

PC

■ Arcade/Sim ■ Bullfrog
■ £44.99 ■ Out Now
■ PC-CD Rom version available
■ No other versions planned



After the sheer addictiveness of Theme Park, Bullfrog has come up with what, quite possibly, is the PC game of the year. So grab your rug and

prepare yourself for a roller-coaster ride, Arabian style...

Set on a mystical planet, ravaged by a brutal war, Magic Carpet is probably the most stunning PC game you'll see this year. Bullfrog's latest masterpiece allows you to hop on to an aerodynamic rug and fly over a rolling 3D landscape packed with hills, cliffs, deep canyons and huge, fire-spitting volcanoes.

The idea is to restore the natural energy balance of 50 individual realms. This is achieved by destroying monsters, castles and other carpet-flyers and collecting the magical energy or 'Mana' they contain. This Mana takes the form of small golden balls and once you've destroyed, say a skeleton, you simply cast a possession spell on the Mana ball and wait for it to be picked up by your magical hot-air balloon. Yes, that's right, a hot-air balloon. This handy contraption operates from your castle and relieves you of the mundane task of collecting all the Mana yourself. Mana is also important because it's the power that fuels your spells, which range from the bog-standard fireball and possession spells right up to the apocalyptic, earth-shattering power of Earth-quake, Meteor and Volcano spells. These are collected in each realm and, although you start off very weak, as you progress you have access to greater and greater fire-power.

Of course, Magic Carpet isn't easy. Far from it. There are a host of monsters to contend with including Bees, Dragons and even the mythical Kraken. And if these weren't bad enough, there are also other players to contend with, who on the later realms are attempting to collect the Mana for their own evil ends. It's simple to play, but fiendishly difficult to get any good at.

As well as playing Magic Carpet in normal mode, if you grab a pair of those cheap 3D glasses and tap the F10 key, you can also play in full stereoscopic 3D.



Your main weapon is the Fireball spell, weak compared to things like Meteor and Lightning but it makes short work of these Killer Bees.



◀ Mana comes in golden balls. To retrieve it, cast a possession spell on them which allows your hot-air balloon to suck them up like a vacuum cleaner.



With all the spells at your disposal, you become practically invincible. There's Lightning, Invisibility, Speed-up, Teleport and many more. All of them can be selected from the map screen, or pre-programmed

◀ on the number keys 1-10.

magic

I CAN SHOW YOU THE WORLD

The superb intro tells how the world was ripped asunder by battling wizards and how you, a wizard's apprentice, must restore the world to its natural balance.

When starting a level it's important to have a castle to store all the Mana your balloon collects. The more Mana you collect the bigger your fortress can be.





Each creature contains Mana. The bigger they are (like these Kraken), the more Mana they hold.

One of the most destructive spells is the Volcano, a very handy incantation whether you want to destroy a castle, waste a skeleton army or just have a little pyrotechnic fun. ▶



Sometimes, you just want to get on your carpet and go... ▶



◀ And then some flippin' flappin' monster gets right in your slipstream...

Luckily you have the right amount of Mana to make him into monster pie. ▶



SECOND OPINION

At last, a CD game that takes full advantage of the power of the PC and CD-ROM. Magic Carpet is a superb game. The attention to detail is amazing and while Bullfrog has chosen to leave out the chase-view where you could see your magic carpet from behind, with the multi-player options, 3D mode and the huge amount of gameplay stuffed into the game, this has turned out to be a true PC 'epic'. If you're looking for a candidate for CD game of the year, Magic Carpet is most definitely it.

STEVE JAMES

The 50 realms in Magic Carpet contain a variety of dangerous creatures. The skeletons are easy to kill but these Gorillas chuck huge boulders at you and are more tricky. ▼



VERDICT

PC
 Magic Carpet is a stunning game and almost faultless. The 3D engine is amazingly detailed and smooth and although the gameplay can get repetitive, the huge variety of monsters and spells will keep you hooked for aeons. Best of all, there's a multi-player option which lets you battle your friends Doom-style. Imagine chucking meteors at your mates or creating a volcano in their path... If you've a CD-ROM drive and a fast machine, Magic Carpet is a must buy.

DEAN EVANS

- GRAPHICS 95
- SOUND 94
- PLAYABILITY 96
- VALUE 95

OVERALL ■

96

To gain Mana shoot the monsters until they explode and give up their Mana ball. When you run out of monsters, shoot the civilians. Then castles, then tents, etc.



As you get more powerful you can pick up new spells. The Earthquake spell cuts spectacular canyons across the landscape and destroys everything in its path.



When you've destroyed all the monsters, levelled all the buildings and collected all the Mana, the realm's restored and you move on to the next challenge.



After every level you get a short cut-scene and things get tougher. More and bigger monsters and even computer-controlled rug-flyers who want all your Mana.

