

Dead Island

An RYG Analysis

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

Developer: Techland
Publisher: Deep Silver

RYG's VERDICT

63%

BARGAIN BIN MATERIAL

64% and Below

1. Product Info

Looking at how much information is provided on Dead Island on its website prior and on release.

- ✓ Dead Island released simultaneously with its console version
- ✓ Dead Island released globally on PC Windows on 06.09.2011
- ✓ Minimum and recommended specs provided
- ✓ Advised Steamworks (Steam) DRM was to be used for Dead Island
- ✓ Advised how Steam DRM would activate the game through Dead Island
- ✓ Manual and Readme provided through steampowered.com
- ✓ All game-related information can be found on steampowered.com

- ✗ Available only on Windows
- ✗ Demo not provided
- ✗ EULA for Dead Island only provided via. the disc copy only

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 Dead Island
- ✓ 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
- ✓ Can request to have their data removed
- ✓ Can review and query changes made to the Privacy Policy

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

3a. EULA (GAME)

Note: 851 words found in Dead Island's EULA.

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

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.

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

- ✗ Third parties not identified
- ✗ Users have limited control over their Steam account
- ✗ Users must accept ALL changes to the Policy before playing Dead Island

Looking at Dead Island's EULA from Deep Silver / Koch Media

- ✓ Easy to read, understand and is worded with clear consistency
 - ✓ Can replace damaged copies with a free, replacement copy
 - ✓ Can back-up copies of Dead Island
 - ✓ Permitted to create free "mods" of Dead Island
 - ✓ Won't blacklist specific background services or software
 - ✓ Users can criticise or provide criticism about the game without reprisals
-
- ✗ EULA / TOS is only found within the game disc
 - ✗ EULA / TOS only covers Dead Island
 - ✗ Drafted to only abide by the laws of Austria
 - ✗ 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
 - ✗ Dead Island's source code isn't to be modified or reverse-engineered
 - ✗ Monitoring services / software are required to play Dead Island
 - ✗ Warranties waived (excluding physical merchantability warranties)
 - ✗ Cover waived against any unforeseeable damages, disruptions of service
 - ✗ Termination process dictated by Deep Silver

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

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 ~75Mb update that will occur straight after the installation of Dead Island.

6. DRM & Activation

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

Note: Dead Island will only be connected to the following servers: Level 3 Communications, QWest Communications, Highwinds Networks, Valve and Verisign.

See Also: How to play Dead Island in [offline mode](#).

Looking at how Dead Island 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
- ✓ Installation completed within 30 minutes
- ✓ Error-free installation

- ✗ No installation logs of files and registry keys

Looking at how Dead Island 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 Dead Island
- ✗ 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 Dead Island 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 Dead Island 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

- ✗ 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

7. Gameplay Experience

See Also: Some links in optimising the gameplay of Dead Island can be found through the following links:

- 1) [PCGamingWiki](#)
- 2) [ViciousXUSMC](#)
- 3) [Dead Island Config Tool](#)
- 4) [Steam Forums on Dead Island](#)

Looking at the gameplay aspects of Dead Island and how it interacts with PC Windows.

- ✓ Can play on minimum specs
- ✓ Can play a backup copy of the game
- ✓ Disc not required for gameplay
- ✓ Suitable options to modify video settings
- ✓ Can remap keyboard/mouse keys only
- ✓ Can play with console controller
- ✓ Can play in windowed mode
- ✓ Won't "phone home"
- ✓ 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

- ✗ 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 Dead Island 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 Dead Island without major errors
- ✓ Start-up settings remain unaltered
- ✓ No DRM / monitoring services running in the background after shutting down
- ✓ System configuration files remain unaltered

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 Dead Island.

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

- ✓ 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

- ✗ Some registry keys related to Steam remain

10. Customer Support

Looking at the customer support side of Dead Island through Steam

- ✓ Customer service / support found in one place at steampowered.com
- ✓ steampowered.com is easy to use and navigate
- ✓ Searching on steampowered.com is direct and quick
- ✓ Info is easy to read and understand

RYG's VERDICT

63%

BARGAIN BIN MATERIAL

64% and below

SHOWS PROMISE & POTENTIAL

Between 65% and 84%

WORTH SUPPORTING

85% and above

While the overall score puts Dead Island in the lower category / rating, we found that much of the positives of Dead Island came through the strong modding community that has helped gamers bring the best out of Dead Island, particularly with a number of configuration tweaks that raises the bar for the PC platform. We feel that in spite of the score (and its use of Steam) Dead Island is worth exploring.



Colophon

This analysis of Dead Island 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. Dead Island was bought with RYG funds through EB Games.

Disclaimer

These analyses are only a guide and represent RYG's perspective into Dead Island 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 Dead Island 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.

RYG Analysis: Dead Island
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