

Dolphin Attack Pitch

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The Premise

In *Dolphin Attack*, you are a pirate sailing with your crew in search of merchant ships to loot when suddenly the dreaded killer dolphins attack. With a series of onslaughts on its way, how long can you survive armed with nothing but your trusty pistol?

Player Motivation

The primary goal for players of *Dolphin Attack* is to survive as many waves as possible. As the game goes on it becomes harder and harder to survive, and when the player inevitably dies, their name, along with the number of waves they survived, is saved into a leaderboard. This leaderboard is used to help boost engagement by incentivizing the competition of getting a top score either against other players or even against themselves! This game will require mastery of its mechanics to be the best, and this motivation for continuous-self-improvement will result in both addictive and fun gameplay!

Unique Selling Proposition

This game uses a mashup of two different concepts to create a unique theme that the game revolves around: pirates and dolphins. Although the core gameplay concept of an endless wave survival has been done before, the application of the theme elements provides a unique experience for the player. In this 2D platformer side-scrolling style experience, the player must utilize all the mechanics present to succeed. The player is stranded on their pirate ship as the

dolphin onslaught commences. The dolphin enemy's method of attacking by leaping out of the water towards the player in an arc like motion before submerging back into the sea provides a new challenge for the player, forcing them to think of new strategies and playstyles to adapt to this exciting new threat.

Competitive Analysis

Light Keeper II

Light Keeper II is a 2D side-scrolling endless wave survival and is the most similar to *Dolphin Attack* out of this list. It features constant engaging action, an appealing art style, a wide variety of skills and upgrades and interesting enemy types. Random events and bosses can occur between waves, and you have allies to assist you in defending the city. Additionally, it uses a leaderboard system to track the number of waves you've survived similar to my game, which means that both games have very similar player motivations (see above section).

However, this game struggles with balancing, which is a big reason why it never grew more than a small audience. With certain aspects of the game being completely unbalanced, it was near impossible to progress to later waves. Players also found difficulty in differentiating the allies from the enemies, causing many frustrating losses.

Although my game *Dolphin Attack* doesn't have nearly as many features due to the limited time and resources to develop it this can be seen as a benefit. *Light Keeper II* took on more content than it should have and suffered in the balancing and testing phase as a result. Learning from this result, *Dolphin Attack* keeps a narrow focus on the gameplay to ensure proper balancing and that it will still be just as fun, engaging, and addicting as *Light Keeper II*, if not more.

Endless Waves Survival

[*Endless Waves Survival*](#) is a 2D top-down game with endless wave survival being its core focus of course. It has a clean, simple art style; a variety of stats, spells, and item upgrades; it is easy to learn; and has good enemy variety.

However, it suffers from the same balancing issues as *Light Keeper II* does (see above), only this time in the opposite direction. The waves don't scale in difficulty nearly as fast as the player does, until eventually, as you max out your spells and items, you can almost stand in one place without dying. On top of that, after a while the waves start to feel repetitive and a chore to get through. This makes the gameplay boring and won't keep the player engaged for long.

For these reasons, *Dolphin Attack*, with its narrower focus, ensures proper balancing on how the waves scale in difficulty over time to challenge the player as they improve and keep them hooked, but not make it scale too quickly so that it's impossible to get to the next wave. Both games appeal to a similar target market, and *Dolphin Attack's* enemy type, while lacking variety, keeps the waves interesting with their unique attack styles, leaping out of the water towards the player in randomized arc angles before submerging back into the sea.

Kingdom Rush Frontiers

[*Kingdom Rush Frontiers*](#) is a popular 2D top-down tower defense strategy game. The main similarity between this game and *Dolphin Attack* lies in its [endless survival mode](#). The exciting gameplay features strategizing for optimal tower type placement, a player-controlled character

used to aid the towers defend against the waves of enemies, a large variety of enemy types, polished and well-thought-out levels, and a well-balanced wave difficulty system, improving on the first two games in this aspect.

A few downsides to this game consist of a scattered and weak story, certain enemies have abilities that feel “gimmicky” compared to other better designed enemies, and it lacks replayability as once you know the strategy to beat the level, it is simple and boring. This game and *Dolphin Attack* both share a similar core concept of wave-based action; however, their gameplay is entirely different with this being a tower strategy game while my game is in the action shooter platformer genre. My game will aim to have a well-designed wave difficulty scale like this one, but overall both have different audiences attracted to them and should have minimal effect on each other in the market.

