

An example of how Dragon Age: Inquisition is designed around wasting the player's time. Here I have to go to the other side which gives me access to the rest of this map. The bridge has fallen (not sure how considering it is apparently made from solid rock), so what to do? Here is what...



Step 1. Click on the “Unlock operation” message (note: this is only visible if you go very close to this spot – otherwise you’ll wasting time running around trying to find some boat or something else that actually makes sense for crossing a calm river – no, that one there is just a prop).



Step 2. With the spot clicked, open the world map and select Skyhold to travel back to the HQ. Loading screen commences...



Loading finished. We are at the Skyhold's spawn point, which of course is nowhere near anything useful but hey, it showcases DA:I's rendering tech and I suppose it also has some form of realtime indirect lighting? Not sure why considering the sun doesn't move. But anyway...



Step 4. Move your step and go inside the castle to find the map room which of course is located at the farthest point in the castle...



...which, by the way, is accessible by crossing another room and four doors (have to make sure the engine finishes loading stuff I suppose)...



Step 5. Wait for the “everyone gathers around the table” animation to finish. This is something you will have to always see no matter what. I suspect the excessive door crossing up to this point was to hide loading this animation...



Step 6. Select a card for the area you want to focus on (this has another couple of mini animations) as nobody ever implemented scrolling and zooming in a game map before



Step 7. Click on the pyramid thing. Notice how it is the only golden thing with a caption – no, this is not because it is the relevant thing you want to do, it is only because I hovered the mouse over it. Normally no captions are shown and everything looks the same.



Step 8. A popup with a description of what needs to be done appears where you have to select someone to do it. For this case this doesn't affect anything except perhaps some flavor text. For what is worth I actually like the little texts here and there in DAI and a big reason I stuck with it.



Note by the way that the power cost required is 5 while my power is at 246, making this a waste of time and no challenge at all. Even if I didn't had enough power, there is a vendor outside (at the other side of the courtyard, of course) literally selling power.

The screenshot shows the 'Repair Pont Agur' mission interface. On the left, a map of the region is visible with a red icon indicating the mission location. Below the map, a 'FORCES' panel displays a group of soldiers and the text: 'I WILL SEND OUR BEST BUILDERS AS SOON AS YOU GIVE THE WORD.' To the right, a 'SCOUTING' panel shows a report from Commander Cullen: 'CITADELLE DU CORBEAU, WHERE CELENE'S FORCES ARE STATIONED, WAS CUT OFF FROM THE REST OF THE DALES WHEN PONT AGUR WAS DESTROYED IN THE CIVIL WAR. OWING TO THE ROCKY TERRAIN AROUND THE CITADELLE, IT HAS NO OTHER ACCESS POINTS. FORCES WITHIN COULD WELL HAVE BEEN STRANDED FOR WEEKS.' Below the scouting panel, the 'POWER COST: 5' is displayed. At the bottom, navigation buttons for 'BACK', 'FAST TRAVEL', and 'INQUISITION PERKS' are visible. The bottom right corner shows 'INQUISITION PERKS 0' and 'POWER 246'.

SCOUTING

Repair Pont Agur

A REPORT FROM COMMANDER CULLEN:

CITADELLE DU CORBEAU, WHERE CELENE'S FORCES ARE STATIONED, WAS CUT OFF FROM THE REST OF THE DALES WHEN PONT AGUR WAS DESTROYED IN THE CIVIL WAR. OWING TO THE ROCKY TERRAIN AROUND THE CITADELLE, IT HAS NO OTHER ACCESS POINTS. FORCES WITHIN COULD WELL HAVE BEEN STRANDED FOR WEEKS.

POWER COST: 5

FORCES

I WILL SEND OUR BEST BUILDERS AS SOON AS YOU GIVE THE WORD.

