

## So... Morrowind's out. Anyone got it yet?

■ Cafe Society

**Lightnin** May 2, 2002, 6:49pm  
#1

[SUB]Let's try this again, shall we? Stupid slow board lost my last attempt.[/SUB]

I've been looking forward to this game for over a year now. I love the previous games- despite their bugginess, they're the best example of a open-ended game I can think of.

So... to keep me from gnawing off a limb in my attempt to get out of here and go to the mall, has anyone gotten it? Whatcha think?

**Munch** May 2, 2002, 7:22pm  
#2

What are the system requirements? The software company's website is painful inadequate - which makes me a little leary in purchasing it.

**Khadro** May 3, 2002, 12:54am  
#3

I saw that it required a 500Mhz or better processor and had to pass. While my p2-333 can still play some of the newer games well enough for me (Wolfenstein, Jedi Outcast), I think I will wait until I am NOT pushing every spare dollar into my wedding before I upgrade.

And yes, I would upgrade to play just Morrowind. Daggerfall consumed me for the best part of a year, and I do not think I ever started the main quest. I did run all the way across the island though. "Travelling" is for wimps 😊

**SPOOFE** May 3, 2002, 2:20am  
#4

Morrowind is out?!? Holy hell, I need to get some money, fast! Anyone need a kidney?

My real dilemma is whether to get it for the Xbox, or PC. Xbox would run better than on my computer, but the PC version allows for editing, mods, and patches.

Choices, choices...

**Badtz\_Maru** May 5, 2002, 6:36am  
#5

I have it, and am enjoying it so far.

Took a while to get used to the slow pace - it takes a while to get around, at low levels even running can seem intolerably slow. Advancement is really slow too. So far I've got two characters to level 2, each one took at least 4 or 5 hours to do so. Neither of these features are truly flaws, though, it's just the pace of the game. I've read of fast ways to advance levels through exercising skills but that doesn't sound very fun. I just like wandering around exploring, looking for quests and odd jobs I can do, and enjoying the scenery.

**BooBoo316** May 5, 2002, 11:18am  
#6

Damn, how did this one sneak by me? I've been looking forward to this game since I saw the previews last year. I loved Daggerfall despite it's flaws and have high hopes for Morrowind.

Crap, I just spent my gaming money on Freedom Force (which I highly recommend, by the way). Well, I guess I'll just have to content myself with laying the smackdown on evil for a couple of weeks until I can get it.

**Journeyman** May 5, 2002, 7:57pm  
#7

Freedom force is a highly entertaining and fun game, I heartily agree. Morrowind... I need to wait until after my finals, otherwise I'll fail spectacularly, if it's anything like Daggerfall.

**Athena** May 5, 2002, 10:32pm  
#8

It's huuuuuuuge...

I've played quite a bit since I got it on Thursday. It's the first game I've ever seen where everything is 'real' - ie, when you go into a room and see a bookshelf filled with books, you can open and read every one of those books. If there's a table set for dinner, you can pick up and look at (or steal) every fork, knife, plate, etc. There's plants that do different things when you eat them... you can make your own spells and potions... you're not stuck to any one profession or set of skills. It's just SO BIG!

Bad things I've found so far:

- At least two crashes to desktop. Granted, it was after playing for about 20 hours, so it's not that big of a deal. Annoying, but not so annoying that I can't live with it.
- I'm not sure how I like the combat methodology. There's no way to know if a monster is waaaay above your level, or just kind of hard. There's been at least two situations where I'm banging my head. Both are quests that involve killing some monsters and/or people. I can't seem to kill the required monsters no matter WHAT I do. I assume that it *should* be in my level range, since I would hope this #!@# game wouldn't be so dumb as to give me quests early on that are impossible to do at my level. But I can't seem to do them. On the plus side, there's 5,231,132,634 other things to do to keep me busy.
- It's sloooooow. Granted, I'm playing on a laptop, but it's a kick ass laption. 1Ghz, 512 MB RAM, 32MB 3d video card. This setup allows me to max out most settings on every other game I play, including games that have been released in the past few months. Morrowind has frame rates as low as 4 or 5 at times, and I don't think I've ever seen above 25. This is with most display attributes turned off or waaaay down. I've heard reports of people with top of the line brand new systems seeing this as well, so hopefully they'll fix it soon.

Overall, though, it's a great game. I haven't turned on Everquest since I bought it, and that's saying something. In fact, why the %#@# am I screwing around on the Straight Dope? On to Morrowind!

**Dangerosa** May 5, 2002, 11:50pm  
#9

I'll try to get my hubby to drop by this thread. He's been playing it for months in beta off and on (more off than on). He is very impressed with the depth of the world.

He did get himself a new PC to play it on. His old one was too slow, and he was using mine to play that and the Dungeon Siege pre-release.

