

Animal Crossing Perfect Town Condition/Golden Axe Guide

by elumelum

Updated to v1.11 on Nov 5, 2002

This walkthrough was originally written for Animal Crossing on the GC, but the walkthrough is still applicable to the N64 version of the game.

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#           ~ Animal Crossing ~       #  
#   Perfect Town Condition/Golden Axe Guide   #  
#           Ver. 1.11 updated 11/01/02       #  
#                                     #  
#           by elumelum, Copyright 2002      #  
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SECTION I: Introduction

Disclaimer

This FAQ is for personal use. You may print out a copy for yourself, but please do not distribute it. You may discuss the information on the Internet so long as you give me full credit for it. Do not excerpt from this FAQ without giving me credit. I've worked hard to make this FAQ, and all I ask in return is proper credit for it. See Copyrights, etc. in the Wrap Up section for more details. Enjoy!

Version History/Updates

Ver. 1.11 (11/01/02) (* please read *):

My e-mail has been broken for a week, so most of your suggestions (if you've been sending them) have not made it to me. Please re-send them! I still have some important things to update in the next version, so if I respond and say "Wait for the next version", please don't be offended or take it personally--if I'm writing about your problem in the FAQ, I'd rather not rewrite the whole solution in an e-mail. I'll still respond to individual questions as best I can.

Thanks for all of your support! You all have been great! Please note that aside from this message, nothing about this version has been changed from ver 1.1. See you soon in the next update!

Ver. 1.1 (10/23/02):

The most important thing I've found in the last two days has to do with weeds: in addition to having an incorrect maximum number, there was much that I didn't know at all. Check the updated checklist and the weeds section for more details. The adjacent trees requirement has been moved to the speculation part of the checklist--although it was certainly the last thing keeping me from obtaining perfect, some readers (incl. Charizard2000, Russell Milligan) insist that they have several pairs of diagonally touching trees and they maintain perfect. Stay tuned as we figure that one out.

The 3 Town Conditions section has been changed to the 4 Town Conditions section--I've discovered a few new messages from the well that point to this.

I've added a new (and perhaps temporary) section called SPECULATION Central. This is where new ideas (whether mine or readers') will go. Things will get moved from here to the appropriate place either after being confirmed, or after being there for a while (for one to three updates). Also, speculation from previous versions of the FAQ that have been confirmed or denied will find themselves into this area.

Check out this new section for a couple of important SPECULATIONS about flowers and the Well's "imperfect" sight.

I've also received many, many corrections, most of which were about the dump, on which I stand duly corrected. On a similar note, Section III has been updated, as well as speculation/information on exempt squares.

Last, and certainly least: I fixed some tabs and some formatting issues.

P.S. Out of extreme need for this update (and to silence the e-mails about the trash) I'm rushing this update out the door a little bit. Please be forgiving if there's any glaring errors, although I don't think there should be anything really bad. There are several great things that I meant to put in this version (suggestions about HRA scores, etc.) that will have to wait for 1.2.

*Ver. 1.0 (10/19/02): *****PLEASE READ*****

-HUGE- UPDATE (and complete 1.0 level FAQ completion):

Unfortunately, in my first batch of otherwise great and helpful e-mail responses from all you readers, there was the Klez virus. Fortunately I've wiped it out now, but it took me hours to get fully get rid of it, and I was hoping to use that time to update the FAQ. Note to anyone who suspects they have a virus--don't e-mail me until you scan your computer. All sending me viruses will do is anger me and make it harder for me to work to update this FAQ for you all.

Now that that's out of the way, here's a list of most of the additions in this large-and-in-charge update:

-A more detailed explanation of "adjacent trees" was added, which is especially important, as it has been causing many people trouble. The most common thing I've seen holding someone back from perfect condition is one tree somewhere diagonally touching another.

Special thanks to Tan Tan and several others for pointing out that I needed to flesh that part out.

-Many sections have been added: check out the new and interesting tips in them (including "Dying Sprouts as Weeds?").

-Thanks to much reader input, the information on flowers and the role they play in achieving perfect condition has been fleshed out considerably. However, several important details are yet to be confirmed.

