

BioShock Infinite

An RYG Analysis

Platform: PC (Windows 7 only)
DRM: Steamworks (Steam)
Digital Distributor: PHYSICAL COPY ONLY!

Developer: Irrational Games / 2K Marin
Publisher: 2K Games / Take-Two Games

RYG's VERDICT

61% **BARGAIN BIN MATERIAL**
64% and below

1. Product Info

Looking at how much information is provided on BioShock Infinite on its website prior and on release.

- ✓ BioShock Infinite released simultaneously with its console version
- ✓ BioShock Infinite released globally on 26 March 2013
- ✓ Minimum and recommended specs provided
- ✓ Advised Steamworks (Steam) DRM was to be used for BioShock Infinite
- ✓ Advised how Steam DRM would activate the game through BioShock Infinite
- ✓ Manual and Readme provided with BioShock Infinite
- ✓ EULA and Privacy Policy fully accessible on steampowered.com & [2K games](#)
- ✓ All game-related information can be found on steampowered.com
- ✗ Available only on Windows
- ✗ Base game sold as multiple "editions" with varying selections of day-one DLCs
- ✗ No demo

2. Privacy Policy

Note: 1,507 words found within [Steam's Privacy Policy](#).

See Also: Relevant Sections: [Collection of Information, Personally Identifiable Information and Use of Personally Identifiable Information](#).

Looking at Steam's Privacy Policy through [Valve \(Steam\)](#)

- ✓ Privacy Policy found on steampowered.com
- ✓ Policy applies to Steam Client, Steamworks DRM and BioShock Infinite
- ✓ Easy to read, understand and is worded with clear consistency
- ✓ Users visibly notified of any changes made to the Policy
- ✓ "Personally-identifiable" and "non-personally identifiable" info are defined
- ✓ Policy specifies what's are collected before and during gameplay
- ✓ Info is stored in the US
- ✓ Data centres are 100% safe and secure
- ✓ Info is used solely for improving Steam's services only!
- ✓ Visible opt-in / opt-out process
- ✓ Users can access and modify their user account
- ✓ Users can modify their user account
- ✓ Users can validate the info they've provided

Note: Privacy Policy was retrieved March 2013; Effective Date of Steam's Privacy Policy prior to this evaluation was August 2012.

3a. EULA (GAME)

Note: 2,985 words found in BioShock Infinite's EULA.

Note: Steam's Subscriber's Agreement (EULA / TOS) is evaluated as a separate section 3b. EULA (STEAM)

Note: While the EULA prohibits the creation / use of mods, there is a **strong and vibrant modding community for BioShock Infinite**.

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

3b. EULA (STEAM)

Note: 6,286 Words found in Steam's EULA.

- ✓ Can request to have their data removed
- ✓ Can review and query changes made to the Privacy Policy
- ✗ Third parties not identified
- ✗ Users have limited control over their Steam account
- ✗ Users must accept ALL changes to the Policy before playing BioShock Infinite

Looking at BioShock Infinite's EULA from 2K Games / Take-Two Interactive.

- ✓ EULA / TOS is found on **2K games**
- ✓ EULA / TOS covers BioShock Infinite and Steam DRM
- ✓ Can replace damaged copies with a free, replacement copy
- ✓ Terms and conditions for Steam DRM are clearly defined
- ✓ Users can initiate legal action if the arbitration process fails
- ✓ Users can criticise or provide criticism about the game without reprisals
- ✗ Difficult to read, understand and is inconsistently worded
- ✗ Drafted to only abide by the laws of the US in the state of NY
- ✗ 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
- ✗ Circumvention of Steam DRM prohibited
- ✗ Back-ups aren't permitted
- ✗ BioShock Infinite's source code isn't to be modified or reverse-engineered
- ✗ Not permitted to create "mods"
- ✗ Monitoring services / software are required to play BioShock Infinite
- ✗ Warranties waived (excluding physical merchantability warranties)
- ✗ Cover waived against any unforeseeable damages, disruptions of service
- ✗ Termination process dictated by 2K Games.

Looking at Steam Subscriber's Agreement through Steam.

- ✓ EULA / TOS is found on steampowered.com
- ✓ EULA / TOS covers Steam DRM
- ✓ Terms and conditions for Steam DRM are clearly defined
- ✓ Can back-up copies of Steam Client
- ✓ Permitted to create free "mods" of Valve's Source Code Engine
- ✓ Won't blacklist specific background services or software
- ✓ Termination process is clear and transparent
- ✗ Difficult to read and understand
- ✗ Drafted to only abide by the laws of US in the state of California
- ✗ Users not visibly notified of any changes made to the EULA / TOS
- ✗ Can't review and query changes made to the EULA / TOS
- ✗ Circumvention of Steam DRM prohibited
- ✗ Monitoring services / software are required to use Steam

See Also: Section 12, *Dispute Resolution / Binding Arbitration / Class Action Waiver*

4. Setup / Install

Note: Installing games through Steam to a different folder and drive can be done by altering the Steam shortcut to add “-dev” (via. [RPS](#))

5. Updates / Patching

Note: There is a ~100Mb update that will occur straight after the installation of BioShock Infinite.

6. DRM & Activation

Note: It is recommended that (new) users should install and update Steam first before installing BioShock Infinite.

