

# THE STANLEY PARABLE



Made By: Galactic Cafe

# What type of Game is “The Stanley Parable”?

The Stanley Parable is a difficult game to classify. People classify it in different ways. Some people don't even consider it a game.

The Developers call it: “a first person exploration game”

# Price and Specifications

Price: \$15

Requires Steam

## Official Minimum Specs:

- OS: Windows XP/Vista/7/8
- Processor: 3.0 GHz P4, Dual Core 2.0 (or higher) or AMD64X2 (or higher)
- Memory: 2 GB RAM
- Graphics: Video card must be 128 MB or more and should be a DirectX 9-compatible with support for Pixel Shader 2.0b (ATI Radeon X800 or higher / NVIDIA GeForce 7600 or higher / Intel HD Graphics 2000 or higher - \*NOT\* an Express graphics card).
- Hard Drive: 3 GB available space
- Sound Card: DirectX 9.0c compatible

In practice, any modern computer capable of playing Portal should be more than capable of playing “The Stanley Parable”

# Game Summary

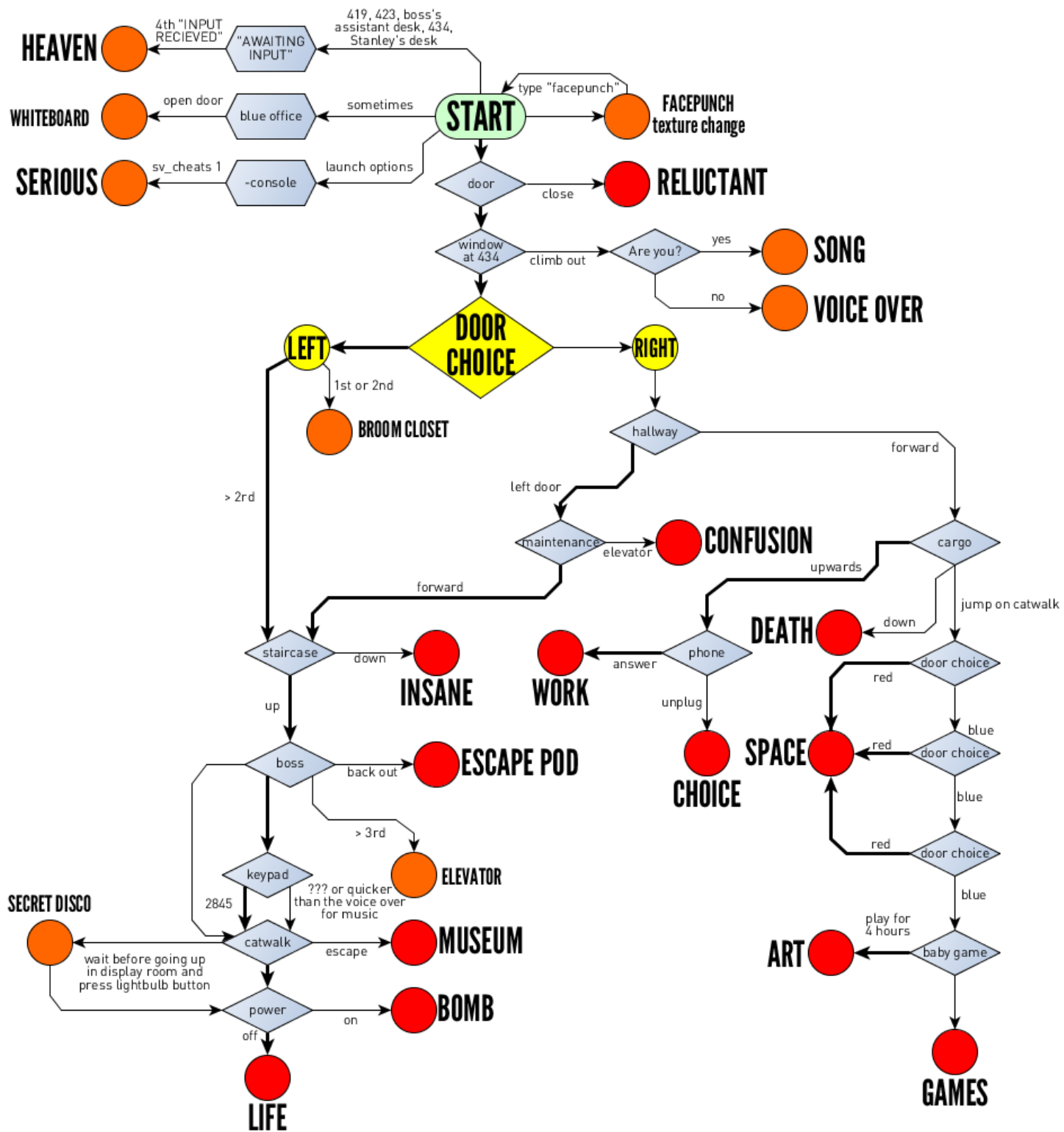
“The Stanley Parable” is a story based game in which you make choices that dramatically change the story, many of the numerous paths being completely different.