-Perhaps one of the most important updates is the division of the checklist into confirmed requirements and speculative requirements. Speculation about requirements and otherwise is extremely valuable to sleuthing out all that can be learned about this aspect of the game.

-Also, on the topic of speculation, SPECULATION labels have been added in points where there is information that is very hard to confirm, but that is still very important. Please note that I can't guarantee or back up these ideas...yet.

-I've done some more editing of the general format, fixing of 79-character-per-line problems (that hyphenation caused one in and of itself), and general sprucing up of spelling, grammar, and style.

-Please visit the updated Thanks section to see all those who are also

mentioned throughout the document who contributed greatly already within the first two days of this FAQs existence.

Ver. 0.91 (10/18/02):

Minor corrections (editing, spelling, grammar, names in Thanks section).

Ver. 0.9 (10/17/02):

First version--I've researched the information contained within for hours upon hours, so most of it is confirmed and correct. However, the success of this FAQ will also depend on your input to help verify and expand the information.

The only reason I didn't name this Ver. 1.0 is that information on the specific length of time your town must stay "perfect" to get the Golden Axe is a very important detail that I haven't confirmed yet.

Future updates: The tailor acre: exempt or not?, more info on # of days for Golden Axe, details of receiving the Golden Axe...

Description

This FAQ is the first full FAQ I've written, and the first that I hope to actually distribute on the web. Having said that, I've gone to great lengths to make sure that I knew what I was talking about before I began work on this. I'm writing this FAQ because I've seen many, many posts asking for help on the matter (and I've written a few) and only seen cryptic or vague answers at best. That's not to say that the answers were wrong--it just seems that many people, even after actually achieving perfect status, simply didn't know exactly what the criteria were that needed to be fulfilled. Partly due to luck, and partly due to being extremely (in fact, overly) thorough, I have come up with solid information on most, if not all of these criteria.

This guide is designed to be a source for quick and easy answers to most questions people ask about reaching perfect condition (as determined by the wishing well) and about obtaining the golden axe. In fact, eventually, one should be able to use this guide as a checklist in order to help them obtain perfect status.

I am assuming that the reader has a good working knowledge of everyday life in Animal Crossing--if you need help with the basics, I suggest checking out the GameFAQs Animal Crossing Message Board:

<http://s2.cgi.gamefaqs.com/boards/gentopic.asp?board=12178>

...and/or the Beginner's Guide by JTrost on GameFAQs:

http://db.gamefaqs.com/console/gamecube/file/animal_crossing_beginners.txt

I also recommend getting either Prima's or Nintendo's Strategy Guide for this game: my personal choice lies with the Official Nintendo version, as it has more detailed information in some sections (more exact fishing and insect prime-times, etc.) and the Prima guide has some incorrect information in it. However, the Nintendo guide also has a few tidbits of bad information

(e.g. the sea bass "season"), and the Prima has more speculative information if you're looking for that. Both guides are great, and are very handy references with avoidable spoilers.

A Word of Encouragement

Okay, so I know that the introduction has gone on for long enough already, but I just have to say this: I know that this can be extremely frustrating. Especially given that I was drawing charts and running around counting every specific type of tree in my town when my roommate got perfect status without having to put nearly as much thought in.

It's frustrating. But it's totally doable. Granted, it might take a bit of work, but it's doable. And hopefully this guide will make it less stressful.

----- SECTION II: Perfect Town Guidelines -----

Follow these rules, and next time you talk to the wishing well, it should tell you that you a perfect town (very livable!). If you don't, e-mail me (see contact info) with detailed information and if it's useful, I'll update the guide ASAP. Please double check that you've tried everything before contacting me.

Definition of Terms (please read)

-The wishing well evaluates your town's condition by assessing most of the "acres" (the screens that the town is divided into) in your town. However, some squares don't fall under the scrutiny of the wishing well. I will refer to these squares as "exempt", and to the other squares as "non-exempt".

-"Trash" refers to boots, cans, and tires that are obtained by fishing (they all look the same when dropped), and not to other normal items that may or may not be scattered about your landscape (furniture, money sacks, clothes, balls, etc.).

