

# Playthrough - How to play

The game begins with a few cutscenes detailing the backstory of the events to come. Alex - the protagonist - is introduced to and welcomed by Victor, the game's main antagonist. Victor shows us the cabin we are meant to live in during our stay. After the third cutscene has finished, we can start to move around, explore the environment and talk to NPCs. We may open a menu with three options by clicking the escape button: resume, controls and quit. We may interact with:

- 1) 7 NPCs
- 2) Two Gravestones
- 3) An inn which we can enter
- 4) Locked doors
- 5) A beehive full of buzzing bees (of utmost importance) (i'm kidding)

A bubbly soundtrack starts to play. The cabin is inaccessible to enter until we have interacted with at least 4 NPCs, most of whom will act quite shady in order to set off a few alarm bells in our head. Upon entering the cabin, we can interact with the bed inside. Doing so, we find and read a diary that was hidden underneath the mattress. It belongs to a previous tenant whose five diary entries detail their gruesome demise at the hands of the locals. At this point, we find out we're dealing with a cult. At the moment the diary is found, the bubbly soundtrack is replaced by an ominous one. We also find a key inside Alex's cabin that seems to belong to Julia. The protagonist, Alex, nudges the player to go back to the car they arrived in in one of the cutscenes in order to escape the valley. When we exit Alex's cabin, the town day scene has switched to a town night scene. NPCs behave differently now, patrolling with flashlights in a consistent manner. If we interact with the car, Alex realizes his car keys - and only escape plan - have gone missing. Thus begins the search-and-find mystery that leads us all around town, all the while avoiding the NPCs who have started patrolling around their cabins with flashlights. If caught inside the range of an NPC's flashlight, we "die" and are transported to a checkpoint. A checkpoint is saved every time we pick up a key.

The last key obtained is the key to the town church. The player may interact with the altar inside in order to reveal a hidden staircase underneath. When we proceed downstairs, we are greeted by a large room with a peculiar set of stones in a grid pattern and various machines. There is a large door that is revealed to be locked when interacted with, but has no keyhole. It therefore requires something else to open it - solving a puzzle. The stones are to be pushed into their correct positions by the player. With the help of a set of nine 9 clues, the player solves a classic logic grid puzzle. When complete, the door unlocks and we may proceed inside what is presumably Victor's room. Inside, we find Alex's car keys. With this, we exit the run and run to our car, towards freedom. When interacted with, the game is complete. The screen fades to black and a set of simple credits roll.

The finished Whispers in the Valley closely resembles its design in a variety of ways. Others, not so much. Things we set out to accomplish which we feel as though we have decently succeeded at include:

- Appealing graphics and animations

- A day and night system
- A dialogue system (albeit one that does not scale very well)
- A stealth segment along with a checkpoint mechanic when caught by the NPCs
- An effective system for player interaction
- An inventory system with a clear UI and pickup system
- Cutscenes with basic animation aiding in story comprehension
- A sweet soundtrack for the day cycle, a darker soundtrack for the night cycle, and a few sound effects (key pickup, puzzle completion).
- An interesting story concept (albeit one that does not always make the most logical sense) and characters with a tiny bit of unique flavor