

iPad & iPhone

▶▶ USER

In touch, switched on & connected

50 HOT iPad GAMES YOU NEED TO DOWNLOAD



INCLUDES REVIEW OF
**ANGRY BIRDS
SPACE**

REVIEWS



Company Rovio

URL space.angrybirds.com Price £1.99/69p

Angry Birds Space

After the relentless barrage of Angry Birds merchandise – angry toys, angry board games, angry slippers, even angry bins – it's nice to get back to what created the phenomenon in the first place: highly polished physics puzzles perfectly suited to the casual touchscreen gamer. And Angry Birds Space is a genuine sequel that adds far more to the franchise than new levels and a corny theme. (Although both of those are included.)

As before, your aim is to defeat some villainous green pigs by catapulting various kinds of bird at their houses and mastering the intricacies of gravity and trajectory. The fun thing here, though, is that gravity has become a moveable feast.

Taking its cues most obviously from the Mario Galaxy series of console platformers, Space introduces both zero-G areas and mini planetoids that exert their own pull on projectiles in the vicinity. This allows for some intricate trick shots where you bend a trajectory round two or even three planetary bodies to pick off a snoozing pig hidden on the far side of a moon.

It's great fun (except for frustrating moments when drifting space debris blocks your shot), and can get quite mind-bending at times. Although there's still a few disappointing levels set within a single gravitational field which, with aesthetic tweaks, could have appeared in any previous franchise instalment.

Some of the most enjoyably odd moments come when you bump into a concealed 'eggsteroid' and get sucked into a wormhole level. The first we discovered recreated Space



Invaders, for example; another pastiche of Super Mario. There are also a couple of nice boss battles where you have to repeatedly bombard the chief pig with space rocks.

Visually the game is appealingly cute. Each of the birds has been given a suitably galactic costume, and the space theme has been carried nicely throughout the level designs. Finally, there's a new character to play with: the ice bird, who freezes whatever he touches, weakening it for other birds to swoop in. We didn't like him much, but it adds to the possibilities.

iPad & iPhone User says...

It's nice to be able to talk about gameplay again, instead of superficial visual changes, and Angry Birds Space is a proper sequel that opens up genuinely new possibilities. Not every level quite lives up to the new mechanic's promise, but there's a huge amount to like here – and no doubt there will be plenty of levels added in free updates. **David Price**

THE SKINNY...

Likes: Tremendous potential of new gravitational effects; nice visual stylings

Dislikes: A couple of levels feel phoned in, but not much

Rating: ★★★★★



Company Limbic Software

URL www.limbic.com Price 69p

Zombie Gunship

As you might have guessed from the title, Zombie Gunship is set after a zombie apocalypse. The game sees you ensconced in the cockpit of a heavily armed Lockheed AC-130 that's endlessly circling over a bunker; inside which the last remnants of humanity have taken refuge. Every so often, you'll spy another survivor attempting to reach safety – unfortunately, a horde of zombies is usually in hot pursuit.

Your mission is simple: gun down the zombies before they can reach the bunker without catching any civilians in the crossfire. If a zombie breaches the bunker or if you kill three civilians, your mission will come to an end. A recent upgrade has doubled the number of humans you can kill, though this will set you back 15,000 points.

Your gunship is equipped with a 25mm Gatling gun, and there's ample opportunity to make sure you're well-armed for the fight ahead. Every time you kill a zombie you are awarded a bounty, which you can spend on upgrading your weapons, so that your guns load faster, shoot farther and inflict more collateral damage.

The graphics in Zombie Gunship have a decidedly low-tech feel – it's a grainy black and white, not unlike the view you'd get from a plane's surveillance camera. And that's to the game's



credit – the graphics really help create the kind of intense atmosphere you'd get in the most edge-of-your-seat monster movies. As grainy as the graphics are, you still get plenty of detail, and you'll be able to distinguish between friend and foe.

iPad & iPhone User says...

All these elements – the strategy, the graphics, and yes, the undeniable thrill of sending the undead back to the grave they crawled out of – make for a compelling iOS game. iPhone and iPad gamers may have a horde of zombie-themed games clamouring for their attention, but few deliver on as many levels as Zombie Gunship. If you're anything like us, you'll find yourself returning to this game time and again to take out the zombie hordes before they get you. **Phillip Michaels**

THE SKINNY...

Likes: It's great fun blasting the undead from a gunship

Dislikes: Graphics might not be to your taste

Rating: ★★★★★



For iPad only



For iPad, iPhone and iPod touch



Company Chair Entertainment
URL itun.es/iLP9qV **Price** £4.99

STAR BUY

Infinity Blade II

Not many games get the honour of stage time in the middle of an iPhone launch. But when Tim Cook's team wanted to show off the 4S's gaming chops, they made a call to Chair and asked how the sequel to Infinity Blade was coming along.

A one-game riposte to console snobs who don't take mobile gaming seriously, Infinity Blade brought craft and ambition to the iOS platform. It had stunning graphics, slick gameplay and surprisingly deep RPG elements, leavened by a dip-in piecemeal style that perfectly suited gaming on the go.

And now, two months after wowing the 4S launch audience in demo form, Infinity Blade's salivatingly awaited sequel has burst on to the App Store. Can it improve on the beloved original? And in pushing the limits of Apple's A5 processor in the 4S and iPad 2, has Chair made a game that less fortunate iOS users won't be able to enjoy?

A5 haves and have-nots

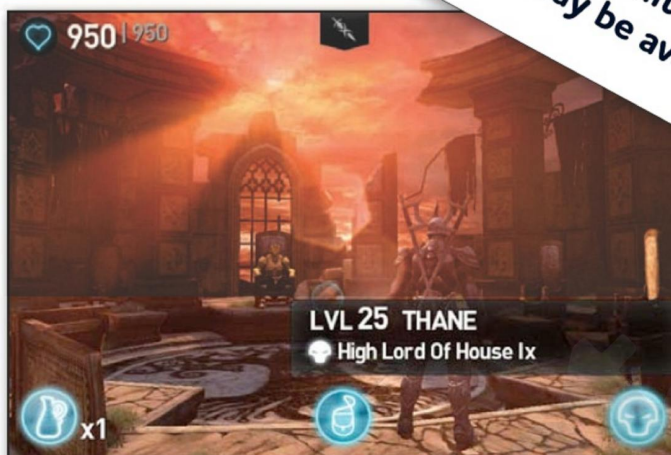
Let's tackle the second question first. Infinity Blade II is certainly a magnificent feat of programming, with graphics that surpass even the original game – you have to see the background landscapes to believe them – and fast, responsive gameplay. It's a showpiece for what today's mobile hardware can accomplish, and logically must make great demands on the processor. But the App Store's specifications state that as well as the A5-equipped iPad 2 and iPhone 4S, the iPad 1, iPhone 4 and 3GS and two generations of iPod touch can run the game too.

(A spokesperson for parent company Epic Games told us they would have preferred – but were not permitted – to specify 16GB+ models of the third-gen touch, however.)

In practice, A5 devices will be at an obvious advantage. We found the game ran like a dream on iPad 2, but we experienced a few crashes on iPhone 4; while some early users have complained of more frequent problems on iPad 1. An update has been issued to address these reports, and the spokesperson assured us that more are on the way.

Infinity – and beyond!

The structure of the game is largely the same as before: it's a series of heavily scripted one-on-one battles with giant monsters, with a small amount of choice in the routes you take between them. Each time you must learn your enemy's attack patterns and respond with the correct combination of parries, blocks, counter-attacks and magic spells, activated via



touchscreen gestures: swipe across the enemy to attack, to the side of the screen to dodge, and so on.

Once you've fought enough minions, you get to a boss. The first time you play through he may well hand you a beating, but the beauty of the game, as in the original, is that you immediately get to play through again, with all your equipment and skills intact, and try to do better. That's the 'Infinity' bit.