-The Well's Messages

The Wishing Well has a small handful of answers to the question "How are things?"--this is the question you ask the well in order to learn about the town's condition. They are:

1) The "satisfactory" message:

'Yes...yes. Things feel as they should. This is certainly a satisfactory level of prosperity...but with just a little more effort, things could be even better.'

This means that you have most, but not all of the perfect guidelines complete. For me, this meant that I needed to get rid of a couple of diagonally touching trees.

2) The "almost satisfactory" message (which I hadn't seen until recently):

"Things aren't too bad...but with just a little more care and attention, everything would be much, much better."

This means that you have taken care of most of your weed problems, but there are still too many weeds in one acre and/or in your town in general. Once you clear up the weeds, you will wind up with either the "satisfactory" message or the "perfect" message, depending on whether the other perfect guidelines are met or not.

3) The "perfect" message:

"Everything is perfect! [Your town name] is a very livable place."

4) The "too many weeds" message (also new to me as of recently):

"When there are too many weeds...and acres in need of care and attention... a town feels very unsettled."

...as well as 5) the "too many trees" message and 6) the "too few trees" message ("In areas where there is little green...") (I'll add the specific wording for those in the next update). The three "too many" / "too few" messages are all followed by a message telling you which acre needs work.

The "too few trees" message means that there's fewer than 9 trees in the acre mentioned. Plant more trees there.

The "too many trees" message means that there's more than 16 trees in the acre mentioned. Chop down/dig up more trees there.

The "too many weeds" message (which supplies an acre) means that there's more than 3 weeds there. Pull at least one weed in that acre (you might as well pull them all, unless you like to live dangerously with your weeds).

-The 4 Town Conditions

There are 4 town conditions: "unsatisfactory" (too few or too many trees in one or many acre(s)), "satisfactory" (correct number of trees, but fails one of the other requirements on the checklist), "almost satisfactory" (too many weeds in one acre and/or in the whole town) and "perfect" (meets all conditions described on the checklist below). See above for explanation of the different conditions.

-"Adjacent" trees are trees that are directly next to each other, even on a diagonal. This is a *BIG* sticking point for lots of people, including myself. If a tree is one digging spot up and one to the side from another tree, the two trees -ARE- adjacent. Here's a diagram to help explain:

```
xxx
x0x
xxx
```

