

REVIEW

NINTENDO

2
PLAYER

4
MEG

SIM
GAME



PRICE: £39.95
BY: IMAGINEER

RELEASE
NOV
CONTROL
JOYPAD
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
ONE
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD
1ST DAY LEVEL
POOR
ORIGIN

Elite was originally released on the aged BBC Micro (model B) where it sold a massive amount of copies. The game went on to appear on just about every 8-bit format and was converted to the Amiga, ST and PC. This is the only console version of Elite to appear... yet!

During the 21st Century, technology evolved fast enough for many people to take to the stars in search of new worlds to settle on, far away from the pollution and over-crowding of Earth. Over the course of centuries these settlers colonised many worlds throughout several galaxies and over the course of time, these people made contact with the inhabitants of the worlds around them.

As time passed, these people realised that they could benefit from forming a galaxy-wide Federation with its own advanced technology and common trading markets. Space travel became a way of making vast amounts of money and retire easily... if you were lucky.

You adopt the mantle of a young space rookie, out to prove to the universe that you are capable of making vast amounts of cash. But trading isn't the limit of your talents. Space is crawling with fugitives, making their own living by blasting honest traders (like you) into pieces and making off with all your lovely cargo. Blasting said pirates is just as important and you are awarded a rating according to your blasting skills.

At the moment you are a sad man, ranked as Harmless. However, you know that you have the necessary skill, determination and guts to make it all the way.



OPTIONS

PITCH: You can adjust this so that pushing down on the joystick pulls you up (rather like a pilot's joystick) or you can switch it into the opposite.

VOX: The game provides self-centring after adjusting your yore, or alternatively you can do it yourself.

MUSIC ON/OFF: A nice rendition of the Blue Danube plays while your docking computers are activated. Turn it off with this option.



TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Once you've started to get a fair amount of money into your account, it's worth buying extra devices and weapons for your ship.

SECRET MISSIONS

Later on in the game, you are invited to take part in special secret missions for the Intergalactic Navy. The first mission involves you tracking down and blasting a stolen prototype ship - the Constrictor! It's equipped with a spanking new shield generator that only military lasers can pierce. But it's got a massive head start on you, so it's down to you to track down leads dotted around two galaxies and find the

Constrictor's den. Then it's your unenviable task to blow the sucker out of the cosmos!



▲ Facing the deadly might of the Constrictor attack craft



ONE/TWO-PLAYER GAME

In the two-player mode, player one controls the firing and has access to the icon system, making him responsible for every system bar the navigation. This part of the game is left to player two. As you might expect, in one-player mode, player one is responsible for every to do with the ship.



How To Control

8-WAY
DIRECTIONAL
CONTROL



A Fire lasers.

B Enable icon select.

S **START BUTTON:** Pause the game and access further options.

S **SELECT BUTTON:** Utilise currently selected icon.

How To Play Adopt the mantle of a space commander on your virgin trip, travelling the cosmos trading your wares. Upgrade your spaceship with better weapons and useful devices and do battle with a universe crawling with pirates and hostile aliens!

ELITE

BASIC TRADING

You start the game docked at Love with 100 credits to your name. It's your job to examine the space markets and trade commodities in order to make a profit. For example, since Love is an agricultural world, you'll be wise buying some furs, food and textiles and trading them with nearby industrial world, Least. Here you can stock up on computers and machinery to sell back at Love. It shouldn't be long before your coffers are bulging!



OTHER DEVICES

DOCKING COMPUTERS: Docking with a space station costs five credits if you wish the satellite to perform the intricate docking manoeuvre for you. These computers, priced at 200 credits allow you to dock yourself with no further outlay of cash.

ENERGY UNIT: The Cobra Mark III is well-known for its slow energy build-up, making its recovery powers in combat very limited. This extra unit boosts the power output.

FUEL SCOOPS: These scoops allow you to skim suns and pick up raw fuel which you would otherwise have to buy. Any cargo containers floating in space can be picked up as well.

ESCAPE POD: If you're running low on energy and those Thargoids are closing in for the kill, activate the escape pod. You're blasted clear of the ship and taken to the nearest space station. A new ship is supplied, replete with every piece of equipment your old ship had. Your legal record (based on your

old ship ID number) is cleared as well!

GALACTIC HYPER-SPACE: There are eight chartered galaxies to explore in Elite. The only way to warp your way to the next galaxy is to invest 6000 credits in a Galactic Hyperspace device, which burns out after one use!

LARGE CARGO BAY: The big standard Cobra Mark III carries 20 tons of cargo. The extra cargo bay boosts the load to 35 tons. Exceptionally useful, this should be your first buy.

