Tomb Raider

Platform: PC (Windows 7 only)
DRM: Steamworks (Steam)
Digital Distributor: PHYSICAL COPY ONLY!

Developer: Crystal Dynamics / Nixxes
Publisher: Square Enix

RYG's VERDICT

66% **SHOWS PROMISE & POTENTIAL**
Between 65% and 84%

1. Product Info

See Also: Steam's Privacy Policy, Steam's Subscriber's Agreement and Tomb Raider EULA.

Looking at how much information is provided on Tomb Raider on its website prior and on release.

- ✓ Tomb Raider released simultaneously with its console version
- ✓ Tomb Raider released globally on 5 March 2013
- ✓ Minimum and recommended specs provided
- ✓ Advised Steamworks (Steam) DRM was to be used for Tomb Raider
- ✓ Advised how Steam DRM would activate the game through Tomb Raider
- ✓ Manual and Readme provided with Tomb Raider
- ✓ EULA, Privacy Policy and TOS fully accessible on steampowered.com
- ✓ All game-related information can be found on steampowered.com

- ✗ Available only on Windows
- ✗ Base game sold as multiple "editions" with varying selections of day-one DLCs
- ✗ No demo

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*.

*Looking at Steam's Privacy Policy through **Valve (Steam)***

- ✓ Privacy Policy found on steampowered.com
- ✓ Policy applies to Steam Client, Steamworks DRM and Tomb Raider
- ✓ 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 the info they send via. their user account
✗ Users must accept ALL Policy changes before playing Tomb Raider

3a. EULA (GAME)

Note: 4,169 words found in Tomb Raider's EULA.

Note: Steam's Subscriber's Agreement (EULA / TOS) is evaluated as a separate section 3b. EULA (STEAM)

Looking at Tomb Raider's EULA from Square Enix.

✓ EULA / TOS is found on steampowered.com
✓ EULA / TOS covers Tomb Raider and Steam DRM
✓ Can replace damaged copies with a free, replacement copy
✓ Terms and conditions for Steam DRM are clearly defined
✓ 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

✗ Difficult to read, understand and is inconsistently worded
✗ Drafted to only abide by the laws of the UK
✗ 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
✗ Circumvention of Steam DRM prohibited
✗ Back-ups aren't permitted
✗ Tomb Raider's source code isn't to be modified or reverse-engineered
✗ Not permitted to create "mods"
✗ Monitoring services / software are required to play Tomb Raider
✗ Warranties waived (excluding physical merchantability warranties)
✗ Cover waived against any unforeseeable damages, disruptions of service
✗ Termination process dictated by Square Enix

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

3b. EULA (STEAM)

Note: 6,286 Words found in Steam's EULA.

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
✗ 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

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: All Steam-related files will be installed to the main Steam directory only!

Looking at how Tomb Raider 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 just under 30 minutes

✘ No installation logs of files and registry keys

5. Updates / Patching

Note: Users can optionally download some video clips of Tomb Raider's DLC after install-ing the game. It will be a 1.8Gb download.

Looking at how Tomb Raider is patched prior and after gameplay.

✔ Can play the game unpatched
✔ Details of patches provided via Steam
✔ Users can be advised of game patch's availability

✘ No plans to sunset Steam DRM

6. DRM & Activation

Note: It is recommended that (new) users should install and update Steam first before install-ing Tomb Raider.

Note: Tomb Raider will only be connected to the following servers: Valve, Eidos Interactive, Comodo (SSL) and Highwinds Networks.

See Also: How to play Tomb Raider in offline mode.

Note: Whilst options are provid-ed to register Tomb Raider via. Square Enix, it is not a require-ment.

Looking at Steamworks (Steam) DRM in relation to Tomb Raider 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 Tomb Raider 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

✘ 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 *(Registering Tomb Raider is optional)*
✘ Game is locked to specific account after activation

7. Gameplay Experience

Note: There are settings which can be "modified" via. the Registry. This can be done via. Regedit within the HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Crystal Dynamics\Tomb Raider\Graphics folder.

Looking at the gameplay aspects of Tomb Raider 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
- ✓ Suitable options to modify video settings
- ✓ Can customise keyboard and mouse controls
- ✓ Can play with (XBox360) console controller
- ✓ Can play in windowed mode
- ✓ Can play offline
- ✓ 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
- ✓ Will resume at the last checkpoint
- ✓ Can manually modify settings through the Registry
- ✓ No DRM or monitoring services running in the background

- ✗ Can only play on one PC at a time per game / account

8. PC Checkup

Looking at whether Tomb Raider 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 Tomb Raider without major errors
- ✓ Start-up settings remain unaltered
- ✓ No DRM / monitoring services running in the background after shutting down
- ✓ System configuration files remain unaltered

9. Removal Uninstall

Note: Steam does offer an option to manually remove all Steam-related files. It does work and will remove any remaining files and keys after uninstallation of Tomb Raider.

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

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

- ✗ Some registry keys related to Tomb Raider remain (Ref: Section 7, Gameplay)

10. Customer Support

Looking at the customer support side of Tomb Raider through Square Enix

- ✓ Customer service in respect to Square Enix is quick to respond within 24 hours
- ✓ Consumers can initiate legal action if arbitration process fails

✓ Customer service in respect to Square Enix is quick to respond within 24 hours
✓ Consumers can initiate legal action (with Square Enix) if arbitration fails

✗ Customer service / support is spread out across Steam and Square Enix
✗ Customer service / support is difficult to use
✗ Searching specific info on Steam, Square Enix is difficult

RYG's VERDICT	BARGAIN BIN MATERIAL	SHOWS PROMISE & POTENTIAL	WORTH SUPPORTING
66%	64% and below	**Between 65% and 84%**	85% and above

While 66% isn't exactly 85% or over there is much to praise, in particular to the array of settings that can be customised on the PC (graphics, gameplay, controller, off/online play as well as fullscreen/windowed mode). Tomb Raider is easy to install (and easy to remove thanks to its "self-contained to Steam's folders" aspect, it uses a DRM system that is reliable (and tolerable) than others in the current market and it is playable without the usual day one patch, even though it will still be due for those running NVidia cards. All in all, Tomb Raider is a PC (Windows) game worth supporting in spite of its legal documentation as well as its overly-formal and distant customer service.

Colophon

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

Disclaimer

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