There's more depth than in Infinity Blade, with around four times the length of play, different routes will take you to various 'Deathless' bosses. And the fights themselves require more varied techniques; overuse the dodge, for instance, and your character will get exhausted. And each battle offers an XP reward for mastering a particular technique.

There are also multiple fighting methods: as well as the classic sword/shield, you can dual-wield or fight with a heavy, two-handed weapon. And you can upgrade weapons with ability-enhancing gems, like the Materia in Final Fantasy VII.

Less than Infinity

There are a few changes we're less keen on. The premise lacks the charming neatness of the original, in which getting killed caused you to come back two decades later as your own avenging son. There's more going on plot-wise, however.

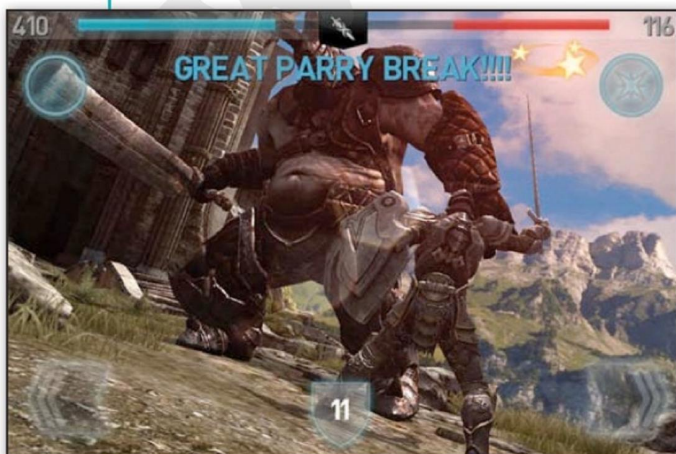
It also seems to take longer to get going, thanks partly to a so-so opening section where you're strolling around with super-powerful gear pinched from the God King. Veteran gamers will know at once that those items are going to be taken away, but you actually hold on to them for long enough to level up a few times. And when you *do* lose the Infinity Blade, the sense of accumulation, of working your way up from rusty second-hand rubbish to godlike armour and weapons – the essence of all RPGs, as Infinity Blade realised – is diminished.

Finally, for some odd reason Chair seems to have decided that everyone loved spotting and grabbing those occasional bags of gold in the background of the first game; now there are dozens of them. Instead of sitting back between fights and taking in the astonishing views, you end up obsessively playing 'Where's Wallet?'

iPad & iPhone User says...

These quibbles aside, Infinity Blade II is the perfect sequel, keeping and expanding almost everything that was great about its predecessor, and fixing the few things that didn't work. The graphics are even better, you're forced to approach the fights more imaginatively, and there's more of everything. If anything can force the world to take iOS gaming seriously, this is it. **David Price**

Prices are correct at time of writing; limited-time offers may be available



THE SKINNY...

Likes: Wonderful graphics; fast, thrilling action; heavily expanded content – more fights and collectable gear

Dislikes: Not much. Too many bags of gold, perhaps

Rating: ★★★★★

REVIEWS



Company United Soft Media **URL** www.catan.com
Price £2.99 (plus £2.99 for Seafarers expansion)

Catan

A recent software update gives us an excuse to finally review the iOS version of Settlers of Catan, Klaus Teuber's superb and deservedly idolised tile-based island conquest game.

Graphically, this is a faithful rendition of the board game, offering you three choices of tile design to replicate your favoured edition. Perhaps too faithful, in fact: some of the little playing pieces can be fiddly to hit without zooming in.

Going digital brings a number of benefits. It's a great relief, for example, having the iPad handle those tiresome banking duties and calculate victory points, all of which makes the game far more fast-paced. It can also be fun (and vindicating) to access the statistical tables of dice rolls at the end of the game. "See! The double six really did come up more than the five!"

But we have quibbles. For one thing, the computer players can be swines. If you're accustomed to politeness in your Catan games – leaving people alone until they've built a couple of settlements, for instance, or giving in to the old 'puppy eyes'

when your wife needs some of your cards – you'll be shocked by how relentlessly the AI players gang up on you. (On the other hand, playing with another human player and ganging up on them is extremely satisfying.)

THE SKINNY...

Likes: Looks good; fun; fast

Dislikes: Harsh computer player tactics; have to beat them to unlock some expansion features

Rating: ★★★★★



What makes this even more frustrating, if you've bought the Seafarers expansion (adding gold mines, multiple islands and the pirate, as shown above), is that you have to battle through campaign mode to gradually unlock the most exciting maps.

Despite these frustrations, however, the underlying quality of the original board game is such that this remains an enjoyable, long-lasting and deeply addictive experience. And £2.99 is a fairly low entry point to the world of Catan.

iPad & iPhone User says...

This is by no means the perfect port, but it's still Catan on an iPad, and that's enough to make it better than a lot of games out there. And while genteel Catanians may be surprised by the level of ruthlessness, others will probably see it as a plus point. Sometimes frustrating, but usually fun. **David Price**



Company Sega **URL** www.sega.co.uk
Price £1.99/£1.49

Brick People

In each stage of this bizarre game, you stack bricks to help the Brick People get to out-of-reach food. Occasionally, you have to collect objects in order. It's all against the clock, but don't worry if time runs out; you can opt to continue, with the 100 seconds of added time

counting against your final score. Every couple of stages, the Brick Monsters show up for a bonus game where you're forced to drag bricks to build specific objects.

It's all great fun. It offers Easy, Normal and Hard difficulty levels, and you can challenge a human opponent via Wi-Fi or Bluetooth; on the iPad version you can also face off against an opponent from the opposite site of your tablet. (The larger screen also makes the game easier to play.)

iPad & iPhone User says...

In an App Store that's increasingly becoming crowded with copycats, Brick People stands out as a weirdly wonderful original. **Philip Michaels**

THE SKINNY...

Likes: Highly original and fun; easy to pick up

Dislikes: Not much

Rating: ★★★★★



Company Popcap **URL** www.popcap.com **Price** £1.99

Peggle HD

► **STAR BUY**

Peggle, the popular iPhone app from the developers of Plants vs. Zombies, is just as enjoyable on the iPad.

The aim is to hit all the orange pegs, in gameplay reminiscent of pinball. Green pegs give you power ups, which vary depending on the stage you're playing. If your ball lands in the bucket that drifts back and forth at the bottom, you get a free ball.

For added fun, there's a Replay option, where you can watch your best moments again, plus a trophy room so you can admire your achievements.

iPad & iPhone User says...

With 55 levels and 12 quirky characters to guide you, Peggle HD will keep iPad owners of all ages entertained for hours. A catchy soundtrack and colourful graphics add to the experience.

Ashleigh Allsopp

THE SKINNY...

Likes: Addictive; great soundtrack; lots of levels and power ups; four modes

Dislikes: None

Rating: ★★★★★





For iPad only



For iPad, iPhone and iPod touch

**Company** Polarbit**URL** www.polarbit.com **Price** £1.99

Reckless Getaway

This fun, cheeky driving game is full of great graphical touches, from the banknotes tumbling out of your car windows to the busy, vibrant backgrounds. But the actual gameplay is less sure-footed. Many of the 16 levels are similar, and the controls take some getting used to. The onscreen buttons (left and right steer, plus power ups) don't lend themselves to accurate driving – although it is thrilling, in a breakneck sort of way – and switching to accelerometer-based tilt controls is worse.



New levels are opened up by racking up stars. But the chaotic driving action in Reckless Getaway doesn't lend itself to this puzzle-game-style scoring system, and the third and fourth stars were often frustratingly hard to get.

THE SKINNY...