**Brainiac4** May 6, 2002, 12:44am  
#10

Hubby checking in. 😊

Short version: I really, really like this game. If you like deep, immersive first-person role-playing games, you probably will too. I played both previous games in the series (loved/finished Arena, gave up on Daggerfall) and was really looking forward to this one.

I have indeed been playing the beta. The main reason I stopped a couple of weeks ago was to give myself the chance to enjoy the final game – I was starting to make progress on the main quest, and wanted to do that with a "real" character, not a throwaway I created for the beta.

The system requirements are relatively steep. My older system (p3/500, 768MB ram, TNT2 Ultra) looked like a slideshow at anything but the minimum settings, so I was playing on Dangerosa's machine (Athlon 1800+, 256MB DDRam, GeForce 2MX), where it looked quite decent. My new machine (p4/2.2, 1GB PC800 RDRAM, GeForce 4 ti4600) runs it at 1280x960 with maxed detail and quite decent framerates. The biggest differentiator seems to be your video card – the NetImmerse engine it's built on (as are Freedom Force and Dark Age of Camelot, by the way) really leverages high-end video cards.

A note on character advancement: the way the system works is kind of neat – it's a hybrid between "traditional" leveling advancement through experience and the newer "improving skills through use" school of thought. What happens is that (a) your skills improve through use (or training) and once you've improved the 10 major and minor skills for your class (which you can define yourself) a total of 10 points, you level up. This makes leveling pretty easy early on through training, by the way.

My advice to other folks would be to look carefully at the skills in the class you choose or define – improving them will be the way you level up, and leveling is how you improve your basic stats (strength, agility, etc) which in turn improves your figured stats (health, mana, fatigue). Choose skills that you plan on using a lot.

A couple of notable things about Morrowind:

- The world is entirely hand-crafted. Not only can you interact with damn near everything, but all of the 300,000-plus objects in it were placed deliberately.
- Character creation is awesomely flexible. If you're familiar with the previous games in the series (Arena and Daggerfall), you'll know what I'm talking about. If not, suffice it to say that there are no limits on the way you can define your play-style. Want to hack your way through? Can do. Prefer blasting away with magic? Ok. Want to sneak past everything? Sure. Up for talking your way out of situations? It's actually possible.
- The system requirements are pretty steep. This is both a good thing and a bad one – if you have a "lesser" system, you'll be turning off options in order to get decent framerates. On the other hand, those of us with high-end systems finally have a game that actually uses all of that horsepower.
- You can interact with (read: kill, if you so desire) every NPC in the game. Some of them are really tough, but all of them are mortal. And there's only one you have to leave alive to finish the main quest.

Others have done a far better job of reviewing the game than I can, especially in this limited space. Check the Gold Guide section at Gone Gold

**DoctorJ** May 6, 2002, 4:37am  
#11

I have two weeks with not much to do before graduation, a \$125 check coming tomorrow from the return of my pager, and a new Athlon 1800+ system that I want to "take out on the open road", so to speak.

I think I'll be heading to Best Buy.

Dr. J

**slortar** May 6, 2002, 5:02pm  
#12

I picked it up Saturday morning. I promised myself I wouldn't buy a new game so soon, but I failed my saving throw, I guess.

I can't rave about this game enough. The only problem I have with it is that shop keepers don't go to bed at night. That's it.

FWIW, I have an Athlon 700, 384 mb RAM, and a tnt2 ultra and it runs fine. Outdoors is around 10-20 fps with view distance set to 1/3 and shadows off. Indoors/dungeons is smooth as silk. I'm running at 800x600, btw.

**B Maru** - if you want to level faster, get some cash and train the skills that are holding you up. You only need 10 pts in major/minor skills and a few hours of bed rest to level. I'm up to 5th or 6th already.

Has anybody been to the Dwemer ruins east of Caldera yet? Amazing. Looks like something out of a movie.

**TommyTutone** May 6, 2002, 7:19pm  
#13

I **LOVE** this game so far. While it has a few flaws, the world is large, and best of all **immersive** !

First the cons (again, this is all likely mentioned elsewhere, so I will be brief and offer more details upon request) based on my 10 hours of play:

- One crash to desktop so far
- Combat lacks feedback. While you DO learn if your weapon is ineffective against some creatures (like certain undead), you generally have no idea if what you are fighting is near your level. This is certainly more realistic, but can be frustrating as you load your last save game 18 times because you are trying to kill a baddie to get to a quest Foozle (this happened to me on my Puzzle Box quest after crossing the broken bridge of fire). If graphical representation cannot be provided, at least throw in a health bar for the foes.
- Short term NPC memory. You can try to kill an NPC, and if you become weak, leave the house they are in and they won't give chase.
- Haven't seen Opal in it yet.
- A few stutters in gameplay. I'm playing on a 1.5GHz with a GeForce 3 and 384 meg RAM, and once in awhile the game stutters when loading up a new area. Graphics resolution does not affect this (I am playing at 1028 x 864 or whatever that second number is) as I've tested with lower resolutions. I've read today, and will test tonight, that it is caused by the Safedisc protection on the CD. I am going to try and get the 'no CD' patch and see if it helps (reports so far say 10-20% better with the patch). A shame it takes pirates to help us play our own game more effectively.
- The journal could be easier to use, allowing you to have a simple list of quests, highlighting those not completed.

