**Game Usability Heuristics**

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

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**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

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| Category 3: Usability & Game Mechanics |

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| **Heuristic** | Notes |
| 1. **Challenge, Strategy and Pace**   Easy to learn, harder to master?  Challenge, strategy and pace are in balance? | Initially it’s easy to learn and understand but as soon as the white and black bars are shown I was confused as to which light I had stop.  A tutorial on what each light is would be helpful for new players.  I think the pace of the bars arriving could be slow down as their speed ramps up very quickly. |
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| **B: Status and Score**  Status score Indicators are seamless, obvious, available and do not interfere with game play? | The end score once you lose is great for making the game feel competitive, adding to the fun.  It could be improved with the help of a scoreboard or a place to review the scores of yourself and or other players to increase that competitive nature and so players don’t need to remember their high score. |
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| 1. **Game Provides Feedback**   Game provides feedback and reacts in a consistent, immediate, challenging and exciting way to the players’ actions? | There isn’t much feedback from the game, the most obvious one is that you have deactivated a bar or that you have died for not deactivating a bar. Not much other gameplay feedback to be noted. |
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| **Heuristic** | Notes |
| 1. **Goals**   The game goals are clear? | Yes. |
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| **E: Burden On Player**  The game does not put an unnecessary burden on the player? | No, it’s simple enough that there are no direct burdens to be noted. |
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| **F. Coolness/Entertainment**  The game offers something different in terms of attracting and retaining the players’ interest? | It’s not exactly unique, games like guitar hero do this game concept in a better way. But the controller is interesting and different as it uses light sensors instead of buttons. |
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| **Heuristic** | Notes |
| **G. Players Perception of Control**  The players have a sense of control and influence onto the game world? | Not much of control is felt when playing the game, as the only thing you can change and control are whether or not the bars are activated or not. More sense of control on what is happening may potentially make it fun. |
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