Likes: Fun and fast, looks great**Dislikes:** Difficult driving controls, getting enough stars to progress is often frustrating**Rating:** ★★★★★

iPad & iPhone User says...

Reckless Getaway looks nice, and can be great fun – the level where you drive an armoured van is fantastic. But unlocking new levels can be a pain. **David Price**

**Company** NimbleBit **URL** www.nimblebit.com**Price** Free

Tiny Tower

In terms of both look and gameplay, Tiny Tower delivers an old-school gaming experience to the iPhone and iPad.

Like in the early sim games, you're in charge of assembling a virtual village, only in this instance, it's confined to an ever-expanding skyscraper.

NimbleBit has got a lot more things right than wrong with Tiny Tower. From the appealing graphics and catchy music to clever touches – like a 'BitBook' feature, in which your tenants can post Facebook-style status updates about their hopes and dreams – a lot of effort has gone into creating what's turned out to be a very good iOS game.



THE SKINNY...

Likes: Great fun to play; world keeps running when you're away**Dislikes:** Could use better Game Center support**Rating:** ★★★★★

iPad & iPhone User says...

Sim fans will love Tiny Tower's take on the genre, while gamers who might not have embraced sim games in the past could find themselves drawn into this free-to-play offering's detailed world. **Philip Michaels**

**Company** Gameloft **URL** www.gameloft.com**Price** £4.99/£2.99**STAR BUY**

Starfront – Collision

If the game's name doesn't already ring a bell, the gameplay certainly will. Each of the 20 missions follows a narrated story, complete with cut scenes. The gameplay is typical of real-time strategy games. You'll mine minerals to construct buildings and train armies to accomplish your objectives.



Real-time strategy games often succeed or fail based on their interfaces, and the small screen on an iPhone or iPod touch makes this an extra challenge. Starfront does an excellent job by giving you instant access to necessary controls and status information.

In skirmish mode, you can create your own single-player battles, and the different multiplayer options give you unlimited replay. There are five multiplayer maps for up to four-player battles online through Gameloft's service, or locally via Wi-Fi or Bluetooth.

James Savage

THE SKINNY...

Likes: Easy-to-use controls; 20 challenging missions; console-like cut scenes and details**Dislikes:** Not much**Rating:** ★★★★★**Company** Hogrocket**URL** hogrocket.com **Price** 69p

Tiny Invaders

Out of the ashes of Bizarre Creations comes a speeding Hogrocket, and the studio's debut iOS game. Tiny Invaders follows the adventures of a troop of space germs, who have been sent to take over the world. Your mission is to travel from host to host, controlling their minds until you and your team reach your target – the President of the United States.

The game itself is a top-down puzzler in which you navigate minuscule aliens around the track-like capillaries of unwitting human hosts. This is done by tapping junctions to switch their paths, but that simple mechanic evolves smoothly as capillaries become more complex and additional hazards like defender white blood cells are introduced.

iPad & iPhone User says...

While it can be precious about distinguishing taps intended to boost speed rather than switch junctions, Tiny Invaders achieves a triumphant victory thanks to its charm, challenge and clever design. **Sinan Kubba**

THE SKINNY...

Likes: Fun; challenging; pleasingly addictive**Dislikes:** Game had problems distinguishing types of tap**Rating:** ★★★★★

REVIEWS



Company Days of Wonder
URL www.daysof wonder.com **Price** £4.99

Ticket to Ride

► **STAR BUY**

If there's one type of game that's perfectly suited to the iPad, it's adaptations of classic board games.

Days of Wonder's Ticket to Ride is one of the latest to jump from the kitchen table to the tablet, and it does so in a manner that brings all the fun of the game without the ziplock bags full of plastic pieces.

Your goal is to build railroad lines across a map, connecting different cities. In order to place your trains on a route, you need to play cards of an appropriate colour. The graphics are gorgeous, with hand-crafted illustrations that fit the period setting, and the iPad's touch interface meshes well.



iPad & iPhone User says...

While the price is higher than many iPad users are accustomed to paying, the quality of this game is well worth the extra cost. Aficionados of the board version will find it a faithful reproduction, while new players should have no trouble getting the hang of it. **Dan Moren**

THE SKINNY...

Likes: Intuitive controls; great, fun game; great interface

Dislikes: Price might be a barrier for some people

Rating: ★★★★★



Company Mountain Sheep **URL** bikebaron.blogspot.com
Price 69p **Download** itun.es/iLv32z

Bike Baron

The start of each of Bike Baron's 50-plus levels sees an optimistic-looking motorcyclist getting ready to conquer an obstacle-heavy track. The touch controls make your motorcycle go forwards, backwards and tilt – vital for landing stunt jumps.

These controls are very responsive, which is handy, because the game demands precision. Tracks offer a variety of large and small loops, long and short jumps, and steep and slender ramps. Levels are also littered with objects that can help or hinder, such as rocket boosters and explosive barrels.

As well as conquering the obstacles, each level has three objectives you must achieve, and these vary from level to level. Sometimes you have to collect gold coins; other times you have to finish without accidents or within a certain time.

If you start to tire of the game, the level maker is very intuitive and lets you design new levels that are both complicated and visually interesting.



iPad & iPhone User says...

Bike Baron is not for people who hate repetition, but it is a well-made game that is challenging from start to finish. **Sam Felsing**

THE SKINNY...

Likes: Great fun; responsive controls; level-creation tool

Dislikes: 'Three attempts' rule that can be frustrating

Rating: ★★★★★



Company Ayopa Games **URL** weldergame.com
Price £1.49 **Download** itun.es/iS655L

W.E.L.D.E.R.

So, you like a wordsearch. And you get satisfaction from clearing a Tetris row. And you relish games that slowly but oh-so-surely become more challenging over time. And you have a thing for steampunk interfaces. Well, you're going to love WELDER.

At its core, WELDER is a wordsearch. You create words of four or more letters by swapping in nearby letters. So, for example, you have the letters PUSN nicely lined up. Tap S and then N and the two letters change positions, forming PUNS. When this happens, the letters vapourise, you earn points, and, Tetris-like, any letters above them drop down. You can also swap letters that aren't in the combination you'll eventually create. Instead, choose one of the eight letters that surround the letter you want to swap. Additionally, there are wooden "blank" letters you can double-tap to create any letter.

So far, so ho-hum. Now, for the twist. You're required to create a specific number of words per round and are given only so many initial swaps to do the job. You earn additional swaps by forming new words. The longer the word, the more points. There are also 'special' letters. Some are simply worth more points because they're harder to use, but

others can't be moved, some have a gold sheen that makes them worth more, some multiply the word's score, and others are completely locked down.

As you move up through the levels, you are required to form more words with fewer initial swaps. In addition, you're provided with harder letters.

Balancing this is the ability to form words in different ways as you progress. For example, as you move up through the game's levels, you earn the right to form words from a backward string, as well as place the last letter of a string at the front.

There isn't a single reason on earth to slap a steampunk interface on this thing, except that it looks very cool. But the developer didn't stop there. Just as unnecessary-yet-lovely are the ambient sounds that whoosh and tick along in the background.

Words With Friends players have to venture outside the app to confirm words. With WELDER, all the words you create appear below the main play area. To look up the definition, just tap the word. If the definition is in the game's built-in dictionary, it appears. Otherwise the game reaches out to the web. So, not only do you get the satisfaction of creating words out of apparently nothing, but you can learn new ones.



THE SKINNY...

Likes: Looks great; sounds great; play develops with time

Dislikes: A thoughtful game, so not for everyone

Rating: ★★★★★

iPad & iPhone User says...

Taken altogether, WELDER is addictive, instructive, and a pleasure for the senses. If you have the slightest interest in word games, you should own it. **Christopher Breen**



For iPad only



For iPad, iPhone and iPod touch

**Company** Pangea Software **URL** itun.es/iLP99P
Price 69p

Monkey Bongo

In Monkey Bongo, you're trying to get food over and around obstacles to their intended recipients.

