

Title:	Re-Volt
Developed by:	Acclaim (http://www.acclaim.com)
Published by:	Acclaim (http://www.acclaim.com)
Reviewed By:	Tim Maxwell
Official Site:	(http://www.acclaim.net/games/re-volt/index.html)
Overview:	<i>Re-Volt's</i> innovation alone warrants its purchase. Luckily, it offers killer graphics and gameplay to boot.
Genre:	R/C Racer
System Requirements:	Pentium 200 PC; 102 MB of free hard disk space; 32 MB RAM; 4x CD-ROM drive; 4MB 3D accelerator card; DirectX compatible Sound Card
Supports:	Joysticks, joypads, or steering wheels; force feedback.
ESRB Rating:	Everyone
The Good Press:	Top-notch physics engine; awesome graphics and sound; challenging AI
The Bad Press:	Track editor is a joke; it's hard to tell which way to go at times
Ratings:	Graphics: 9/10 Sound: 8/10 Getting Started: 8/10 Documentation: 8/10 Value: 9/10
Tips:	Jumping off ramps may be fun, but it is an easy way to find yourself on your back. Be careful when using the speed-burst power up, the extra speed makes the car much more difficult to control.

Back when I was about eleven or twelve years old, having a remote-controlled car was synonymous with being cool. If you had one, you were in, if you didn't, you were an outcast. I was always in the latter category until one fateful Christmas morning when I unwrapped my first R/C racer. Sure, it wasn't expensive or well crafted, but it zoomed around with enough reckless abandon to satisfy me. Like so many ill-made cars before it however, it died without reason one morning. I couldn't afford a new one at the time and, as I got older, I never really had the desire to buy another one. A few weeks ago, a nifty little racing game called *Re-Volt* arrived at my doorstep and all my fondest childhood memories came flooding back to me.

Nostalgia aside, *Re-Volt* is one of the most innovative and downright enjoyable games I've played in quite some time. You start off the game by selecting the type of game you want to play (single race, championship, or obstacle course), select your car based on the specifications you choose, and hit the pavement for some rip-roarin' action. There are a total of thirteen tracks in seven unique environments,

including everything from your average neighborhood scene (Toys in the Hood), to a giant cruise ship (Toytanic). Each of these maps is intricately detailed and offers plenty in the way of interactivity. For example, in Toys in the Hood, you'll have to be on your toes to avoid a basketball that has bounced astray from someone's driveway. Other graphical touches include working sprinklers, moving walkways and animated exhibits at the museum.

All of this graphical splendor is accompanied nicely by some impressive audio effects. This game just might be the poster child for environmental audio. Basically, if you have a capable sound card and a four-speaker setup, you're in for a treat. You'll quickly recognize the familiar buzz of your car as it zooms by at scale speeds in excess of 350 MPH. Everything from the squeal of the tires to the seagulls flying overhead on the cruise ship sound 100% authentic.

Anyone who has used a remote control car will tell you that the physics engine in *Re-Volt* is second to none. I was astonished with just how realistically my car reacted when I ran over an oil slick or took a tumble off a ramp. One of the coolest examples of this occurred at the supermarket when you enter a large refrigerated room. You are forced to do a U-turn in this area to continue but the momentum of your car combined with the icy floor make this feat darn near impossible without a hitch. To succeed, you have to slow down and, as you start sliding, rotate your car to face the direction of the exit and pound the accelerator. Needless to say, successfully navigating this area was quite a rewarding experience. You'll find similar examples of this as you zip around the wet floors of the museum and the sandy roads of the Wild West.

As a result of the terrific physics engine, *Re-Volt* comes with a noticeable learning curve. At first, I was incredibly frustrated with the game. I'd be sailing along in first place, then make one false move and find my car flipping and flying all over. Countless times I found myself losing races due to the slightest navigational error. What quelled my frustration was the fact that I never felt like the game or the other cars were cheating. Unlike in many other racers, your competition isn't composed of driving aces. I frequently saw computer opponents stuck in corners or lying upside-down in a ditch. Therefore, I always felt like I had a chance to get back into a race and that is exactly the way a racing game should be.

Another great feature of *Re-Volt* is the aggressive artificial intelligence displayed by the other cars. Simply put, these guys are ruthless and have no qualms with jeopardizing their position to knock you (or another computer player) out for the count. These guys want to win the race and they'll use any means necessary to do so. No pansy drivers are allowed on this circuit so you'd better bring your skills to the table if you want to win.

Oh, there's one last thing I forgot to mention about *Re-Volt* – the killer array of weapons and other nifty gadgets. As you're driving along, you'll see little lightning bolts littered all over the track. When you run over one, a random weapon or other power up is placed in your inventory to be used whenever you please. These power ups include bottle rockets (which, when used, display the coolest graphical effect in the whole game), oil slicks, shock waves, and speed bursts among other things. With careful timing and placement, you can seriously hinder other cars with these weapons and this adds a whole new level of excitement to the game.

I'd be remiss if I didn't mention any flaws in the game, but let me tell you, they are few and far between. First of all, on some of the tracks, it can be very difficult to see which direction is the right way to go. There are arrows that show up and tell you which way to turn, but, especially when you've just been taken out by a bottle rocket, it can be hard to determine which way's which. Luckily, if things really get desperate, you can press a button and the computer will re-orient you to the track, but that wastes valuable time. Another minor hiccup comes with the less-than-stellar track editor that is included. The interface is a joke so sadly, any aspirations of creating an awesome track like the ones included would be very difficult. I hesitate to even call this a problem though since most games don't even bother including one.

Acclaim has a real winner on their hands with *Re-Volt* – even if you've never been into R/C racers. Die-hard racing fans will enjoy the innovative track design and stellar physics engine while the

over-the-top weapons and splendid graphics are sure to entertain the casual fan. Simply put, this game belongs in every gaming enthusiast's collection.