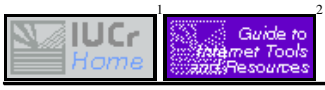


# MOOs: Interactive Virtual Reality for Conferences and Forums

MOO is a text–based virtual reality environment. A user logs on (using telnet) to a multi–user system where the virtual world is described to him by lines of text shown on the screen, and with which one can interact by issuing commands. One moves between two 'rooms' of the virtual world by issuing movement commands such as `north, east, south, west, up, down, @go, @join`. One examines the virtual world with commands such as `look, touch, open, read, who, @whois` and one expresses oneself with commands such as `talk, say, emote, describe, poll, whisper`. Other useful commands are `help, home, @quit`.

A virtual world offers real time interaction between participants. Discussions may take place in open or restricted groups of 'rooms' which are either open to the public or have restricted access. In a virtual world one also finds notice boards, books, maps, e–mail and bulletin boards. MOO has found use in distance teaching applications.

A simple telnet connection with a VT100 terminal emulation is adequate for getting started with MOO. Many users find however that a specialized client program with a split screen for sent and received messages is preferable. MOO itself is powerful and inexpensive but limited by its text–based conception. Extensions have been made to provide a multi–media interface to MOO using the World–Wide Web.

The name MOO comes from MUD–OO *i.e.* Multiple User Dungeon – Object Oriented. The first text based virtual reality systems were entirely games–oriented.

### BioMOO

BioMOO is a virtual meeting place for biologists, connected to the Globewide Network Academy. The main physical part of the BioMOO is located at the BioInformatics Unit of the Weizmann Institute of Science, Israel. BioMOO is a professional community of Biology researchers. It is a place to come meet colleagues in Biology studies and related fields and brainstorm, to hold colloquia and conferences, to explore the serious side of this new medium. BioMOO has an excellent tutorial for beginners.

You can connect to BioMOO either through an ordinary telnet session by using the command
telnet bioinformatics.weizmann.ac.il 8888[3]
or by use of the multimedia (WWW) interface on
http://bioinfo.weizmann.ac.il:8888[4]

### TecfaMOO

A Virtual Space for Educational Technology, Education, Research and Life at TECFA, School of Psychology and Education, University of Geneva, Switzerland. The TecfaMOO Project WWW page (including 'how to use' information): http://tecfa.unige.ch/tecfamoo.html[5]. Connect at telnet tecfamoo.unige.ch 7777[6]

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[1] http://www.iucr.ac.uk/iucr–top/welcome.html
[2] int.index.html
[3] telnet://bioinformatics.weizmann.ac.il:8888
[4] http://bioinfo.weizmann.ac.il:8888
[5] http://tecfa.unige.ch/tecfamoo.html
[6] telnet://tecfamoo.unige.ch:7777
[7] int.index.html
[8] http://www.unige.ch/crystal/ahdf/Howard.Flack.html

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