You control a battalion of helpful monkeys who want to fling bananas at their hungry toucan friends. Drag back your finger to fling an object past the intervening structures – hay, dynamite and so on.

The action in Monkey Bongo unfolds across five worlds, each with 10 levels of their own, and all of this happens with the kind of gorgeous, multi-dimensional graphics that developer Pangea Software routinely delivers. Most of the puzzles also require a bit of thought to solve. And the game supports the AirPlay mirroring features introduced in iOS 5, so you can play it on your HD television set.



iPad & iPhone User says...

This is an engaging game with a distinctive look. Physics puzzle enthusiasts should go bananas over the intuitive controls, challenging levels and whimsical graphics. **Philip Michaels**

THE SKINNY...

Likes: Gorgeous graphics; fun gameplay; good sense of humour

Dislikes: Minor camera issues

Rating: ★★★★★

**Company** Gameloft **URL** ironman2iphonegame.com **Price** £2.99

Iron Man 2

Iron Man 2 is composed of nine levels of flying around, crossing checkpoints, completing timed missions, defeating baddies and figuring out puzzles. At £2.99, nine levels may seem a little short, but some tricky early levels stretch things out somewhat.

The graphics are excellent and easily on par with some of the higher-end 3D titles on the App Store. The menus are well laid-out and the text is easy to read. And flying through the various locations in the game is simply amazing. Indeed, this makes it all the more disappointing that there's no free-roam mode: villains or invisible walls are always there to keep you from exploring. The gameplay is a little linear, but we were more angered by the long load times between screens.



iPad & iPhone User says...

Iron Man 2 remains faithful to the film's storyline and cast and, coupled with the graphics and amazing gameplay, offers decent value. It's a slick adventure that's sure to keep you glued to your iPhone for hours. **Aayush Arya**

THE SKINNY...

Likes: Superb graphics and gameplay, faithful to film

Dislikes: No free-roam mode, linear, long load times, a bit short

Rating: ★★★★★

**Company** Launching Pad Games **URL** itun.es/iLP9TR **Price** 69p

Mighty Fin

The App Store is home to a number of worthwhile side-scrolling games, and this game belongs in the top tier of that category.

In the case of Mighty Fin, you're a fish bobbing along assorted aquatic settings and capturing valuable bubbles along the way. There are a multitude of levels – the game debuted with eight, and another eight have been added since. The music is tailored to each setting, and special attention has been paid to the sound effects, from the splash of Fin leaping out of the water to the flopping noise when he meets his unfortunate demise. Mighty Fin's graphics are also noteworthy, particularly the title screens.



Side-scrolling games can get repetitive, but Mighty Fin varies things by unlocking new game modes whenever you complete a level.

iPad & iPhone User says...

Great graphics, sound, and gameplay all add up to a delightful iOS game. **Philip Michaels**

THE SKINNY...

Likes: Multitude of levels; great sound effects

Dislikes: Gameplay can feel a little repetitive after a while

Rating: ★★★★★

**Company** Disney **URL** itun.es/iLP9jk **Price** 69p

Where's My Water?

There's a silly premise behind Where's My Water? – an alligator needs water for the showers he enjoys taking – but this physics puzzle game from Disney really encourages young players to use their reasoning skills.

The game asks you to help out Swampy, an alligator living well below a city's surface. You've got to direct water from street level storm drains to his shower below the ground. Standing between the water and the pipe is a large amount of earth cluttered with objects. You need to take your finger and dig a path through the dirt to guide the water to the pipe, while avoiding sewer dead ends.



iPad & iPhone User says...

Some of the game's 330 levels can be completed fairly quickly, but in each one, you've got to work your way through the level in a unique way. Not every level is challenging, but the game requires a little bit of thought. **Sam Felsing**

THE SKINNY...

Likes: Will appeal to a younger audience; 330 levels

Dislikes: Not every level provides a challenge

Rating: ★★★★★

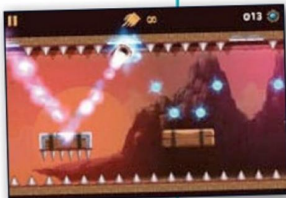
REVIEWS



Company HotGen
URL www.hotgen.com **Price** Free

To-Fu 2

To-Fu 2 is a challenging platformer made with iOS devices in mind. Rather than imprecise virtual buttons for movement, To-Fu 2 lets players ping the squishy hero with surprising accuracy. Simply tap on To-Fu, drag in the direction you want to go, and release to send him flying. The game's 100 levels are designed with spikes, saw blades and moving platforms to take advantage of To-Fu's pinging ability. In addition to reaching the exit of each level, you can earn extra medals for collecting energy orbs or using a set number of pings. The medals are a fun challenge, and offer an excuse to go back and replay levels.



Rating: ★★★★★

Likes: 100 levels; replayability
Dislikes: A little easy



Company: NaturalMotion
URL www.naturalmotiongames.com **Price** £1.99

Backbreaker 2: Vengeance HD

Backbreaker 2: Vengeance HD puts you in the boots of a running back trying to run the length of an American football field while avoiding opposing tacklers. On-screen controls let you dodge, and you can tilt your iPad to change directions. In Tackle Alley mode, on the other hand, you're the hunter, not the hunted – you've got to chase down a ball-carrier.



The graphics are amazing – designed to exploit the second- and third-gen iPads' processing power – and we love the over-the-shoulder view and heart-pounding thrill when an enemy tackler suddenly lurches into view.

Rating: ★★★★★

Likes: Amazing graphics
Dislikes: Easy to hit wrong button



Company Firemint **URL** firemint.com
Price £1.99/69p

Spy Mouse

Firemint knows its way around path-finding interfaces, and it shows in Spy Mouse. Drawing a line to hide from cats of all varieties – black, blind, ghostly – to gather pieces of cheese is elegant, with only a few hitches when you're frantically tapping the screen to run away. You can start with easier levels, but it's hardly necessary when the show-practise-test method of introducing concepts like mouse holes, couches and televisions is designed this well. The patient will be aptly rewarded with a satisfying challenging experience.



Rating: ★★★★★

Likes: Addictive
Dislikes: Occasionally frantic



Company Mediocre AB **URL** www.sprinklegame.com
Price £1.49

Sprinkle

Sprinkle isn't your average physics-based iOS game, thanks to the introduction of two new elements: water and fire. Your goal is to put out fires, quickly, using a crane/fire hose combo and as little water as possible. The realistic fluidity of the water and the lifelike properties of the fire are what makes this game different. The first few levels are easy, but they soon get more difficult – there are obstacles, tunnels, valleys, and ledges that will get in your way. Levels are star-based, so you'll need to earn a certain number of water droplets before the next ones open. Sprinkle is a fun, if short, game.



Rating: ★★★★★

Likes: Realistic water behaviour
Dislikes: Short



Company Booyah! **URL** www.booyah.com
Price Free

Early Bird

Early Bird doesn't exactly break new ground in gaming, but it offers a fun way to pass the time and some adorable graphics of baby birds and their worm enemy.

You control Early Bird in his journey to get from Point A to Point B – Point B being a wormhole populated by an attitude-laden worm. Flicking a finger across the screen sends Early Bird on his way, but you've only got so many flicks for each stage of the game. Obstacles stand in your path, but other objects can help you on your journey.



Levels become more complex and challenging to solve as you progress through Early Bird. That bolsters the game's longevity. You'll also find yourself going back to already-completed levels to improve upon your score. With 96 levels, that's a lot to keep gamers coming back for more.

THE SKINNY...

