jump one more circle and then shoot the switch a third time. Jump up to the ledge.

After you cross the pit, go down some stairs. Work your way around to the top of a wall that shoots fire jets back and forth through six rectangular slits. Grapple the gold ring, and then, when the flames move away from you, rappel down - even with Red Skull #5. Swing right to get the skull. Swing left and then jump, for an Ammo Upgrade. You will land on a balcony at the base of the wall. Quickly move to the other side of the balcony to avoid an arrow trap shooting from your right.

Go to the end of the balcony, where more of the fire vents make forward progress risky. Notice that the arrows fire in two sets. Wait until the closest set goes past you. Then step out and launch a grenade down the hallway. Destroy both sets of arrow traps in this manner.

Notice that the fire vents have a regular pattern. Every sixth vent has fire. Select your Grenade Launcher. Follow the fire across three vents *only*, and a Shield Demon will pop out of the pavement behind you. Quickly summersault/run back to the other end of the balcony, before the fire pops up behind you. Shoot grenades at the demon until he drops his shield. Then finish him off with bullets.

If you missed the Ammo Upgrade when you dropped down, shoot the impact switch to turn off the fire. Now, throw a spear into the wall to the left of the impact switch. Jump onto the spear, and then jump onto the switch. Now throw another spear near the Ammo Upgrade and then jump on that spear. Now jump up to get the upgrade.

Now follow behind the fire as it vents through the floor. When you reach the far side of the vents, one fire thrower will attack you from straight ahead, across another gap in the pavement. Destroy him, and then collect Red Skull #6, sitting next to a ball. Now "heal" that ball.

Roll the ball close to the gap in the pavement. Place a bomb behind the ball, so that when you detonate the bomb it will push the ball past the gap. Now push hard and let the ball roll partway across the vents. Quickly back away from the fire. When there is no fire between you and the ball, run and jump onto the ball. Then jump from the ball to safety on the balcony. When there is again no fire between you and the ball, push/pull it the rest of the way onto the balcony. Now push the ball over the fountain.

Go down the next staircase, jumping the gap along the way, to arrive at a lava pit with more of the circular columns overlooked by more fire-breathing statues. Shoot the impact switch, as before, to reverse the rotation of the statues - and the fire. Jump along the column circles, until you get to a ledge leading to a Challenge Room. Enter the room.

Inside, jump on the L-shaped turntable. Shoot the impact switch twice to turn halfway. Jump off the end of the turntable to land next to the switch. Drop a bomb at the base of the switch, but do not detonate. Now return to the turntable and jump off the other side of the "L". There, pull out a gold handle to see a cut scene of an iron grate rising in front of an artifact chamber. After the cut scene ends, run and jump back onto the turntable. As soon as you land, detonate your bomb so that the turntable slowly rotates toward the chamber with the artifact. Before the turntable even completes its turn, jump across the gap and roll into the small chamber. When you pick up the War Drum artifact, the grate will stay open. There is *only-just* enough time to complete this maneuver.

Now exit the Challenge Room and return to the area in front of the circular plates and the turning statues. As you need to, change the direction they are spinning, by shooting the switch. Visit every circle in the area. If you need to, you can walk off the edge of a circle and hang there until the fire passes over you. On the lower right side is Red Skull #7.

On the far right side, at the very dead end of a line of circles, is a Health Upgrade. However, you can only access the upgrade from the lower-left of the field of circles. Caution: On the way to the upgrade, you must jump to one circle bathed by flames from three of the statues. Now exit the area at its left side. Travel the walkway down to reach an Ammo Dump, in front of an arched door.

Just past the next doorway, fire will flow up from the threshold vent to lock you into a room. Here, you must battle many skeletons and fire throwers. Speed is life. Keep running and tumbling ahead of your enemies. Take out the fire throwers first. Just collapse the skeletons if they get in your way. When the fire throwers are dead, lure the skeletons onto the tile with a scorpion painted on its surface. There, collapse the skeletons into piles of bones, then quickly plant and detonate a bomb. A message will pop up on-screen to let you know that you have sacrificed the skeleton. Do the same thing to three of them to get a Health Powerup. A Shield Demon will pop up near the scorpion circle. Be ready, when he interrupts your skeleton bashing.

After you have killed the last of the enemies, the fire shooting up from the exit doorway will disappear. Head through the exit and jump across a gap as you descend a long staircase. You will come to a wide pit of fire with more rotisserie-like ledges turning slowly over the pit. Make a series of jumps to the other side. To make things more interesting, flames shoot out from statues turning on the left side. A ledge on the right has Red Skull #8. A ledge on the left has Red Skull #9.