BACK FAST TRAVEL INQUISITION PERKS

INQUISITION PERKS 0 POWER 246

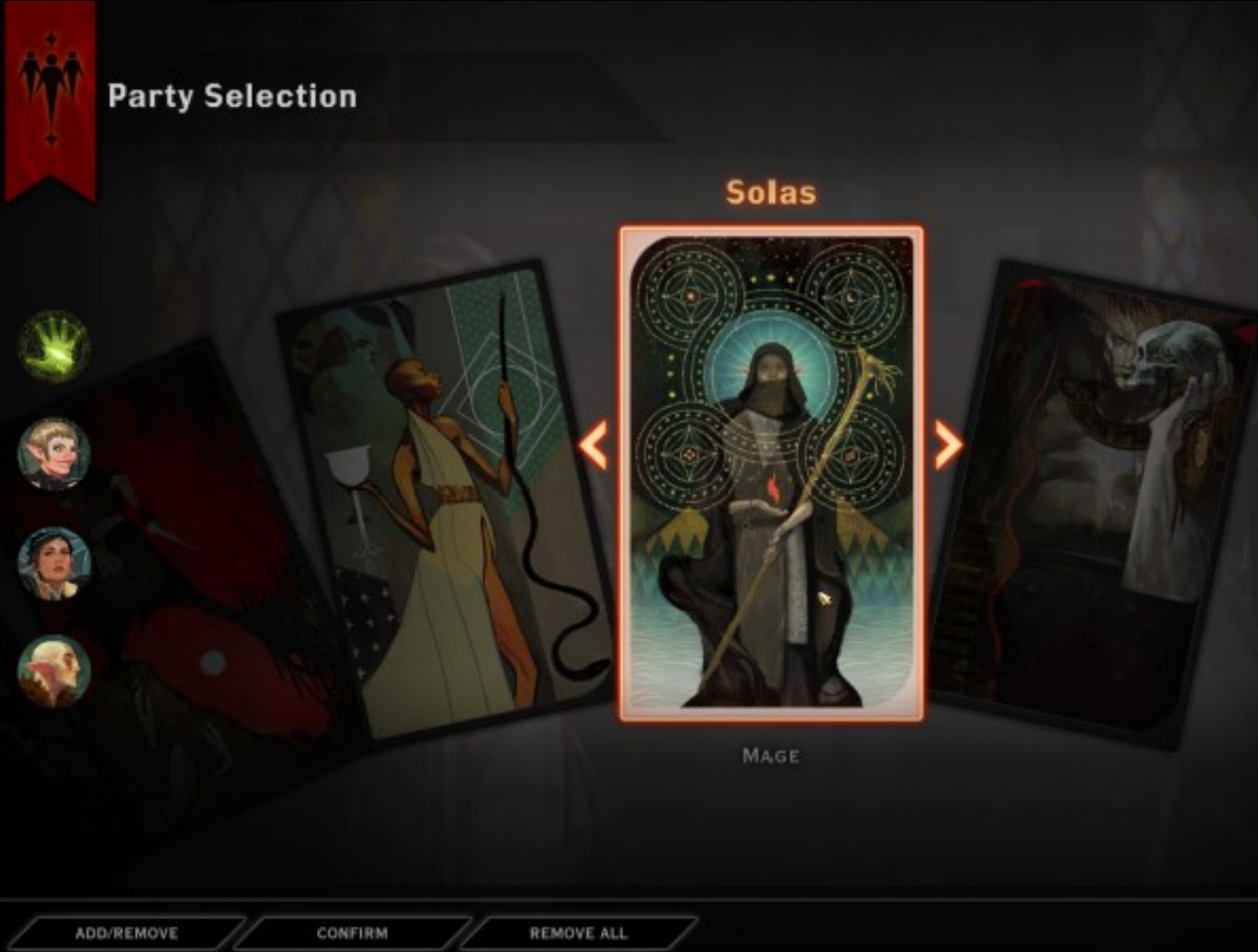
Step 9. We reached the final step in the bridge installation and maintenance wizard, so now just accept the report.



Step 10. By this point the game has realized we wasted enough time and it offers to ease the pain a little by giving us the option to teleport back where we were. So, let's Venture Forth! Another loading screen....



Step 11. Select your party again since the game couldn't bother using a few bytes of RAM to preserve it. Of course I am kidding, it certainly could, it just wants you to spend a *little* extra time to pad out the game's length. A *little* extra time here, a *little* extra time there, for the entire game.



And here we are, back at the spot (almost, we moved a little back) where this entire endeavor began, finally able to go to the other side.



Of course it takes around three seconds to cross that small patch of the bridge, but we had to waste around 6 minutes (according to the screenshot timestamps I took) and the game didn't even offer an alternative. Like that boat over there.



The game isn't bad of course, you can still get enjoyment out of it and you even get to ride a dragonhorse or whatever that is. Although horse(-ish) riding is so stiff and slow that I only use it when I need to jump somewhere when broken physics make it hard (horses jump a bit higher).



The End