

Batman: Arkham City

An RYG Analysis

Platform: PC (Windows 7 only)

DRM: Games For Windows Live and SecuROM

Digital Distributor: PHYSICAL COPY ONLY!

Developer: Rocksteady Studios

Publisher: Warner Bros Interactive

RYG's VERDICT

39%

BARGAIN BIN MATERIAL

64% and Below

1. Product Info

Note: Demo can be found on [Steam](#). You will need to install the Steam Client first before playing the demo.

Note: Games For Windows Live was implemented with a mandatory and persistent-online user account; SecuROM was implemented as a release-date check and hardware binding DRM. More info can be found on [Flibit's SteamDRM Page](#).

Looking at how much information is provided on Batman: Arkham City on its website prior and on release.

- ✓ Minimum and recommended specs provided
- ✓ Demo provided
- ✓ Manual and Readme provided with the game
- ✗ Batman: Arkham City (Batman: AC) released after the sale of its console version
- ✗ Batman: AC for PC released with different global dates
- ✗ Available only on Windows and MacOS
- ✗ Base game sold as multiple “editions” with varying selections of day-one DLCs
- ✗ Only advised Games For Windows Live DRM was to be used on the game
- ✗ No advice on how SecuROM DRM would activate or affect users
- ✗ EULA, Privacy Policy and TOS is only found within the game
- ✗ Game-related information on Batman: AC is difficult to find & navigate

2. Privacy Policy

Note: [Privacy Policy](#) from Warner Bros Interactive.

Note: 3,465 Words found within Batman: Arkham City's Privacy Policy

Looking at Batman: Arkham City's Privacy Policy found only through Warner Bros Interactive's website.

- ✓ Policy applies to Batman: AC, Games For Windows Live and SecuROM DRM
- ✓ Data centres are 100% safe and secure
- ✓ Users can access their in-game account
- ✓ Users can modify in-game account
- ✗ Privacy Policy only found on Warner Bros's website
- ✗ Difficult to read, understand and is inconsistently worded
- ✗ Users not visibly notified of any changes made to the Policy
- ✗ “Personally-identifiable” and “non-personally identifiable” info are intertwined
- ✗ Doesn't define what info is specifically collected before and during gameplay
- ✗ Not advised where the info is specifically stored
- ✗ Not clearly defined how info is used
- ✗ Third parties not identified

3. EULA / TOS

Note: 1,641 Words found within Batman: Arkham City's EULA.

- ✗ Opt-in / opt-out process not provided
 - ✗ Users have limited control over in-game account
 - ✗ Users can't validate what they've provided
 - ✗ User data is retained by Warner Bros Interactive for an extended period of time
 - ✗ Can't review and query changes made to the Privacy Policy
 - ✗ Users must accept ALL changes made to the Policy before playing Batman: AC
- Looking at Batman: Arkham City's End User License Agreement.*
- ✓ Users can initiate legal action if the arbitration process fails
 - ✓ Users can criticise or provide criticism about the game without reprisals
- ✗ EULA / TOS is only found within the game
 - ✗ EULA / TOS only covers Batman: AC
 - ✗ Difficult to read, understand and is inconsistently worded
 - ✗ Drafted to only abide by the laws of the US
 - ✗ Users not visibly notified of any changes made to the EULA / TOS
 - ✗ Can't review and query changes made to the EULA / TOS
 - ✗ License to play the game only provided
 - ✗ No refunds or exchanges for purchased games
 - ✗ Replacement copies not provided
 - ✗ Terms and conditions for GFWL and SecuROM DRM aren't clearly defined
 - ✗ Circumvention of GFWL and SecuROM DRM prohibited
 - ✗ Back-ups aren't permitted
 - ✗ Batman: AC's source code isn't to be modified or reverse-engineered
 - ✗ Not permitted to create "mods"
 - ✗ Monitoring services / software are required to play Batman: AC
 - ✗ Warranties waived (excluding physical merchantability warranties)
 - ✗ Cover waivered against any unforeseeable damages, disruptions of service

Note: Limited warranties, waivers of liability and indemnity are commonly found within many software EULAs and TOCs

4. Setup / Install

Note: SecuROM will install extra files in the /AppData/Local/Temp folders

Note: Batman: AC will also install Will install xlive.dll + related files in /Windows/System32/SysWOW64/

Looking at how Batman: Arkham City is installed on Windows PCs only.

- ✓ Custom installation options are provided
 - ✓ Currently-executing background services won't interfere with installation
 - ✓ Error-free installation
 - ✓ Installation completed just under 60 minutes
- ✗ No installation logs of files and registry keys
 - ✗ Extra Batman: Arkham City files found outside of gaming directory
 - ✗ Extra GFWL and SecuROM DRM files found outside of gaming directory

5. Updates / Patching

Looking at how Batman: Arkham City is patched prior and after gameplay.

- ✓ Can opt-in / opt-out of automatic updates

Note: Users wishing to patch Batman: Arkham City will need to create a GFWL account and have it patched through GFWL.

- ✓ Day-one patch optional
- ✓ Can play the game unpatched
- ✗ No plans to sunset Games For Windows Live and SecuROM DRM

6. DRM & Activation

Note: Batman: Arkham City will connect to the following servers: Microsoft, Verisign and Sony DADC (SecuROM).

