Critical Strike

I played Critical Strike until level 15 and took notes about the things I noticed during the gameplay. Based on these notes, I wrote my analysis in different categories and added some suggestions to make the game better.

1. Tutorial

Analysis:

Before starting the tutorial, the player is not allowed to access their existing account, and the tutorial is mandatory. Once it begins, the tutorial introduces the player to the basic mechanics of the game such as movement, aiming, shooting, and grenade usage. However, it does not teach or mention the crouch and jump functions. This lack of explanation causes players to be unfamiliar with these abilities later in the game, and as a result, they often do not use the crouch or jump buttons at all. Also, there is no cinematic scene before or after the tutorial, the game continues directly without any storytelling element.

Suggestions:

• The Vertigo Games logo appears on the game opening screen, but adding the text "Vertigo Games" below the logo could improve branding and recognition.
• The tutorial could include a simple part where players must jump over or crouch under objects. This would help them get used to these buttons early on.
• A short cinematic scene (15–20 seconds) either before or after the tutorial could help create a stronger emotional connection between the player and the Critical Strike.

2. UI Impression

Analysis:

The gameplay interface is simple, and the buttons are placed in reachable positions. However, buttons like aim and fire cannot be fully customized. Their positions can be changed, but their size cannot be adjusted.Switching from the primary weapon to the melee weapon (third slot) is not direct. The player needs to tap the weapon icon twice on the top right.

At the end of a match, the game takes the player to a results screen that shows leaders, the scoreboard, and rewards. This screen also includes quick access to missions and inventory.

In the main menu, there is a lot of visual information, which can confuse new players and make it harder to focus. The game starts with a default male character, and unlocking female characters is only possible after some progress.

In the inventory section, weapons, character skins, and gear appear in a flat and simple screen design that looks a bit outdated and not very user-friendly. Weapons are grouped by type, but their stats (such as damage and fire rate) are written in very small text on a black background, which makes them hard to read.

Suggestions:

• A button resizing option can be added, similar to what PUBG Mobile offers.
• The default layout could include a small empty space on the right side of the screen. This would allow players to use the left side for movement and the right side more comfortably for camera control.

• Weapon switching can be done by swiping, with the weapon icons placed transparently at the bottom of the screen. This would support a more fluid gameplay experience.

• The main menu can be simplified. Pop-up messages and offers can be grouped under one section to reduce confusion and make the interface more user-friendly.

• In the inventory screen, the weapon selection menu can be moved to the top-left, keeping the selected weapon in the center and showing its stats on the right in larger, readable fonts. This would help players understand the weapon features more clearly. The same design can also be applied to other gear like gloves, armor, and characters.

• Offer both male and female character options at the start to make the game more inclusive for female players.

3. Visual Effects & Animations

Analysis:

The red damage indicator around the screen and the direction marker when getting shot improve the combat experience and make the gameplay feel more satisfying. However, the weapon model takes up almost 25% of the screen and is only shown in the right hand. This size and positioning reduce the player's focus and visibility during matches. While moving the character, the weapon remains visually static, which negatively affects the sense of fluidity and dynamism.

Character movement feels slow, and both the visual and sound effects for crouching and jumping are weak. These animations feel weak and can make the player lose interest or get bored while playing.

The auto-aim feature makes the game too easy, while turning it off makes aiming on mobile devices frustrating and overly difficult. There is also an occasional bug when trying to pick up dropped weapons, which affects gameplay flow.

Suggestions:

• The weapon model can be scaled down to help players focus more on the gameplay and overall flow.

• While running, the weapon can be slightly pulled closer to the character's chest and animated with movement. This would create a more dynamic and immersive experience.

• The character's movement speed can be slightly increased, and more noticeable visual and sound effects can be added to jumping and crouching actions. These improvements would make the gameplay feel smoother and more engaging.

• Since auto-aim feels too easy and no aim is too hard, a "semi-assist" aiming option could be added to offer a better experience for players who want partial control.

4. Core Loop Explanation

Analysis:

The core loop of Critical Strike is based on playing short PvP matches across different game modes, earning XP and gold, and using these rewards to unlock weapons and skins that give the player an advantage. Players receive rewards based on how long they stay in the game (e.g. 5, 20, 40, 60, 120, 180 minutes).

There is also a "Daily Rewards" system to encourage players to log in every day, but this screen looks too crowded and is not very user-friendly. In addition, the game uses a 50-level battle pass system to keep players active over a period of 15 to 30 days.

Even though this loop seems effective at first, it starts to feel repetitive after a while and does not give strong long-term motivation. The 180 minutes required to get the biggest reward feels too long for many players. For those who don't buy the battle pass or have VIP access, it can easily lead to the feeling of "Why should I keep playing if I won't really win anything?"

The game also lacks systems that could create a stronger connection with the player, like winning streak bonuses, ranked climb rewards, or unlockable content tied to achievements. Because of this, after a few days, many players feel that the loop becomes repetitive and the reward system loses its excitement.

