

COLDSTONE PLUGIN TUTORIAL

By Dee Brown, © 2001-2002 by Beenox inc.
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Introduction

This document contains step-by-step instructions to create your first plugin for a Coldstone Game. This plugin will add an NPC to Fantrima. While everything explained here applies to other Coldstone games, this tutorial will assume that you have the full version of Pillars of Garendall on your hard drive (you do not need to have the registered version). You should also have played it at least once for a couple of minutes to have a general idea of what the game is.

You can download the full version of Pillars of Garendall for free at the following address:

<http://www.AmbrosiaSW.com/games/pog/>

If you have the Coldstone CD, Pillars of Garendall is included on it. Just copy the "Pillars of Garendall" folder to your hard drive.

How to add a simple character in Fantrima

1. Create the plugin project

The first step is to create the Coldstone plugin folder itself.

- a) Start Coldstone.
- b) Select "Create New Game..." from the file menu. The Coldstone Game Factory dialog appears.
- c) Click the "Select..." button and choose where to save your new plugin on your hard drive. The path will appear in the white box above the "Select..." button.
- d) Click the "Next" button. The game type list panel appears.
- e) Select "Plugin" in the list and click the "Next" button.
- f) If you selected the correct type in the list, you are now prompted to select the "Plugin data" file from the game you want to modify with your plugin. Click "Select..." and browse to the "Plugins" folder within the "Pillars of

Garendall" folder. Choose the "Plugin data.txt" file. The path will appear in the field above the "Select..." button. Click "Next".

- g) Click "Next" again. The files are copied in your new plugin project folder.
- h) Click "Finish". Coldstone sets your new plugin as its new active project.
- i) Select "Plugin options..." from the "Project" menu. The plugin options dialog appears.
- j) Click on the "Misc" tab.
- k) Enter the name that you want for your new plugin into this field (default value is "My Plugin").
- l) Click the "Save" button to save your modifications and close the dialog.

2. Creating the character

The plugin folder created in step 1 could contain anything – a new item, a new quest, or even a new town, but in this plugin we're going to add an NPC. This is how we create and define that NPC.

- a) Select "NPC" from the "File->New" menu or click on the head button in the toolbar (5th button from the left). A new NPC (non-player character) window appears.
- b) Click on the "Battle" tab.
- c) Click on the "..." button in the "NPC Display" group box. The tile set browser appears.
- d) If you want to add a man, select "npc_cman09" from the library popup. However, if you want to add a woman, select "npc_cwoman04". The previews of all the pictures and animations found in this folder appear.
- e) Click on the picture with a small red arrow over it (it should be the default selection).
- f) Click the "Select" button. A preview of the selected animation appears in the white box to the left of the "NPC Display" group box.
- g) Click the "Map" tab.
- h) Click the "Edit..." button next to "Player contact:" in the "Event links" group box. A linked event window appears.
- i) Double-click on "Dialog" in the action lib window. The action name dialog appears.
- j) Click "OK". (The name of the action has no importance in this case.) The action parameters dialog appears.
- k) Enter what you want this character to say in the "Text" field (like "Good morning adventurer.").
- l) Click "OK" to save the modifications to this action and close the parameters dialog.
- m) Close the event window (no need to save). The "Edit..." button next to "Player contact:" now appears in bold caption.
- n) Close the NPC window. Coldstone asks you if you want to save your modifications, click "Yes". The file name dialog appears.
- o) Enter what you want this NPC name to be.
- p) Click "Save".

3. Adding the new character in Fantrima

Now that we've created our NPC, we have to place him into the world of Garendall – in this case in the center of the town of Fantrima.

