Far Cry 3

Platform: PC (Windows 7 only)
DRM: UPlay (Online Services Platform)
Digital Distributor: PHYSICAL COPY ONLY!

Developer: Ubisoft Montreal et al.
Publisher: Ubisoft Entertainment

RYG's VERDICT

43%

BARGAIN BIN MATERIAL
64% and below

1. Product Info

See Also: More info on Uplay or Online Services Platform can be found through Ubisoft's website.

Looking at how much information is provided on Far Cry 3 on its website prior to release.

- ✓ PC (Win) version of Far Cry 3 released simultaneously with the console version
- ✓ Minimum and recommended specs provided
- ✓ Advised Uplay DRM was to be used for Far Cry 3
- ✓ Advised how Uplay DRM would activate the game through Far Cry 3
- ✓ Manual and Readme found on Far Cry 3

- ✗ Far Cry 3 released with different global dates
- ✗ Available only on Windows
- ✗ Base game sold as multiple "editions" with varying selections of day-one DLCs
- ✗ No demo
- ✗ EULA, Privacy Policy and TOS are located across several websites and in-game
- ✗ All game-related info on Far Cry 3 is difficult to find and navigate

2. Privacy Policy

Note: 1,998 words found within Ubisoft's "Global" Privacy Policy.

Note: Safety & reliability of their data centres cited under "*What Safeguards Does Ubisoft Use to Protect My Personal Information?*"

See Also: Ubisoft's Privacy Policy, retrieved August 2013.

Looking at Far Cry 3's Privacy Policy found only through Ubisoft's official website.

- ✓ Data centres are 100% safe and secure
- ✓ Users can access their Uplay / User account
- ✓ Users can modify their non-essential details within their Uplay account

- ✗ Privacy Policy only found through Ubisoft's website
- ✗ Policy only applies mainly to Ubisoft's websites rather than Far Cry 3 specifically
- ✗ 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 specifically defined how info is used
- ✗ Third parties not identified

Note: Users can choose to opt-out of their Uplay account and/or services via. Email.

✖ Opt-out process provided via. email only.
✖ Users have limited control over the info they send to Ubisoft during gameplay
✖ Users can't validate what they've provided
✖ User data is retained by Ubisoft 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 Far Cry 3

3. EULA TOS

Looking at Far Cry 3's End User License Agreement and Terms of Service.

Note: 2,019 Words found within Far Cry 3's & Punkbuster's EULA.

✔ EULA / TOS covers Far Cry 3 and Uplay DRM
✔ Terms and conditions for Uplay 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

✖ EULA / TOS is only found within Far Cry 3
✖ Difficult to read, understand and is inconsistently worded
✖ Drafted to only abide by the laws of USA
✖ 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

Note: Replacement copies are conditional on the basis that users do not activate their copy of Far Cry 3

✖ Replacement copies provided for a fee & within 30 days of purchase
✖ Circumvention of Uplay DRM prohibited
✖ Physical back-ups aren't permitted
✖ Far Cry 3's source code isn't to be modified or reverse-engineered
✖ Not permitted to create "mods"
✖ AV and/or firewall software may require modification before gameplay

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

✖ Warranties waived (excluding physical merchantability warranties)
✖ Cover waived against any unforeseeable damages or disruptions of service
✖ Termination process dictated by Ubisoft

4. Setup / Install

Looking at how Far Cry 3 is installed on Windows PCs only.

✔ Custom installation options are provided
✔ All files are installed within folders designated by users
✔ Background services and software won't interfere with installation
✔ Error-free installation
✔ Installation completed within 30 minutes

Note: Uplay DRM and Punkbusters will install within /Ubisoft/ folder alongside Far Cry 3

✖ Third party software (other than DirectX or .NET Framework) is required
✖ No Far Cry 3 installation logs of files and registry keys
✖ Uplay DRM files found in /Ubisoft/Ubisoft Game Launcher/

5. Updates / Patching

Note: First-time installation and update of Far Cry 3 and Uplay DRM will require ~550Mb.

- ✓ No other DRM files or registry keys are installed
- ✓ Can install patches manually
- ✓ Details of patches provided via Ubisoft's Support Site

- ✗ Automatic updates are mandatory
- ✗ Day-one patch required
- ✗ Requires ALL patches to play Far Cry 3
- ✗ Third party updates required
- ✗ Notifications not provided for availability of game patches
- ✗ Changes to the Privacy Policy and/or EULA / TOS not provided
- ✗ No installation logs of files and registry keys
- ✗ Rollback option not provided
- ✗ No plans to sunset Uplay DRM

Note: Uplay DRM will perform multiple updates for first-time users.