If the '0' is any given tree, there must not be trees in the 'x' spaces around it. This diagram shows a diagonally touching pair of trees, which will keep you from earning perfect condition:

```
xxxx
xx0x
x0xx
xxxx
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If you have confusion as to what the spacing is, try digging a square of

holes 3x3. You should notice how they are all evenly spaced. The spots you are able to plant trees in are all in a grid as such.

-The "lake" is the square where the river forms a large pool where there is a dock. As far as I know, every town has one. It is *not* the holding ponds, the isolated bodies of water of which there are several in any given town.

-"Normal" acres are acres that are neither beach nor any shop or major town point of interest (e.g. police station, Nook's, Museum, and other things as marked on the map).

And now, the moment you've all been waiting for...

****-----****
The Checklist (details follow)
****-----****

Confirmed requirements:

- All non-exempt acres must have between 9 and 16 trees (inclusive) in them.
- All acres must have fewer than 3? weeds in them (see Weeds below)
- You must have fewer than -30- weeds in your whole town.
- There must be no trash on the ground.

Speculative requirements:

- There must be no adjacent trees (*including* no diagonals, see above).
- You must have a certain number of flowers.
(I'm almost positive that flowers -aren't- required: see Flowers below.)
- You must have (at least one tree/at least a certain number of trees) in *NON-EXEMPT* acres (this is an important new point, see SPECULATION below)

This list is growing and being refined every day--by following these guidelines, you should be able to get to a perfect town, but there are a few sticking points that have yet to be ironed out. See below for more tips.

Exempt Acres

You may have as many or as few trees as you like (up to 33, that is) in exempt acres.

Exempt acres are: any and every beach square (including the tailor), the player houses (see SPECULATION below), the wishing well (also see SPECULATION below), the museum, and the lake.

(Aldrin Nicholas and others confirm that the lake and the tailor are exempt.)

Non-exempt acres include the post-office, Nook's, the dump, the police station, the train station and of course every other normal acre.

(The train station has seemed exempt to some, but I'm almost positive it's not.)

Note that exempt acres are NOT exempt from weed requirements--I have had the well complain that there were too many weeds in a beach acre and in the museum acre.

SPECULATION: According to Casey Jones and Kevin Walter, their player-house acre and wishing well acre seem to be non-exempt for them. I think that this falls under the new speculative requirement of a minimum number of trees in non-exempt acres, but I'm not sure. Any information on this from anybody would be highly appreciated (see contact info below). I definitely have fewer than 6 trees in both of those acres and still have a perfect town.

Counting Your Trees

If you are unsure whether or not a tree is in the acre you're in, stand directly next to it. A tree counts towards an acre's tree total if it's trunk is in that acre/screen. If you can see a trunk at the top of the screen but in order to stand beside it, the screen has to scroll, then the tree does not count for the acre below it. Likewise if you see only the top of the tree, it does not count for the acre you're in.

The same principle works horizontally: if you see a trunk on the left or right edge, but you have to scroll to the next screen to stand above or below it, it does not count towards the total of the original acre.

Fewer than 9 trees:

Any number of trees 8 and below will result in the "In areas where there is little green..." message. Plant more trees in that acre.

More than 16 trees:

Any number of trees 17 and above will result in the "Trees are things of extraordinary beauty but..." message. Chop down/dig up more trees in that acre.

Mail-order Axes!

If you have a TON of work to do involving cutting down and or replanting trees, I highly recommend mail-ordering several axes. They're cheap, and if you end up with more than you need, you can always sell them. It's frustrating to sit down for a major session of tree management only to have your axe break and be unable to get a new one.

STUMPS

GET RID OF THEM. I could speculate about the maximum number of stumps or on how exactly the well looks at them (I know it doesn't like them), but I'm not going to. Why? Because you might as well dig up these eyesores right after you cut something down, at least if you're going for perfect. If you're not going for perfect, you can have all the stumps you want, but why would you reading this guide then, anyway?

Tips on Growing Trees

As Aldrin Nicholas points out, and as is confirmed by the Nintendo Guide,

trees take 4 days to grow and fully mature, and 3 days to bear fruit. Also, it is possible for a tree to begin to grow but not ever fully mature--this is usually due to a poor planting spot (directly next to other trees, rocks, buildings, etc.). Note that some trees will grow in poor spots, and often times, a tree that existed the first time you played will be in a spot that you could never plant yourself (those cheaters ;D). If a tree has been stuck at one stage of it's growth for a long time, it will never mature.

Also, if you are looking to change the "type" of tree in a certain spot, by far the best thing to do is to cut down an existing tree and, after digging up the stump but before covering up the hole, plant a new tree in the same spot. The Nintendo Power Guide and many FAQs suggest that this increases the chance of having the new tree grow successfully, and I agree with them.

Partially-Grown Trees

