

## Can Simple Puzzle Games Become More Popular?

Puzzle games have always been a part of your average gamer's diversionary diet. These games may feature rotating blocks, finding words, or matching colors. But regardless of the mechanic, puzzle games have been around for decades within the overwhelmingly competitive video gaming industry. But will this trend continue? Industry experts struggle to estimate the longevity of the puzzle game, in the face of blockbuster titles like Bungie's Halo 3—a game that was viewed by more folks than any film released this year.

But what do these "Super" games have that a game like Tetris does not. Graphics? Sure. Top of the line graphics have become almost commonplace in the gaming industry. Two years ago, a game like F.E.A.R. was considered by most to be "Beautiful" and "Amazing" in terms of graphical performance when it was released on the PC. But now, the game pales in contrast to titles such as Unreal Tournament 3, or Bioshock. Even games that were released as many as six months ago are already looking shabby compared to the latest offerings by gaming's top companies.

But, so far, the puzzle game somehow has survived. —How can that be?

Well, in a word, Gameplay.

Even though everyone loves pretty graphics and colorful explosions, solid gameplay beats the pants off shiny polygons nine times out of ten. Many games have amazing graphics, but more often than not, these games are beaten and tossed aside within just a few hours of gaming. How many hours of gaming do you think Tetris gave to the average gamer? Try over a hundred. But that's Tetris—and all games can't be Tetris. So what other games are out there?

To begin with, a recent release from Jenkatgames.com entitled "Discombobulated" springs to mind. Discombobulated is an amazing game that shares more than a little with the aforementioned Tetris. Gamers are given colored balloons that continually pile up, while they try to pop them as fast as possible with a common straight pin. It sounds simple. (Like Tetris did the first time you played it.) But after a while you'll find it not only challenging, but absolutely addictive.

But hold on a moment. These games cost a ton of cash right? I mean, gameplay that is near to top tier releases from big gaming companies must cost fifty or sixty dollars at least. —Not at all actually. Discombobulated is free. And like most online games at companies like Bigfish.com or Jenkatgames.com, they're just a good, if not better than their expensive counterparts.

Puzzle gaming isn't going anywhere. If anything, it's getting stronger. Even the big name gaming consoles like the Xbox 360 and the Playstation 3 have begun to release puzzle games downloads for their online subscribers. But these games often come with a six to ten dollar price tag, offering, at best, the exact same game that would be free on the world-wide-web. So before you invest in your next sixty dollar video game purchase, take a look at what these online games are offering these days. Because at the finish line, it's all about gameplay.

## About the Author

Lance Hemenway has been writing about [free online games](#) for major web publications since 1997. If you want to try your hand at [Downloadable games](#), visit [www.Jenkatgames.com](http://www.Jenkatgames.com).

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