Note: BioShock Infinite will only be connected to the following servers: Valve, Level 3 Communications, Kaia Global Networks Ltd, CDNNetworks, Highwinds Networks, HiNet Networks, Verisign

See Also: How to play BioShock Infinite in [offline mode](#).

- ✗ Cover waived against any unforeseeable damages, disruptions of service
- ✗ Arbitration process isn't freely-provided and requested by Valve
- ✗ Legal action is waived

Looking at how BioShock Infinite is installed on Windows PCs only.

- ✓ Custom installation options are provided
- ✓ All files are installed within folders designated by users
- ✓ Steam DRM files installed within folders designated by users
- ✓ Currently-executing background services won't interfere with installation
- ✓ Error-free installation

- ✗ No installation logs of files and registry keys
- ✗ Installation completed beyond 60 minutes

Looking at how BioShock Infinite is patched prior and after gameplay.

- ✓ No other DRM files or registry keys are installed
- ✓ Users can be advised of game patch's availability via. [steampowered.com](#)

- ✗ Automatic updates are mandatory
- ✗ Day-one patch required
- ✗ Requires ALL patches to play BioShock infinite
- ✗ Patches only installed via. automatic updates
- ✗ Details of patches not provided
- ✗ No installation logs of files and registry keys
- ✗ Rollback option not provided
- ✗ No plans to sunset Steam DRM

Looking at Steamworks (Steam) DRM in relation to BioShock Infinite and its effects on Windows PCs only.

- ✓ Won't interfere with currently-executing background services or software
- ✓ Firewall and AV settings aren't modified or required to be modified
- ✓ Users are aware and advised on how BioShock Infinite will be activated
- ✓ Username, password and email are only required
- ✓ Unlimited online activations to any one PC
- ✓ Can play single-player game offline
- ✓ Only Steam DRM is implemented
- ✓ Unlimited hardware activations
- ✓ Unlimited installations
- ✓ Support and troubleshooting process provided
- ✓ Activation is simple and hassle-free

7. Gameplay Experience

See Also: [PCGamingWiki's page on BioShock Infinite](#), which includes a range of customisation / tweaks.

Note: (Local) savegame files are found under the \Program Files (x86)\Steam\userdata\<unique Steam ID>\8870\ folders.

Note: Configuration files are found under the \My Documents\My Games\BioShock Infinite\ folders.

- ✗ No instructions provided on the activation process
- ✗ Can't verify the safety and reliability of the activation process
- ✗ A non-transferrable user account is required
- ✗ Game is locked to specific account after activation

Looking at the gameplay aspects of BioShock Infinite and how it interacts with PC Windows.

- ✓ Can play on minimum specs
 - ✓ Disc not required for gameplay
 - ✓ Suitable options to modify video settings
 - ✓ Can remap keyboard/mouse and console controllers
 - ✓ Can play with console controller
 - ✓ Can play in windowed mode
 - ✓ 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
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- ✗ Requires original copy to play the game
 - ✗ Will "phone home"
 - ✗ Can only play on one PC at a time per game / account
 - ✗ DRM and monitoring services will operate during and after gameplay

Looking at whether BioShock Infinite 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 BioShock Infinite without major errors
- ✓ Start-up settings remain unaltered
- ✓ No DRM / monitoring services running in the background after shutting down
- ✓ System configuration files remain unaltered

Looking at how clean, efficient and effective the removal process is for BioShock Infinite (How much legacy material is there after the removal of BioShock Infinite?)

- ✓ Will need to uninstall the game via. Control Panel
 - ✓ Knowledgebase provided at Steam to remove all Steam files and registry keys
 - ✓ Knowledgebase in removing game + DRM files is easy to understand
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- ✗ Some registry keys related to BioShock Infinite remain

8. PC Cleanup

9. Removal Uninstall

Note: Steam does offer an option to **manually remove all Steam-related files**. It does work and will remove any remaining files and keys after uninstallation of BioShock Infinite.

10. Customer Support

Looking at the customer support side of BioShock Infinite through 2K Games.

- ✓ Customer service / support found in one place at support.2k.com
- ✓ support.2k.com is easy to use and navigate
- ✓ Searching on support.2k.com is direct and quick
- ✓ Info is easy to read and understand
- ✓ Consumers can initiate legal action if arbitration process fails
- ✗ Customer service takes more than 24 hours to respond
- ✗ Customer service will take more than 24 hours to resolve issues
- ✗ Tone and language used is distant, robotic and impersonal
- ✗ Focused on generic suggestions and solutions within their FAQ
- ✗ No option provided for giving feedback on the service of customer support

RYG's VERDICT

61%

BARGAIN BIN MATERIAL

64% and below

SHOWS PROMISE & POTENTIAL

Between 65% and 84%

WORTH SUPPORTING

85% and above

There are a few pitfalls and shortcomings here and there even though it's great that 2K have decided to use Steam for their third installment of their BioShock franchise (as opposed to GFWL / SecuROM). Getting past all of that BioShock Infinite is playable and customisable (in respect to its settings, remapping of keys, etc) as a PC game should be.



Colophon

This analysis of BioShock Infinite 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. BioShock Infinite was bought with RYG funds through EB Games.

Disclaimer

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