Likes: Cute graphics; timefiller; good replayability; free

Dislikes: Hard to shake the 'me too' feeling after Angry Birds

Rating: ★★★★★

There's plenty of fun to be had in Early Bird, and as a free download – at least at time of writing – there's no reason not to give this pleasant and casual game a try.

Philip Michaels



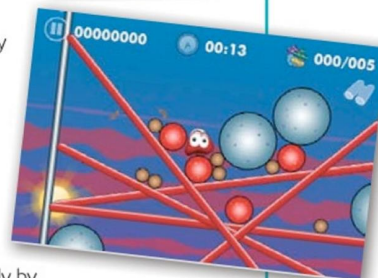
Company: Chillingo **URL** www.chillingo.com
Price: £1.49/69p

Blobster

STAR BUY

Children and adults alike will enjoy this entertaining side-scrolling platform game.

There are two methods of controlling the game – you can choose to tilt your device to move Blobster (a cute red blob) or touch the sides of the screen. Both are easy to master, especially by playing the tutorial level.



Blobster has three game modes, Arcade, Survival and Race. Arcade and Race are unlocked when you buy Blobster but you need to complete 75 per cent to unlock Survival.

Arcade mode sees you guide Blobster through four worlds, with 10 levels and three bonus levels in each world. It's seriously addictive, so we wish there were even more levels.

The Race mode is a race against time to get as far into the level as possible while collecting as many Blobules as possible.

In Survival mode you are constantly attacked by enemies and you have to get the right power-up to defeat them.

Offering attractive, colourful graphics and a strong variety of levels, Blobster will keep you entertained for hours.

Jordan Parsons

THE SKINNY...

Likes: Easy controls; freakishly addictive gameplay

Dislikes: Only 40 levels

Rating: ★★★★★



For iPad only



For iPad, iPhone and iPod touch



Company Chillingo **URL** www.chillingo.com
Price £1.49/69p

Cut the Rope **► STAR BUY**

Cut the Rope starts off simply enough: feed candy to Om Nom, the monster. In the beginning, it's as easy as the title suggests. However, the puzzles get increasingly intricate with the introduction of other interactive objects and various other challenges along the way.

Cut the Rope is a physics-based puzzle game consisting of a series of boxes, each containing 25 themed. Each level has a piece of 'candy' (ie a sweet), and Om Nom the monster. Using the objects in the level, you have to get the candy in his mouth. Early levels begin with simple ropes and bubbles, requiring a quick slice with your finger to cut the rope or a tap to pop the bubbles.

Later, you'll encounter more objects: like ropes that only appear when the candy is near them and hazards like spikes or candy-hungry spiders. To unlock later sets of levels, you'll need to collect a certain number of stars – each level has three to collect by touching them with the candy. Feeding Om Nom is usually fairly straightforward, but capturing all the stars can be a challenge.

The level design is superb, with excellent use of physics; from basic gravity to floating objects

and the bungee action of ropes. The game makes great use of the touchscreen, even requiring you to use multiple fingers at times. You'll find yourself motivated to not only complete each level to advance to the next, but to collect all three stars too.

Knowing an elegant solution exists keeps you replaying a level over and over to find it. Plenty of social networking options are included so you can share progress with your friends.

iPad & iPhone User says...

Cut the Rope is a blockbuster hit for a reason. The simple premise is executed with clean, beautiful graphics, responsive controls, awesome physics and top-notch level design. Om Nom never ate so well. **James Savage**



THE SKINNY...

Likes Addictive gameplay, clever puzzles, surprisingly complex

Dislikes None

Rating: ★★★★★



Company Chillingo **URL** www.chillingo.com
Price £2.99/£2.49

NyxQuest

Set in Ancient Greece, NyxQuest is a side-scrolling platform game that sees you play as Nyx, a winged girl who is searching for her missing friend Icarus. You'll need to be careful, though, as Hades has sent his minions to try and stop you.

Thankfully, the Greek Gods have given you some of their powers to help you defeat these enemies, which include hydras and harpies. You'll also need to keep an eye out for other obstacles such as bottomless pits. To progress through the game's 12 levels, you'll need to solve a series of puzzles, although these shouldn't pose too much of a problem.

The graphics are wonderfully evocative, and overall we were impressed.



iPad & iPhone User says...

NyxQuest is a highly addictive and great-looking game, and you'll soon find yourself totally immersed.

Jordan Parsons

THE SKINNY...

Likes: Impressive graphics; highly addictive

Dislikes: The game can be a little too easy at times

Rating: ★★★★★



Company Chillingo **URL** www.chillingo.com
Price £2.49/£1.49

Anomaly Warzone Earth

Anomaly Warzone Earth has taken the tower defence genre and turned it on its head. Instead of building up your defences, you go on the offence, leading your troops through a maze of obstacles laid out by an army of alien invaders.

The game itself looks fantastic and has a simple story, so you can quickly get into the battles. The controls are easy to understand and follow, and simple to remember. But despite this simplicity, we were pleased to discover that there is a tactical side to the game, as you have to carefully pick your route through the map, from the safest but longest route to the quickest and deadliest one.

iPad & iPhone User says...

Anomaly has great graphics and is fun to watch, but you'll have to make sure you get your tactics right to proceed to the next level.

Jordan Parsons



THE SKINNY...

Likes: Fantastic graphics; easy to understand controls

Dislikes: Don't have total control over your troops' actions

Rating: ★★★★★

REVIEWS



Company Indiagames

URL www.quarrelgame.com Price £1.99

Quarrel Deluxe

Quarrel is a game of words, mixing the best of Scrabble and Risk: players battle for control of 12 maps by spelling words and solving anagrams. When attacking or defending you can only use as many letters to spell words as you have units on the chosen territory, making strategy and reinforcements almost as valuable as your spelling. But vocabulary is the true key to victory. Unfortunately there's no multiplayer option, so you are limited to challenging the nine AI personalities, but these offer a diverse range of difficulty and play styles.



Rating: ★★★★★

Likes: Great for wordsmiths
Dislikes: No multiplayer



Company Zynga URL www.zynga.com

Price £2.49/69p (free version available)

Hanging With Friends

Like the classic game of hangman, Hanging With Friends sets you a word to guess, and threatens your avatar with doom if you guess wrongly too many times.

Taking it in turns with your opponent – each of you suspended by balloons over a lava pit – one player picks a word and the other has to guess it, one letter at a time. Get a letter wrong and you pick up a strike; fail a whole word and you lose a balloon.

If Zynga could stamp out the occasional crashes and lag, Hanging With Friends could be a great way to pass the time, and is worth a look if you're hankering for a mobile version of hangman.



Rating: ★★★★★

Likes: Fun, simple gameplay
Dislikes: Lag, occasional bugs



Company Illusion Labs

URL www.illusionlabs.com Price £1.99

Foosball HD

This virtual table football sim offers simple yet detailed graphics, from the grainy wood panelling to the shadows on the playing surface, and the iPad controls are as easy to master as the real thing. Slide your finger along the metal bar to move the players from side to side. A flick sends them spinning.

Foosball HD's single-player mode pits you against a computer opponent, but two-player mode is where it really shines. Half of the screen in landscape mode controls the blue team; the other controls the reds. There's not much customisation, but Foosball HD is a solid offering that will surely appeal to fans of table football games.



Rating: ★★★★★

Likes: Great two-player mode
Dislikes: Little customisation



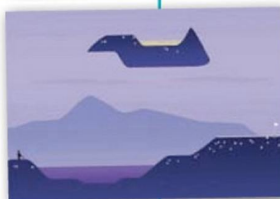
Company Noodlecake

URL www.noodlecake.com Price 69p

Super Stickman Golf

► **STAR BUY**

This highly addictive game sees you play as the titular Super Stickman. There are three course packs to choose from: Classic offers 16 beginner courses; Super includes eight intermediate ones; and Expansion sports five painfully advanced offerings. Each course includes nine holes, so right from the start, there's a lot of gameplay packed into Super Stickman Golf, which suited us as we absolutely loved this game.