From the far side of that pit, go down some stairs to see (and feel, if you have a Rumble Pad) large, burning balls of stone and metal crashing down from overhead. Easily avoid them as you jump across the gaps between a series of tiled platforms, picking up gems along the way. Jump to a platform on the left, just before you reach the other side, for Red Skull #10. Toward the back right of the area, find the base of a flight of stairs. Climb those stairs and exit through the opening at the top.

## Level Eleven - Belly of the Beast

Run across the wooden bridge, all the way to the other side. It will collapse behind you into the lava below. Jump onto a low stone pedestal straight ahead, to get the Rocket Launcher. When you pick up the launcher, a short cut scene will pan the camera view to the right, so that you can see a large column sunk into a pit of lava. On top of the column is an Ammo Dump. Hanging in the air, evenly spaced around the column are Red Skulls #1, #2, #3, and #4. The column is actually a mechanism.

A rectangular wood and stone walkway goes completely around the central column. At each corner of that walkway is one large stone pressure plate, identical to the one in front of you. Each pressure plate can raise that central column and deploy a wooden bridge to it. The bridge always deploys first to that part of the walkway immediately clockwise from the switch. So, to get to the central column, run clockwise across any of the four pressure plates until you get to the next wooden part of the walkway. Wait for the wooden bridge to deploy, and then run/tumble across to the central column. This is how you pick up the four Red Skulls. After you get to the central column, the boards behind you will fold down and the boards ahead of you will deploy as an exit from the column. You then have five seconds to get off the column before it sinks back down into the lava.

On each corner of the grid is an almost-square plaza just like the one you are standing on. The upper-left and lower-right plazas have a large circular pit of lava in their corners. Knock down the column in the corners of these two plazas for Red Skulls #5 and #6. The first of these plazas you go to will trigger the appearance of a huge, horned, lava-covered dinosaur. He is slow and plodding, but spits fast fireballs in a spray pattern. He can also direct large balls of fire to drop on your position. So, do not stand in one place for very long. He is vulnerable to the Rocket Launcher.

At the edges of the grid are eleven circular Spider Tile columns. Some of them have treasure on them, including Ammo Packs. If you jump on every one, the game will reward you.

After you have taken half his life away, the dinosaur will summon a swarm of tiny red dinosaurs to help him. When three quarters of his life are gone, four magicians will appear on the spider tiles. They will throw fire bolts at you. When you kill them, they will drop Red Skulls #7, #8, #9, and #10. As you harm the Fire Dinosaur, he will become more aggressive. Keep moving around, dodging assorted attacks. The hardest part of this level is keeping the Fire Dinosaur alive long enough for you to complete all of the optional tasks.

Start by going right, and wake up the Fire Dinosaur in the lower-right corner. Then run left, back across the *first* pressure plate you saw. Continue clockwise, around the corner and then run across the bridge, collecting a Red Skull, until you get to the central column. Exit the column, collecting another Red Skull. Continue clockwise, and cross over the next pressure plate that you come to. Just around the corner from that plate, the bridge will deploy again. Run across and collect one more Red Skull. Then exit the column, collecting the fourth Red Skull. Add the Spider Tile jumps next. Kill enough tiny red dinosaurs to meet the third points challenge, and get the better Grenade Launcher. Then kill the four magicians to get the last four Red Skulls. Then kill the big Fire Dinosaur.

## Level Twelve - Stronghold Passage

Go down the stairs to arrive at a wide courtyard. A Lava Stone monster will lurch toward you from the other side. He will send flaming balls toward you, from which you should roll away. Fire will begin shooting from the six round holes in the floor. If you touch the fire, you will die. Stay at the top of the steps and shoot two or three rockets at the monster. After the monster has disintegrated, break the urns for the treasure inside.

Now walk up the stairs, to find a puzzle. Flames surrounded a high stone column, except for one white tile. That tile is the top of a sunken column. A ball sits on top of the erected column. Drop a bomb on the white tile, but do not detonate. Now stand on the nearby pressure plate. The high stone pillar will sink down, and the sunken pillar will begin rising. When the two columns are nearly the same height, detonate the bomb. The ball will roll off its column and onto the floor. Two skeletons and one other monster will attack you as soon as you detonate the bomb. Run partway up the next stairs to fight them.

Now roll the ball onto the pressure plate. Drop a bomb at the base of the ball, and then stand on the lower stone column. While standing on the column, detonate the bomb. The ball will roll free of the pressure plate. The column upon which you are standing will rise. Get an Ammo Upgrade at the top.

Drop down from the column (it is a long drop, but you will not be hurt) and roll the ball into position over one of the circles of fire. If you touch the fire while you are rolling the ball into the hole, you will die. You must snuff out all six fires so that you can open the skull gate.

Go back up the stairs, through the monolith room, and up some more stairs. As you go, grapple the gold ring, and then drop down over the broken corner of the stairway to find a Health Upgrade. Then climb back up and continue up the stairs, jumping over a wide gap along the way.

