

Game of Thrones

An RYG Analysis

Platform: PC (Windows 7 only)
DRM: Act/Control
Digital Distributor: PHYSICAL COPY ONLY

Developer: Cyanide Studios
Publisher: Focus Home Entertainment

RYG's VERDICT

58%

BARGAIN BIN MATERIAL

64% and Below

1. Product Info

See Also: Information on [Act/Control DRM](#). Note: Protection-ID links Act/Control DRM to *StarForce ProActive* (version 5.7).

Looking at how much information is provided on Game of Thrones on its website prior and on release.

- ✓ Minimum and recommended specs provided
- ✓ Manual and Readme provided with Game of Thrones
- ✗ Game of Thrones released after the sale of its console version
- ✗ Game of Thrones released with different global dates
- ✗ Available only on Windows
- ✗ No demo
- ✗ Advised Act/Control DRM was to be used after general release
- ✗ Vague advice on how Act/Control DRM would activate Game of Thrones
- ✗ EULA is only found within the game
- ✗ All game-related information on Game of Thrones is difficult to find & navigate

2. Privacy Policy

Note: When connected Game of Thrones will connect to the following servers: Act/Control, Cyanide Studios, Focus Home Interactive, Verisign and Cloudflare.

Looking at Game of Thrones's Privacy Policy (or lack thereof).

- ✗ Privacy Policy not provided via. Cyanide Studios of Focus Home Interactive
- ✗ Not advised where the info is specifically stored
- ✗ Not clearly defined how info is collected and used
- ✗ Third parties not identified
- ✗ Users can't validate what they've provided

3. EULA TOS

Note: 2,198 words found in Game of Thrones's EULA.

Looking at Game of Thrones's EULA from Focus Home Interactive.

- ✓ Can replace damaged copies with a free, replacement copy
- ✓ Can back-up copies of Game of Thrones
- ✓ Permitted to create free "mods" of Game of Thrones
- ✓ Can opt-out of any monitoring services / software

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

4. Setup / Install

- ✓ Won't blacklist specific background services or software
- ✓ 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 Game of Thrones Disc
- ✗ EULA / TOS only covers Game of Thrones
- ✗ Difficult to read, understand and is inconsistently worded
- ✗ Drafted to only abide by the laws of England
- ✗ 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
- ✗ Terms and conditions for Act/Control DRM aren't clearly defined
- ✗ Circumvention of Act/Control DRM prohibited
- ✗ Game of Thrones's source code isn't to be modified or reverse-engineered
- ✗ Warranties waived (excluding physical merchantability warranties)
- ✗ Cover waived against any unforeseeable damages, disruptions of service
- ✗ Termination process dictated by Focus Home Entertainment

Looking at how Game of Thrones is installed on Windows PCs only.

- ✓ Custom installation options are provided
- ✓ All files are installed within folders designated by users
- ✓ Act/Control DRM files installed within folders designated by users
- ✓ Currently-executing background services won't interfere with installation
- ✓ Error-free installation
- ✓ Installation completed within 30 minutes

- ✗ No installation logs of files and registry keys

Looking at how Game of Thrones is patched prior and after gameplay.

- ✓ Can opt-in / opt-out of automatic updates
- ✓ Day-one patch optional
- ✓ Can play the game unpatched
- ✓ Users can be advised of game patch's availability

- ✗ No plans to sunset Act/Control DRM

Looking at Act/Control DRM in relation to Game of Thrones and its effects on Windows PCs only.

- ✓ Instructions provided on the activation process
- ✓ Won't interfere with currently-executing background services or software
- ✓ Firewall and AV settings aren't modified or required to be modified

5. Updates / Patching

Note: Game of Thrones's autoplay feature will advise users of an available patch if they're connected online.

6. DRM & Activation

Note: As mentioned in Section 1, the files incorporated with Act/Control DRM are linked to *StarForce ProActive* (version 5.7).

Note: Instructions on activating Game of Thrones manually can be found on the [Game of Thrones forums](#).

Note: Uninstalling Game of Thrones won't trigger a deactivation notification or request and so it will "burn" an activation limit if users aren't launching acpc.exe before uninstalling Game of Thrones. acpc.exe can be found within /Game Folder/Binaries/Win32/.

7. Gameplay Experience

Note: Savegame and configuration settings can be found within /My Documents/Game of Thrones/UnrealEngine3/Binaries/SaveData/

Note: Users can make further graphical modifications through the settings file. Instructions can be found on the [Game of Thrones's forum](#).

- ✓ Hassle-free offline option to activating the game is provided
- ✓ User account not required
- ✓ Can play single-player game offline
- ✓ Only Act/Control DRM is implemented
- ✓ Support and troubleshooting process provided
- ✓ Activation is simple and hassle-free

- ✗ Can't verify the safety and reliability of the activation process
- ✗ Activation pathway isn't explained
- ✗ Limited to 5 online activations to one PC
- ✗ Limited to 5 hardware activations
- ✗ Limited to 5 installations on one PC

Looking at the gameplay aspects of Game of Thrones 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
- ✓ Can play with console controller
- ✓ Can play in windowed mode
- ✓ Can play offline
- ✓ Won't "phone home"
- ✓ 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
- ✓ No DRM or monitoring services running in the background

- ✗ Minor GPU settings are provided (outside of configuration ini file)
- ✗ Can only play on one machine (as per EULA)
- ✗ Cannot customise console controller settings

Looking at whether Game of Thrones 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 Game of Thrones 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 Game of Thrones (How much legacy material is there after the removal of Game of Thrones?)

8. PC Checkup

9. Removal Uninstall

Note: Deactivating Game of Thrones via .acpc.exe can be found within /Game Folder/Binaries/Win32/.

10. Customer Support

RYG's VERDICT

58%



- ✓ Direct uninstallation shortcut provided
- ✓ Backup savegames prompt provided / Savegames retained
- ✓ Clean uninstallation
- ✗ Notifications on deactivating the game not provided

Looking at the customer support side of Game of Thrones through Cyanide Studios

- ✓ Customer service / support found in one place at [Game of Thrones's forum](#)
- ✓ Info is easy to read and understand
- ✗ Game of Thrones's forum is difficult to use
- ✗ Searching on Game of Thrones's forum was difficult

BARGAIN BIN MATERIAL

64% and below

SHOWS PROMISE & POTENTIAL

Between 65% and 84%

WORTH SUPPORTING

85% and above

What affected Game of Thrones (PC) more was the staggered releases, lack of proper (legal) documentation and a DRM that limited the ability to advise users how many activations they can use and how many they can revoke. Apart from this Game of Thrones is a cleaner game that won't leave any legacy material behind.

Colophon

This analysis of Game of Thrones 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. Game of Thrones was bought with RYG funds through JB HiFi

Disclaimer

These analyses are only a guide and represent RYG's perspective into Game of Thrones 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 Game of Thrones 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: Dungeon Siege 3
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