Likes: Easy controls; physics feel right
Dislikes: Graphics are basic

Rating: ★★★★★



Company 4th & Battery

URL www.4thandbattery.com Price Free

The Unpleasant Horse

► **STAR BUY**

You're a cute little horse with wings – and a bad attitude. Occasionally a bird will fly by; you need to steal their feathers stay afloat. Also flying among the clouds are other horses – you hop onto their back and push them into the meat grinders waiting below. That's all there is to it – just good, wicked, pony-pulverising fun.



Likes: Great gameplay; fun sense of humour
Dislikes: No Game Center integration

Rating: ★★★★★



Company Mantid Interactive

URL mantidinteractive.com/redrover Price £2.49

Red Rover – The War to End All Wars

A playground game with a military twist, Red Rover pits you and a friend (the game is multiplayer only) against each other in a military strategy game. You must take your opponent's territory by strategically placing your tanks and troops. The visuals are simple but atmospheric, and we found this great fun.



Likes: Good strategy, bug-free
Dislikes: No single-player mode, only one board

Rating: ★★★★★



Company NaturalMotion Games

URL www.naturalmotiongames.com Price 69p

Jenga HD

With over 50 million versions of real-world Jenga sold since it was released over 25 years ago, there's a huge audience of fans wanting to know if Jenga for iPad stacks up.

Just like the physical block game, you begin with 54 wooden blocks stacked in a tower of 18 levels of three blocks each. The objective is to systematically remove blocks from lower levels and add those blocks to the top to see how high you can build the tower.



You can play alone or pass-and-play. Once the tower topples and blocks hit the table, the game is over. Jenga for iPad also includes an arcade mode in which the blocks are different colours, and you race against a countdown clock to match colours or place blocks quickly to score additional points.

A virtual touch-screen version will never replace the original, but the iPad version does an excellent job despite being trapped behind a screen.

James Savage

THE SKINNY...

Likes: Good graphics, cool pinch to zoom controls

Dislikes: Ain't nothing like the real thing

Rating: ★★★★★



For iPad only



For iPad, iPhone and iPod touch

Company **ustTwo**URL www.ustwo.co.uk Price 69p

Whale Trail

Whale Trail is a simple, soft-hearted game that closely follows the example of the much-loved avian side-scroller Tiny Wings. Touch your finger to the screen to make the whale fly upwards, and release to let him dive (but drop off the bottom of the screen and an evil monster will eat you). That's it for controls.

The whale uses up some kind of fuel as he flies along – we're not going to try and reproduce the nonsensical plot justification for this – so the aim of the game is to pick up enough of this fuel, represented by coloured bubbles strewn across the sky, to keep yourself chugging along.

As well as keeping yourself airborne and fuelled up, it's also important to avoid the storm clouds, which zap you with electricity if you bump into them, stealing some of your fuel supply and lowering your score multiplier. The only way to beat the clouds is to avoid them, or collect seven coloured stars and enter a temporary invincible 'frenzy'.

THE SKINNY...

Likes: Sweet music and bright, beautiful graphics; polished, simple gameplay; fun

Dislikes: You often feel like one go is enough; sense of cuteness can feel calculated at times

Rating: ★★★★★

It's all very simple; a true one-button game. But you can tell that this was put together by a large and well-funded team. The production values are off the chart, from the polished graphics to the twinkly soundtrack by the pop



star Gruff Rhys (from the band Super Furry Animals). Not to mention the marketing campaign, which has been inescapable.

The gameplay, too, has clearly been honed, and the swooping, acrobatic flight of the little whale can be exhilarating when timed right. But it doesn't have a huge amount of lasting interest. We found little compulsion to play the game over and over again the way you'd chase the next nest in Tiny Wings; it's more of an occasional pleasure than an addiction.

iPad & iPhone User says...

This is a beautifully designed game based on a flimsy and derivative premise; it feels like a bit too much money has been thrown at something that would have been a charming bit of throwaway fun with a fifth of the budget. Still, the price tag is only 69p, so the lack of depth really needn't worry you. And it is quite sweet and quirky, even if calculatedly so. **David Price**

Company **Gameloft** URL www.gameloft.co.uk

Price £4.99

N.O.V.A. 2

► STAR BUY

With its story of alien-human warfare and various intergalactic mysteries, N.O.V.A. 2 doesn't break new ground in terms of plot for a FPS. However, on an iPhone 4, it does offer a twist in terms of control. It takes advantage

of the iPhone 4's gyroscopes, thus allowing you to look around by just moving your phone as if it were a window into the game's reality. This both augments the game experience and eliminates the feeling that you need three hands to play an FPS on a touch device. Aside from this, gameplay boils down to moving, selecting a weapon and



shooting, but that's no bad thing. Graphics and sounds are top-notch; the former look great on the iPad's sharp, clear display, while the latter combines a high-power hard rock soundtrack with excellent sound effects.

Ryan Rigney

THE SKINNY...

Likes Innovative controls, great production

Dislikes Depth of field could do with more detail

Rating: ★★★★★

Company **Halfbrick**URL www.halfbrick.com Price 69p**► STAR BUY**

Jetpack Joyride

Jetpack Joyride is an addictive cave flyer that will keep you coming back for more. You play Barry Steakfries, who breaks into a top-secret lab, steals a machine-gun-powered jet pack and takes flight. As you jet or run along, ever-forward, you try to avoid various hazards, while collecting



coins scattered about. These can be used to buy accessories.

It's the extras that make Jetpack Joyride a joy to play. For example, at various points along your path, you encounter vehicle stations, each producing a random selection of laboratory vehicles such as the Hog, a jumping Harley look-alike equipped with a sawn-off shotgun. The controls took us a few games to get used to, but once we did, we found the mix of responsiveness, acceleration and force of gravity to be just about perfect.

iPad & iPhone User says...

Jetpack Joyride isn't the first cave flyer, but it's kept us coming back for more. **Dan Frakes**

THE SKINNY...

Likes: Highly addictive; controls are easy to master

Dislikes: None

Rating: ★★★★★

REVIEWS



Company Semi Secret Software **URL** aquariagame.com
Price £2.99 **Download** itun.es/iSp4RR

Aquaria

Based on the PC game of the same name, the iOS version of Aquaria is a side-scrolling puzzle game with a retro feel. You are tasked with helping Naija, a mermaid-like creature, explore her underwater world and discover her past.



The soundtrack is beautifully composed, and music is key to this game, as Naija uses it to interact with much of the world around her. During the game, she learns to play songs that allow her to do everything from fighting enemies to becoming a human (mermaid?) torch. As the game progresses, her powers and experiences get steadily darker as she has to defeat increasingly powerful bosses. We found the controls a little awkward once the action picked up.

Our biggest complaint, though, is that it's not always clear what you should do next, and it's easy to get stuck.

iPad & iPhone User says...

It's slow to start, but Aquaria draws you in and the beautiful design and soundtrack keep you hooked. The game is complex but rewarding.

Karissa Bell

THE SKINNY...

Likes: Beautiful soundtrack; attractive graphics; rewarding

Dislikes: Controls can be awkward; some will find it slow

Rating: ★★★★★



Company Infinite Dreams **URL** www.idreams.pl
Price £1.99 **Download** itun.es/iS65nc

Jelly Defense

Tower-defence games can involve modern-day soldiers, knights, otherworldly beings, futuristic spacemen or robots; but they're nearly always some variation on the military. This app opts for jelly. But game developer Infinite Dreams provides more than just cute critters in Jelly Defense, and the result is a refreshing take on the genre.