The question has been raised about whether partially-grown trees count towards the total number of trees for that acre. I'm almost positive that the answer is yes, as simply planting a sprout will increase the tree count for any acre.

Weeds

It seems that about 5 weeds appear in your town every day. You can pull these weeds by standing over them and pressing B. Sometimes they are hard to see, but I'm almost positive that weeds never appear in a place that you can not see them. You can also get rid of weeds by completing a certain condition with a certain character in the middle of the night, but I won't discuss that here. If you are thorough enough to have obtained perfect condition, hopefully you can stand running through each acre in the town and checking for weeds (I actually think it's fun!).

If you end up with lots of weeds in your town, the well will actually complain about it, which is something I hadn't seen until time-travelling forward to gain tons of weeds (great for experimentation). I experimented with my 50+ weeds carefully, and learned a lot, but I don't have it all totally firmed up. The conclusions I made should be good enough for a while, though, as we already know that having weeds is generally bad and you should get rid of them.

The well directed me to several acres that had 4 or more weeds in them. After reducing any one of those acres to only 3 weeds, it would stop complaining about that one. However, it stopped telling me to go to specific acres (instead, it gave me the general "Things aren't too bad" message) while there were still a few acres with four or more weeds in them. This is what gave me the impression that the well

After reducing those acres such that no acre in my whole town had more than three weeds in it, the well switched from the "almost satisfactory" message (see The Well's Messages above) to the "satisfactory" message (a surprising move).

I tried reducing each acre to a maximum of two weeds each, but it wasn't until the total number of weeds lowered to 30 that the well said I had a perfect town. At that point, some acres had two weeds, some had one, and some had zero.

So here's my conclusions: 30 weeds is the maximum allowable total, 3 weeds

per acre is the maximum allowable for satisfactory condition, and it seems that 2 weeds is the maximum allowable for perfect condition. Unfortunately, by the time my town had 30 weeds in it, every square had below 3 weeds, so it's possible that 3 is allowed for perfect condition, but I'm not sure.

Just as with dead tree sprouts (see below), the bottom line is that weeds are no good, so get rid of them as early and as often as possible.

Dead Tree Sprouts as Weeds

After planting many trees to achieve perfect condition, it's common to have many of the "sprouts" fail the next day. By "failing", I mean that the tiny tree will have drooping leaves and a little round circle taken out of one of the leaves (presumably decay or damage from bugs eating it).

I'm almost positive now that dead tree sprouts count as weeds. If you have more than 3 of them in an acre, the well will probably complain about it. If it doesn't, I believe it's because of the well's "looseness" when it comes to telling you about weed problems (see Weeds above).

Whether this is for sure or not, the bottom line is that I strongly recommend that you dig up failed sprouts if you are going for perfect condition, as having them around can only be detrimental.

Trash

Make sure to read my "definition" of trash above for a clarification of what I'm talking about. It's OK in the well's eyes to have some normal items lying around, but not OK to have trash lying around. ** This includes the dump **. You can put trash in the dump and it will be taken away eventually (I stand corrected on this issue), but the well doesn't seem to make an exception for the dump--I'm almost positive (confirmation soon) that it will reset your perfect condition for trash to be in the dump.

The best thing to do with trash is to "sell" it (read: give it) to Tom Nook.

Flowers

Some say that you can correct the "not enough trees" condition by planting flowers. This seems possible, but I have neither discovered a specific formula for it, nor have I confirmed it. I recommend following the formula (between 9 and 16, inclusive) for the right number of trees, and then planting flowers where you see fit afterwards. Also, I'm almost positive that you can not receive the "too many trees" message by planting too many flowers--I had twenty or so in an acre with 16 trees and had no problem. Of course, I haven't filled the screen with flowers ever, but that could take a long time to test. (...might look pretty cool, though!)

My guess is that if flowers can push the condition from "there is little green" to satisfactory condition "yes, yes...", then there is at least a rough formula for how many flowers it takes.

Along with the story about my weeds experiment, the following story about my flowers experiment makes up a very important part of this update. I counted 63 flowers in my town before touching them at all. During this experiment, I kept three flower bags on hand and demolished three flowers at

a time uniformly across my landscape, and checked the well each time to see if my town fell out of perfect condition.

I never had to use those three flower bags I had on hand, as I demolished -every- single flower in my landscape.

I still had perfect condition.

This confirms that flowers are completely unnecessary for maintaining a perfect condition. It's still possible that flowers are necessary or at least helpful for -obtaining- perfect, but I'm still not sure.

SECTION III: Getting the Golden Axe

Keep it up!

So your town is perfect? Great! Now it's time to try to keep it that way! In order to get the Golden Axe, you must maintain a perfect condition for 15 days (confirmed by Atticus676 and the Nintendo Power Official Players Guide).

