

OVER CLOCK

TEAM FORTRESS 2

Why it still holds up well

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Released back in 10th October 2007, this game is very much alive and still kicking strongly to this very day. Although it was quite popular after its release, it didn't explode into its widespread popularity until it became free-to-play on Steam back in June 2011, further fuelled by the release of its 'Mann vs Machine' co-op mode back in August 2012. It's been over 11 years since launch, how does the game still hold up?

THE GAMEPLAY

Everything in the game is fine-tuned to avoid balance issues with each class. The Scout, a flanker, has a small health pool but can run very fast. The soldier, can either be a flanker or a pusher, is the second slowest class in the game but can get to places VERY quickly using rocket jumps consecutively. The Heavy, can be a pusher with a Medic or with the sensible use of a secondary weapon, 'Sandvich', has the largest health pool in the game but is also the slowest class in the game and has a minigun that can churn out immense damage close to mid-range. The Spy, the sneaky Frenchman of deception, with as much health pool as the scout, can one-shot kill with a swift backstab using his knife.

Damage and movement systems don't work like they would in other shooter games. Only the Sniper can deal massive damage of 150 hitpoints or above with headshots; the Spy can cause headshots with his Ambassador revolver with 102 HP or less damage. Oh, and there's also random critical hits: 15-25% chance for melee and 5-15% chance for ranged weapons to deal thrice the damage they can deal, unless the weapon is tagged to not be able to deal random critical hits, like the Ambassador.

A simple change in the classes' weaponry can create a completely new subclass that plays completely differently from what it was supposed to be played like. For example, Demoknight, Trollier, Fat Scout, Battle Medic, and so many more.

The hit-boxes are rock-solid, precise and easily discernable; and there are numerous variations and strategies the Source engine allows like trickstabbing with the Spy, B-hopping with the Heavy; consecutive rocket jumps, sticky jumps and air-strafes with the Soldier and Demoman, hopping around evading all hits as the Scout, and so on.

THE CHARACTERS

Each of the nine characters has their own unique personalities. They are all insane and they are either very good at hiding their insanity, or they don't care how insane they look.

For instance, the Soldier would be the perfect description of the latter. He is a self-proclaimed soldier of war with American jingoist and patriotic ideals who has very little regard to how he is portrayed by others. His open insanity is further proved by both the comics, and the fact that he owns the most fun in-game

mechanic: Rocket Jumping, where he jumps by shooting rockets at his feet. The Demoman also falls in the Soldier's insanity spectrum, but he's a little smarter as the Scottish one-eyed drunkard who's an expert in all things that go 'KA-BOOM!'

On the other far extreme is the Engineer. He has 11 hard science PhDs and is a soft-spoken old-fashioned Texan man. The Medic, the German man of medicine, falls somewhere within the realms of the Engineer's insanity, but with a more Frankenstein-ish attitude towards all forms of life. Oh, he also lost his medical license, which you will be reminded of many times.

And the other four fall somewhere in the middle, where two of them think it is a profession to be an assassin (the Spy thinks of himself to be a man of class while the Sniper will throw a jar of pee at you), the Heavy does it because it is fun to mow down enemy mercenaries with a minigun and the Scout does it to hide his insecurities.

Oh, and the Pyro exists. Genderless, a mercenary of mystery, loves everything that is fire, and the prime example of questionable habits.

THE ARTSYLE AND ECONOMY

The game is made to be cartoonish, set in the game's canonical 1970s era. Characters are box-shaped, devoid of strange curves that wouldn't go against their hitboxes, and they come with taunts that you can use to simply have a good time when the entire server decides to

become friendly, with all players goofing around using taunts and hilarious glitches that don't intrude the game.

You can buy or sell hats, taunts, cosmetics or strange weapons in the game or the Steam market with real money or trade them by exchanging in a barter system valued in Crate Keys, Refined Metal and a valuable cosmetic called Earbuds. Many sites for barter trade exist, like backpack.tf or scrap.tf.

And the music... Oh the beautiful and smooth mix of jazz and old-fashioned rock. It's enough to give you an eargasm. Mercenary Park, TF2 Theme Music and

ROBOTS! are my favourites.

SPECS REQUIRED

OS: Windows 7 (32/64-bit)/Vista/XP
Processor: 1.7 GHz Processor or better
Memory: 512 MB of RAM
DirectX: Version 8.1
Network: Broadband Internet connection
Storage: 15 GB of available space

Aka is a tiny little bleep on the world's radar, and he finds peace in knowing it. Ruin his peace by poking him on akaaraf@hotmail.com