At the top of those stairs, is a large white stone cone with a hole in the middle. Lying next to the cone is a second ball. Roll the ball until it is touching the base of the cone. Drop a bomb at the base of the ball. Stand back and detonate. The ball should jump into the cone, and then pass through the hole. That hole leads to the courtyard below, with the six fire holes. Push the ball into position later.

For now, continue up. In this small room, you must retrieve a ball that sits on a circle of flame. At each end of the group of fire rings, are two short stone columns holding collapsed wooden steps. On the far side of the room is a gold handle. Following, is the traditional way to solve this problem:

Throw a spear into the column closest to the handle. Pull out the gold handle all the way. Wooden boards will extend part of the distance between the two stone columns. Jump onto the spear, up to the edge of the column and then pull yourself up to the top of the column. Now take a running jump to the other column, dropping a bomb into the fire as you cross over it. You have about eight seconds to complete the maneuver. If you land without killing yourself in the fire, back away and then detonate the bomb. The ball should land on the floor. Two magicians will attack you *from within the flames*. Use the stone columns for cover. Fire rockets at the magicians.

Note: the above maneuver can be quite challenging if you are using a mouse and a controller. Try quickly abandoning both when you reach the top of the column. Now, with your right hand on your keyboard, press the Down Arrow and the Left Arrow both at the same time. With your left hand, press the Caps Lock key and the Space Bar at the same time - a half second *after* your right hand pushes the arrow keys. These keystroke combinations will cause your character to run left, jump the gap, and drop a bomb. You may land on the ground next to the fire.

Alternatively, my solution to this diabolical puzzle is, perhaps, more elegant: Jump on top of the urn just to the left of the doorway as you enter. Shoot a rocket at the ball to knock it to the ground. Quickly jump behind the nearest column and use it for cover while you kill the magicians.

Now center the ball against the wooden boards at the doorway, and then drop a bomb behind the ball. Go through the gates and pull the gold handle, to open the gates. While *still holding onto the handle*, detonate the bomb. The ball should roll through the wooden boards before they close. Now push the ball down the stairs, close to the stone cone. Bomb the ball into the cone.

Now go back up to the ledge of fire. Descend the ladder on the right, to find a walkway. Enter the Challenge Room. Find an easy puzzle. An impact switch sits in front of a field of spike plates. Throw a spear at the switch, and then throw another spear at the switch. Go to the rear side of the grid and then stand on the tile two rows from the back wall and three columns from the right side of the grid. Throw a third spear at the switch. Walk carefully over to the plate holding the Stone Serpent artifact. When you pick it up, the whole field of spikes will drop permanently.

Exit the room, continue past the base of the ladder and go down the steps. You will come to a small area containing a stone column. Still standing partway up the stairs, throw a spear into the column.

Then jump onto the spear. Then jump to the top of the column to get Red Skull #1. Now drop down to the floor and step on a hidden spider tile in the corner. Return to the room with the stone cone.

Walk through the narrow entrance to a broken ledge on the right. Take a long jump over the gap and pull yourself up by your fingers. Then, when the fire statue turns away from you, jump over a second gap. Go up some stairs, then left. You will come to a wall with deadly spikes along its base. Throw a spear into the wall. Then jump onto the spear. It is just long enough to protect you from the spikes, on the way up the wall. Warning: As soon as you pull up to that higher ledge, two skeletons will appear on the floor below. The skeletons will soon jump up to join you. There is not much room up there. Select your favorite weapon. Then jump up to the ledge and kill the skeletons.

Climb a ladder, and then start along a walkway. Ahead is a narrow gate. Pairs of fireballs bounce continually through the gate. Wait until two of them roll through, and then quickly summersault through the gate. Beyond, is a ledge holding Dual SMG's. Pick them up between bouncing fireballs.

Note the ball chute at the base of some stairs. Climb up those stairs. When you enter the next room, the wooden floor behind you will pop up to form a door, locking you inside. A steel ball will roll down some stairs to your left. Ahead of you is a circular pressure plate. Flaming balls restrict access.

Go straight ahead, then right, past another ball chute, and climb some stairs. At the top of the stairs, find a gold ring. Jump over the edge toward Red Skull #2, and then *immediately* shoot your grapple at the gold ring to keep from dropping to your death. You should fall through the skull and collect it. At any rate, this is how I believe you solve this puzzle. Though I tried many times, I was never able to retrieve the skull. Then climb back up and go right again.

You will come to a wall with flames billowing around it. Drop a bomb at the base of the impact switch. Then throw a spear at the switch. The lower fire will snuff out, but new fire will appear along the top of the wall. Throw a spear at the wall, and then jump onto it. Now detonate the bomb and quickly jump up to the top of the wall and pull up to the ledge, before the reignited lower fire burns you to death.

