

Lemmings Revolution – Windows

Developed by: Take2 Interactive

Published by: TalonSoft (<http://www.talonsoft.com>)

Reviewed by: Tim Maxwell

Official Site: <http://www.talonsoft.com/lemmings/index.html>

Genre: Puzzle

System Requirements:

Windows 95/98
166 MHz Pentium or equivalent processor
64 MB RAM
4 MB DirectX compatible 3D Accelerator Card
DirectX compatible sound card
500 MB Hard Drive space
24X CD-ROM Drive
Microsoft Compatible Mouse

Supports: 3D Acceleration

ESRB: Everyone

Overall Rating: 8

Graphics: 8/10

Sound: 7/10

Documentation: 8/10

Getting Started: 9/10

Gameplay: 8/10

Value: 9/10

The Good Press: Highly addictive gameplay; colorful graphics; dozens of puzzles to play through; at only \$20, the price is right.

The Bad Press: Some of the puzzles are mind-numbingly difficult.

Overview: The cute little blue-smocked creatures return in the most entertaining *Lemmings* title since the original.

Tips:

If you're stumped on a particular puzzle, pause the game and plan out your strategy.

If you're out of blockers and need to get your Lemmings going in a different direction, think of how you can use a different skill to turn them around. For example: if there is a wall above you, build a staircase up to it so your Lemmings will bump into it and change direction.

Some 15 years ago, the original *Lemmings* game was introduced and became an instant cult favorite among computer owners. Since then, there have been a half-dozen or so sequels to the venerable series on various platforms, but none of them have been able to live up to the original's ingenuity and fun factor. With this in mind, Take2 Interactive strived to release a product that was innovative and unique, but retained many of the elements that made the original such an addicting game. I'm happy to report they've succeeded in all respects.

For those of you who've been living under a rock for the past decade, *Lemmings* is a puzzle game whereby your main objective is to guide a troop of rodent-like creatures through a 3D maze. To help you do so, you can "program" the creatures (called lemmings) to perform different tasks including climbing, digging, blocking and so on. A time limit is assigned to each puzzle, and the ultimate goal is to escort as many of the resourceful rodents to their escape balloon as possible in the allotted time. Level selection is handled through a nifty hierarchy chart—each time you complete a mission, two more are opened up for you. Early on, the levels are pretty tame—consisting of only a few available skills and an obstacle or two. As you progress however, things start to really get exponentially more complicated and difficult. The game culminates with an array of missions that are darn near impossible to complete. Needless to say, if you're able to solve all 100 puzzles, you'll feel a sense of accomplishment and gratification that is unmatched in any other game.

As previously stated, Take2 has worked hard to keep the core gameplay from the original *Lemmings* intact, but have thrown in a whole slew of new twists and features to keep things fresh and entertaining. Some added extras include water tanks, acid pools, timed doorways, and speed-up pads just to name a few. In addition, there are a couple of new species of lemmings to spice things up—including the swimming variety, those impervious to acid, and the rare, multi-skilled breed. One of the game's biggest challenges is knowing how to utilize them to their full potential—if you accidentally kill one of them off, you may not get another one to work with.

With all of these new species and traps to confuse you, solid control is of utmost importance. Fortunately, manipulating your lemmings couldn't be simpler. All of the available skills are located in the upper left-hand corner of the screen along with a number denoting how many more times you can assign that particular ability. So, if you want to make one lemming a miner, you simply click on that icon and then the appropriate lemming. You can also rotate around the map at any time using the right mouse button, pause the game to plan your strategy, or speed up the game if you've solved the puzzle and now just have to wait for your lemmings to reach the balloon. Take2 has really done a nice job of making your brain do the work, and doesn't further complicate things with a troublesome interface.

One area where the *Lemmings* series hasn't really shined is in the graphics department. The lemmings themselves were never really all that distinguishable, and many of the backgrounds consisted merely of lines and blobs of pixels in the past. Luckily, *Lemmings Revolution* blows them all away with detailed, colorful landscapes and rock-solid animation. Take2 has also incorporated a number of other props and special effects such as fire and fish swimming around to further enhance the eye candy. Granted, the game certainly won't win any awards for graphics, but they are appropriate for the game and, most importantly, keep load times to a minimum.

On the sound side, *Lemmings Revolution* has again improved, but not to the degree the graphics have. The familiar cries of "Yippee" and "Let's go" from the lemmings are still present—virtually unchanged from previous editions. And the music, which admittedly has improved from the annoying ice-cream-man type riffs of years past, is still nothing to write home about. In fairness, this really doesn't detract from the experience since you have the option of turning everything off. I find that listening to my own music while playing provides for a more relaxing *Lemmings* session anyway.

So what is it that keeps this game from scoring higher? In all honesty, I couldn't find much to complain about with *Lemmings Revolution*, and with a retail price hovering around the \$20 mark, you can't really go wrong. However, this game certainly isn't for everyone—some may be turned off by its cutesy nature, others will find the latter stages too frustrating. But if you are a fan of the previous *Lemmings* titles and enjoy using your brain over a twitchy trigger finger, I can't recommend this game enough. If, on the other hand, you prefer mindless running-and-gunning, or think of gaming as a brainless activity, you're better off looking elsewhere.