

USING THE VROMA MOO

Hardware and Software Requirements:

WINDOWS 95 (or NT) Netscape or Internet Explorer (IE) 3 or higher (4 or higher is better)

MACINTOSH Netscape 4.0.3 or higher. Mac users should also have a Power Mac running OS 8 or higher, for best results (otherwise, consider using the Split Interface – see the Web Gateway help page for more details). OS 8.1 is even better, and rumor has it that 8.5 might alleviate some Java flakiness, though Netscape will also have to cooperate.

NOTE: If your school uses a proxy server, you may encounter difficulties. Some schools also limit telnet access, which Vroma relies on: ask your computer support person!

LOGGING ON

Use your web browser (i.e. Netscape or IE) to go to our Web Gateway at **<http://www.vroma.org:7878>** (*note the colon in the URL). There is also a link to the Gateway on the main VRoma page.

Go to the Login Form and type your VRoma character name and password in the corresponding boxes. Then click on the “Login with the Integrated Interface” button. After a minute or so, you will be logged into VRoma. Note that the window at the bottom of your screen is where you will see the “chat” part of the MOO (the Output Window). At the very bottom is a smaller window (only about one line of text tall) where you can type. (the Input Window).

GETTING STARTED

The upper window of VRoma looks and works like a web page: it has links (or buttons) that you can click on to get more information or explore something more closely. It may also contain images and other embedded multimedia. It is thus called the **WEB WINDOW**. Along the right edge of the Web Window you will see the **TOOL BAR**. This is a series of links to some of the more commonly used functions of the MOO. E.g. these links allow you to move to certain important areas of the MOO, read MOO news, find out who else is logged on (and “join” them), and to edit your own MOO objects (including yourself!). See the section on **THE TOOL BAR** for more details about each of these functions.

The main part of the Web Window contains a description of the room you are currently in followed by a list of other objects in the room with you. Like any web page, it may also include images and links to other web pages. To explore an object further, click on the link (just as in any web page). To get back to the main description of the room after exploring, click on the “**Look again**” button in the Tool Bar, which will *refresh* (i.e. *reload*) your view of the room..

Following the room's description and the list of objects in the room is a list of other VRomans who are in the room. People in this list are not necessarily logged into the MOO – if they set their MOO home to this room, they are listed whether they are logged in or not. If they are not logged in, the MOO will indicate that they are “asleep”. If you are unsure whether an object is a real logged in person, use the “**Who's in VRoma**” button in the Tool Bar to see if they are in the list of logged in people. Notice that both objects and people may have small icons associated with them.

TIP: You can associate an icon with yourself if you know its URL. Do this with the “Customize Yourself” button in the Tool Bar.

Below the list of people in the Web Window is a list of **EXITS** out of the room, along with the names of the rooms to which these exits lead. To move through an exit, just click on its name. If you get lost at any time, you can always get back to one of the main rooms (Prima Porta, Rome or Officina) by clicking on its name in the Tool Bar. If you have built a room of your own and made it your VRoma MOO “home”, you can also get back there by clicking on the “**Home**” button in the Tool Bar.

CHAT FEATURES

Even though the VRoma MOO is really a piece of software, the metaphor upon which its user interface is based is topographical: it tries to act like a **place** (Rome) that is divided into many discrete areas. These areas are called “rooms”. These divisions are important to bear in mind, since you can only “hear” and “talk to” people who are in the room with you (though it is possible to “page” people from another room in the MOO).

To determine who else is logged into the MOO, use the “**Who's in VRoma**” button on the Tool Bar. This list will also tell you what room each person is in. If you want to join someone (move into the room that they are in), you can click on the room name in this listing.

To talk, you type what you want to say in the narrow window at the very bottom of the screen (the **INPUT WINDOW**). Preface what you type with the word “say”, for example, to say “howdy y'all” you would place your cursor in the Input Window and type *say howdy y'all*. Then hit the return key. You will see the results of this in the window just above the Input Window (the bigger **OUTPUT WINDOW**), along with what others say to you in return.

