

## Ref: 0030 Analysis

Source: "What is usability", 23/03/17

### What is usability?

Usability means making products and systems easier to use, and matching them more closely to user needs and requirements.

The international standard, [ISO 9241-11](#), provides guidance on usability and defines it as:

*The extent to which a product can be used by specified users to achieve specified goals with effectiveness, efficiency and satisfaction in a specified context of use.*

My task was to evidence usability features. While the game was carefully developed, I wanted to ensure that I knew a definition of usability before I started to create an entire document about it. Immediately when skimming across the page, I am met with a short definition, similar to what I thought would be the definition, but much clearer than the uncertain jumble I had.

Usability is about:

- Effectiveness - can users complete tasks, achieve goals with the product, i.e. do what they want to do?
- Efficiency - how much effort do users require to do this? (Often measured in time)
- Satisfaction - what do users think about the product's ease of use?

...which are affected by:

- The users - who is using the product? e.g. are they highly trained and experienced users, or novices?
- Their goals - what are the users trying to do with the product - does it support what they want to do with it?
- The usage situation (or 'context of use') - where and how is the product being used?

Upon seeing a list, I started analysing the contents. This list began to outline things to look at; while I had an idea on what usability was, I wasn't so sure about how I would begin to structure and break down the task. Each bullet point could be used as its own separate aspect for my game to be compared against.

Usability should not be confused with 'functionality', however, as this is purely concerned with the functions and features of the product and has no bearing on whether users are able to use them or not. Increased functionality does not mean improved usability!

Finally, the last section removed two aspects for comparison that I had planned myself for my game. This was also a wise idea, as I have spoken about functionality in the main stage testing and the points would have been redundant in this document.