REVIEW



COMMENT



I'm an old Elite veteran, having got to Elite on the Spectrum, C64 and Amiga versions. Frankly, I'm amazed at the high quality of this console conversion. Everything from the original version of the game is here, all of the ships, every mission - even the geography of all

RICH

eight galaxies is exactly the same! The gameplay itself is just as fresh as ever. The trading requires plenty of brainwork and risk-taking, while the deep space blasting action is decent enough to keep arcade fans occupied for ages. There are only a couple of problems I see NES players having to get around. Firstly, the game is quite difficult to get into. There's a good few hours of intensive trading required to tool up your ship to the required standard and it isn't the most exciting aspect of the game by any stretch of the imagination. Secondly, once you do get into it, there are one or two tedious patches that could have been programmed around - the over-long docking sequence for instance. Other than those minor gripes, Elite offers a freedom and challenge unrivalled by any other Nintendo video game. If you're after a game unlike any other, offering a vast quest and months of satisfaction, go and buy Elite!

old ship ID number) is

ECM UNIT: Very useful should your opponent fire a missile at you. Just activate the ECM and watch every missile in scanner range (including any you've fired) explode!



▲ The complete list of available weapons and devices.

REVIEW

COMMENT



JAZ

I thought it was impossible, but Elite has arrived on Nintendo and it's absolutely brilliant. Although the graphics are simple, they're amazingly atmospheric and once you get used to the control system you get completely drawn into the action. There's tremendous lasting appeal in this, with eight galaxies to explore, special missions and, of course, the ultimate aim of earning the Elite accolade. One of my favourite aspects of the game is that you can play legally, or make things even harder for yourself by turning fugitive and blasting everyone and everything - including the police! Elite is one of the most original, playable and long-lasting NES games I've played in months and is well worth checking out, especially if you're after a challenge. Excellent! Now if only Imagineer could do a Super NES version...

POLICE SQUAD!

In deep space, you're entitled to blast any one you want really, although if you shoot down an honest trader, your legal status may take a turn for the worst. One minor offence moves you from Clean to Offender. If, however, you choose to trade in robot slaves or rare species, your status is upgraded to Fugitive: public enemy number one! This makes you fair game for both the police, in their nippy Viper ships, or bounty hunters, who come after you with just about anything!

LONG-TERM INTEREST

WEAPONS

PULSE LASERS: Rather primitive lasers that do not damage ships easily. Many hits are needed to see off the easiest target.

BEAM LASERS: More powerful than pulse lasers, these useful weapons also fire more rapidly. Excellent.

MILITARY LASERS: The best lasers money can buy, but they are very expensive at 6000 credits.

MINING LASERS: These aren't really weapons. Blasting asteroids with these lasers reduces them to their component minerals which you can scoop up and sell.

MISSILES: Target up one of these babies and let rip in order to get rid of any enemy in a matter of seconds. However, advanced ships have ECM units that counter any missile threat.

ENERGY BOMB: Quite expensive at 900 credits, these bombs are brutally effective against multiple attacks as they destroy every enemy craft on your scanner scope.



HOW HARD

The aim of the game is to shoot enough enemy craft to boost your combat rating to its highest possible status: Elite! You start the game as a Harmless space user, but the more ships you blast the higher your rating. Remember though, it takes a few thousand kills to get you to Elite! The full list of classifications is as follows:

HARMLESS
MOSTLY HARMLESS
POOR
AVERAGE
ABOVE AVERAGE
COMPETENT
DANGEROUS
DEADLY ELITE

LONG-TERM INTEREST	NEW					
	GOOD					
	MID					
	BAD					
	VERY BAD					
		MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI

RATINGS



PRESENTATION

98

- ▶ Superb range of options, battles lock-up to show your great position and extending to game presentation.
- ▶ No bad points to speak of, honest.

GRAPHICS

83

- ▶ The nice frame buffer graphics save their progress well.
- ▶ Lack of colour makes the game look quite bleak.

SOUND

78

- ▶ There are plenty of decent blasting effects.
- ▶ The music borders on the average - you'll soon hear it off.

LASTABILITY

93

- ▶ Eight massive galaxies to explore with thousands of planets to visit.
- ▶ Some might find the going quite monotonous by the time they reach Dangerous level.

PLAYABILITY

90

- ▶ A massive game to undertake and needs to keep you occupied.
- ▶ Very difficult to get into initially, and some boring patches later on.

OVERALL

91

A classic computer game makes the transition to the NES perfectly! A truly original game, Elite offers months of excitement-packed gameplay.