

= Agar.io =

Agar.io is a massively multiplayer action game created by Matheus Valadares . Players control a cell in a map representing a petri dish ; the goal is to gain as much mass as possible by swallowing smaller cells without being swallowed by bigger ones . The name Agar.io comes from the substance agar , used to culture bacteria .

The game was released to positive critical reception ; critics particularly praised its simplicity , competition , and mechanics , while criticism targeted its repetitive gameplay . Largely due to word of mouth on social networks , it was a quick success , becoming one of the most popular web and mobile games in its first year . A downloadable Steam version was announced on 3 May 2015 , and the mobile version of Agar.io for iOS and Android was released on 8 July 2015 by Miniclip .

= = Gameplay = =

The objective of Agar.io is to grow a cell by swallowing both randomly generated pellets , which slightly increase a cell 's mass , and smaller cells without being swallowed by larger cells . It currently holds four game modes : FFA ( Free @-@ for All ) , Teams , Experimental , and Party . The goal of the game is to obtain the largest cell ; players restart when all of their cells are swallowed . Players can change their cell 's appearance with predefined words , phrases , symbols or skins . The more mass a cell has , the slower it will move . Cells gradually lose mass over time .

Viruses split cells larger than them into many pieces ( 16 or less , depending on the mass ) and smaller cells can hide underneath a virus for protection against larger cells . Viruses are normally randomly generated , but players can make new viruses by feeding a virus , i.e. ejecting a small fraction of a player 's cell 's mass into the virus a few times , causing the virus to split up and hence create another virus .

Players can split their cell into two , and one of the two evenly divided cells will be flung in the direction of the cursor ( a maximum of 16 split cells ) . This can be used as a ranged attack to swallow other smaller cells , to escape an attack from another cell , or to move more quickly around the map . Split cells eventually merge back into one cell . Aside from feeding viruses , players can eject ( release ) a small fraction of their mass to feed other cells , an action commonly recognized as an intention to team with another player . A player can also eject mass to trick enemies into coming closer to the player . Once an enemy cell is close enough , the player can split his / her cell to eat the baited enemy .

= = Development = =

Agar.io was first announced on 4chan on 27 April 2015 by Matheus Valadares , a then @-@ 19 @-@ year @-@ old Brazilian developer . Written in JavaScript and C + + , the game was developed in a few days . The game originally did not have a name , and users had to connect to Valadares ' IP address in order to play . The name Agar.io was suggested by an anonymous 4chan user , as other domain names such as cell.io were already taken . Valadares continued updating and adding new features to the game , such as an experience system and an " experimental " gamemode for testing experimental features . One week later , Agar.io entered Steam Greenlight with Valadares announcing a future free @-@ to @-@ play version of the game for download . He planned to include features in the Steam version not available in the browser version , including additional gamemodes , custom styling , and an account system . It was approved for listing on Steam due to community interest .

On 8 July 2015 , Miniclip published a mobile version of Agar.io for iOS and Android . Sergio Varanda , head of mobile at Miniclip , explained that the main goal of the mobile version was to " recreate the gaming experience " on mobile , citing the challenges with recreating the game on touchscreen controls .

= = Reception = =

Agar.io was released to a positive critical reception . Particular praise was given to the simplicity , competition , and mechanics of the game . Engadget described the game as " a good abstraction of the fierce survival @-@ of @-@ the @-@ fittest competition that you sometimes see on the microscopic level . " Toucharcade praised its simplicity , strategic element , and " personality . "

Criticism was mainly targeted towards its repetitiveness and the controls of the mobile version . Tom Christiansen of Gamezebo was mixed on the game , saying that there was " nothing to hold my attention " and that it was " highly repetitive , overall . " Pocket Gamer , reviewing the mobile version , described its controls as " floaty . "

Because it was frequently propagated through social media and broadcast on Twitch.tv and YouTube , Agar.io was a quick success . The agar.io website ( for the browser version ) was ranked by Alexa as one of the 1 @, @ 000 most visited websites and the mobile versions were downloaded more than ten million times during their first week . During 2015 , Agar.io was Google 's most searched game .

Agar.io was featured ( including some details of its gameplay as well as a shot of an actual game ) in " Chapter 48 " of Netflix TV @-@ series House of Cards . Its gameplay was compared to the presidential campaigning .

= = = Use as a political soapbox = = =

During the campaigns of the June 2015 Turkish elections , Agar.io was used in Turkey as a medium of political advocacy ; many players were naming their cells after Turkish political parties and references , with alliances formed between players with similar political views , battling against other players with opposing views . Some political parties have used Agar.io in campaign posters as a symbol of support .