Suggestions:

• Instead of giving rewards based on time spent in the game, rewards can be based on the number of matches played or won. This would increase motivation by encouraging players to keep playing for progression, not just waiting for time-based rewards.
• The daily rewards screen currently shows all 30 rewards at once, which can feel overwhelming. A scrollable layout could be more user-friendly and may increase daily login rates.• Seasonal events (e.g. snow-themed maps in winter, Halloween-themed skins and
environments) could make the game more visually dynamic and engaging during special times of the year.
• Adding more value to the competitive/ranked mode would encourage players to log in every day to climb the ladder and improve their rank or level.

5. Economy/Shop

Analysis:

There are special offers in the game that are designed to encourage purchases. However, new players often don't fully understand the value of the in-game currency and other resources at early levels. Because of this, the special offers seem to be more attractive to experienced players who already know the system.

The main menu can also feel confusing. Almost every section you tap gives some kind of reward or crate, but it's not always clear what you are getting or why. This lack of clarity can make the experience harder for new users to follow.

Despite this, the game does create a desire to become a premium user or purchase the battle pass, especially through benefits like exclusive missions and the no ads option.

Suggestions:

• Special offers can include skin-based items or cosmetics that appeal to beginner players. This could encourage early in-game purchases by making the offers feel more accessible and visually attractive.
• Battle pass and premium options can be highlighted more clearly in the main menu. The ad banner in the top-right corner can be reduced in size, and crate progress indicators can be placed underneath it for a cleaner and more focused layout.
• An extra reward can be given to the MVP of each match, such as a crate piece, a temporary boost, or a special post-match animation. This would make players more competitive and increase their motivation to stay engaged with the game.

6. Overal Analysis:

As a new player, Critical Strike offers a fast-paced and smooth shooting experience with multiple game modes and satisfying combat mechanics. The controls are simple to learn, and the core gameplay feels fun from the beginning. The reward system, daily missions, and battle pass give players a reason to keep coming back.

However, the tutorial covers only the basics and does not fully explain the movement system, which may affect gameplay later on. The main menu feels a bit crowded at first, and many features unlock quickly without enough explanation. Visual and sound effects, such as weapon animations or footstep sounds, could be improved to make the game feel more dynamic. Also, most rewards are based on time spent in the game rather than actual performance, which might feel less motivating over time. In-game currency values are not clearly explained in the early stages, which can confuse new players.

7. Churn Analysis

Day 1 :

The tutorial only introduces basic actions (movement, aiming, shooting, grenade), and skips key movement mechanics like crouching and jumping. These are not shown or used, which causes players to ignore them later on.

At the same time, the main menu feels crowded and chaotic — too many pop-ups, unclear labels, and overlapping functions. New players may feel lost right after the tutorial.

Additionally, the very strong aim-assist system makes the early game feel "auto-played," reducing player satisfaction. As a result, players who are looking for more control or challenge might lose interest quickly.

Day 7 :

After the first few days, the player starts noticing that the reward system is based mostly on time spent (5m–30m–3hrs), not on actual performance. This weakens the feeling of progress and removes any skill-based motivation.

There are no strong "daily challenges" like "play 10 matches" or "win 5 rounds," and no structure that keeps players actively involved. Without any competitive pressure, ranked climb, or limited-time content, players may not find a reason to return daily.

Day 30:

By the 30th day, players who are still active may feel that the game lacks end-game depth. The Battle Pass progression ends around day 15–30, but there is no additional ranked content, prestige system, or event-based progression to keep the loop interesting.

The shop and reward design favors monetized systems, and players who are not investing money start hitting a wall. Since the game doesn't offer long-term goals tied to performance or progression, the motivation to stay disappears, and players churn.

8. Piggy Bank Feature – Event-Based Implementation for Critical Strike

8.1 Concept

The Piggy Bank should not be a permanent feature, but rather a limited-time system activatedonly during special seasonal events (e.g. New Year, Halloween). This limited availability creates urgency and strengthens community engagement by aligning the system with in-game themes and visuals.

8.2 How The System Works:

• Piggy Bank is available **only during a specific event period** (e.g. 7–14 days).

• During this time, players earn XP by completing matches, getting kills, or winning rounds.

• These coins are stored in the Piggy Bank, and once it reaches a certain capacity, the player receives a prompt to unlock it for a fixed price (e.g. Ł89.99).

• Players can see their Piggy Bank fill up after each match, creating anticipation and a sense of progression.

8.3 Rewards & Content:

• Every Piggy Bank unlock guarantees one event-exclusive skin

• The rarity of the skin (common / rare / epic / legendary) is chance-based

• Additional rewards include gold or crate keys

• All skins are available only during that event, increasing their perceived value

8.4 Psychological Impact:

• Players feel rewarded every time → there's no "empty" unlock

• Skin rarity keeps players coming back for another try

• Time-limited and exclusive → stronger emotional connection and urgency

• No forced monetization → directly tied to active gameplay