On the higher ledge, find a stone pedestal with a shallow depression in the top. There is also a chute, used to transport balls below. The path continues up to a room with a gold handle. In the middle of a lava lake to the right, is a large ledge with an Ammo Upgrade sitting on it. Fire rolls back and forth along that platform, through six sets of vents. Stand near the first vents and wait for the fire to surge away from you. Follow behind the flames, collect the upgrade and then run/tumble back to safety.

Go to the back of the room and pull on the gold handle. This will snuff out the flames on the small round stepping-stones. Jump from step to step, making one detour along the way to collect Red Skull #3. When you reach the far ledge, you will find another gold handle and a ball. Warning: Sometimes, when you start moving around on this ledge, two magicians may start throwing fire bolts at you from the large ledge where you got the upgrade. Equip your favorite weapon and take care of them first.

Now roll the ball close to the edge of the lava pool, so that you can launch the ball onto the larger ledge, where the fire is still rolling back and forth. Be aware that the ball can drop into the lake if you push it too far. However, the game will drop another ball and you may try again. So, get the ball as close to the edge as possible. Drop a bomb at the base of the ball. Then back away and detonate.

The ball should land on, or near, the second row of fire vents from the far side. Pull the handle. Now hop back over the stepping-stones. Then follow the fire on the large ledge, drop another bomb behind the ball. Run back to safety. Explode the bomb to make the ball jump to your side of the gap.

Push the ball over to the pedestal with the shallow depression on top. Position the ball just beyond the square of patterned tile, in line with the pedestal and the round pillar on the back wall. Place a bomb behind the ball. When you detonate the bomb, the ball should jump up onto the pedestal and settle in the depression. In case you tire of the exercise, you may continue the game without the hole-in-one. Either way, push the ball through the chute. A Lava Stone monster will attack when you do.

Then return to the room with the two-fisted statue that launches the pairs of flaming balls. To get past the wall of fire, jump over it and land next to the impact switch. Go up the stairs to the left of the statue and you will find a row of fire circles on the floor. Quickly run along that row, collecting the gems. There is a stone column between you and the next ledge. Jump on the column, and then throw a spear at the impact switch on the other side of the gap. The column will rise and then you can collect the Health Upgrade. Throw another spear at the switch to lower the column. Then jump to the ledge on the other side. Step on the spider tile.

Now roll the brass ball near the edge of the platform, so that it settles into a spot where past damage has caused a small depression in the floor. Plant a bomb behind the ball, but do not detonate. Get out of the blast radius of the bomb. Spear the switch and then quickly detonate the bomb. The metal ball should fly to the right, land briefly on the rising column, roll off the far side, clear another gap and land on the ledge to the right. Alternatively, the ball may land on top of the column and stay there. In which case, you will need to set another bomb at the base of the ball to get it to go all the way.

Now lower the stone column and jump across the gaps. Use another bomb blast to send the ball to the right yet again, over the row of fire circles. Follow the ball, and then push it down the stairs.

You should now have three balls in the room with the large two-fisted statue. Push one ball to the left of the left fist, in a little niche next to the wall. Drop a bomb to the right of that fist. Grab hold of the ball again and then detonate. The explosion will not affect you or the ball. The explosion *will* punch the left fist up, for a few moments. Roll the ball under the fist, before it falls back down.

Now roll another ball to the right of the right fist. Place a bomb to the left of that fist. Grab hold of the ball and then detonate. Quickly roll the ball under the right fist before it drops back down.

Then roll the third ball onto the circular pressure plate. The fire in front of the gold handle will stop, allowing you to pull it. When you do so, the nearby gate will open. Now push the balls down through that opening to the area where the statue is spitting pairs of bouncing fireballs. Warning: Two skeletons and three magicians will attack you as soon as you remove the ball from the circular pressure plate. Run halfway up the stairs and shoot rockets down on them.

After you defeat those enemies, go down the ramp and push the balls through the chute. After that, backtrack to the wall with spikes at its base. Jump over the ledge to land on the tiled walkway below. After you make the first long jump over the gap near the rotating fire statue, two skeletons will jump to your ledge and attack. After the second long jump, as you go down the next stairs, ten tiny red dinosaurs, two skeletons and one Lava Stone monster will try to stop you. Continue down until you reach the area with six flame holes.

Push the balls over the flame holes. Be very careful not to touch the fire. After you have placed all six balls, the skull gate will open. Go through the opening and into a new area.

Go through a doorway left, into a Challenge Room. Inside, throw a spear at the impact switch. This will raise a wooden walkway around the column. On the right side of the room is a cubicle containing the Mask of Tezcatlipoca. Drop a bomb at the base of the impact switch. Stand two square tiles to the right of the switch, and then throw a spear into the column. Now, go around the corner and jump onto the spear. Detonate the bomb, and then immediately jump right - to the cubicle. Now throw another spear at the switch to raise the walkway again. Exit the room.

