Trailmakers Review: Racing in the Exoplanet Sandbox

Playing in the sandbox is the first conscious activity I remember from my childhood. All these toy shovels and rakes, and piles of sand, of course, let you create sea monsters and build towers, dig deep ditches and practice in sand culinary. So much time has passed, and I still like playing in the sandbox. Not the real one, but virtual.

Hello, I am **Lenny Martens**, 35-years old software developer, big fan of game sandboxes and real deserts. I gathered the team of the same sandbox fans, and we all decided to dedicate the whole website to one sandbox, which we consider perfect in all senses. And this is the Trailmakers game released at the beginning of 2018. I and my teammates concluded that is they could play only one sandbox game to the rest of their lives it would be Trailmakers.

So we are here on this site to keep you informed about the latest news and updates regarding Trailmakers. Sorry, I haven't introduced my mates, the best team I ever worked with.

Jack Williams is the most sophisticated and thorough web-designer I've ever met. He's the real PRO in his job. He has an eye on the visual details and sees the essence of things clearly to transmit it with his immaculate design.

Sonia Nelson is the QA Specialist. She has the analytical mind and never misses a detail in her work. She prefers sandboxes for the unlimited opportunities these games bring players.

Chuck Anderson is our Front-End Developer. He is absolutely positive about decisions he makes and never lets us doubt in the success of any project. Trailmakers is his guilty pleasure in times when he's not in the mood for work.

We are all saying hello to you, Trailmaker fan. We are the same as you: preferring open worlds and limitless opportunities.

Trailmakers is a sandbox game with elements of racing, based on the story of an expedition on a far planet. Left by yourself, you need to be perfect drivers and engineers at the same time. So you need to build your car yourself, ride it, modify it, according to environmental specifics, and explore the world.

Left to Your Own Devices Lite-Rally

The idea of a car-centered sandbox where you can both assemble your vehicles and ride them is not new, But Trailmakers from the early announces was the game to take this to a new level. Flashbulb, the developing and publishing company, released early version in January 2018, and now that you can download Trailmakers for PC, it's quite a big success with reviews mostly positive.

The game combines ease of building with challenging tasks of engineering and exploration, multiplayer mode and free roaming. So you don't have to complete tasks (though there are some) or compete with rivals (though this option is also here). You can just feel left alone and ride the beautiful exoplanet as long as you want and as far as you can.

So, literally, the game is not that lite (as it requires at least i5-4440, 8 GB RAM and 5 GB of storage under Windows 7 or later), but it's alright with a rally in it.

Ride What You Build

Speaking in terms of goal, your mission is to build yourself a vehicle and ride it as far as you can. The word "sandbox" sounds more literal here, as you really leave a trail out of sand. It's so yellow and red that it reminds both of American desert landscape and Martian surface, but there's obviously more life in here. The landscape can change, providing a new challenge.

Construction part is very spectacular here. To combine parts at your disposal you need to position them with an electromagnetic tool. Each block has its unique properties, including functions, weight and shape. So you can use them to build a racing car, an airplane or a helicopter. There are no exact tasks or quests; you build what you consider necessary for any given terrain.

To build a vehicle, you'll have to move the camera a lot, because positioning elements depends on the base orientation. Though the developers tried to make assembling as easy as possible, you'll need a lot of tries before you assemble your first vehicle.

And then ride it. Riding is made similarly to what we see in numerous racing games, with the convincing physical part. All the parameters of your vehicle depend on how it's built. After collisions or crashes, your vehicle needs repairing. Luckily, it's easy unless you make any changes. You'll have to because this world is a dangerous place with various landscapes that require different properties. As for the world, it's colorful and vivid, with its sand and stone esthetics. The gravity on this planet is close to that on Earth, and the rest of physics is natural too.

There are two ways of multiplayer online: you can either compete, each in his/her own vehicle, or take an expedition together in a two-seated one.

The controls are designed according to Windows usage mode, that is, for keyboard and mouse set. The developers introduced also generic gamepad support (keeping in mind

that most players will use Steam Controller, Xbox gamepad or some generic model), but there are still some complaints about gamepads working incorrectly.

The game still receives updates that introduce new features, so it'll be long before you explore it inside out. But beware: some of them bring innovations into game physics, and after these changes apply, the models you have made according to the previous version may change their properties too.

What to Play On

So far we only have Trailmakers for Windows (10, 8). It's the only platform this game has been developed for since it's first been announced. Trailmakers for Mac isn't even planned, but a virtual machine can be a solution. But it will take a powerful Mac model, because the virtual machine and the host system will still require much of its resources, and the virtual Windows machine should satisfy the minimal requirements.

The developers are announcing the Xbox release in Q! 2019, but it's not specified whether Trailmakers for Xbox 360 will ever appear, or it will be exclusively for Xbox One. There is also nothing said about Trailmakers for P4 (PS3 release is more doubtable). As for Trailmakers for Switch, it's even less probable, due to specific Nintendo policy on game selection, taking on more exclusives.

Mobile gamers can relax so far. There hasn't been any announcement about the mobile version, though, in theory, it's possible because the game is based on the popular Unity engine. Given the performance of the latest iOS devices, we can suppose that Trailmakers for iPhone or iPad will be no surprise (though, again, there's never been even a hint).

Conclusion

It's one of the most prominent games in its very special genre of sandbox-and-racing. You may feel a bit of confusion when you download Trailmakers and can't make it out. But as soon as you learn the basics, it gets much more fun. There's no cheating if you

watch some videos on YouTube before assembling your first vehicle. As for controls, gamepad will enhance your experience, but lack of it won't kill it.

Cons

- No Trailmakers for Android or iOS, console versions also questioned;
- Updates can change the physics dramatically and impact your builds features;
- Gamepad support is not perfect yet.

Pros

- Original concept that combines sandbox and racing in open world;
- Spectacular graphics;
- Moderate system requirements;
- Non-trivial multiplayer modes.

5 of 5	4 of 5	4 of 5	5 of 5
Graphics	Sound	Gameplay	Community

More information and download links at trailmakers.net.