

Magic Carpet



Category: Action
Developer: Bullfrog Productions Ltd.
Publisher: Electronic Arts, 1450 Fashion Island Blvd., San Mateo, CA 94404-2064 (415)-571-7171

No, it doesn't look anything like *Doom*. But there's a reason people are comparing it to the best game ever.

Required	We Recommend
CD-ROM drive; 486/33MHz or better; 8MB RAM; 2MB hard-drive space; VGA; Mouse	Double-speed CD-ROM; Supported sound cards; Pentium, 16MB RAM and SVGA for high-res graphics

M.S.R.P.: \$59.95

It might not sound like much — a “flight-sim” where you pilot a magic carpet in a “Thief of Baghdad” setting, casting spells to combat monsters and evil wizards. But this is one of those games you have to see to believe — and even after a few hours of play, you *still* may not



As you gather more and more mana, you'll be able to build your little tower into a huge, fortified castle.

believe it, because like the very best computer games, *Magic Carpet* just keeps hitting you with wonder upon wonder.

Let's start with the graphics. Bullfrog used texture-mapped polygons to create the 3D hills, mountains, volcanoes, and

Over the past year or so, there's been a lot of talk about a “Doom-killer” — the game that could finally replace *Doom* in the hearts and minds of PC gamers. For the most part, people have been looking for it among games that attempt to reproduce the look and feel of *Doom* itself — ultra-violent, first-person shooters set in claustrophobic mazes or dank dungeons.

But I don't think it was *Doom*'s theme or setting that people couldn't stop talking about. It was the game's breakneck action and knockout technology that made it a huge hit. And that's why the next *Doom* isn't going to be some knockoff or me-too game. It's going to be something just as innovative and exciting as *Doom* was when it first appeared on the scene. Something like *Magic Carpet*.



The dragon, a flying version of the giant worm, can be a real threat to your castle.

castles that make up the worlds of *Magic Carpet*, and the effect is incredible. It's easy to suspend your disbelief and simply lose yourself in the game as you weave your way through canyons and along shorelines that look utterly convincing. There's a high-resolution, Super VGA mode for gamers with enough computing muscle — but even the standard VGA graphics are anything *but* standard.

Then there are the sounds. From the howl of the wind as you cruise over the landscape to the Godzilla-like shrieks of dragons and fire-breathing worms, *Magic Carpet* completely immerses you in the experience. And it doesn't stop there; you can even hear the crackling of flames as you pass over a stand of burning trees. Buzz a mob of peasants, and hear their angry shouts.

But every month brings us another stack of games that prove great graphics and sounds aren't nearly enough to make a game worth playing. So what else does *Magic Carpet* have to offer?

How about action? *Magic Carpet* has you constantly moving, flying from one end of the map to another; destroying monsters; attacking the enemy's castle as you defend, repair, and improve your own; and collecting the spells and “mana” spheres that give you your power. Every level, or world, of the game offers new challenges, new monsters, and new spells. You won't find a pet strategy that will serve in



After a well-placed volley of fireballs, a giant worm erupts in a shower of mana spheres.

The Sweet Spells of Success

To fight evil wizards, you'll need some magic of your own. *Magic Carpet* provides 24 handy spells, if you can find them all. Here's a handful of the more useful ones:



The Fireball is your basic, all-purpose spell for busting stuff up, from evil trolls to enemy castles.



The Rapid Fireball uses a lot of mana, but it's a devastating spell.



Beyond Sight reveals the location of all the other players in the game.



Accelerate propels you forward at breakneck speed. It'll get you out of a lot of trouble spots.



The Shield spell absorbs 75 percent of the destructive power sent your way by monsters and evil wizards.



Create Castle does just what it says. You use it to build, repair and expand your home base.



The Possess spell lets you take control of any building or claim mana to take back to your castle.



Giant, fire-breathing worms are just the beginning of your troubles in *Magic Carpet*.

every situation, so you'll have to stay on your toes.

Best of all, the game's difficulty curve keeps things very challenging without ever making it impossible. *Magic Carpet's* AI is extremely tenacious, but just when you think you've hit the "brick wall" that you find in so many other games, things will begin to turn around and you'll be on your way to another level.

As if great visuals and perfectly balanced gameplay weren't enough, the designers of *Magic Carpet* threw in some more goodies: 3D graphics and support for multiple players. The game comes with those old-fashioned red-and-blue 3D glasses, but there's also support for VR headsets, and even a stereogram mode for people who are good at those "Magic Eye" pictures, where you unfocus your eyes to turn a jumble of colors into a 3D image. And gamers with access to a local-area network can play *Magic Carpet* with up to eight people at a time.



The Kraken can't come out of the water, but he's got a magic tractor beam. If he catches you in it, there's no escape until one of you is dead.

It's almost pointless to talk about *Magic Carpet's* replay value, since that issue may never enter the picture. The game comes

with 50 levels, most of which can take hours to complete, and the designers even included a great utility that can change any .PBM-format graphic file (a compressed version of .LBM) into a new map.

So if you're looking for the heir to *Doom's* fame and fortune, you'd do well to get your head out of those gun-smoke-filled mazes and into the clouds over Al Jahan, or Shai Yulim, or any of the 48 other worlds of *Magic Carpet*. It'll make you forget you ever saw a demon or a Hell Knight.

—Dan Bennett



The Rapid Fireball spell is like a fully automatic version of the Fireball. It's the first real mass-destruction spell you'll lay your hands on.

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Amazing graphics, terrific sound and action.

LOWS: No way to save a game in the middle of a level, which can take hours to complete.

BOTTOM LINE: There's a whole lot of game here, and it's all excellent. *Magic Carpet* may well become the talked-about game for 1995.

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