

Hill Climb Racing (video game)

Hill Climb Racing is a 2012 2D physics-based racing video game released by the Finnish studio Fingersoft for Android, iOS, Microsoft Windows, and Windows Phone. It was originally created by Toni Fingerroos, Fingersoft's founder, and is the company's best-known product. The player controls a driver across hilly terrains, collecting coins along the way and spending them on vehicular upgrades while being watchful of the driver's head as well as the vehicle's fuel supply.

The game received generally somewhat favorable reviews. Critics tended to describe the graphics as being rudimentary at best or ugly at worst and sometimes panned the gameplay as unimpressive, but the former was overlooked when they lauded the physics. Further praise went to the simplistic two-button controls and the freemium monetization model for its passive approach. Its success led to the creation of a sequel, *Hill Climb Racing 2* in 2016, and in 2018, the *Hill Climb Racing* franchise became the second Finnish mobile game franchise after Rovio's *Angry Birds* to amass one billion downloads.

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Gameplay

The object of *Hill Climb Racing* is to drive as far through progressively difficult racing stages as possible while collecting coins,^[1] taking advantage of the nonrealistic physics^[2] and using only two simple controls: the Gas and Brake pedals. While in midair, pressing these pedals will instead cause the vehicle to rotate, allowing the player to control the angle with which they land. Fuel is replenished by picking up gas canisters or batteries along the way. The player can perform stunts such as driving the vehicle into the air for a prolonged time or flipping it over to earn more coins, which after the race may be spent on upgrades or to unlock new stages and vehicles (including monster trucks, dirt bikes, tanks, and Santa's sleigh).^[3] Conditions ending the game are depleting the vehicle's fuel or hitting the driving avatar's head.^{[4]:271}

Hill Climb Racing



| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Developer(s) | Fingersoft |
| Publisher(s) | Fingersoft |
| Director(s) | Toni Fingerroos |
| Platform(s) | <u>Android</u>, <u>iOS</u>, <u>Microsoft Windows</u>, <u>Windows Phone</u> |
| Release | <div> <div>Android</div> <div><u>WW</u>: September 22, 2012</div> </div> <div> <div>iOS</div> <div><u>WW</u>: November 8, 2012</div> </div> <div> <div>Microsoft Windows</div> <div><u>WW</u>: October 21, 2013</div> </div> <div> <div>Windows Phone</div> <div><u>WW</u>: November 27, 2013</div> </div> |
| Genre(s) | <u>Racing</u> |
| Mode(s) | <u>Single-player</u>, <u>multi-player</u> |

Since its inception, *Hill Climb Racing* has seen updates that add new content. For example, the garage was introduced in a December 2016 update, where players can purchase cars and tune their parts. Gems were also introduced as a currency of the game.^[5]

Development

Hill Climb Racing was developed by Toni Fingerroos, a self-taught Finnish programmer who was 29 years old at the time of the game's release. Prior to the game, he started writing software at the age of ten. He was intrigued by car racing, and wrote *Ralli 94* and shared it with his friends. At that time, when he thought that games were developed by firms and not by people, he named his own hobbyist firm Fingersoft.^{[6][7]}

A decade after his first game, Fingerroos revived the Fingersoft trade name as a professional studio that programmed games for Nokia mobile phones. Fingerroos described he "failed at that quite miserably." He since pursued other occupations, all with unfavorable outcomes. One of them was working with Pixolane, a game studio, and spending his money on developing a PlayStation 3 game called *Rust Buckaneers*^{[4]:243} that was ultimately cancelled as the studio wasted its seed money, which caused him to accumulate debt. Another was repairing and selling sports cars imported from Japan and the United Kingdom, which also drained his personal savings. Fingerroos returned to and revived again Fingersoft in late 2011, where as the company's sole worker, he designed a photography application every few days to see whether some of them would turn out to be successful. One of these apps was *Cartoon Camera*, released in February 2012 and having quickly amassed over ten million downloads. The app's profitability strengthened Fingerroos' confidence, helped him pay off debts, and secured the creation of his next project, *Hill Climb Racing*.^{[6][7]}

Fingerroos said he spent 16 hours a day for a couple of months developing *Hill Climb Racing* in a compact bedroom before completing the project.^[7] The sound assets were crowdsourced, and his friends and acquaintances drew the visuals. As Fingersoft's business manager, Jarkko Paalanen, states, the visuals were intentionally drawn to be "naïve and childish", as part of the game's character.^{[4]:243} Bill Newton, the game's protagonist, was drawn as a sketch by Fingerroos' partner Pai Turunen. Fingerroos then photographed the sketch with one of the company's earlier camera apps and modified it for the game's inclusion.^{[4]:243} It was released for Android devices on September 22, 2012.^[8] Amid the game's success, Fingerroos contacted Teemu Närhi, a former Pixoline employee, to port the game for iOS.^{[4]:243} That version was released on November 8,^[9] and the game was later ported to Microsoft Windows on October 21, 2013,^[10] and to Windows Phone on November 27.^[11]

