

It's time for the kingdom's annual speedrunning marathon! What can they use to improve their times?

Completion Time	Commentary
12m 10s	<i>The main obstacle here is the sheer distance you need to travel. However, due to negative speeds not having a lower bound, you can build up speed by swimming backwards into the starting anemone for a few minutes, then release to launch yourself even faster than the EAC can carry you.</i>
5m 4s	<i>Little-known fact: While the Crossing the Streams ability is only taught during the final boss, it's actually usable during the entire game. This lets you beat early enemies and bosses extremely quickly, if you're willing to take the risk.</i>
3m 1s	<i>In this run, it's just a matter of completing all the main quests on the first loop. There's a nice skip where you can bypass Rita's ice sculpture minigame via a frame-perfect jump, and this means that you don't need to learn the ice sculpting ability to reach the good ending. Be warned, though: If you decide to practice this run, you'll eventually get completely sick of hearing "I Got You Babe" so many times. Kind of ironic, right?</i>
13m 4s	<i>My advice is to get really good at the first level, recruit Ariadne into your party, and really prioritize the section of the game before the plane. As you go deeper, time slows down; this makes optimization of later levels not nearly as worth it.</i>
2m 2s	<i>This one is TOUGH. In order to get the fastest time, you need to skip the noodle shop sidequest, meaning that you won't be able to obtain a sword. As a result, you'll need to defeat every wave of enemies in the final boss sequence with only melee attacks. With this many enemies, it makes for an absolutely brutal challenge, especially during the O-Ren fight.</i>
7m 2s	<i>This run gets really short once you've played the game before. Killing Teddy when you first meet him takes you straight to the good ending, letting you skip huge portions of the game which come afterwards. Er, before.</i>

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10m 3s	<i>The developers expect you to take time to train and level up before attempting the final boss, but you can actually attempt it immediately after the tutorial. With enough stamina, you can stay in the ring long enough to win - no training montage necessary.</i>
8m 4s	<i>In normal playthroughs, you go to the lord's castle before setting out to rescue the princess. However, in the optimized route, you actually rescue her first, in order to skip the unnecessary castle level. If you can get the princess back before sundown, you'll avoid the lengthy transformation sequence. While the story is simple, the mechanics are surprisingly subtle; they've got a lot of layers. Like an onion.</i>
1m 12s	<i>By clipping through one of the building walls in the city, it's actually possible to save both Rachel and Harvey before the bombs go off. The code doesn't know how to deal with this situation, so it ejects you to a debug room, where you can skip a huge portion of the game and teleport directly to the ending.</i>
11m 5s	<i>In one of the joke categories of this particular run, you see how fast you can complete the tutorial chapter and choose the bad ending. You don't get any guns or kung fu skills, but it's great for beginning speedrunners who aren't quite ready for the rabbit hole yet!</i>
4m 5s	<i>The level design here is fantastic - the Overlook has a number of hidden passages that make travel from point to point very efficient. Due to a developer oversight, if you open the bathroom window wide before the snowstorm comes, Wendy will be able to escape during the axe scene, bypassing the entire hedge maze level and reaching the ending cutscene early.</i>
14m 6s	<i>This unique survival horror classic is a very popular choice for experienced runners. The many challenging fights and platforming sequences, all while pursued by a relentless AI, make for a difficult challenge the entire way through. If you give up at any point, don't worry... you'll be back.</i>
9m 9s	<i>Interestingly, the house can actually take directional input in the tutorial level. This allows you to land somewhere other than the starting town, bypassing the first several quests and that annoying song. If you move perfectly, you can even land directly on top of the final boss instead, immediately giving you her powerful loot drop.</i>

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15m 4s	<p><i>There's not a whole lot you can do to speed up the first act, since you can't really change the boat speed. Your time largely depends on how fast you're able to get Jack through the escape sequence at the end. Fun fact: Due to an item duplication glitch in the main ballroom, you can end the game with multiple Hearts, keeping an extra after the final cutscene.</i></p>
6m 2s	<p><i>Some tips: throwing furniture out the back increases your speed slightly, allowing you to get to South America more quickly. Also, in the airship level, you can use the Cone of Shame spell to defeat the enemies in one hit. It's a shame the cutscenes are unskippable, though - that first one is a real tear-jerker.</i></p>