Your job on each level is to defend a set of crystals from the jelly invaders who travel predetermined paths that lead directly to your crystals. You defend yourself by placing jelly towers along the path; each tower has a specific weapon and attack range, and they can only attack invaders of matching colours. Each tower costs money, but fortunately invaders tend to drop coins after they've been defeated.

The levels increase in difficulty as you progress. The invaders vary in capability – some are faster than others, some have longer lives – and in higher levels, there are multiple paths to defend. You must also think carefully about tower placement, since the effectiveness, range and cost of each tower varies, and you have a limited budget to work with.

What makes Jelly Defense enjoyable is that it successfully combines challenging gameplay, attractive graphics and a playful

soundtrack. There's nothing complicated about the graphics, but they have a well-designed, cartoon-like quality. The soundtrack features catchy tunes with lyrics in Polish. (We think, based on some brief web research. Plus, Infinite Dreams is based in Poland.) The songs were done by an artist who goes by the name of Hipki, and

THE SKINNY...

Likes: Well thought-out graphics, gameplay and sounds

Dislikes: Fiddly on iPhone

Rating: ★★★★★



Company Hemisphere Games
URL hemispheregames.com/osmos **Price** £2.99

Osmos

Most games for iOS are designed for quick thrills. Not Osmos. At its heart, Osmos is a physics-based arcade game, but it's a world away from the frenetic world of Angry Birds and its ilk.

Here you control a 'mote' – an organic blob – with the aim of absorbing smaller motes. The various levels feature orbital motion and gravitational fields, sentient foes, and hugely chaotic environments in which you must move as subtly as possible or risk oblivion.

Osmos is perfectly suited to the iPad. The touch controls are faultless, the graphics beautiful and the soundtrack engaging. There are a few difficulty spikes, but the mix of ambient audio, stunning visuals and a procedural 'arcade' mode with random content keeps you playing until you succeed.

Osmos has all the hallmarks of an iPad classic.

Craig Grannell



THE SKINNY...

Likes Intuitive, different, beautiful and engaging. Varying level design. Arcade mode

Dislikes A few difficulty spikes

Rating: ★★★★★



you can preview the soundtrack on YouTube, or buy it on iTunes. The songs stick in your head – you'll find yourself singing a Jelly Defense tune while standing in the queue at the supermarket.

The fact that the game was designed with iOS in mind is clear in the interface. Much of the game is spent selecting a tower in your arsenal, dragging it to the desired location, and then collecting the money from the dead invaders. These tasks work well with iOS touch input. The iPhone version of the game, however, might be frustrating for players with big fingers, because the items on the iPhone screen are on the small side, and you'll sometimes select the wrong tower or place it in the wrong location.

iPad & iPhone User says...

Overall, Jelly Defense is an entertaining twist on the tower defence genre. It's addictive and entertaining, looks good, and might help you learn Polish. We think. **Roman Loyola**



For iPad only



For iPad, iPhone and iPod touch

**Company** Telltale Games **URL** www.telltalegames.com**Price** £4.99 per episode

Monkey Island Tales

Buckle up buccaneers, for a five-episode adventure in the boots of hapless hero Guybrush Threepwood. Things get off to a swashbuckling start when you're tasked with boarding the ship of the zombie pirate Le Chuck to rescue Threepwood's wife. It's a short scene, but it sets the humorous tone and the key characters' motivations if you're new to the series.

This version abandons the illustrated style of the first two Monkey Island games (available on the App Store) for a 3D world. The iPad adaptation has lower-resolution textures and is missing some effects from the Mac version, and it's a little jittery in places. However, the animation and top-notch voice acting bring the world to life.

Threepwood is moved by holding a thumb onscreen and sliding it around. That can be awkward when the camera angle changes dramatically, but tetchiness soon passes because the game doesn't depend on precision movement and timing. It's about observing and interacting with your surroundings,

and engaging with the delightful cast.

Dialogue is laden with the laughs and wryness for which the series is famed, and it's packed with clues on how to progress. Tales demands patience and thought and even the most ardent

adventurer will get stuck, so there's a hint system to help you get back on track. It's best turned off and only used when your best efforts fail to illuminate the way forward. That way you can savour the brainteasers, which lack replayability.

Beware switching to another app, though. The game will lose your progress since you last manually saved. That's a horrible oversight on Telltale's part, but if you can forgive that, the episodic structure of Tales delivers a twisting story that will keep your brain busy for hours.



THE SKINNY...

Likes: Humorous story

Dislikes: Game can lose progress when you switch to another app

Rating: ★★★★★

iPad & iPhone User says...

Tales is brilliantly daft escapism from start to finish. Play with sound to avoid getting stuck on the early sound puzzle, and for the satisfaction of voice acting throughout. Episodes are sold individually, which is good news if you're uncertain about the old-fashioned adventure style, despite its 3D makeover.

Alan Stonebridge

**Company** Gamevil **URL** www.gamevil.com**Price** 69p

Air Penguin

Produce an avian-themed iPad game, and you can expect people to let fly with the Angry Birds comparisons. But that would be unfair here.

Yes, Air Penguin features birds (penguins) and they seem to be angry (because of the ice caps melting). But this is a scrolling platform game instead of a physics-based puzzler, and uses a completely different control scheme: instead of on-screen buttons or touch controls, it relies entirely on the accelerometer. This may either delight or unfuriate you.

It's up to you to navigate the penguin from ice floe to ice floe across a series of stages, tilting your iDevice forwards, backwards and side to side to make sure he lands safely. Flick your iPad hard enough and you can make the penguin swerve around dangers – sharks, swordfish and walrus, for example – and back to safety.



iPad & iPhone User says...

The tilt controls are challenging to master, and some will find Air Penguin frustrating. But there are a lot of nice touches here, and we're impressed. **Philip Michaels**

THE SKINNY...

Likes: Offers a decent challenge, attractive background and cute sound effects

Dislikes: Potentially frustrating

Rating: ★★★★★

**Company** Gameloft**URL** www.gameloft.co.uk **Price** £4.99

9mm **STAR BUY**

This hugely entertaining third-person shooter, starring detective John Kannon, is very much a case of 'shoot first, ask questions once the bad guys are dead'.

The graphics are superb and the dialogue is hilarious, sure to appeal to Grand Theft Auto fans. The game offers optional gyroscope-based controls; the developers knew this could be tricky to get used to, but we reckon gyro makes those first few kills all the more satisfying.

The controls are conveniently placed, with the crouch/stand button and the virtual joystick on the left. The shoot and run button is bottom right, next to a cool button that allows you to dive in slow motion. There are numerous firearms to choose from, and a shop for upgrades.

iPad & iPhone User says...

This is a funny, great-looking game that's kept fresh by the gyro controls – well done, Gameloft. **Ryan Macro**



THE SKINNY...

Likes: Good graphics; gyroscope; hours of playability

Dislikes: Challenging for new gamers

Rating: ★★★★★

REVIEWS



Company Electronic Arts
URL www.ea.com **Price** £2.99/69p

Mirror's Edge

Welcome to dystopia. In Mirror's Edge, society is 'perfect', and government surveillance aims to keep it that way while, naturally, ignoring or suppressing the underclass. Cue 'runners'. The heroes of the age, these fearless athletes use free-running and parkour skills to leap over rooftops, plunge down ventilation shafts and clamber up buildings, passing on messages and avoiding getting shot by guys with really dangerous guns (and, often, hugely dangerous helicopters).

On the iPad, the 3D action of the PC game has been simplified somewhat, with protagonist Faith instead shown in a side-on view. Touchscreen gestures are used along with the accelerometer to control and fine-tune her actions.