- a) Select "Event" from the "File->New" menu or click on the exclamation mark button in the toolbar (3rd button from the left). A new event window appears.
- b) Double-click on "NPC control" in the action lib window. The action name dialog appears.
- c) Click "OK". (The name of the action has no importance in this case.) The action parameters dialog appears.
- d) Select "Add" in the action popup (should be the default).
- e) Select your new NPC's name in the "NPC" popup (should be the default).
- f) Select "Custom" in the coordinates popup (should be the default).
- g) Enter "120" in the left coordinates field (X coordinate).
- h) Enter "65" in the right coordinates field (Y coordinate).
- i) Click on the "+" button next to the NPC name popup. The new NPC action appears in the list.
- j) Click "OK" to save and close the parameters dialog.
- k) Close the event window. Coldstone asks you if you want to save your modifications, click "Yes". The file name dialog appears.
- l) Enter "Add npc to fantrima" in the name field.
- m) Click the "Save" button.
- n) Select "Plugin load calls..." from the "Project->Game Plugin" menu or click on the gear button in the toolbar (at the far right). The plugin load calls dialog appears.
- o) Select "World_P10" from the "Locations" popup.
- p) Select "Add npc to fantrima" from the "Event" popup (should be the default value).
- q) Click the "+" button. The new load call appears in the list.
- r) Click "OK" to save your modifications and close the plugin load calls dialog.

4. Trying you new plugin

- a) Select "Build release" from the "Project" menu. The compilation options dialog appears.
- b) Click "OK" to close the compilation options dialog.
- c) Browse to your "Pillars of Garendall" folder.
- d) Select the "Plugins" folder and click the "Choose" button to close the standard file browser. The compilation progress dialog appears and all the required files are being converted into the Coldstone plugin format. A new folder with the plugin name appears in the "Plugins" folder of "Pillars of Garendall".
- e) Go in the Finder and browse to the "Pillars of Garendall" application inside the folder of the same name (where you compiled your plugin).

- f) Launch the “Pillars of Garendall” application. The game loads its data and then display the plugin dialog interface with a list of all the plugins found in its “Plugins” folder.
- g) Check the name of your plugin in the list.
- h) Click “OK”. If don’t own a registered copy of Pillars of Garendall, you won’t be able to check more than one plugin at once. Uncheck all the others and then, click “OK”. The game loads the plugin data and displays the game’s startup screen.
- i) Click “START”.
- j) Jump right to the player creation dialogs by pressing the escape key.
- k) Put whatever name you want in the name dialog.
- l) Click “OK”. The game loads the first map, the town of Fantrima. The hero appears in front of Fantrima. The guard asks what happened to you.
- m) Click on any answer. Your hero falls on the ground. The guard calls for help.
- n) Click on the dialog to close it. Anabelor, the innkeeper, comes to take you back to his house. When you’ll awake, you see that your new character is wandering in the middle of the town square, to your right.
- o) Click on him/her or use the keyboard to approach him/her and press the “x” button to talk to your new character. The text you entered earlier is displayed.

Additional tips

Add a hostile character

To add a hostile character (an enemy which you can fight and kill), simply follow all the instructions above but when you get to step 2a above, creating the NPC, click on the “Roll” button. When a character has a positive stamina value, it is considered as hostile to the player.

Find where you are

The Coldstone Game Factory automatically adds a debug event to your plugin. When you are playing Pillars of Garendall with your plugin activated, you can press “d” when walking in a map to know the name of the location and the current coordinates of the player. This is helpful when building your plugin, but please note that this event should be deleted before the public distribution of your plugin by doing the following:

- a) Select “Plugin options...” from the “Project” menu. The plugin options dialog appears.
- b) Click on the “Keys” tab.
- c) Select “Plugin_DebugInfos” from the list.
- d) Click the “-” button to remove it.
- e) Click the “Save” button to save your modifications and close the plugin options dialog. The “d” key is no longer linked to anything but the now useless “Plugin_DebugInfos” event is still in your plugin project.

- f) Double-click on the "Events" folder in the "Plugin" browser window in Coldstone. A new folder browser opens within Coldstone displaying the contents of the "Events" folder.
- g) Double-click on the "Defs" folder.
- h) Click on the "Plugin_DebugInfos.cet" event file.
- i) Either press backspace on your keyboard or click on the "X" button above it (last button to the right). Coldstone asks you if you really want to delete the file.
- j) Click "Yes".

Further reading

The next logical step would be to follow the full Coldstone Tutorial (not this one, but the other tutorial provided in the documentation folder of Coldstone). The full Coldstone tutorial guides you through the process of creating a complete game from scratch (with a story, enemies, friendly characters, shops, interface creation, etc.). You should also take a good look at the complete Coldstone manual for complete details and to learn about all those mysterious buttons that you saw here and there while doing this tutorial.

Have fun with Coldstone,

The Beenox Team
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