

Thief

An RYG Analysis

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

Developer: Eidos
Publisher: Square Enix

RYG's ASSESSMENT

58% **BARGAIN-BASEMENT MATERIAL**
64% and below

1a. Product Info

Note: Alternative digital vendors in which Thief's sold. Be advised that each vendor will bundle their unique DRM system in addition to Steam.

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

- ✓ Thief released simultaneously with its console version
- ✓ Thief sold through multiple digital and physical vendors
- ✓ Minimum and recommended specs provided
- ✓ Advised Steamworks (Steam) DRM was to be used for Thief
- ✓ Advised how Steam DRM would activate the game through Thief
- ✓ EULA, Privacy Policy and TOS fully accessible on steampowered.com
- ✓ All game-related information can be found on steampowered.com

- ✗ Thief (for PC Windows) released with different global dates
- ✗ Available only on Windows
- ✗ No known DRM-Free option released for Thief
- ✗ Base game sold as multiple "editions" with varying selections of day-one DLCs
- ✗ No demo
- ✗ No Manual and/or Readme

2. Privacy Policy

Note: Privacy Policy contains ~1,860 words. Last updated August 2012.

Note: Please refer to *Personally Identifiable Information* under Valve's Privacy Policy.

Note: Please refer to *Use of Personally Identifiable Information* under Valve's Privacy Policy.

Note: Accessing personal info can be found within the Players Account Settings once logged into Steam.

Looking at Thief's Privacy Policy through Valve

- ✓ Privacy Policy found on steampowered.com
- ✓ Policy applies to Thief, Steam and Steam DRM
- ✓ Privacy Policy formatted for easy reading on the web
- ✓ "Personally-identifiable" & "non-personally identifiable" info are clearly defined
- ✓ Policy explicitly specifies which info are collected before & during gameplay
- ✓ Info is stored at Valve Corporation within the US
- ✓ Data centres are 100% safe and secure
- ✓ Policy explicitly specifies which information are used
- ✓ Players can opt-out of marketing and/or promotional material
- ✓ Players can access their personally-identifiable information
- ✓ Players can modify their personally-identifiable information
- ✓ Players have full control over their personally-identifiable information
- ✓ Players can validate the info they've provided via Email

Note: Refer to Steam Privacy Policy's **readability scores**.

Note: Valve, however, won't send personal info to third parties for marketing purposes.

Note: Please refer to *Use of Personally Identifiable Information* under Valve's Privacy Policy.

3a. EULA (GAME)

Note: 2,233 Words found in Thief's EULA.

Note: Refer to Thief's EULA **readability scores**.

- ✗ Privacy Policy was not written for easy comprehension
- ✗ Players not visibly notified of any changes made to the Policy
- ✗ Players not consulted on future revisions to the Privacy Policy
- ✗ Third parties are not identified
- ✗ Players cannot export their information
- ✗ Players data is retained by Valve for an extended period of time
- ✗ Can't review and query changes made to the Privacy Policy
- ✗ Valve may transfer all players information in the event of a sale or merger
- ✗ Players must accept ALL changes made before playing Thief

Looking at Thief's EULA from Square Enix.

- ✓ EULA / TOS is found on steampowered.com
 - ✓ EULA / TOS covers Thief, Steam and Steam DRM
 - ✓ Players visibly notified of any changes made to the EULA / TOS prior to purchase
 - ✓ Terms and conditions for Steam DRM are clearly defined
 - ✓ Can back-up physical copies of Thief
 - ✓ Allows monetisation of clips relating to Steam through video-sharing sites
 - ✓ Won't blacklist specific background services or software
 - ✓ Players can criticise or provide criticism about the game without reprisals
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- ✗ EULA was not formatted for easy reading on the web
 - ✗ EULA was not written for easy comprehension
 - ✗ Drafted to only abide by the laws of the US
 - ✗ Players not visibly notified of any changes made to the EULA / TOS
 - ✗ Players not consulted on future revisions 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
 - ✗ Circumvention of Steam DRM prohibited
 - ✗ Thief's source code isn't to be modified or reverse-engineered
 - ✗ Not permitted to create "mods"
 - ✗ Warranties waived (excluding physical merchantability warranties)
 - ✗ Cover waived against any unforeseeable damages, disruptions of service
 - ✗ Termination process dictated by Square Enix
 - ✗ Arbitration process isn't freely-provided and is overseen by Square Enix

Looking at Steam Subscriber's Agreement through Steam.

3b. EULA (STEAM)

Note: 7,431 Words found in Steam's EULA. Last updated July 2013.

Note: Steam's Video Policy can be found the **Legal Info** section.

- ✓ EULA / TOS is found on steampowered.com
- ✓ EULA / TOS covers Thief, Steam and Steam DRM
- ✓ Players visibly notified of any changes made to the TOS prior to purchase
- ✓ Terms and conditions for Steam DRM are clearly defined
- ✓ Can back-up copies of Thief
- ✓ Allows monetisation of clips relating to Steam through video-sharing sites
- ✓ Won't blacklist specific background services or software
- ✓ Players can criticise or provide criticism about the game without reprisals

Note: Refer to Steam EULA's readability scores.

Note: Valve will **not delete** any Players accounts voluntarily.