The final part of the level contains two sets each of two extreme hazards. The first is a field of circles on the floor. These circles glow orange to give you brief warning, and then erupt with flame. This is an area you must cross while running and tumbling. The second type of challenge is a series of fragile square plates that fall away into the abyss after you have stood on them for a few moments. Fireballs will fall from above to smash many tiles in front of you. Jump over the gaps they leave.

So, pick your moment and then run forward to pick up Red Skull #4, directly in front of you. Dodge around fire circles and any glowing orange. Pick up the remaining six Red Skulls as you go. When you get to the end of the circles, do not stop. Continue over the fragile tiles to the other side of that field. You will hear the sound of a checkpoint. However, do not stop. Continue across a second set of fire circles and then a second set of tiles until you reach a safe stone ledge on the other side.

After you reach the far side, drop a bomb next to the casket. Detonate the bomb to reveal the final spider tile. Step on it for a reward. Pass through the doorway to complete the level.

## Level Thirteen - The Mirror's Wake

Arrive at a decaying walled enclosure, dimly lit and open to the elements. Glowing embers continually float to the ground around you. Walk left, along the paving stones. Note the ball sitting on a low pedestal, as you pass by it. Continue left, until you reach a stack of TNT boxes. Stand clear, and then throw a spear at the boxes. After they explode, go into the hidden area beyond, to find Red Skull #1. Now leave the small cul-de-sac and go through the nearby archway. At the end of this section of the path, you will see a well-built stone bridge to your left and a rocky bluff straight ahead. Below the rocky bluff is an area that the game calls the Arena.

As you reach the middle of the long stone bridge, a Shield Demon will attack you. One rocket should work, and the TNT at the middle of the bridge will help. Just beyond the archway at the end of the bridge, a Lava Stone monster will attack, along with a few tiny red dinosaurs.

You will find yourself on a small, elevated plaza. To the left is another archway, to a drop-off. Take a few moments to look around for gems. Blow up the TNT. Take advantage of your momentary safety to look over the edge of the small promontory that the plaza sits on. One view below will show you two of three dormant fire statues and, to the right of the statues, three dormant fire grooves on the ground. This is another view of the Arena. The bluff on the other side of your plaza gives a view of one column of the long bridge. Hidden in the darkness at the base of that column is a truck. You will be coming back to this bluff, because you can climb/drop down safely here, to the road below.

Now return across the bridge, to the ledge holding the spiked ball. Roll the ball across the bridge. Push that ball through the archway opposite the entrance archway, and over the cliff. Do not follow the ball. Instead, go back to the bluff where you can see the bridge column. Climb down to the road.

As you move toward the bridge, two Shield Demons will attack you. If you blow up the truck while the demons are next to it, the game will reward you for knocking off their shields with the explosion. However, this part of the game is so dark that you may not be able to see the truck, even though you know where it is. Notice the fumarole shooting lava balls into the air. Summersault over to a position left of that fumarole, but not too close. Now you can see the bridge column and the green truck at the base of the column. The two Shield Demons will walk as a pair, one on each side of the truck. When they are even with the truck, or just a little past it, shoot the truck. It will explode, knocking the shields from the hands of both demons. Now use rockets to finish them off.

Now pay attention to the fumarole, launching lava balls into the air. The balls fall back down and burst. You must stand well back from these, about the length of the pickup truck. Otherwise, the bursting lava will injure you. However, the second Red Skull sits on top of this one. To get the skull you must study the repeating pattern of the lava balls launching one-two, one-two and one. After the single ball launch, jump over the fumarole and through the skull to the other side of the fumarole. If your jump was true, you have skull number two.

Now go under the bridge, to the Arena. The only things active now are three more fumaroles. Each of them has a Red Skull on top of it. Going counter-clockwise, the first pattern is one-two, one-two, one and one. Jump across the fumarole after the second single launch. The next two fumaroles both have the same pattern, one-two, one-two, one low and one high. Jump across the fumarole after the launch of the high lava ball. You should now have five Red Skulls.

Now return to the base of the cliff that you climbed down. In the opposite direction from the bridge, find a ramp leading up to a higher ledge. At the top of that ramp, enter a Challenge Room. Find a metal ball, a stone column, a high wall with flames extending from the top and a stone pressure plate. Step on the pressure plate to lower the column. As it reaches its lowest point, flames will erupt from its top. Roll the metal ball onto the plate so that the column stays down. Drop a bomb next to the ball, and then walk over and step *onto the corner* of the column. Stand close to the fire, but not in it. There is just enough room. Detonate your bomb. The column will start to rise and you with it. When the column gets high enough, the flames will disappear. Now jump to the ledge and get the Clay Serpent artifact from the cubby in the back wall. Jump back onto the column, down and exit.