Note: Uplay DRM and its services form a part of Ubisoft's DRM, distribution and PC gameplay policy.

6. DRM & Activation

Looking at Uplay DRM in relation to Far Cry 3 and its effects on Windows PCs only.

Note: Unlimited activations to any one PC, **BUT** gameplay is limited to one active PC.

- ✓ Won't interfere with non-AV background services or software
- ✓ Firewall and AV settings aren't modified or required to be modified
- ✓ Unlimited online activations to any one PC
- ✓ Can play single-player game offline after initial activation
- ✓ Only Uplay DRM is implemented
- ✓ Unlimited hardware activations
- ✓ Unlimited installations
- ✓ Online activation is simple and hassle-free

See Also: More info on Uplay or Online Services Platform can be found through Ubisoft's website.

- ✗ No instructions provided on the activation process
- ✗ Cannot verify the safety and reliability of the activation process
- ✗ Activation pathway isn't explained
- ✗ No offline activation option
- ✗ A non-transferrable user account is required
- ✗ Username, password, email, DOB and first + last names are required
- ✗ Game is locked to specific Uplay account after activation
- ✗ No support or troubleshooting process

Note: Far Cry 3 will connect to Ubisoft's servers, along with Verisign, Limelight Networks, Amazon Web Services, AOL, Softlayer Technologies, PunkBusters and Akamai Technologies

Note: User account creation can be done prior to activating Far Cry 3 or through Ubisoft's website.

7. Gameplay Experience

Looking at the gameplay aspects of Far Cry 3 and how it interacts with PC Windows.

Note: Downloadable copies provided after activating Far Cry 3 through Uplay.

- ✓ Can play on minimum specs
- ✓ Can play an online backup copy of the game
- ✓ Disc not required for gameplay
- ✓ Suitable options to modify video settings
- ✓ Can play with console controller (Xbox 360 controller tested)
- ✓ Can play offline
- ✓ Can play without connectivity issues on an ADSL connection
- ✓ Won't interfere with services and background software in offline mode

Note: Savegames can be found in /Ubisoft/Ubisoft Game Launcher/savegames/ folder.

✓ Will resume at the last checkpoint
✓ Can modify Far Cry 3's ini file

✗ Keys and buttons bound to default settings (in respect to console controller)
✗ Full screen mode only
✗ Requires constant and tethered internet connection to access DLCs
✗ Will "phone home"
✗ Can only play on one PC at a time per game / account
✗ Monitoring services (Punkbusters) will operate during and after gameplay

8. PC Checkup

Looking at whether Far Cry 3 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 Far Cry 3 without major errors
✓ Start-up settings remain unaltered

✗ Monitoring services running in the background after shutting down
✗ System configuration files altered in respect to Punkbusters

9. Removal Uninstall

Looking at how clean, efficient and effective the removal process is for Far Cry 3 (How much legacy material is there after the removal of Far Cry 3?)

✓ Backup savegames prompt provided

✗ Will need to uninstall Far Cry 3 via. Control Panel (or equivalent program)
✗ Notifications on deactiving the game not provided
✗ Punkbusters, Uplay and Far Cry 3 registry keys will remain

10. Customer Support

Looking at the customer support side of Far Cry 3 through Ubisoft's Support Services.

✓ Customer service / support found in one place at cs.ubi.com
✓ Customer service will resolve issues within 72 Hours
✓ Focused on understanding problems and providing an effective solution

✗ Searching on cs.ubi.com is somewhat difficult
✗ Customer services will take more than 24 hours to respond
✗ Tone and language used is distant, robotic and impersonal
✗ Options not provided for giving feedback on the service of customer support

RYG's VERDICT

43%

BARGAIN BIN MATERIAL

64% and below

SHOWS PROMISE & POTENTIAL

Between 65% and 84%

WORTH SUPPORTING

85% and above

It's unfortunate that much of the positive elements described in Far Cry 3's gameplay and its vast array of PC settings is undermined by its usual Ubisoft-centric elements, such as its autoupdate function, invasive 3rd party software, phone home capabilities and its inability to completely remove any Ubisoft files and registry keys from the system. Users may encounter significant stuttering during the cinematic scenes in the game.

Colophon

This analysis of Far Cry 3 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. Far Cry 3 was bought with RYG funds through EB Games.

Disclaimer

These analyses are only a guide and represent RYG's perspective into Far Cry 3 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 Far Cry 3 and hope you continue to support our work.