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**)

Note: Downloading Thief will take ~24 Gb.

5. Updates / Patching

Note: A ~1.6 Gb "day one" update is required prior to playing Thief. **There are no known notes on Steam.**

- ✗ EULA / TOS was not formatted for easy reading on the web
- ✗ EULA / TOS was not written for easy comprehension
- ✗ Drafted to only abide by the laws of the US
- ✗ Players not consulted on future revisions 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
- ✗ Circumvention of Steam DRM prohibited
- ✗ Steam's source code isn't to be modified or reverse-engineered
- ✗ Not permitted to create "mods" for Steam
- ✗ Steam is provided "as is" with limited warranties
- ✗ Cover waived against any unforeseeable damages and/or disruptions of service
- ✗ Termination process dictated by Valve
- ✗ Arbitration process overseen by an external party within the US
- ✗ Limited options for players to take any legal action

Looking at how Thief is installed on Windows PCs only.

- ✓ Custom installation options are provided
- ✓ All files are installed within folders designated by Players
- ✓ Steam DRM files installed within folders designated by Players
- ✓ Currently-executing background services won't interfere with installation
- ✓ Error-free installation
- ✓ Installation completed within 60 minutes

- ✗ No installation logs of files and registry keys

Looking at how Thief is patched prior and after gameplay.

- ✓ No other DRM files or registry keys are installed
- ✓ Can play Thief with the latest patch without any major issues

- ✗ Automatic updates are mandatory
- ✗ Day-one patch required
- ✗ Requires ALL patches to play Thief
- ✗ Patches only installed via. automatic updates
- ✗ Details of patches not provided / provided prior to installation
- ✗ Notifications not provided for availability of game patches
- ✗ Changes to the EULA / TOS not provided until updates begin
- ✗ No installation logs of files and registry keys
- ✗ Rollback option not provided
- ✗ No plans to sunset Steam DRM

6. DRM & Activation

Note: It is recommended that (new) Players should install and update Steam first before installing Thief.

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

Note: Installing, updating Steam and installing Thief for the first time will connect to the following companies: Valve (*Highwinds Network Group, QWest Communications, Limelight Networks, Amazon Web Services, Level 3 Communications, ChinaNet, Telstra and Verisign*)

7. Gameplay Experience

Note: Thief will connect to IWeb Technologies, Akamai Technologies and Comodo SSL, all of which were unrelated to Steam.

Note: Steam will still connect to Steam Achievements in offline mode.

Looking at Steam DRM in relation to Thief 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
- ✓ Players are aware and advised on how Thief will be activated
- ✓ Players name, 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

- ✗ No instructions provided on the activation process
- ✗ Can't verify the safety and reliability of the activation process
- ✗ A non-transferrable Players account is required
- ✗ Game is locked to specific account after activation

Looking at the gameplay aspects of Thief 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 borderless full screen mode
- ✓ Can play in windowed screen mode
- ✓ Anisotropic Filtering, Anti-Aliasing, Shadows, Depth of Field and Vsync
- ✓ Can customise keyboard and mouse controls
- ✓ Can customise console (XBox360) controls
- ✓ Can play with console controller
- ✓ Separate Volume Controls provided
- ✓ Closed captions & subtitles provided in 8 languages, including English
- ✓ Localisations provided in 6 languages other than English
- ✓ Can play Thief offline
- ✓ Can access DLC offline after registration
- ✓ 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 manually save gameplay progress in-game
- ✓ Can modify savegame and/or ini file

- ✗ No options for user-generated audio and/or closed captions / subtitles
- ✗ Will "phone home"
- ✗ Will not advise users that it connects to third-party servers in offline mode
- ✗ Cannot opt out of Steam achievements
- ✗ Can only play on one PC at a time per game / account
- ✗ DRM and monitoring services will operate during and after gameplay

8. **PC Checkup**

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

- ✓ Direct uninstallation shortcut provided through Steam's client manager
- ✓ Backup savegames prompt provided / Savegames retained
- ✓ External tool provided at steampowered.com
- ✓ External tool to remove game + DRM files is easy to use

- ✗ Steam registry keys remain after the uninstallation of Steam / Thief
- ✗ Remaining Steam keys will remain after using external tool(s)

10. **Customer Support**

Looking at the customer support side of Thief 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 Eidos's forum is direct and quick
- ✓ Info is easy to read and understand

RYG's VERDICT

58%

BARGAIN-BASE- MENT MATERIAL

64% and below

SHOWS PROMISE & POTENTIAL

Between 65% and 84%

WORTH SUPPORTING

85% and above

Players should expect similar results from us with many AAA titles that opt to use Steam as its choice of DRM / Distribution / Gaming platform. Terms and conditions are fairly standard and people shouldn't expect that to change with AAA titles any time soon. The unexpected concern we found was a mandatory 1.6Gb update that came on top of a 24Gb installation in which there were no known notes from Steam about it. It feels like a day-one patch and with minor connections coming from the first launch of Thief we are wondering if it's an added measure from Square Enix / Eidos in tracking paid / unpaid copies. Apart from this Thief plays quite well with its array of settings and choices aimed at optimising (accessible) gameplay without sacrificing quality.



Colophon

This analysis of Thief 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. Thief was bought with RYG funds through EB Games.

Disclaimer

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