

How to Dragon, for any curious fire-breathing, winged serpents out there

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First, you need to get off your lazy tail – yes, that one wrapped around the golden statue of some king you either ate or scared off. You need to stretch, make noises that will make any creature near your cove fly away, and maybe blow out a couple of puffs of smoke for good measure. Look around at the pile of gold you have been sleeping on and realize it is far too small for a dragon such as yourself. Once you are full of greed and the need to expand your gold pile, slither out of your cove. Make it nice and slow so the ground shakes with each step and throw in an angry snort here and there. Exit your cave, which we all know is just a castle you knocked over who knows how many years ago, and extend your wings. Hold them out longer than what is needed, but you have to look big if any eyes are on you. Speaking of which, take a big sniff. Smell that? That’s a deer. And that? That’s a hog. Smell the difference? No? That’s okay. You didn’t come here to eat wild animals; you came for something else.

Once you focus back on why you stepped out into the sun, get ready to fly. Flap your wings around. You don’t really need to do this; it’s just fun to see everything fly away under your wings. Lower yourself to the ground; that’s why you stretched earlier, and spring up as fast and as high as possible. Pound your wings as hard as you can. It’s essential to flap as fast as you can; otherwise, you’ll... and what self-respecting flying dragon can’t get off the ground on the first try? Once you are in the air, do some pointless spins and twirls. Not because you enjoy it, of course, it’s just how dragons get off the ground. Then a roar, not your main roar, but the roar you make when you’re on your way. Fly south. Dragons are always north of people. Don’t get distracted by any animals, even if you’re tempted. Remember, you’re filled with greed.

The lands below you should change from forested wildlands to tamer forests, then to groves, fields, and finally, farmlands. If it doesn’t go in that exact order, you’re going the wrong way. Trust me; I should know. If you see a farmer, make sure to fly right over them, not too low of course, high enough so they see the shadow pass over them, and then they hear you. They tend to scream and scatter like ants but are more enjoyable. Do not, and I repeat, do not, remember that one man who just started to cry in a horrible voice the last time you went out. It’s upsetting to one’s health.

Once you locate the castle, make sure to roar – your “I’m going to eat you” roar. Do it a couple of times to make sure they hear you. Swoop in at the walls a couple of times. Don’t touch anything, just get them really scared. Let them shoot arrows or boulders at you. The arrows don’t do anything, and the big rocks are easy enough to avoid. Once they all stink of fear – that salty, dungy smell – that’s when you know they are ripe enough and ready to be seared. Open your mouth and bring up the greed that filled you; let it out. It will burn up the arrows, armor, the flesh inside, and even the stone walls. Make a couple of passes; don’t make

any art, just go back and forth. Fly up really high and look at the castle. It should look like a child's drawing. Now dive. Hold the dive to the last second then fling your wings out. All the debris and anyone around should fly back. Walk into the throne room, eat anyone there, then find the treasure room. Ahhh, there it is. You can hear it, smell it, feel the gold inside. Once you break down the wall, look. Just look. Make sure it is bigger than your other pile, and if not, I'll let you figure out how to move the gold.