Now the pros:

- The world is HUGE! My endurance is high enough that I am able to run to most places, and even then it takes some time to get anywhere. At least in these early stages, the travel has not been dull. I picked up two quests on one road I travelled and passed by many mines, crypts, and other hideouts as well (I've visited a few for the ph@t lootz).
- The world is immersive. When you view the world, the only 'non-world' items you see are your status bar on the bottom left and the mini-map on the bottom right. Very small and out of the way, letting you admire the world (and when you have seen the water effects and the giant mushroom trees, you WILL admire) in its full regale.
- Many of the quests are imaginative. So far, I've solved a murder mystery in the starter town, helped a woman find a thief (not for revenge, but because she loved his banter), and witnessed a screaming wizard fall from the sky, dying as he hit the ground. While there are a few Fedex quests (especially for the main course), there is plenty of variety... I currently need to go 'convince' a rogue mage her dues are past due through any means necessary.
- Countless character templates. Roguish types are popular, though I've focused on an Imperial-knightish type character (replacing short blade and amorcraft with mercantile and mysticism). There are 10 races, **21** classes (not including those you can custom make), and 13 astral signs offering various benefits. You can play this game several times with different templates and have several ways of solving problems (my next character will be an evil assassin, who plans to kill everyone in the world, mwahahaha!).

So, why are you still reading this? Buy the game... BUY IT NOW!!!

**D\_Odds** May 6, 2002, 8:59pm  
#14

Morrowind is item number 1 on my Father's Day list. I'm hoping the first patch will be out by then; I always expect bugs from Bethesda. If their CRPGs weren't so good, I would boycott them for the nasty code they burn onto CDs.

I understand Best Buy has this at \$5.00 off of list (\$49.99) and a \$10 gift card. Waiting will be tough.

**Johnny\_Angel** May 6, 2002, 10:03pm  
#15

Saturday night I had the most immersive computer gaming experience since Necropolis in Fallout. I was running around mapping the city of Vivec, which is a clutch of square buildings called Catanas with canals running between them. The stonework is carved in a geometrically ordered organicism – squarish with no sharp corners, ziggurats of curves instead of angles, with thick-lipped archways that look to have been built by large and fastidious wasps – the stonework pocked and weathered but unyielding; ponderous, ancient. It was early dusk, still bright but orangish, and I walked over a bridge that arced between the upper ledges of two catanas. Over the valley between buildings, with the canal a heart-skipping distance below, I saw another bridge, double-tiered to connect two floors, and hung with banners of coarse fabric weighted with dowels at the bottom and painted with sigils and stirring in the wind. I said, “This is grand.” I hopped onto the upturned edge of the bridge I was on and took a deep breath and jumped up and out and hung in the air for a moment and then plummeted, and shot through the gap in the millions of pounds of architecture, and hit the canal and came up sputtering and falling in love with Vivec.

**Daoloth** May 6, 2002, 10:12pm  
#16

Ah, Morrowind. My character is a level 4 (close to 5, I believe) Imperial Rogue. Member of three different factions, namely House Hlaalu. I’ve played about 25 hours total, and experienced three crash to desktops. Fortunately they occurred shortly after loading the game, so nothing was lost.

There is LOTS of exploring to do in Morrowind, especially in big cities like Vivec and Balmora. Vivec, like Johnny Angel stated, is a massive city with nine different complexes, called Cantons. Each canton is three tiered- The lowest level (just above the city sewers) are the canalworks, the middle “waistworks” (homes and stores) and the highest tier the “plaza” (usually manors and fancier stores).

I’ve done many different quests, as they range in a wide variety. Furthermore, there are about a dozen factions/guilds that you have the option of working under (though many of them are enemies). My quests have gone from everything to escorting a slave (I chose to free her, instead), collecting some debt money, escorting merchants through hostile territory, stealing valuable items, and more. There are always multiple paths to each quest, too.

Well, time to go play it...

**Athena** May 8, 2002, 4:43am  
#17

So where is everyone in the game? I’m either level 10 or 11 now, and have maxed out hand-to-hand at 100. So now I gotta start working on those other darn skills...