Back outside, walk along the paving stones for a while. When you get to a large tree on your right, the trail turns left. When you come to a broken rock wall on your right, a Lava Stone monster will attack you from the front. Two rockets will make him go away. A little farther along the path, another Lava Stone monster will attack you from behind.

Just beyond a pair of dormant rectangular fire vents across your path, is an intersection. Go right, down the ramp. Halfway down, a Lava Stone monster will attack you. Below, is the High Power Shotgun, floating over the ground. Roll the ball into the fire hole to get a Health Upgrade. Explore the limits of this small area, and then go back up the ramp to the intersection. Fire is now coming from the floor vents at the top of those stairs, forcing you to go in one direction. In the next battle, you will probably run out of ammunition. Even though they do not have the power of your newer weapons, your pistols have unlimited ammo. Put them into the mix of your four favorite weapons.

Not far along your new path, Xolotl will appear in a cut scene. He will taunt you again, and then leave through a huge double-gateway that locks behind him. Still part of the cut scene, three Shield Demons will burst up from the ground, along with magicians, tiny red dinosaurs and skeletons. The cut scene is deceptive. At first, only one Shield Demon will attack you, along with his friends.

After the cut scene, shoot a rocket at the demon's shield to break it. The demon and all his friends will attack you. You cannot retreat down the long path, because of the now-active fire vents. However, you can run down the ramp to the area where you rolled the ball into the hole. Here, you have some running room. Soon, however, that entire area will be full of your enemies. When that happens, run back up to the top of the ramp and defend yourself from there. The Shield Demon's energy bolts will hit the ramp way, instead of you. The magicians are a greater threat. Their energy bolts can turn corners. Concentrate on the magicians. You can outrun all the rest of your enemies. If you run out of ammo, use spears and your original twin pistols have unlimited ammo.

When the area is quiet again, collect the floating gold skull key that the demon dropped. Now go to the left of the huge gate through which Xolotl fled. Flames had blocked those stairs while you battled the Shield Demon, but now the route is open. At the top, just to the left of the temple, a fire statue rotates, guarding Red Skull #6. When you pick up the skull, several tiny red dinosaurs will attack from the right side of the temple doorway. Do not let them distract you from the fire statue's rotating jet of flame. A good technique would be to pick up the skull and gems quickly, and then run over to the Healing Fountain and fight the dinosaurs from there.

Enter the temple and go left, battling tiny red dinosaurs along the way. You will reach a room with a large ball, connected to a metal rod, turning in fast circles. Shoot a rocket at the column holding the ball to disconnect the ball. Then quickly push it around through the maze to a fire hole that blocks access to the next area of the maze. You must work your way around a Lava Stone monster that appears just ahead of the fire hole. There are others of his kind in other parts of this maze. Worse, a constant hail of fireballs will begin falling from above you. Watch for their black shadows and tumble out of the way when you see them. If you complete this task within 15 seconds, you get a reward. However, just staying alive will be a challenge for you. Then kill the monster and pass through the narrow opening.

Now go left again, battling skeletons, tiny red dinosaurs and Lava Stone monsters as you go. The close quarters make self-inflicted damage possible. A nearby Ammo Dump will allow you to be lavish with your firepower. As you go deeper into the maze, you will find another large, metal ball sitting next to a pressure plate. Push the ball onto the pressure plate to lower a gate on the back wall. Behind the gate is an Ammo Upgrade, inside a small cubby. The ball will not stay on the plate long, because the falling lava balls will knock it loose. So summersault quickly through the maze to the back wall. Then go left to reach the gate. Hurry past enemies, because you do not have time to fight them. As you dash madly about, dodging fireballs and monsters, pick up Red Skull #7, #8 and #9 scattered about the maze.

Now return to where you left the ball. Roll it through the maze again, still battling enemies as you go, until you reach an area to your lower left. The mass of the rolling ball will easily crush smaller enemies in front of you, but not Lava Stone monsters. Roll the ball onto the fire hole blocking access to the final part of the maze, and then pass through the opening. A hurried exploration of this new area will reveal the Dark Drum artifact, at a dead end part of the maze.

Also in this new area, you will find the second of three huge gatekeepers that you saw in the last cut scene. These are Shield Demons with many more hit points. Use a rocket to break his shield, and then kill him and his constant companions. Skeletons will rush to his aid, along with more dinosaurs. Pick up the gold skull key that floats in the air when you blast away his shield.

You now have two of the three keys that you need to unlock the gate through which Xolotl retreated. Quickly run/tumble back to the original entrance to the temple, and temporary safety. Now backtrack along the long trail. The vents in the floor of the trail are dormant again.

Pass the Challenge Room. Go down the stairs and under the bridge. The three fire statues are turning now, spewing fire. Soon after you cross the inactive fire vents on the floor, they will fire up - locking you in the Arena.

