**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? |  |
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| **B: Status and Score**  Status score Indicators are seamless, obvious, available and do not interfere with game play? |  |
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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? |  |
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| **Heuristic** | Notes |
| 1. **Goals**   The game goals are clear? |  |
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| **E: Burden On Player**  The game does not put an unnecessary burden on the player? |  |
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| **F. Coolness/Entertainment**  The game offers something different in terms of attracting and retaining the players’ interest? |  |
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| **Heuristic** | Notes |
| **G. Players Perception of Control**  The players have a sense of control and influence onto the game world? |  |
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