Chinese version

Fingersoft had plans to localize *Hill Climb Racing* in China. They had already released the original game in that region in July 2014, in collaboration with MyGamez, a Finnish-Chinese game publisher specializing in marketing non-native mobile games to China. Paalanen saw an opportunity to appeal to the Chinese audience by altering the game's theme to match their culture, while keeping the gameplay unchanged. *Hill Climb Racing: China Edition* was published by MyGamez in February 2015, coinciding with Chinese New Year.^{[12][13]}

Reception



Screenshot illustrating elevation as the main aspect of the game.

Throughout this course, coins are spread in groups, with some of them accompanied by fuel and gems (as shown on the center-right). The top-left portion of the screen comprises the fuel gauge and an inventory of coins and gems.

Reception

| Review scores | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Publication | Score |
| <i>Mobil</i> | 7/10 ^[1] |
| <i>Modojo</i> | ★★★★★ ^[2] |
| <i>Pocket Gamer</i> | ★★★★★ ^[14] |
| Awards | |
| Publication | Award |
| Finnish App Awards | 2014 App of the Year ^[15] |
| China Mobile | Best Sports Game of 2014; ^[16] Best Innovation of 2015 ^[16] |

Hill Climb Racing's critical reception was somewhat positive, with praise often going to the game's physics. Criticism was normally focused on the visuals, but that was often overlooked when the physics was tested. *Modojo*'s John Bedford respectively dismissed the graphics and soundtrack as rudimentary and repetitive, but found a great deal of satisfaction in mastering the controls and called the game "furiously addictive."^[2] *SFGate*'s Peter Hartlaub praised the ability to upgrade vehicles, as he found it to dramatically improve the player's experience and demonstrate the game's "subtle" physics. Even though he found *Ski Safari*, a similar racing game, to have a more sophisticated gameplay and better graphics and be more cartoonishly "fun," he also found *Hill Climb Racing* more engaging and concluded that the game is "a good example of the importance of mechanics over visuals in [the mobile gaming] market."^[3]

Pocket Gamer's Harry Slater compared it to *Trials* and found it to be less "bombastic" and the graphics slightly ugly, but praised the simplicity of the gameplay. He called the game unimpressive, but decent in the genre of physics-based racing games and enjoyable.^[14] Swedish magazine *Mobil*'s Elias Nordling considered the game's freemium model and noted the progression system as fast enough to not make the in-app purchases tempting. He found the controls simple and the physics difficult, but his main complaint was the fact that when starting any level, the player always starts from the beginning, rather than from the highest achieved level. Elias concluded that that obscured the feeling of achieving anything, but he ultimately liked it and found it to be addictive.^[1] In the book *Finnish Video Games: A History and Catalog*, Juho Kuorikoski also found the monetization to be reasonable and the mechanics addictive. He described the visuals as being "amateuristic" and particularly ugly for a successful game, but later argued that "good graphics don't make a good game".^{[4]:271–272}

Sales

In its first fiscal year, Fingersoft reported that it gained a total of €15.5 million in revenue via advertisements and in-app purchases. The company's net sales continued to rise until 2018, when Fingersoft reported net sales of €21 million, down from 2017's €29.6 million. This was attributed to the company's focus on building its team and not releasing any title in 2018, and its older games continued to be profitable.^[17] A few journalists have described the game's performance as having transformed Fingersoft into a "rags-to-riches" app studio.^{[4]:271[6]}

In October 2013, Fingersoft announced that *Hill Climb Racing* had been downloaded 100 million times.^[8] In 2014, *Hill Climb Racing* had over 40 million active players playing it on a monthly basis.^{[4]:243} Near the end of April 2018, the company's CEO, Närhi, confirmed the franchise surpassed one billion downloads, becoming the second Finnish mobile game franchise—after Rovio's *Angry Birds*—to reach the mark.^[18]

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External links

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 - [Hill Climb Racing Arabic \(https://www.4iz.com/%d9%84%d8%b9%d8%a8%d8%a9-%d9%87%d9%8a%d9%84-%d9%83%d9%84%d9%8a%d9%85%d8%a8-%d8%b1%d9%8a%d8%b3%d9%86%d8%ac-%d9%85%d9%87%d9%83%d8%b1%d8%a9/\)](https://www.4iz.com/%d9%84%d8%b9%d8%a8%d8%a9-%d9%87%d9%8a%d9%84-%d9%83%d9%84%d9%8a%d9%85%d8%a8-%d8%b1%d9%8a%d8%b3%d9%86%d8%ac-%d9%85%d9%87%d9%83%d8%b1%d8%a9/)
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This page was last edited on 26 March 2021, at 02:03 (UTC).

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