You must face the third Shield Demon gatekeeper. Only three areas inside the Arena are safe from the statue's rotating flame. The first is where you enter, just beyond the fire vents. The second place is in a short canyon just behind the statue to the right of the vents. The third safe place is a rocky outcrop behind the statue directly across from the vents. Move between these three sections of the grid, while you battle the demon. The most dangerous place to stand is in the middle of the Arena.

When you have defeated the gatekeeper, take the final golden gate key. Before you leave, place yourself in a position to see a gold ring on a high bluff, above the statue to the right of the vents. Grapple that gold ring and pull up to the ledge. Enter the Challenge Room.

When you step on the pressure plate in front of the door, the gate will rise. Then you may enter a large, square room filled with fire circles, all over the floor. To make this exercise more challenging, the gate will drop down behind you. The fire circles will glow orange for a few moments, before shooting out deadly flames. This is your cue to move. A ball, attached to the end of a metal rod, rotates around a column. A small, gated cubby on the right wall of the room contains the Mask of Cipactli artifact. A Lava Stone monster lies buried under the circles between the pillar and the cubby. A fire hole burns constantly. The object is to kill the monster, free the ball, get the ball into the fire hole and run over to the cubby to collect the artifact. When you have done that, the game will damp down all of the fires, so that you may leave safely. When you die, the game will reset the entire puzzle, including the Lava Stone monster, leaving you outside the gate with a few less points.

There are many ways to complete this challenge. One of them is the following:

When you go through the gate, stand on the second fire circle out from the door and out from the left wall. Then run toward the artifact cubicle until the Lava Stone monster bursts up through the floor. Then run back to the same fire circle from which you started. Now shoot two rockets at the monster to remove him from the equation. Now run to the left corner of the room and stand two circles out from that corner. Having circles all around the one you are standing on, gives you a place to move when the one under you starts glowing. Now shoot a rocket in the direction of the pillar to knock the ball free of the rod. Now run to the ball and roll it quickly into the fire hole. Then run carefully over to the artifact cubby and enter it.

When you exit the room, attach your grapple to the gold ring and begin to lower yourself over the edge. If you drop too quickly, the fire from the statue below will roast you to death.

Standing in front of the fire vents, go behind the statue on the left and jump on a broken bridge section. Grapple the gold ring, on a ledge high above and then walk off the bridge to bump against the wall. Then climb up until you are level with the rest of the bridge, on your right.

Swing left and right to gain momentum, and then jump right, onto the broken bridge. Move a few steps along the bridge, turn to face the gold ring, and then throw one or more spears at the *front* of the shiny wall you just climbed. Now get as close as you can to the spear and jump onto it. From there, jump to the top of the wall and collect Red Skull #10. Now jump back down onto the bridge.

Notice that the bridge throws flaming balls, in a regular pattern, from two places on the wall above. Wait for the lowest rock to fly, and then quickly tumble forward after it. Run and jump to clear the gap. Then roll forward past some lava balls that will come from your left. Keep running and jump to cross another wide gap. Now you are back in the area below Xolotl's gate. As you approach the gate, it will open automatically. Follow the path leading through the gate and trigger a cut scene.

## Level Fourteen - Xolotl's Stronghold

This final phase of the game takes place on three separate arenas. The first one is to your front. Jump across the break to land on a large, square grid covered in spike holes. There are two large circular stone columns on either side of the grid, and one in front of you. You cannot jump on these, but Xolotl can. The first time you see him, he will be standing on the column to your front, just to the left of a spinning, spiked cylinder. After he taunts you, he will shoot electricity, from his claws, at the grid. Blue circles will cover several rows of spikes, on the left and right sides of the grid.

A few moments later, spikes will pop up from the holes that had circles on them. Moments later, those spikes will drop. A few seconds later, blue circles will stretch from left to right, across the entire grid. Moments later, spikes will also ripple across the grid from left to right. Up to this point, you have not needed to move.

However, blue circles will start appearing sporadically, all over the grid. In each case, spikes will shortly follow in their place. Unlike previous appearances of spikes in this game, these do not kill you if you accidentally bump into them. Soon, the circle you are standing on will have its own blue circle. Step back one square to avoid a piercing. Next, you will hear the ping of an auto save. You have just seen a short tutorial of what you can expect. Class is over; it is time to fight Xolotl.

Now Xolotl will jump to either the left or the right column, still taunting you. He will throw blue-green spread shots of energy bolts at you as well. Shoot him until his red health meter goes completely down, all the time watching your feet for blue circles. Pick up the Ammo Packs and Health Packs as you move about. Shoot Xolotl with any weapon, but the Golden Shotgun or Rocket Launcher seem to work best.

Xolotl will now leave to regenerate his health meter. Before he leaves, he will warn you of a new attack. From underneath the rotating cylinder of spikes, a swarm of small red spiders will race toward you. This group is easy to deal with. The twin pistols with unlimited ammunition work well against them. Watch now for increased blue circle activity.