Note: SecuROM DRM implemented in Batman: Arkham City is a release-date check and hardware-binding DRM.

Notes: Users are not required to create a GFWL account in order to play and/or save their games locally. An offline local account can be created.

Looking at Games For Windows Live and SecuROM DRM in relation to Batman: Arkham City and its effects on Windows PCs only.

- ✓ Won't interfere with currently-executing background services or software
- ✓ Firewall and AV settings aren't modified
- ✓ User account not required
- ✓ Can play single-player game offline
- ✓ Activation is simple and hassle-free
- ✗ No instructions provided on the activation process
- ✗ Can't verify the safety and reliability of the activation process
- ✗ Activation pathway isn't explained
- ✗ Limited to 10 online activations to one PC
- ✗ Game is locked to specific account after activation
- ✗ GFWL and SecuROM DRM are implemented
- ✗ Limited to 5 hardware activations
- ✗ Limited to 10 installations on one PC
- ✗ No support or troubleshooting process

7. Gameplay Experience

Notes: This particular instance of Games For Windows Live needs no updating of any sort to play Batman: Arkham City.

Note: It is advisable for users to visit [PCGamingWiki's page](#) on Batman: Arkham City if they are having issues playing Batman: Arkham City.

Looking at the gameplay aspects of Batman: Arkham City and how it interacts with PC Windows.

- ✓ Can play on minimum specs
- ✓ Suitable options to modify video settings
- ✓ Can play with console controller
- ✓ Can play in windowed mode
- ✓ Won't "phone home" if an offline Local Account is created
- ✓ Can play offline
- ✓ Can play without connectivity issues on an ADSL connection
- ✓ Can play error-free for more than 5hrs
- ✓ Won't interfere with services and background software
- ✓ Will resume at the last checkpoint
- ✓ Can modify savegame and/or ini file
- ✗ Requires disc for gameplay
- ✗ Requires original copy to play the game
- ✗ Cannot customise console controls
- ✗ Requires constant and tethered internet connection to access DLC
- ✗ Can only play on one PC at a time per game / account
- ✗ DRM and monitoring services will operate during and after gameplay

8. PC Checkup

Looking at whether Batman: Arkham City will modify certain PC settings without users permission / consent.

- ✓ PC clean after scanning for viruses
- ✓ PC clean after scanning for malware and spyware
- ✓ PC clean after scanning for rootkits
- ✓ HOSTS wasn't modified
- ✓ Played Batman: Arkham City without major errors
- ✓ System configuration files remain unaltered

- ✗ Startup altered to include DRM services (Games For Windows Live)
- ✗ DRM services running in the background after shutdown

9. Removal Uninstall

Note: A number of Games For Windows Live-related files will remain, particularly in the / Windows/SysWOW64/ folder; SecuROM-Files will be removed (NOT registry keys).

Looking at how clean, efficient and effective the removal process is for Batman: Arkham City (How much legacy material is there after the removal of Batman: Arkham City?)

- ✓ Backup savegames prompt provided / Savegames retained

- ✗ Will need to uninstall the game via. Control Panel
- ✗ Games For Windows Live registry keys will remain
- ✗ SecuROM registry keys will remain
- ✗ No External tools to remove game + DRM files provided

10. Customer Support

Looking at the customer support side of Batman: Arkham City through Warner Bros' Support section

- ✓ Customer service / support found in one place at [Warner Bros Support Page](#)
- ✓ Website is easy to use and navigate
- ✓ Searching on Warner Bros Support Page is direct and quick
- ✓ Info is easy to read and understand

- ✗ Customer service takes more than 24 hours to respond
- ✗ Customer service will take more than 24 hours to resolve issues
- ✗ No option provided for giving feedback on the service of customer support

**RYG's
VERDICT**

39%

**BARGAIN BIN
MATERIAL**

64% and below

**SHOWS PROMISE
& POTENTIAL**

Between 65% and 84%

**WORTH
SUPPORTING**

85% and above

What affected the score for Batman: Arkham City more than anything were the number of things in which gamers weren't entirely made aware to what sorts of rights they had or how their game would affect their PC. That aside, playing Batman: Arkham City was possible during the 5-10 hour mark, offline and without the need of creating a GFWL account. Of course, this won't be possible for Windows 8 users.



Colophon

This analysis of Batman: Arkham City was compiled by Lisa and Martin Pham. Typeface used is ITC Stone Sans. RYG thanks Anna Henriksson, [Josh Bush](#), [Ethan Lee](#), [Adam Ames](#) and [David Hatch](#) for their insights and suggestions in the design of this analysis. Batman: Arkham City was bought with RYG funds through EB Games.

Disclaimer

These analyses are only a guide and represent RYG's perspective into Batman: AC as a product. We believe everyone should perform their own research and reach their own conclusions. This is one view of many, we hope. Again, we thank you for taking the time to read our analysis of Batman: AC and hope you continue to support our work.

RYG is a user research and design studio for video game developers and publishers. Our focus is planning and designing games with a gamers'-first mentality through user and product research. RYG is led by a husband-and-wife team of Lisa and Martin Pham. RYG is operated in the heart of Sydney.

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