TIP: A quotation mark can be substituted for the word “say”, saving you a couple of keystrokes!

Things that you say will appear in the second person (e.g. *You say "howdy y'all"*.) Things that others say will be in the 3rd person, prefaced with the speaker's character name (e.g. *Camilla says "howdy to you too!"*)

You can also make it appear as though your character is “doing” things in VRoma. To do this type a colon (:), followed by whatever you want to do. The colon will be replaced by your character name. So, if you are Camilla and want others to see “Camilla waves”, type *:waves*.

TIP: If you prefer not to use the Input Window, you can also say and do things using the form in the lower part of the Web Window, by typing in the rectangular box to the right of the “Do Command” button. Notice that the “say” option can also be changed to various actions. After typing what you want to say or selecting an action, click on “Do Command.”

You may notice that the Output Window also contains some of the same information that you see in the Web Window, e.g. the description of the room and list of objects and people in it. This is so people without a web browser can also log into VRoma to chat, though they will not have access to its multimedia functions.

THE TOOL BAR

Here is a description of what each of the links (buttons) in the Tool Bar along the right side of the Web Window does.

Look Again This button will “refresh” your view of the room you are in. This is especially useful if you have been examining objects in more detail, or if someone tells you to look at something or someone new in a room and you don’t see it on the page.

Prima Porta, Rome, Officina Clicking on one of these 3 buttons will move you to one of the 3 main areas in the VRoma MOO. The Prima Porta is the VRoma MOO starting point (where you are when you log in, unless you have set another MOO home for yourself). The Officina is where classrooms and other “non-authentic” rooms are located.

Home Takes you to your “home” room in VRoma. If you have not set one (with the @sethome command), this defaults to the Prima Porta.

Basic info Brings up a smaller window with some basic information about the VRoma MOO interface and navigation (much of the same information that is contained in this handout, always available while you are logged into the MOO!).

Who’s Online? This button will take you to a listing of everyone currently logged into the MOO. The four columns in this listing tell you each person’s character name, length of time they have been logged in, length of time they have been “idle” (not typing or clicking on anything) and the room they are in. The room names are links – you can click on them to move to the room and join the person there. To get back to the page for the room you are in, click on the “Return to Viewer” link just above the listing.

Slide Screen Launches a small floating web window. This advanced feature is used to show slides or web pages to others.

Show/Hide inventory If you are holding any MOO objects, Show inventory will list all the things you are holding in the Web Window, below the listing of Exit names. If you want something to appear in a room, you will need to go to the room and type *drop <object>* in the Input Window.

Customize Web Options allows you to change the appearance of the Web Window.

Customize Yourself allows you to add or change your character's description, gender and icon.

Customize Rooms and Objects allows you to describe (and re-describe) your rooms and other MOO objects, as well as add web links and images and customize other object features (For more details, see the building and creation tutorials.)

News allows you to read News about the MOO. Click on a news item's title, then on "read" to read it. Use the "look around" button when you are finished reading.

Mail allows you to read internal MOO mail that has been sent to you by other Vromans. For information about *sending* MOO mail, see the VRoma MOO Mail Commands chart below.

VRML view replaces the Web Window with a VRML (virtual reality modeling language) window that allows you to navigate through the MOO more graphically. You need to have a VRML plug-in installed in your web browser to use this. If you don't have experience with VRML, be warned that it takes some getting used to! If you are familiar with VRML authoring, you can enhance your own rooms so that they look more realistic than the basic default scenes.

Help allows you to access the extensive MOO help system. Note that many of these articles refer to typed commands that have been superseded by "point and click" alternatives, though the typed commands still function as documented here.