Xolotl will send three more groups of spiders, each group with one giant spider included. In addition, Xolotl will enclose you in a prison of spikes with each group of spiders. The spikes will form around you in a different place on the grid for each of the three fights. Between fights, you must avoid standing on any blue circles for more than a moment.

After you have defeated the last of these groups of spiders, the grid will go a bit crazy. Blue circles will start appearing more rapidly. There will be fewer places to run. Instead, start walking from one square to the next. As soon as the one you are on generates a blue circle, move to a safe square next to it. This exercise lasts only a few seconds, but it seems a lot longer.

One diabolical part of this spike attack will confine you to a rectangle of squares in the center of the grid. A wall of spikes will surround you. Then, all of the plates in the center will glow with blue circles, even though the wall of spikes all around you is still up. When that wall of spikes drops back down into its holes, tumble toward the closest safe square. You will have just enough time to get to safety. At the end of the sequence, all the spikes start dropping into their holes to leave a clear grid.

Now Xolotl will return to one of the two columns, with a full health meter. He will bring a host of spiders with him. You may kill the spiders if you wish, for points. Sometimes the spikes will pop up and kill the spiders. They will not stop coming until you reduce Xolotl's health meter to zero. He will throw blue-green spread shots at you as well. However, the greatest threat to your life is still the spikes. You may ignore the spiders and Xolotl's energy bolts, but you may not ignore the blue circles.

After you have depleted Xolotl's second life meter, he will say that he is through playing games. Then, he will fire an electrical charge from his claws at the huge spiked cylinder lying sideways across the back of the room. A wall of spikes will pop up on the left and right sides of the grid. The cylinder will start rolling toward you, and you will have nowhere to go. Those spike walls will drop down just before the cylinder reaches you. Immediately, blue light circles will appear on all of the plates where the spikes just dropped. You have just enough time to roll either left or right, avoid the rolling cylinder, and roll back to the center of the grid before those spikes pop up again. The cylinder will roll harmlessly past you. Xolotl will have fled to the next field of battle. Go through the opening.

On the other side of the spike grid, is a ledge with a Healing Fountain and Ammo Dump. Then continue down some stairs, jumping two gaps along the way. Now turn right, and jump across a gap to a broken section of a platform. Make another jump to a larger platform, covered with poison pods.

Here, Xolotl will drop from above and crush you, if you let him. Watch for his large black shadow coming toward you. Roll away from it, then turn and fire your weapon at Xolotl. When he lands, he may also fire a blue-green energy bolt spread shot. Many gators and skeletons will try to distract you from Xolotl's ambush attack. The poison pods are more of a help than a danger to you. As they explode, the pods kill your enemies.

Any time you stay in one place for more than a couple of seconds, expect Xolotl to drop in on you, so keep moving around the grid all the time. Then get ready to shoot at the spot from which you just moved away. That is where you will next see Xolotl.

Roll over Health Packs and Ammo Packs as you move about the grid. Eventually, Xolotl will reappear with a fresh life meter. Drain this one as you did the others. He will issue another taunt, and then retreat. Follow behind him, to find a wide high stone platform with a view.

Use the Healing Fountain and Ammo Dump as necessary. From the edge, look over to see a decayed square stone platform far below. That is where you will fight your last battle. Now go down the stairs to that platform, making six jumps across broken parts of the long stairway as you go.

On that platform, Xolotl will attack from a ledge to your front. He will call down lava balls that explode around you and cause damage. Dodge around these, or back away and let them explode ahead of you. If you stand in one place for more than a few moments, you can be certain that location is the next target for the balls. Use this predictability to your advantage. To shoot Xolotl, you need to stand close to his ledge, where you can see him. To create a few moments when there are no lava balls falling on that position, go to the other side of the grid and wait for the ball shadows to appear. Then quickly summersault over to where Xolotl is standing and get in a few shots at him.

After you do enough damage to him, Xolotl will try a new tactic. He will call in a small army of Lava Stone monsters to help him. When they disintegrate, they leave behind Ammo Packs and Health Packs. The swings of their arms can knock you into the lava surrounding the platform. Shoot at one monster for two seconds, and then dodge away from him.

Next, you must survive a veritable hailstorm of lava balls. Keep moving in wide circles around the edge of the grid, to stay ahead of the balls.

After the hailstorm, you must battle Xolotl alone. He will return to his tactic of dropping down from above and firing blue-green spread shots. Keep moving and firing. Eventually, Xolotl will crouch down at the center of the grid and start throwing out waves of blue-green energy bolts. This is his last gasp. He will die soon and issue a cry of despair. When Xolotl is finally dead, the game will run a closing slide show and then the credits.

Chris Barton - Revised 08.24.2011