

Platform: PC (Windows 7 only)
DRM: DRM Free
Digital Distributor: Direct From Developer

Developer: Eric Provan
Publisher: Eric Provan

RYG's ASSESSMENT

77%

SHOWS PROMISE & POTENTIAL

Between 65% and 84%

1a. Product Info

Looking at how much information is provided on Spate on the developer's website prior and on release.

- ✓ Spate released globally on 27.03.2014
- ✓ Available on Windows, MacOS and Linux
- ✓ Spate sold through developer's website and through Steam
- ✓ DRM Free option provided through developer's website
- ✓ Advised DRM Free on 27.03.2014
- ✓ All game-related information can be found on spategame.com

- ✗ Minimum and recommended specs not provided
- ✗ Download payload not provided on developer's site
- ✗ No publicly-released demo (only through Kickstarter)
- ✗ No Manual and/or Readme
- ✗ No Privacy Policy (Spate will connect to Google without player's request)

1b. Digital Dwnld

Looking at the developer's site as a digital distributing service for PC games.

- ✓ Spate sold at one, global price
- ✓ Available worldwide through spategame.com
- ✓ Download / Client Manager not required for gameplay
- ✓ Advised DRM Free on 27.03.2014
- ✓ Minimal details required in purchasing and downloading Spate
- ✓ Alternative payment options provided (Visa, Mastercard, Paypal)
- ✓ Correct currency confirmation provided prior, during and after purchase
- ✓ Confirmation of purchase and receipt provided
- ✓ Free and unlimited access and downloads after purchase
- ✓ Can play Spate without download / client manager
- ✓ Can backup purchased games "offline" (e.g. external or optical drives)

- ✗ Minimum and recommended specs not provided
- ✗ Download payload provided after purchase of Spate

2. Privacy Policy

Note: Spate will connect to Google on and during gameplay on a regular basis without any player's knowledge or approval.

Looking at The developer's site Privacy Policy through the the developer's site

- ✗ Privacy Policy not provided

3. TOS EULA

Looking at the developer's site's EULA.

- ✓ EULA / TOS not found / required.

4. Setup / Install

Note: Spate is a very small game to download (~880Mb) and install directly on Player's PCs.

Looking at how Spate is installed on Windows PCs only.

- ✓ Players can extract all game files to the directory of their choosing
- ✓ All game files are installed within folders designated by Players
- ✓ No DRM files installed within folders designated by Players
- ✓ Currently-executing background services won't interfere with installation
- ✓ Error-free installation
- ✓ Installation completed within 5 minutes
- ✗ No installation logs of files and registry keys

5. Updates / Patching

Note: The version of Spate evaluated was up to date and required no updates.

Looking at how Spate is patched prior and after gameplay.

- ✓ Can opt-in / opt-out of automatic updates
- ✓ Can play the game unpatched

6. DRM & Activation

Looking at The developer's site in relation to Spate and its effects on Windows PCs only.

- ✓ Firewall and AV settings aren't modified or required to be modified
- ✓ User account not required
- ✓ Can play single-player game offline
- ✓ Unlimited hardware activations
- ✓ Unlimited installations
- ✓ Activation is simple and hassle-free

7. **Gameplay Experience**

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

- ✓ Can play on minimum specs
- ✓ Can play a backup copy of the game
- ✓ Can play in full screen mode
- ✓ Can play in borderless windowed screen mode
- ✓ Can customise keyboard and mouse controls
- ✓ Can customise console (XBox360) controls
- ✓ Can play with console controller
- ✓ English subtitles provided
- ✓ 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 play on more than one PC simultaneously
- ✓ No DRM or monitoring services running in the background

- ✗ Limited video settings provided prior to gameplay
- ✗ No separate volume controls
- ✗ English only provided
- ✗ No option for User Localisation
- ✗ Will "phone home" to Google
- ✗ Won't advise players upon launching Spate
- ✗ Games saved at specific checkpoints within the game
- ✗ Can't modify savegame and/or ini file

Note: Spate will connect to Google on a regular basis if players play Spate with an internet connection.

8. **PC Checkup**

Looking at whether Spate will modify certain PC settings without Players 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 Spate without major errors
- ✓ Start-up settings remain unaltered
- ✓ No DRM and monitoring services running in the background
- ✓ System configuration files remain unaltered

9. **Removal Uninstall**

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

- ✓ Savegames retained in main directory

- ✗ Players will need to manually delete Spate from HDDs
- ✗ Players will need to manually remove registry keys relating to Spate

10. Customer Support

Looking at the customer support side of Spate through the developer's site

- ✓ Customer service / support found in one place at spategame.com
- ✓ Website is easy to use and navigate
- ✓ Searching on the The developer's site is direct and quick
- ✓ Info is easy to read and understand

RYG's VERDICT

77%

BARGAIN-BASE-MENT MATERIAL

64% and below

SHOWS PROMISE & POTENTIAL

Between 65% and 84%

WORTH SUPPORTING

85% and above

There is only one issue we found with Spate and it's the unknown, regular connections to Google (most likely Google Analytics) during each of the gameplay sessions. Apart from this Spate is released bug-free (in the times we've played it), feels properly tested and leaves a very minor file/registry footprint after its full [and manual] removal.



Colophon

This analysis of Spate 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. Spate was bought with RYG funds through The developer's site.

Disclaimer

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