

## Gravis Destroyer Joystick (PC)

Produced By: Gravis

Review By: Tim Maxwell

Overview: A decent but feature-deficient joystick aimed at budget-minded gamers.

Good Press: An ambidextrous, inexpensive, joystick that can control just about anything you can throw at it.

Bad Press: Too few buttons, no programmability, and it is just light enough to cause desktop sliding problems.

Profile: Joystick

System Requirements: IBM PC or Compatible, Standard PC game port.

### Our Ratings:

Ease of Use: 9/10

Compatibility: 9/10

Documentation/Tech Support: 8/10

Feel: 8/10

Value: 7/10

Not too long ago, when a PC gamer looked to buy a new joystick or control pad, the only way to turn was to Gravis. Nowadays, things aren't quite so simple for Gravis as stiff competition has arisen from the likes of Microsoft and Saitek. While these two peripheral powerhouses have come out with some impressive products, no company can compete with Gravis when it comes to variety. Simply put, if there is a specific genre you enjoy, Gravis has a controller for you. But what is the best choice for the multi-faceted gamer who enjoys all types of games? Some might say the Gravis Destroyer joystick, others will not...

In the vast realm of PC joysticks, the Gravis Destroyer is about as "vanilla" as it gets. What you get is a simple joystick with two buttons and a throttle slider. Since there are no hat switches or secondary firing buttons, the designers were able to make this joystick comfortable for both right and left-handed players. This automatically gives this stick a bit of an advantage since most companies make their joysticks specifically for right-handers. While there are some exceptions to this (namely the Saitek's Cyborg 3D which can be adjusted for either hand), southpaws have to do some serious searching to find a workable controller. In this respect, this stick might be just what the doctor ordered.

Control with the Destroyer is quick and responsive. The two buttons and slider are easily accessible and are not taxing on the fingers. The base is relatively light so the stick slipping and sliding around on the desk is a concern, but this problem is lessened somewhat by the use of rubber disks on the bottom which do an adequate job of holding it in place. The issue does pop up on occasion, however - especially with space sims where a lot of jerking around is required to keep your target centered in the reticle. Expect to have to remove your ever-important free keyboard hand on occasion to get the stick back where you want it. When it comes right down to it though, the Destroyer doesn't feel flimsy and was actually a bit sturdier than I expected.

Another positive aspect of the Destroyer joystick is how easy it is to setup. There's no need to load any drivers and continually worry about updated drivers as the games need them. A quick connection and a brief trip to the control panel will have you up and running in no time at all. This ease comes at the expense of programmability, but who needs to program a two-button stick anyway?

That is the main problem with the Destroyer - there just isn't enough functionality. Simply put, two measly buttons just won't get you too far in the latest games. It will let you control just about any

game you can throw at it, but I can't think of a single game genre for which this stick would be ideal. Real flight and space simulator fans wouldn't even consider a stick without hat switches and more firing buttons, sports gamers would be far better off with a standard gamepad, first-person shooter buffs strive for more precise aim that only a mouse can provide, and racers would much prefer a steering wheel. So where does that leave the Destroyer? Just a button or two and perhaps a hat switch away from serious contention.

I hate to say that the Destroyer is a failure, but any serious gamer will tell you that control is everything. I just don't think that this stick has enough gadgets to compete with the Sidewinders and Cyborgs of the world. If you are a left-handed, budget-minded (or both) gamer looking for a cheap, no-frills stick to play all your games with, look no further – the Destroyer is for you. But if you really want to be part of the action, you can do a lot worse with just a bit more money and research.