The most recent game I’ve played is Fallout Shelter. This is a mobile platform game, and is available on the Google Play store, and Apple App Store for free. The game does a lot right in my option. It is not a game that requires you to pay money to progress. It also does not ask that you monitor it often, and is more of a checking and waiting game. However, there are several game breaking bugs as well as no true progression. Since there is technically no end to the game and no multiplayer the game drops off after a while no matter how few dwellers you may have.

Throughout your time with Fallout Shelter, you’ll be managing NPCs. This requires giving them jobs to collect resources, train skills, or repopulate. There is no real interaction, rather everything happens automatically on a timer. At no point have I run into a problem that required me to open the in-app purchases to get any outside help. The game is designed around punishing those who sit and stare at the game mindlessly. If you’re in trouble sometimes the correct move is just exit the app and wait for resources to pool up. In addition, you are able to earn the in-app purchasable items through objectives (which take a relatively long time, but still worth it) further reducing the need to buy your way through the game.

It is surprisingly fun to set dwellers up on tasks to improve the Vault, or themselves. You can gain new equipment by sending a dweller out to the wastes, and monitoring their condition while they are out adventuring. Improving their stats makes them less vulnerable to the dangers of the wastes, and allows them to stay out longer and longer. The more time they spend adventuring, the higher chance they have to find something valuable. This doesn’t mean you need to check them every 10 minutes, rather if you send them off with stimpacks and radaway, they’ll use it automatically. Not to mention no one can truly die, and with a few (or a mountain) of bottle caps you can bring your friend back to life. This makes it much less tedious or stressful to send people out or watch your Vault be raided since the punishment for making a mistake is not irreversible.

Now for the bad. There are exploits that exist that allow you to have dwellers out a few minutes but be treated as if they had been away for weeks as far as the loot table is concerned. Not to mention the bug which I have only recently discovered. Crashing on startup with no hope of recovery. They only way to resume play is to delete the app and reinstall; Losing all of your save data. I’m holding off on this for now, but with no patch announced there may not be a workaround for quite some time. Exploits that allow you to get the best items in the game, and bugs that require you to start all over again are not good.

That brings me to the last point. I had a Vault with 35 or so dwellers. Looking at the building interface, it seems that all building are unlocked once you reach 100 dwellers. However, I had already found myself having a difficult time doing anything with the game other than training stats. There was never any chance that I would run out of resources, and sending dwellers out to the waste is a waiting game. There was no raid attack that I couldn’t defend, and no boss to defeat or enemy player to contend with. What I’m getting at is that there was hardly a concrete progression system in place. Once I got my vault self-contained, there was really nothing left to do/worry about.

So does that make this a good or bad game? I would say in a freemium type of mobile game, I would look at how ridiculous the in-app purchases are, how much time is required to progress reasonably, and what is there to do while waiting since all of these types of games have a lot of waiting. Fallout Shelter definitely does well on two of those fronts. It does fall short on the final one though. There is not much to do other than wait for certain things to happen, and there is no real reason to progress further and further after you get your Vault set up to where you don’t worry about resources. If I had to give it any sort of good or bad rating, I’d unfortunaty have to say that it is only a mediocre game. With no real end game or tiered progression, the game ends up feeling very empty after a while. This isn’t good for something that technically never has an end.