Genre

Dolphin Attack contains fast-paced action and requires quick reactions, mastery of game mechanics, with minimal story so it would be classified as an Action game. Specifically, the use of a gun and platforming mechanics to maneuver enemies along with the camera perspective would categorize it in the sub-genres of a 2D side-scrolling shooter platformer.

Gameplay

Upon launching, *Dolphin Attack* begins with a start menu. The player can navigate using three different buttons:

- The “Start” button directs the player to the character selection screen where they choose what pirate character they want to use along with their in-game nickname (for leaderboard purposes). Once they confirm this information, they can then start the game.
- The “Leaderboard” button directs the player to a leaderboard page showing the top scorers (the players who survived the most waves) alongside their nickname.
- The “Exit” button quits the game.

Once the game is started, the player is placed on a pirate ship in the middle of the sea. This is the environment that the player can move around in and falling into the sea results in an immediate loss. The pirate ship will contain a variety of obstacles and platforms to allow a highly maneuverable environment for the player.

The player can move using the keys WASD, jump using spacebar, double jump by pressing the spacebar a second time while in the air, and dash using the left shift button. Each player also has a gun (a classic pirate flintlock pistol) which can be aimed using the mouse and fire bullets using the left mouse button.

There will be a five second countdown before the start of the first wave and between waves. The enemies in each wave are killer dolphins who attack by leaping out of the water towards the player in randomized arc angles (a parabola like motion) before submerging back into the sea. Players must maneuver to avoid being hit by these dolphins and use their weapon to shoot them. Each dolphin takes two shots to kill, and the wave doesn’t end until all dolphins are dead. The first wave will start off easy but scale in difficulty with each progressive wave (faster dolphins, more dolphins per wave, etc.).

The player gets three lives and every time the dolphin hits them, they lose one. Upon running out of lives the game ends and their score is saved to the leaderboard. At the end of every wave, they can open a chest located on the ship to get an additional life.

The game will also have a pause menu which can be opened in-game using the ESC button, and features three buttons:

- The “Continue” button resumes the game.
- The “Restart” button restarts the game.
- The “Exit to Menu” button directs the player back to the main menu.

The player’s goal is to survive as many waves as possible before inevitably falling to the killer dolphins!

Note, specific values mentioned here may be modified during development based on testing for optimal player experience.

Story Synopsis

Dolphin Attack’s main emphasis is on the gameplay instead of the story; however, it does have a small plot to give context to the gameplay:

You are a pirate sailing with your crew in search of merchant ships to loot; however, those waters have a dark side to them. The local myth is that the dolphins in that area have mutated, developing murderous tendencies and an appetite for human flesh, but being the cocky and ignorant pirates that you are, you dismiss those as silly stories and travel out into those waters anyway. Nearly out of nowhere, the dreaded killer dolphins attack, and as you witness your crew

slowly get picked apart, you suddenly find yourself alone on the ship. With a series of onslaughts on the way, how long can you survive armed with nothing but your trusty pistol?

Tarket Market

Dolphin attack's target audience are video game enthusiasts who enjoy fast-paced action games, have good reactions, and enjoy the 2D side-scrolling shooter platformer style. Geographically, this game is intended for anyone with access to a computer, and the target age range would be between the ages of 13-30, with 13 being the lower limit due to the use of guns, minimal blood, and violence.

The target ESRB rating that I'm aiming for with the game is "Teen" due to (as stated before) the use of guns, minimal blood, and violence within the gameplay.

Target Platform

Minimum hardware requirements are required to run smoothly. Specifically, the approximate minimum requirements can be found on nearly all computers today: An integrated graphics card, 4 GB ram, i3 processor, 20 MB storage, etc.

The game will be available to play on any major Operating System on release (Windows, Mac, etc.) to best leverage costs and increase the chance of success.

Summary

With its engaging and addictive action-focused gameplay, wide demographic, and availability to consumers, *Dolphin Attack* is everything players want. It measures up to all its competitors, adds unique elements to the idea of wave-based survival games with its themes and enemies to stand out from other games, and will no doubt be successful in the industry.