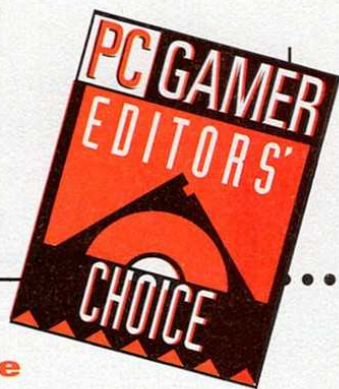


Warcraft

 CD-ROM


Category: Action-Strategy

Developer: Blizzard Entertainment

Publisher: Blizzard Entertainment,
PO Box 18077, Irvine, CA 92713
(714) 556-66712

Warcraft mixes action and strategy in a brew so addictive it should come with a warning label.

Required	We Recommend
386/25 MHz; CD-ROM drive; 4MB RAM; 2MB hard-drive space; VGA; Mouse	486SX/25 MHz; Compatible sound card

M.S.R.P.: \$69.95

starters, there's more diversity in *Warcraft's* battles. While the bulk of the game consists of simply locating the enemy's



Accept your mission, and you'll zoom in on a beautifully rendered, and animated 3D map of the battlefield.

base and wiping it out, the occasional quest is thrown in to spice things up. In these battles, you're sent into enemy territory to accomplish a specific task, like healing and rescuing captured soldiers. With a fixed number of troops and no way to build more, these scenarios are almost like little dungeon adventures, and they require a completely different approach.

There's also plenty of diversity in the types of units and structures you can create in *Warcraft*. Whether you choose to command the humans or the orcs (they're the little folks at war here),

you'll start your campaign with just the basics: a city hall for training workers who gather gold and lumber and build other structures, a barracks for training swordsmen, and farms to feed your

growing population. But as you progress through the game's 24 scenarios, things get more interesting. Soon you'll be building a lumber mill, which makes it possible to train archers or spearmen; a temple, where clerics

Many strategy gamers will find that *Warcraft* strongly reminds them of an earlier game. Often, this would be a problem — but in this case, that earlier game is Virgin's *Dune II*, one of the most entertaining and absorbing action-strategy games ever published.

Fans of the Virgin game will see similarities right off the bat: As in *Dune II*, you begin *Warcraft* with an unexplored map, send troops out to locate and harvest resources, and build structures and military units in preparation for the inevitable battle — all in real time. *Warcraft's* keep-it-simple interface is also very close to *Dune II's*. Just click on a unit, issue a movement or combat command, and click on the destination or target. Also like *Dune II*, *Warcraft* has a near-perfect difficulty curve. Early battles give



This human settlement is well-defended by footmen, archers, clerics and a knight. It looks like they can't lose...

you very simple goals and just a few types of units and structures to worry about, while more complex options are introduced bit by bit as the game progresses.

But *Warcraft* is far from a *Dune II* clone. It has everything the earlier game offered, and much, much more. For



Durooma Victory		
Rank Corporal		
Score 1,048		
enemy units destroyed	structures destroyed	gold mined
You 1	You 0	You 4,800
Enemy 1	Enemy 0	Enemy 0
units trained	structures built	lumber harvested
You 8	You 9	You 2,100
Enemy 8	Enemy 0	Enemy 9

The scoring screen at the end of each mission features some sharp-looking 3D animation.



...but the tables can turn quickly in *Warcraft*. Lesson for the day: Don't get greedy and spread your forces too thin.

or orcish necromancers are trained; a blacksmith's shop for upgrading armor and weapons; stables, which lead to knights on horseback (or orcish raiders on wolfback); and a tower for training conjurers or warlocks.

In the temples and towers, you can research increasingly effective spells. Human Clerics can learn a healing spell that lets soldiers hang in battle much longer, and orcish Necrolytes can develop the ability to raise the dead, turning fallen troops into skeleton warriors. Then there are the conjurers and warlocks, with their summoning spells —

"The feature that will excite some gamers more than anything else is *Warcraft's* two-player mode."

which in turn lead to some of the nastier military units, like giant spiders, scorpions, elementals, and even daemons.

What all this means is that you'll never find a single, sure-fire strategy that'll serve you throughout the game; your tactics will have to evolve as each new wrinkle appears. That translates into oodles of replay value, ensuring that *Warcraft* is definitely not one of those games you'll toss on the shelf as soon as the next pretty game comes along.

Of course, the feature that'll excite some gamers more than anything else is *Warcraft's* two-player mode, which lets a

pair of desktop despots connect their computers via modem, network or serial port. So, in the unlikely event that the game's strong AI isn't tough enough for your tastes, you can try your hand (or claw, as the case may be) against a living, breathing opponent. The Custom Game option even lets you pit orcs against orcs or humans against humans, so you and your friend won't have to



You can group as many as four soldiers and issue basic commands to all of them at once.

fight over who gets to be the orc commander and who has to lead those goody-goody humans.

On top of all that, *Warcraft* is full of nice extra touches — those little things



In this POW-rescue mission sequence, the game takes on a dungeon-adventure slant.

the designers didn't have to do, but which make the game even more entertaining. There's the digitized sound, for example: The human troops respond to a mouse click with lines like "Your will, Sire?", and the orcs have a guttural language all their own. Click on a soldier four or five times in a row, and he'll get impatient, finally he will respond with "What do you WANT?!!" or "Stop poking me!!!" Even some of the buildings have their own sound effects — select the temple, and you'll hear pious chanting; click on the blacksmith, and you'll hear the ringing of steel on steel. It's a small thing, something many gamers might never notice — and it adds nothing to gameplay. But it's testimony to how much care went into *Warcraft*.

— Dan Bennett

If you build it, they will attack

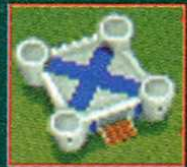
Even the noblest humans and most rapacious orcs get homesick for their castle or mountain stronghold. But with a little planning, a frontier outpost can have all the comforts of home.



The city hall is where human peasants and orcish peons learn to harvest lumber, mine gold and build other structures.



All soldiers are trained in the barracks. If the enemy is killing your troops as fast as you train new ones, you might want to build a second barracks.



In the temple, human clerics and orcish necrolytes learn the spells that make them indispensable in combat.



Building a lumber mill makes it possible to equip archers and spearmen with the tools of their trade. Later, you can spend some gold here to research improvements to those weapons.



PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Good graphics, two-player options and unbeatable play value.

92%

LOWS: It's so addictive, it belongs on the FDA's controlled-substance list alongside *Civilization* and *SimCity 2000*.

BOTTOM LINE: If you like action, strategy or fantasy games, you *have* to check out *Warcraft*. It doesn't get much better than this, folks.