In order to "maintain", it's best to play every day. It's possible to not play for several days and keep perfect, but it's risky, because if you happen to get 3 weeds in a given acre (won't happen after one day, but could happen after two or more days), then your town will fall out of perfect condition. It's highly unlikely that it will happen in two days, but as I've said before, it's best to stay on top of it as much as you can. Also, make sure to follow the tips at the end of Section II for getting rid of trash.

The Well-Deserved Reward

(The pun/reference to the wishing well was initially quite unintentional)

***** Possible Spoiler Alert!!! *****

If you keep up the good work long enough, the next player to talk to the well will be visited by the well spirit, Farley. The reward will be the Golden Axe! The Golden Axe is unbreakable, just like the Golden Shovel (thanks to CubeCrazyMonkey, Atticus, the Nintendo Power Guide, and others for confirmation).

SECTION IV: SPECULATION Central

New or Unconfirmed SPECULATION

-Ver 1.1 (10/23)

SPECULATION: According to BlueYoshi, flowers may divert the well's attention

to another square if the square they are in is lacking something. It's very hard to confirm this, but it's a feasible and neat idea boot. Keep it in mind.

SPECULATION: The well doesn't always look at all the squares.

BlueYoshi's idea about the flowers would support this. Also, some readers are convinced that certain squares that I think are exempt are non-exempt. Since I've researched my theories on exempt squares quite thoroughly, I could chalk this up to the well not looking at my squares properly. However, it seems more likely to me that there is a certain tree requirement even for exempt squares (say, a minimum of 1 tree).

Also, the way the well didn't specifically point out some squares that had more than three weeds in my town (after I fixed a few that it did point out) suggests that the Well's sight may be imperfect.

It is worth noting that this SPECULATION may never be fully confirmed or denied, but once again, it's good to keep in mind. One of the most valuable things in working towards a perfect town is to be well-informed.

Confirmed or Denied Previous SPECULATION

-Ver 1.1 (10/23)

SPECULATION: You must have no more than 10 weeds in your town for perfect condition.

DENIED: Several readers have confirmed that they have more than 10 weeds and remain in perfect condition. I started at 50+ weeds and removed them in small batches until finding that 30 is the true maximum number (see checklist above).

SPECULATION: Dead Tree Sprouts count towards the total number of weeds.

OLD ANSWER: The problem with this assertion is that after getting rid of about 10 (of many) dead tree sprouts, I achieved perfect condition again, but I still had over 30 left. This means that either a) dead sprouts count as a fraction of a weed or b) there is a separate counter for dead sprouts and hence a separate limit for them. Unfortunately, the specifics of this speculation are extremely hard to confirm, but I'll be working on it.

NEW ANSWER: See above under Dead Tree Sprouts as Weeds.

SPECULATION: The golden axe is unbreakable.

CONFIRMED: The only reason it was speculation was that I hadn't gotten it yet. This has been confirmed by many, including the well spirit himself.

SECTION V: Wrap Up

Thanks

Thanks to Nintendo for this awesome game! I'd like to make a special mention of the quality of the localization--for anyone who understands Japanese or who has studied it, there are lots of great touches, such as how the shop owner,

a Tanuki (somewhat of a Japanese raccoon) is named Tom Nook, the Kapp'n is a Japanese sea critter called a Kappa (get it?), etc. Not only that, but the writing is great! It obviously goes far and beyond a straight translation.

Thanks to GameFAQs for hosting both this FAQ and a great site that I appreciate more each day. Without the help of those on the message boards, I could not have created this.

Thanks to my roommates (Ants Eames and Jenny Becker) for playing along and for tolerating long hours spent messing with trees (not the most fun thing to witness, I'm sure). Thanks also to Bobby Conover and Brett Camper for enjoying this game with me in the early days of it's release, as well as for chatting about it on-line.

Thanks to everyone who has answered my posts on the message boards (Animal Crossing and otherwise), and to GameFAQs for hosting such a great site. Thanks to all who contribute to this community, and to all those writing detailed FAQs for this unusual game.

Thanks to the writers of the many FAQs I have read--they have shaped the writing of this guide without a doubt. Any similarities of this guide to other guides (besides the traditional structuring and other conventions) is unintentional.

Big Thanks to all of the reader feedback and suggestions--you guys are going to help me make this a much better guide. Thanks to (real names and e-mail names are intermixed) BlueYoshi579, CubeCrazyMonkey, Kevin Walter, Casey Jones, Aldrin Nicholas, Atticus676, TanTan, and Tom Kliewer in Canadia.

A Big "No Thanks" goes out to the viruses that are coming my way--please, please, use an anti virus program to scan your computer before contacting me.

Many more thanks to come--hopefully for some great submissions!

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My e-mail address is bmac@shammusic.com. I will not respond to any e-mails unless they contain pertinent questions or relevant information. Of course, no spamming, please. Also, please double check with the checklist in Section II before e-mailing and saying you are stuck.

Hope you've gotten help or at least satisfaction out of this guide! See ya next update.