VROMA MOO BASIC COMMANDS

COMMAND	WHAT IT DOES	POINT AND CLICK ALTERNATIVE
say [text] (abbreviated with a quotation mark) (e.g. <i>say hi</i> or <i>"hi"</i>)	how you talk to people in the same room with you; others see "[your name] says [text]"	At the bottom of the Web Window, select "say" and type what you want to say in the box to the right, then click on "Do command"
page [character] with [message]	how you talk to people in rooms other than the one you're in	
emote [text] (abbreviated with a colon) (e.g. <i>emote smiles</i> or <i>:smiles</i>)	prepends your name to whatever text you type and prints it to everyone else in the room; this is how you "do" things in the MOO	At the bottom of the Web Window, select "emote" and type in what you want to do in the box to the right or choose from among the actions provided then click on "Do command"
look [object] abbreviated <i>l</i> (the letter <i>el</i>) e.g. <i>look here</i> or <i>l Lucius</i>	gives a description of an object or detail. This includes other people!	click on the object's or person's name in the Web Window
look me	gives a description of your character -- you need to describe yourself!	click on the word "you" at the top of the Web Window. to describe yourself, use the "Customize yourself" option from the right side of the page
@whois [charactername] (e.g. <i>@whois Camilla</i>)	use this to find out who the people you're talking to really are	
@go [room name]	moves you to the room in question (assuming there are not more than one with that name)	
@join [player name]	takes you to the current location of the named player	click on the "Who's Online" button in the Tool Bar, then on the room where person whom you wish to join is
help or help [topic]	gives a list of MOO help indices, or help on the topic specified	click on the "Help" button in the Tool Bar
@examine [obj]	gives more info. about an object (including 'verbs' defined on it)	Click on the object name
take [obj]	pick something up	
take [obj] from [another obj]	take something from a container	You can click on the container, then on the object inside, though this isn't quite the same as "taking" it
put [obj] in [obj]	Put it back	
give [obj] to [player]	just what it says	
@quit	Logs you out of the MOO	

VROMA MOO BUILDING COMMANDS

@build	Type @build (without arguments) and you will be prompted to type (1) a room name, then (2) to name the entrance to the room and finally (3) to name the exit from the new room back to the one you're in. (See the building tutorial for details.)
@create	creates an object on the MOO (other than rooms and exits -- use @build for that). You will be asked to select the type of object you want from a menu (use the object number!), then to name, then to describe your new object. (See the creation tutorial for details.)
@recycle [object number or name]	destroys a room, exit or other object you own
@audit	lists the objects you own

VROMA MOO MAIL COMMANDS

The MOO has a powerful and flexible built-in mail system that allows you to send mail to and receive mail from anyone else who has a VRoma character. This can be handy for communicating with someone you are collaborating with in a MOO course or project. Here are the basic commands. Note that you can see the list of your messages and **read** mail using the Mail button in the Tool Bar.

@mail	lists your mail messages
@read	lets you read your current mail message
@read [number] (e.g @read 3)	lets you read mail message number [number], for example if you want to read a message that is not your current message
@reply	takes you into the mail editor, ready to compose a reply to the mail message you just read. To write your message, type <i>say</i> followed by your response, then hit return. You can type in as many lines as you like (be sure to precede each new line with <i>say</i>). When you are finished composing your message, you must type <i>send</i> (on a separate line) to send the message and exit the mail editor.
@send [character name] (e.g @send Camilla)	takes you into the mail editor (room) to compose a message to the named person. You'll be prompted for a subject line. Type a subject line then hit return. Then you are ready to type your message -- to compose your message, type <i>say</i> followed by your message, then hit return for each line of the message. When you're finished type <i>send</i> to send your message and exit the mail room.
@rmmail (or @rmmail [number])	deletes your last mail message (important to do, since old mail takes up room and can slow down the MOO)

TIP: The MOO mail editor is really a special kind of room. While you are composing a new message or reply, you are in the Mail Room, and so you won't be able to hear what other people in the room are saying. They in turn will see a message telling them when you leave for the Mail Room, and another message after you return from the Mail Room (after you type *send*).