

RYG Evaluates Dreamfall Chapters

by

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It took us a while to look into Dreamfall Chapters, but in our assessment we figured some new things about the way we can look at games. Hopefully we can start to implement them in the new year.

RYG's Assessment
70%

Shows Promise & Potential
(Between 65% and 84%)

About Dreamfall Chapters

Dreamfall Chapters is an episodic, exploration / adventure game and continues on *The Longest Journey* storyline with the last game ending in 2006. Dreamfall Chapters is also a successfully crowdfunded game by Red Thread Games. Please refer to each section for our results we've evaluated and our summarised thoughts to gain a better understanding of how Dreamfall Chapters affects PCs and plays as a PC Game.

RYG Disclaimer

This Windows version of Dreamfall Chapters (Build: 1.1.1) was obtained through Humble Bundle independently with RYG funds for the purposes of evaluation and product testing. Dreamfall Chapters was evaluated on the following system specs: Windows 7, Intel i5-4460, 16Gb RAM, AMD Radeon R9 290 as well as on a system bearing an Intel HD 4600 Integrated Graphics.

Availability

Humble Bundle: https://www.humblebundle.com/store/p...ass_storefront

GOG: http://www.gog.com/game/dreamfall_chapters_season_pass

Steam: <http://store.steampowered.com/app/237850/>

Recommended System Specs

OS: Windows 7 or above (*Windows 7 Version Tested*)

CPU: Intel i5 (Quad Core)

GPU: ATI or NVIDIA Card with 1 Gb VRAM

RAM: 4Gb

HDD: 20 Gb (~5Gb was used in this evaluation)

Source: [Humble Store](#)

Section 1 - Content Strategy and Product Marketing

- + Was released globally on 21.10.2014
- + Is available through Windows, MacOS and Linux
- + Is available through Humble Store, GOG and Steam
- + DRM-Free versions of Dreamfall Chapters sold through GOG and Humble Store
- + EULA, Privacy Policy and Terms of Service accessible through [humblebundle.com](#)
- Certain DLCs provided on specific versions of Dreamfall Chapters
- Minimum / Recommended Specs not provided on [redthreadgames.com](#)
- Complete download size not provided through [redthreadgames.com](#)
- Demo was only provided for crowdfunded backers of Dreamfall Chapters only
- In-game documentation and/or tutorials not provided
- All game-related information is scattered between [humblebundle.com](#) and [redthreadgames.com](#)

Our Thoughts: While there's little information from the official site by way of specs, policy documentation, updates, DRM, etc. the Humble Bundle site has enough information for players to decide upon making an informed purchase.

Section 2 - Digital Distribution

- + Is sold at one, global price through Humble Store
- + Is available worldwide through Humble Store
- + Download / Client Manager is optional for download of Dreamfall Chapters
- + Minimum / Recommended specs provided through Humble Store
- + Released DRM Free through Humble Store
- + Humble Store advises how its DRM-Free process is used in Dreamfall Chapters
- + Only Username, Email and Password are required to create a Humble Store account
- + Alternative payment options provided by Mastercard, Visa, Paypal, Amazon and Bitcoin
- + Currency Notification provided prior, during and after purchase
- + Confirmation of purchase and receipt provided
- + Free and unlimited access and downloads after purchase
- + Can play Dreamfall Chapters without Download / Client Manager
- + Can backup purchased games 'offline' (e.g. external or optical drives)
- + Refunds and/or exchanges offered for purchased games under specific provisions

- + Can access personal data
- + Can review and dispute and validate breaches in [Humble Store Terms of Service](#)
- Complete download size not provided
- All players warranties waived whenever they use Humble Store
- Cover waived against any unforeseeable damage and/or service disruptions within Humble Store
- No known process to terminate account
- Account termination voids past purchases and licenses to play Dreamfall Chapters
- Can't review and question changes made in Terms of Service
- Past purchases voided after refusing to accept Terms of Service

Our Thoughts: The Humble Store is a great way to purchase (DRM-Free) games without the need of a user account. The payment process is fairly straightforward with a name, address, credit details and email being the only pieces of information required in making a purchase. To date all prices on the Humble Store are set in USD, GRB and EUR with the intent of providing a [near-parity pricing](#) of games sold on a daily basis. Players have the option of downloading their games through their Internet browser of choice or a Bittorrent client of their choice. However, some of the concerns raised in our assessment are consistent with every digital distribution store in the current market – little cover(s) provided in the event of service disruptions, difficulty in terminating accounts, difficult avenues in reviewing TOS and limited consumer warranties for digitally-purchased products.

Section 3 - Privacy Policy

- + Applies to Dreamfall Chapters and [Humble Store](#) only
- + Formatted for easy reading online
- + Written for easy comprehension
- + 'Personally-identifiable' & 'non-personally identifiable' info are clearly defined
- + Policy specifies what information are collected at specific areas of the platform
- + Players advised where the info is specifically stored
- + Data centres are 100% safe and secure
- + Info is used solely for payments, opt-in email campaigns & acct management
- + Visible opt-in / opt-out process in respect to Dreamfall Chapters and Humble Store
- Privacy Policy for Dreamfall Chapters through Red Thread Games not provided
- Players not visibly notified of any changes made to the Policy
- Players not consulted on future revisions to the Privacy Policy
- Third parties not identified
- Players provided with little no options to access all game and player data
- Player data is retained by Humble Store for an extended period of time
- Can't review and query (legal) changes made to the Policy
- No specific information on how info will be used in the event of a sale/merger
- Players must accept ALL changes made to the Policy before using Dreamfall Chapters

Our Thoughts: While there is an in-game setting that allows players to opt out of any data-sharing of their gameplay to Facebook, the game will still connect back to Red Thread Game's servers through SSL periodically. In addition to this there is no known Privacy Policy attributed to this particular in-game process. Meanwhile Humble Store's Privacy Policy is pretty straightforward, but otherwise written to boilerplate terms as with many commonly-worded privacy policies in the gaming industry.