I did several of the quests on the main story line, up to where I’m supposed to go find some guy named Hassuer in Ald’ruhn. I’ve also joined the thieves’ guild, the fighter’s guild, and, after some searching, the Morag Tong. The Morage Tong is the most fun - I’ve performed about 6 assassinations now, and got to talk to a Daedra in person. This game is very engrossing.

I also did a bunch of walking and swimming between Sarith Mora, Tel Aruhn, and Molag Mar. There’s some nifty stuff over there, including an island with what I think are fire elementals on it (they have some strange name, and killed me right away) and also some frost elementals on the mainland. I’ve killed enough Cliff Racers to build myself a home out of the bones. There’s also a ton of little crypts and dungeons in there. While looking for one cave - Zaintirari - I found about 4 others.

This game is biig. Not as big as Everquest (in fact, from what I gather, it’s maybe 1/10th the size of EQ) but it seems as big because it’s just so empty compared to on-line games. I keep wanting to ask another player for directions, or chat, or something... but in another way, the solitude is rather nice. Definitely more RPGlike than the on-line games.

I’ve heard mention of some spells that allow you to quickly teleport yourself around. I know that there’s some that take you to different temples and such. Mainly:

(hmmm... was going to post my scrolls here, but I can’t read my scribbles from last night! ha! Anyone got a guide?)

**SPOOFE** May 8, 2002, 8:23am  
#18

I just want to take this moment to say something...

I hate you all. I hate you I hate you I hate you.

::sigh::

I... need... MONEY! When’s my check coming?!? When when when?!?

**TommyTutone** May 8, 2002, 2:15pm  
#19

I’ve heard mention of some spells that allow you to quickly teleport yourself around. I know that there’s some that take you to different temples and such. Mainly:

Within the school of Mysticism, you can pick up Mark and Recall. I chose Mysticism as a major school for my knight template solely for these, but, unless I am missing something, you can only have one spot marked at a time. I’m considering rerolling and bumping it down (and getting rid of speechcraft as a major skill, it climbs too slowly).

In addition are to Divine type scrolls, that when read will teleport you to the closest Temple of ??? (depends on the scroll you read).

I've found Marking just outside my guild entrance very useful as I can bop back after completing a mission for my promotion.

**Drastic** May 8, 2002, 2:59pm  
#20

I haven't had as much time to put into it as some of you folks (damn you) but I'm digging it so far.

Bad (and less-than-my-god-thats-good) points first:

Character generation. I've restarted a few times, to try to settle on something to invest long-term in (this game's going to have one helluva long term) the development of. I am really getting tired of the ten minutes through the ship and census office by about the third time.

Also, unless my memory is over-romanticizing Daggerfall, the process actually took a couple steps backwards in flexibility—in the previous title you could pick and choose flaws and bonuses of all sorts of types and impact level—which Morrowind collapses all into the thirteen fixed birth signs, which is a shame. Originally I wanted to recreate my fellow from Daggerfall, the apostate cursed priest who only regenerated magicka, and absorbed spells, during nighttime—but slowly took damage when outside in sunlight, and couldn't regen magicka at all. No such luck. But I'll cope.

Safedisc. Yeah, it's worth the mild amount of time to get a safedisc-removed patch, as every bit of performance increase is a good thing. There's even a note in the box warning users that safedisc may very well hose their performance in an absurdly large range of configurations. If Bethesda has brains, the thing will be removed in an official patch; should never have been there in the first place, but I very much doubt the actual developers had a say in that decision.

And...hmm. I think that Unarmed should knock people out for longer than two seconds, though that may be a skill-level issue. Also, I want a blackjack-type weapon, to KO rich nobles in one stealthy smack, a la Thief.

The good. Oh, the good. Sweet beautiful big immersive good.

I find myself just jogging about (gotta job, for skill increase) admiring the scenery. In the initial little village, I went to the top of the lighthouse to spy out a certain npc's stash (to be part of the violent oppression inherent in the system), and completely forgot to keep track of him to instead watch the sunset and the stars come out. Nice. Very very nice.

Most amusing moment came in joining the Thieve's Guild, I'm supposed to get a key off of someone. My sneak obviously needs some exercise and training, as my pickpocketing is seen. The noble—all alone in his manor—goes insane with rage and comes after me with bare hands. Clearly, he REALLY sucks, since only about one in fifteen swings actually lands—and I'm still level one, with an armor rating with a grand total of 1, although my birth sign is The Thief. (I've desperately got to train my Unarmored skill higher up—I'm hoping in the long-term it was worth taking). So I ready my dukes, and pummel him unconscious. Problem is, he keeps getting up again (thus the complaint about knockout not lasting nearly long enough). This goes on for almost fifteen minutes, until I get sick of his persistence, switch to short sword, and gut him. (Then I reloaded from the last savegame, because I really don't want to kill the fellow, just liberate the key.)

Good game. It's going to consume entire weekends, I can tell.