

Analysis of Mechanics

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Title: Valheim

Released: 2021 (still in Early Access)

Author: Iron Gate AB / Coffee Stain Publishing

Primary Genre: Survival Adventure

Secondary Genre: Role-playing, Sandbox builder

Style: Low-polygon 3D game in Nordic mythology setting

Analysis

1) The main game-loop is designed around gathering resources and upgrading your base and gear. The role-playing takes part in developing your character, there are skills, but they are upgraded only by using them, so this can't be really counted, but the choice of gear gives you a lot of options for your character, every weapon type has its own benefits and weaknesses, the same applies to armor and in the late stages of the game you can choose to use magic instead of physical weapons. The building system in this game is pretty complex and is up to you how much time you spend with it, you need some basic structures, but you can also create visually astounding structures.

2) The interaction between these genres is really smooth and developers try to take the best of each. For example, the survival mechanics, which can be annoying they flipped them over, to make it more rewarding. For example you don't get any debuffs for not sleeping, but you can use it to skip the night when more dangerous creatures roam, and also for resting you get a buff for health and stamina regeneration. Or another example you never starve because of hunger, instead you get increase of your maximum health and stamina, so you can experience more dangerous adventures. The building is also fun because you can use it in many clever ways on your adventures and not only for building your base. Role-playing part is also important because with your growing strength you can explore more areas and therefore collect more resources and with well-built character is much easier to overcome dangers on your adventures.

3) Low-polygon style is a good choice for this game, it gives the game the feel of the older, harder games which doesn't give you anything for free, but when you overcome this it rewards you with a real sense of achievement. The Nordic mythology is generally liked setting which fits perfectly and you also can learn something new from bits of lore on rune-stones around the world in this game.