It has very few gameplay mechanics or elements, focusing on tight design and strong narrative.

# Plot / Storyline Summary

As the story changes so dramatically to the point that many of the stories are unrelated it is difficult to provide a meaningful summary. Instead, this flowchart shows the various choices, paths, and stories in the game.

The only consistent elements to the storylines in “The Stanley Parable” is the presence of “Stanley”, the character the player ostensibly plays, “The Narrator”, a disembodied voice who comments and addresses both Stanley and the player directly, and the player themselves.



# The Player's Role

The Player as previously noted, both controls Stanley, and is an “actor” within the story. The game operates on a very meta level, and the Narrator is aware of the players existence and addresses them personally.

At a gameplay level, the Player explores the game, searching for new choices and plotlines while the Narrator provides commentary, sometimes acting as a friend, and sometimes as an adversary.



# Gameplay

As explained previously, the majority of the game is exploring the various storylines.

The game takes place from a first person perspective and has few actual gameplay mechanics. Here is all of the things the player, as Stanley, can do:

- Walk(But not Jump!)
- Push buttons
- On rare occasions, pick up objects.

That is everything Stanley can do.



# User Interface and Artwork

The game takes place in the first person perspective and uses an ultra minimistic UI featuring only the subtitles.



# Sound and Music

## Music:

- “The Stanley Parable” features mostly quiet, ambient music.
- There are few moments where dramatic music is used to heighten tension.
- Music is used subtly to influence the mood, and rarely takes center stage.

## Sound:

- Most noises in the game are ambient noises common to an office setting.
- The overriding and central element to the game's sound design is the near constant narration of the Narrator, voiced by the wonderful voice of British actor Kevan Brightings.

# Other Stuff:

- Scoring: None
  - Manual: None
  - Bugs?: None that I experienced first hand
- However the game is a Source engine game, and most likely has bugs common to the Source engine.

# Special Features:

- The game does not have any special features from a gameplay or technology perspective.
- It does include momentary “cameos” of Minecraft and Portal, where you are warped into a (fake) instance of Minecraft, and the beginning of Portal.
- The game's Demo is also noteworthy, as it is entirely stand alone and does not feature any of the story from the main game.

# Review:

## What is good about “The Stanley Parable?”

- The game is very tightly designed. In almost every case the developers have thought of everything the player could do, and what they are most likely to think and do.
- An Example of this is in the Portal area, it is possible to throw a cube pass a gate, making the puzzle unwinnable. This would only happen if the player deliberately trying to fail, but there is narration from Narrator if the player does do this.

# Review:

## What is good about “The Stanley Parable?”

- The writing and story telling is excellently done, showing fine understand of the tropes and conventions contained in Video Games, and using them and subverting them to excellent effect.
- This is aided by the excellent performance from Kevan Brightings as the Narrator, who helps make and define the game.



# What is bad about “The Stanley Parable?”:

Common complaints:

- The game is short, and can be finished with minutes if you only do one playthrough, and 3 hours to do them all.
- There is little in terms of gameplay mechanics, making some feel that the game isn't a game at all.
- The game can be frustrating or demoralizing(as intended for those particular storylines).
- Some of the decisions and choices are not easy to discover or are hidden.



# What are comparable games? And how does it compare?

- Quite frankly, there are very few games that are quite like “The Stanley Parable”.
- There are many story based games, but none are focused on the deconstruction of Video Games like “The Stanley Parable.”
- In fact, none are directly comparable.

# Who is the Audience?

In the game itself, the Narrator quips(after assuming the original player must have died) that the replacement player must have a understanding of “Video Game and Video Game narrative Tropes.”

The game is not incorrect in doing so. The Audience for this game must have a understanding of Video Games for the events in it to make a full impact.

As such, the target audience are people familiar with video games and conformable with literary deconstruction.

# Are there any design mistakes?

## Define “Mistake”?

- Arguably, taking into consideration the developers intentions and the games overall goal in terms of design, it is unlikely that there are any major design mistakes.
- However, this is different from what players may consider a mistake.

## Strengths:

- Incredible Story Telling
- Tight Focus and Design
- Unique Experience

## Weaknesses:

- Short
- Light Gameplay

# What can be improved?

The game is short, and even those who enjoy it will want more of it. Finding the ways to expand the length without making it feel padded would be lovely.

The game does not many gameplay elements, and possibly adding more while using them to cover more tropes would have addressed some complaints.

Is the Game worth buying?

**YES!**

**(Unless you hate story based games)**