The game is mostly pleasingly responsive and great to look at. On extended play, however, the environments become samey as they largely centre on building sites and skyscrapers or murky, industrial interiors. Despite the lack of visual variety, the outside levels are mostly glorious to play, although pathways are more linear than you might assume. Gameplay

"The outside levels are mostly glorious to play but can be quite linear too"



inside buildings tends to become more finicky and fragmented, but at least you have as many shots as you need to complete each level.

Besides the standard storyline mode, Mirror's Edge provides 'speed runs' for completed levels, and you can also challenge friends in a split-screen two-player mode that offers time-attack speed trials and a 'city hunt' for secret packages.

iPad and iPhone User says...

Mirror's Edge is actually pretty similar to the 69p iPhone game Run!, but with Hollywood-style production values. However, the story and wonderful outside sections give it an edge, and the 'infinite continues' model ensures even the toughest levels aren't too frustrating. **Craig Grannell**

THE SKINNY...

Likes Simple gameplay with polish and great production

Dislikes Short, inside levels can be more frustrating than fun

Rating: ★★★★★



Company Gameloft **URL** www.gameloft.com
Price £4.99/£3.99

Shadow Guardian

Run, jump, climb, shoot, and duck for cover. With Shadow Guardian by Gameloft, the iOS finally gets a vibrant, swashbuckling-fun action-adventure game.

You play as Jason Call, and the fate of the world rests upon your shoulders. Mercenaries battle you for control of an ancient relic, the Prima Materia, in this third person game. Drawing inspiration from the Uncharted and Tomb Raider series, Shadow Guardian is a moderately successful attempt to bring treasure hunting action to the iOS platform.

On screen controls provide move, look, aim, shoot, and jump commands. A cover button appears as you approach items like barriers – useful in a firefight. Shadow Guardian delivers plenty of eye candy and interesting locations to explore, but the ease at which you roll through the levels makes the journey less rewarding. **James Savage**



THE SKINNY...

Likes Impressive graphics, realistic lighting and shadows

Dislikes Lacking in challenge

Rating: ★★★★★



Company EA **URL** www.ea.com
Price £4.99/69p

Battlefield: Bad Company 2

The Battlefield series is well known on the console, and the iOS adaptation does those classics justice. BFBC2 offers diverse gameplay, including 14 missions undertaken in five different locations across the globe – all to be mastered in three difficulty levels. Multiplayer is available for up to four people via online, local WiFi, and bluetooth in free-for-all and squad deathmatch game modes.

Likes Control options, long lasting

Dislikes Graphics could be sharper

Rating: ★★★★★



Company Halfbrick **URL** www.fruitninja.com
Price £1.99

Fruit Ninja HD

Fruit Ninja HD is a funny, quick game that combines two ideal game qualities: It's easy to learn and fun to master.

It's hard to overstate the basic simplicity of the game. Fruit appears on the screen, and you're tasked with slicing and slashing it up, ninja-style. Swipe your finger across the screen and your sword does its work.

What Fruit Ninja HD lacks in depth, it makes up for in amusing addictiveness. A multiplayer mode takes it further than the old iPhone version.

Likes Decent gameplay, funny premise

Dislikes Simplicity itself

Rating: ★★★★★





For iPad only



For iPad, iPhone and iPod touch

**Company** Atari **URL** www.atari.com**Price** Free **Download** itun.es/iLv32K

Asteroids: Gunner

Atari's Asteroids: Gunner is a 21st-century revisit of the hugely popular arcade classic Asteroids (which can still be played on the firm's official website). The premise is disarmingly simple: you're a spaceship, and you need to blow up clusters of asteroids, with the occasional enemy space ship or alien swinging by so that you can earn bonus points. There are three sectors containing 50 levels each.

Controlling the game takes a step up from the original joystick, using double onscreen joypads: the left pad controls movement through 360 degrees, while the right pad fires. Being more used to swiping and tapping with a single finger in iPhone games, this took us a little while to get used to, but was quite effective for aiming.

While the original game was undoubtedly addictive, this modern iPhone version adds an extra dimension to boost longevity: the asteroids leave behind crystals that you can collect and save up to buy weapon upgrades, different spaceship models, single-use boosts and additions to your weapon inventory.

The game is free, but if you get impatient and want stronger weapon upgrades with whizzy affects, you can spend actual money on 'space bucks' that can be turned into thousands of crystals.

What impressed us most about Asteroids: Gunner was the atmospheric, spacey soundtrack: it's genuinely pleasant to listen to, unlike the music on some iPhone games we could mention.

THE SKINNY...

Likes: Graphics and sound; free; friendly to novices; simple but fun

Dislikes: Twin-joypad controls can take some getting used to

Rating: ★★★★★



In addition, there are some 200 achievements you can collect throughout the game to display on Apple's Game Center and OpenFeint. Novices will find it heartening to pick up awards even if their skills are fairly... dubious. One achievement called 'Master-At-Arms' was awarded to us for completing a wave with less than 30 per cent accuracy, and we collected another accolade for our speed, after completing a level by essentially running away.

Beginners will also appreciate being permitted to pass a level, get better at the game and then go back to it, rather than being stuck right at the beginning for an eternity.

iPad & iPhone User says...

Asteroids: Gunner is an exciting upgrade on one of the best-loved arcade classics in gaming history. The original premise is given a facelift with elegant graphics, an interesting soundtrack and responsive controls. Asteroids has come a long way. **Mary-Ann Russon**

**Company** Eyedip **URL** www.eyedip.com**Price** £1.99/69p

Flight Doodle

While the actual goal of Flight Doodle isn't unusual (fly upward, avoid falling objects, collect prizes), there are several elements that make this action game feel fresh and unique. With amusing visuals and highly customisable settings, this addictive game is certain to keep players returning. The option to customise enemies, choose what music plays, and design a flight craft allows players to make the game their own.

Likes: Easy to pick up gameplay, custom levels

Dislikes: Possibly a little over-simple

Rating: ★★★★★

**Company** Gaijin Entertainment **URL** gaijinent.com**Price** £1.49/69p

Braveheart

Nothing to do with the historically inaccurate Mel Gibson film, this game nonetheless shares that movie's high quotient of killing. Traverse the countryside massacring everything that gets in your way in search of the Holy Grail. It's a top-down view, and you tap to move your character about the landscape as literally hundreds of enemies descend upon you.

Likes: It's an addictive challenge, beautifully presented

Dislikes: A bit repetitive

Rating: ★★★★★

**Company:** Ongoz Spa**URL** www.ongoz.com

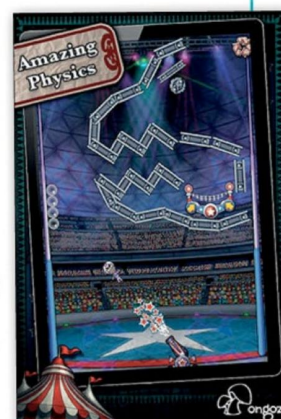
Circus Pain

Experience the exhilarating thrills of getting shot out of a cannon with none of the bone-crushing injuries in Ongoz's Circus Pain. This 2D physics puzzle game puts you in the star-spangled boots of Igor, a circus performer with a talent for getting flung out of a cannon and smashing everything in his path.

Your mission: control the angle and the thrust of Igor's cannon to allow this human cannonball to fly through a series of obstacle-ridden puzzles so that he can land safely in a waiting net – though not too safely, as you also rack up points for inflicting damage on poor Igor.

It may sound a lot like Angry Birds, the monstrously successful physics-puzzle game for iOS devices, or even Ragdoll Blaster. But even if Circus Pain doesn't break new ground as easily as it breaks Igor's bones, this free game is still an enjoyable (if slightly sadistic) game.

Sam Felsing



THE SKINNY...

Likes: Sense of humour, pick-up-and-play gameplay

Dislikes: A few bugs

Rating: ★★★★★

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