**Game Usability Heuristics**

**Based on a paper co-authored by Heather Desurvire & Charlotte Wiberg**

Published in the proceedings of the 3d International Conference on Online Communities and Social Computing: Held as Part of HCI International 2009

Pages 557-566

**Abstract:**

Game developers have begun applying formal human-computer interaction (HCI) principles in design. Desurvire et al [2] adapted a set of Heuristics for productivity software to games. The resulting set, presented at CHI 2004, was Heuristics to Evaluate Playability (HEP). Generalization of these heuristics is required to make them applicable to a multiple of game genres and game deliveries. This follow-up study focused on the refined list, Heuristics of Playability (PLAY), that can be applied earlier in game development as well as aiding developers between formal usability/playability research during the development cycle. Heuristics were formed based on their efficacious scores on the popular game review website, metacritic.com. Fiftyfour gamers rated High and Low ranked games on 116 potential heuristics. Implications for how these Heuristics will help developers improve game quality are discussed. PLAY has been found useful in design evaluation and elfreport survey format

Heather Desurvire and Charlotte Wiberg. 2009. Game Usability Heuristics (PLAY) for Evaluating and Designing Better Games: The Next Iteration. In *Proceedings of the 3d International Conference on Online Communities and Social Computing: Held as Part of HCI International 2009*(OCSC '09), A. Ant Ozok and Panayiotis Zaphiris (Eds.). Springer-Verlag, Berlin, Heidelberg, 557-566. DOI=http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.falmouth.ac.uk/10.1007/978-3-642-02774-1\_60

<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.588.2260&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

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| Category 1: Game Play |

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| **Heuristic** | Notes |
| **A. Heuristic: Enduring Play** |  |
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| **B. Challenge, Strategy and Pace** |  |
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| **C. Consistency in Game**  **World** |  |
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| **Heuristic** | Notes |
| **D. Goals** |  |
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| **E: Variety of Players and Game Styles** |  |
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| **F. Players Perception of Control** |  |
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| Category 2: Coolness/Entertainment/Humour/Emotional Immersion |

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| **Heuristic** | Notes |
| **A. Emotional Connection** |  |
| **B: Coolness/Entertainment** |  |
| **C: Humour** |  |
| **D. Immersion** |  |

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| Category 3: Usability & Game Mechanics |

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| **Heuristic** | Notes |
| **A. Documentation/Tutorial** |  |
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| **B: Status and Score** |  |
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| **C. Game Provides Feedback** |  |
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| **Heuristic** | Notes |
| **D. Terminology** |  |
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| **E: Burden On Player** |  |
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| **F. Screen Layout** |  |
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| **Heuristic** | Notes |
| **G. Navigation** |  |
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| **H: Error Prevention** |  |
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| **I. Game Story Immersion** |  |
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