Section 4 - EULA and Humble Bundle's TOS

- + No known EULA for Dreamfall Chapters
 - + Terms and conditions for its DRM-Free component are clearly defined
 - + Can legally make archival copies of Dreamfall Chapters
 - + Players can create content based on Dreamfall Chapters and monetise it online
 - + Dreamfall Chapters won't blacklist specific background services or software
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- Dreamfall Chapters's source code is restricted
 - Not permitted to create free 'mods' of Dreamfall Chapters

Our Thoughts: While there's no known EULA for Dreamfall Chapters (which is a good thing) there are a few things that players can and can't do with the game, namely with specific references to mods (as the source kit's not available).

Section 5 - Installation

- + Custom installation options provided through a compressed file
 - + No third party software required
 - + All game files installed in main installation directory
 - + All DRM files installed in main installation directory
 - + Currently-executing background services won't interfere with installation
 - + Error-free installation
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- No installation logs of files and registry keys

Our Thoughts: The distributed copy through the Humble Store is packaged in a ZIP file and should allow players to extract all game files to the file directory of their choice. Removing these files is as easy as deleting them off the system without any harm; there is a registry key that can be removed in relation to Dreamfall Chapters and it relates only to the in-game settings provided.

Section 6 - Automatic and/or Manual Patching

- + Automatic updates are optional
- + Can play Dreamfall Chapters unpatched and with minimal bugs
- + Patch free from any other third-party DRMs
- + Can download patches manually and/or through other portals

- + Patch free from any other third-party apps
- + Alternate notifications provided for existence of new patches via. steampowered.com
- + Dreamfall Chapters is playable with latest patches
- Details of patches not provided / provided prior to installation
- No installation logs of files and registry keys
- Rollback option not provided

Our Thoughts: Humble Store won't make any notifications to their customers in relation to any potential updates made to the games they've purchased. Instead, players should look towards the official website of Dreamfall Chapters or through Steam's gamecard to determine what updates have been made. This version was tested on the October 31st 2014 patch, which was version 1.1.1 – the same patch that fixed the majority of framerate issues during the Europolis stage of the game.

Section 7 - DRM and Activation

- + Instructions provided on activating Dreamfall Chapters
- + Currently-executing background services won't interfere with activation process
- + Firewall and AV settings not modified
- + Can verify safety and reliability of the activation process
- + Can play Dreamfall Chapters offline
- + Can transfer activation or game to another user account
- + This version of Dreamfall Chapters is DRM-Free
- + Unlimited hardware activations
- + Unlimited Installations
- + Troubleshooting process provided for failed activations

Our Thoughts: Players shouldn't have any issues downloading, playing, re-playing and archiving Dreamfall Chapters in any way, shape or form. There are also no known third party DRM files found in this copy of Dreamfall Chapters either.

Section 8 - Gameplay

- + Can play on minimum specs (tested on Intel HD 4000)
- + Can play a backup copy of the game
- + Can play in full screen mode
- + Can play in windowed mode
- + Can play in multiple resolutions from 720p to 1080p
- + Complete options in remapping keyboard and/or mouse controls
- + Separate volume controls provided for dialogue, sound effects, music and master
- + Full subtitles and/or captions provided for French, German and English
- + German language are supported alongside English
- + Can play Dreamfall Chapters in offline mode

- + Can access DLCs offline
 - + No known connectivity issues during gameplay
 - + Can opt out of achievements and leaderboards
 - + Dreamfall Chapters won't blacklist specific background services or software
 - + Can play game at last save checkpoint
 - + Can play on multiple machines simultaneously
 - + Can modify savegame and/or configuration file
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- Only Anti Aliasing, Depth of Field, Shadow Distance and Ambient Occlusion are provided in-game
 - No options in remapping console controls
 - No option for players to provide custom subtitles and/or localisation
 - Will 'phone home' without players consent
 - Will encounter some gameplay and/or performance errors during gameplay
 - Saves operate under a checkpoint and/or timing system

Our Thoughts: We found a few issues with the gameplay section of Dreamfall Chapters, although we suspect that it may be to do with how the game runs on AMD GPUs. The good news is that the frame rate issues that players were experiencing on the Europolis stage were fixed in the game's latest patch. However, players expecting a visual upgrade (or a writing-driven upgrade) from Dreamfall: The Longest Journey might be slightly disappointed. But this was chapter one and so the game's entire storyline isn't over yet.

Section 9 - General PC Maintenance

- + PC clean of viruses, malware, spyware and rootkits after installation and gameplay of Dreamfall Chapters
- + HOSTS was clean
- + Windows Startup was clean
- + Humble Bundle isn't running after gameplay of Dreamfall Chapters
- + No other PC settings were modified after gameplay of Dreamfall Chapters

Our Thoughts: Dreamfall Chapters is a clean game and won't impact on players PCs nor alter its settings outside of its gameplay.

Section 10 - Uninstallation

- Some game-related registry keys remain after manual removal of Dreamfall Chapters

Our Thoughts: As mentioned players can remove a registry key relating to Red Thread Games / Dreamfall Chapters as the key relates to the in-game settings.

Section 11 - Customer and Technical Support

+ From The Official Website: <http://redthreadgames.com/games/chapters/>

+ From SteamDB: <https://steamdb.info/app/237850/>

+ From PCGamingWiki: http://pcgamingwiki.com/wiki/Dreamfall_Chapters

If you would like to discuss this report, you can do so here on our [forum](#) (membership is required), or via our [Twitter](#) page.

Changelog

16.11.2014 – Report published on RYG