

Boom Blox - Wii

Steven Spielberg's first foray into gaming

by Chris Pickering published on 13 May 2008

When EA announced that they were working with legendary movie director Steven Spielberg, most of the gaming world were expecting an epic in keeping with the film maker's long and successful history.

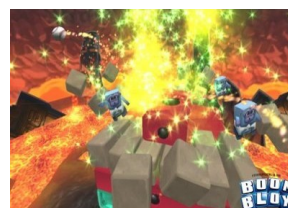
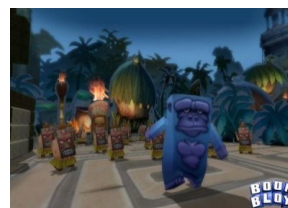
But with his early admission that he desired to "create a video game that I could play with my kids", most could be forgiven for expecting a kiddy action adventure in the usual movie to game route.

The truth is quite different. Boom Blox is a game quite unlike most available on any console outside the obvious similarities to Jenga. Like the much loved game, Boom Blox usually comes complete with a towering formation of blocks, with you attempting to remove certain blocks in order to complete the task in hand.

Though the vast majority of the game's numerous puzzles go along similar lines, each level sports a unique design, and objectives change fairly regularly in order to spice things up a little.

The addition of blocks with various wild and wonderful properties certainly makes some of the latter levels incredibly tricky, with explosive and vanishing blocks proving to be the most tricky to handle. The real challenge, however, comes with learning just how to use these special portions of the level to your advantage to make progression easier, and hopefully obtain the best score for that particular level.

Pleasant little modes that prompt you to blast away at blocks spiralling across the screen, and others that encourage you to save your little cute block animals from falling debris are a nice little distraction from the real brain-melting puzzles. Some can be a touch frustrating, but they certainly break up what could have descended



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into monotony.

Manage to make your way through all these levels and you'll be able to knock-up some of your own tricky challenges. A well made level creation mode awaits you, and the more patient among you will knock-up some real epic challenges that you can send to a friend. Sadly there's no chance to upload it online and show off your best creations, nor can you discover the best of these user created levels and play around with them yourself.

The graphics are, admittedly, not overly impressive. Though the tiny animal block characters are well designed, and no doubt will appeal to the younger gamer, the aesthetics themselves are no more than standard for the Wii. The story, too, isn't particularly enthralling, and unless you have a youngster playing, you'll be eager to pass the fairly sub par writing on offer.

But what makes Boom Blox isn't the aesthetics. The levels themselves have been designed with such fantastic thought that although you may seemingly hit a brick wall and be confused with just how to progress frequently, you'll always come to a decent conclusion with a little exercise of the brain.

What is also incredibly impressive are the way the blocks themselves tumble and fall in a realistic manner. It might seem like a daft plus point, but watching a tower crumble after a botched removal attempt is almost as enthralling as actually completing the level.

VERDICT

Spielberg and EA's first conjuring might not be a huge movie style epic, but that doesn't prevent it from being an astonishingly enjoyable puzzler. Playing on your own, the brain teasers are addictive enough to keep you hooked long into the evening. But get the family crowded around the TV and the fun levels quadruple.

At a glance

What is it?

Puzzle game

Good

Hundreds of levels, fantastic user creation options, a real challenge for any gamer

Bad

No chance to upload your best levels, graphics and story sub par

Verdict

Spielberg's first foray into the gaming world is a cracking puzzler, and one that all the family can enjoy

Price £39.99

Our score

8/10

Your score

?/10

<http://www.pocket-lint.com/review/3133/Boom-Blox-Nintendo-Wii-EA>

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Don't let the cutesy visuals put you off. It might look like the kind of title you'd buy little Johnny for Christmas, but this possesses enough competitive goodness to be snapped up by any Wii owner craving something to give their brain a workout after Wii Fit.