

Bloons- David Cain

Game: Bloons (original)

Platform: Flash

Description: Bloons is a puzzle game, where the player progresses through a series of levels. The player controls a monkey whose objective is to clear the screen of all balloons. The player is given a set amount of darts to fire at the balloons and must burst a given number of balloons to progress to the next level

Genre: Bloons is a puzzle game. It is very typical in that the game is a series of levels of increasing difficulty. Bloons is unique in that it is probably one of very few games where a monkey fires darts at balloons.

Interface: The only control available to the user is the mouse. The monkey does not move from its position on each level- the user only controls the direction of the dart and the power of the shot.

Goal: The goal of the game is to complete all 50 levels (and for the obsessive, to complete each level with the maximum number of balloons cleared).

Major challenge: The major challenge of the game is to fire the dart at the appropriate power and angle so that it avoids unwanted obstacles and hits desired objects. This can be very challenging at times.

Rule set: The rules of Bloons are quite simple. The projectile darts fall back to the ground in an arc like we'd expect in real life. Special balloons and obstacles have specific functions that are introduced to the user as the levels progress. The rule set is fairly easy to follow.

Competition: Bloons does not inherently have competition built into the game. However, each round can often be completed with a variety of strategies. By bringing a second player into the game, the competition of who can get the most perfect level completion turns Bloons from a puzzle into a game.

Fun: 3/5. Bloons is insanely popular, probably because it's so addicting. It's very challenging to get perfect scores, and the game furthers the obsessive desire for perfection by tracking your best scores. Bloons can be very entertaining, but it's easy to get frustrated or no longer enjoy the game.

Difficulty: 1/5 Bloons is very easy to learn. However, it's very difficult to master the game.

Visual quality: 3/5 Bloons doesn't need great visuals, as it is so simplistic in nature, but its graphics are appealing all the same.

Engaging: 2/5 Bloons is only as engaging as you want it to be. The player can fire shots with no time restrictions, and one can leave the game at any point and come back to where he or she left off. That being said, Bloons is incredibly addicting, and can draw someone in quite easily.

Recommendation: Bloons is a fun puzzle game, but it's easy to get bored with the game. 2/5

Review (Zack Cecere)

Fun?: 4 == the game definitely has an addicting quality. The key part in making this game fun is spacing out difficult levels and creating much variety among the levels. Thus, the user only has to gain minor experience with the game in order to make seemingly great progress. However, the user does have to stop every couple levels or so in order to think over a particularly difficult pattern (progress + interspersed challenge)

Learning Difficulty: 2 == the controls themselves are very simple and it does not take long to figure out the general strategy. The difficulty arises from unfamiliar balloon patterns.

Visual Quality: 3 == Nothing too complex but in depth enough to get the point across (not a complex enough game to require more)

Engaging?: 3 == Perhaps I did not get far enough, but the game is not difficult enough nor is there enough user interaction for this game to be particularly engaging. However, the lack of in depth user interaction is part of the appeal of a flash game that is in many cases a procrastination tool.

Recommendation: 4 == As a simple flash game that requires little time for familiarization, I would recommend it. Its appeal derives from the level variety and the feeling of success that come with only interspersed effort.