

Shadowrun Returns

An RYG Analysis

Platform: PC (Windows 7 only)
DRM: Steamworks (Steam)
Digital Distributor: Steam

Developer: Harebrained Schemes
Publisher: Harebrained Schemes

RYG's VERDICT

60% **BARGAIN BIN MATERIAL**
64% and Below

1a. Product Info

Note: Harebrained Schemes have provided an [unofficial FAQ](#) sourced from many presentations and written articles on the in's and out's of Shadowrun Chronicles, including its interaction with Steam.

Looking at how much information is provided on Shadowrun Returns on the Steam site prior and on release.

- ✓ Shadowrun Returns released globally for PC (Win) on 26.07.2013
- ✓ Minimum and recommended specs provided
- ✓ Advised Steamworks (Steam) DRM was to be used for Shadowrun Returns
- ✓ Advised how Steam DRM would activate Shadowrun Returns
- ✓ EULA, Privacy Policy and TOS fully accessible on [steampowered.com](#)
- ✓ All game-related information can be found on [steampowered.com](#)

- ✗ Available only on Windows and MacOS
- ✗ Base game sold as multiple "editions"
- ✗ No demo
- ✗ No Manual and/or Readme

1b. Digital Dwnld

Note: Backing up Steam games "offline" can be found via. [PC-GamingWiki](#).

Note: Refer to Section 3, [Billing, Payment & Other Subscriptions](#) in respect to pre-order refunds for users living in the EU

Looking at Steam as a digital distributing service for PC games.

- ✓ Available worldwide through [steampowered.com](#)
- ✓ Minimum and recommended specs provided
- ✓ Advised Steamworks (Steam) DRM was to be used for Shadowrun Returns
- ✓ Advised how Steam DRM would activate Shadowrun Returns
- ✓ Free and unlimited access and downloads after purchase
- ✓ Can backup purchased games "offline" (e.g. external or optical drives)
- ✓ Refunds offered for pre-orders (EU ONLY!)
- ✓ Can access personal data
- ✓ Can terminate account or request to terminate account

- ✗ Shadowrun Returns is priced inconsistently across global regions
- ✗ Download / Client Manager is required, including for gameplay
- ✗ User account creation is required
- ✗ No refunds or exchanges for purchased games
- ✗ Warranties waived (excluding physical merchantability warranties)
- ✗ Cover waived against any unforeseeable damages, disruptions of service

Note: Difference in prices for Shadowrun Returns can be found via. [Steam Apps Database](#).

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.

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

3a. EULA (GAME)

3b. EULA (STEAM)

Note: 6,946 Words found in Steam's EULA.

EULA has been updated to July 2013.

- ✗ Account termination voids past purchases and licenses to play them
- ✗ Consumers prevented from disputing Steam TOS breaches made against them
- ✗ Can't review and question changes made to Steam TOS
- ✗ Past purchases voided after refusing to accept Steam TOS

Looking at Shadowrun Returns's Privacy Policy through Steam

- ✓ Privacy Policy found on steampowered.com
 - ✓ Policy applies to Steam Client, Steamworks DRM and Shadowrun Returns
 - ✓ 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
-
- ✗ Third parties not identified
 - ✗ Users have limited control over their Steam account
 - ✗ Users must accept ALL changes to the Policy before playing Shadowrun

Looking at Shadowrun Returns's EULA from Harebrained Schemes.

- ✓ EULA / TOS wasn't found / wasn't required.

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

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

6. DRM & Activation

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

Note: Shadowrun Returns will be connected to the following servers: Valve (Highwinds Networks, Telia.Net, Kaia Networks, QWest Communications, Limelight Networks, Level 3 Communications, Comcast & WA Internet Exchange)

- ✗ 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

Looking at how Shadowrun Returns 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
- ✓ Installation completed within 30 minutes (using an ADSL2+ connection)

- ✗ No installation logs of files and registry keys

Looking at how Shadowrun Returns 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 Shadowrun Returns
- ✗ Patches only installed via. automatic updates
- ✗ No installation logs of files and registry keys
- ✗ Rollback option not provided
- ✗ No plans to sunset Steam DRM

Looking at Steam DRM in relation to Shadowrun Returns 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 Shadowrun Returns 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

See Also: How to play Shadowrun Returns in [offline mode](#).

7. Gameplay Experience

Note: Details on current workarounds and fixes can be found through [Steam](#).

See Also: How to play Shadowrun Returns in [offline mode](#).

Note: Saves are automated through a checkpoint system (at the end / start of each level).

Note: Shadowrun Returns will not recognise previous savegames. A workaround can be found on [Steam](#).

8. PC Checkup

9. Removal Uninstall

Note: Cache files related to Unity Web Player will need to be removed in order to complete a full uninstallation. These files are found in the /AppData/Local-row/ folder.

- ✗ 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 Shadowrun Returns 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 in windowed mode
- ✓ Can play offline
- ✓ Can access DLC offline (via. Steam Workshop)
- ✓ Won't "phone home"
- ✓ 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

- ✗ Only HD Textures, Anti-Aliasing and Resolution are provided
- ✗ Only playable on mouse and keyboard
- ✗ No manual save option.
- ✗ Can only play on one PC at a time per game / account
- ✗ Can't modify savegame and/or ini file
- ✗ DRM and monitoring services will operate during and after gameplay

Looking at whether Shadowrun Returns 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 Shadowrun Returns without major errors
- ✓ Start-up settings remain unaltered
- ✓ No DRM and monitoring services running in the background
- ✓ System configuration files remain unaltered

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

- ✓ Knowledgebase provided at Steam to remove all Steam files and registry keys
- ✓ Knowledgebase in removing game + DRM files is easy to understand

- ✗ Will need to uninstall the game via. Control Panel
- ✗ Some game files and registry keys related to Steam and the game remain

10. Customer Support

Looking at the customer support side of Shadowrun Returns through Steam's Community Forums

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

RYG's VERDICT

60%

BARGAIN BIN MATERIAL

64% and below

SHOWS PROMISE & POTENTIAL

Between 65% and 84%

WORTH SUPPORTING

85% and above

Putting aside the best/worst parts of Steam, the only real concern in which players should be aware of in relation to playing the retail version of Shadowrun Returns is how the savegame function is designed within the game, specifically with how savegames are transferred, backed up and (re)pointed through Steam. It's a feature that is somewhat understated. Apart from this Shadowrun Returns behaves like many Steam games we've looked at in 2013.



Colophon

This analysis of Shadowrun Returns 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. Shadowrun Returns was bought with RYG funds through Steam.

Disclaimer

These analyses are only a guide and represent RYG's perspective into Shadowrun Returns 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 Shadowrun Returns 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: Shadowrun Returns
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