



Black Desert Online

By Martin Lohner



General Information

Company: Pearl Abyss (Published by Kakao Games in NA)

Type of Game: MMORPG

Release Date: March 3, 2016

Price: \$9.99 || \$29.99 || \$49.99

- Supplemented with in-game microtransactions for cosmetics and functionality



Hardware Requirements

| ITEM | MINIMUM | RECOMMENDED |
|------------|--|--|
| OS | Windows 7 or higher (32-bit or 64-bit) | Windows 7 or higher (32-bit or 64-bit) |
| PROCESSOR | Intel Core i3-530 2.9 GHz | Intel Core i5-650 3.2GHz |
| MEMORY | 4 GB RAM | 8 GB RAM |
| GRAPHICS | GTS 250, GeForce 9800 GTX, Radeon HD 3870 X2 | NVIDIA GTX 970, AMD RX 480 |
| NETWORK | Broadband Internet connection | Broadband Internet connection |
| RESOLUTION | 1280x720 | 1280x720 |
| STORAGE | 27 GB available space | 27 GB available space |

From the game website: blackdesertonline.com



Quick Overview

Black Desert Online:

- Enormous game with many in-depth aspects
- MMORPG of the year in 2017
- Combat focused, with player driven economy
- Offers a wide variety of other content as well
- NO FAST TRAVEL
- Annoying Pay2Win aspects and RNG involved
- Loved for its beautiful graphics and fast paced, immersive combat system



Main Story Line

The main story is not required to be completed and does not reflect the “core” gameplay in Black Desert Online.

Your character awakens in a small coastal town, having forgotten their own identity. We are then greeted by the “Black Spirit”, which offers us help in exchange for our cooperation.

We learn more about who we are, but give more power to the black spirit (who only we can see). Over the course of the main story the Black Spirit becomes so powerful it wants to break free from us as a host. We then defeat the black spirit, showing who’s in charge and keeping it contained as a valuable asset of resources and strength to our character.

Through expansions added to the game there are other story lines which are thematic to the new content, but do not really connect to the initial main story as it was released in 2016.



Player's Role

The player can take on many different roles depending on their own interests. The game offers a wide variety of activities and ways of progression.

Types of player roles:

- Story portrays us as “hero”, unaffected by greed and power. We are often asked to make difficult decisions that other characters don't want to. (political and ethical issues within the gameworld)
- Player can take on a role based on interests such as a fighter (PvP / PvE), and or pursue life skills (Trading, Gathering, Cooking, Alchemy, etc.)



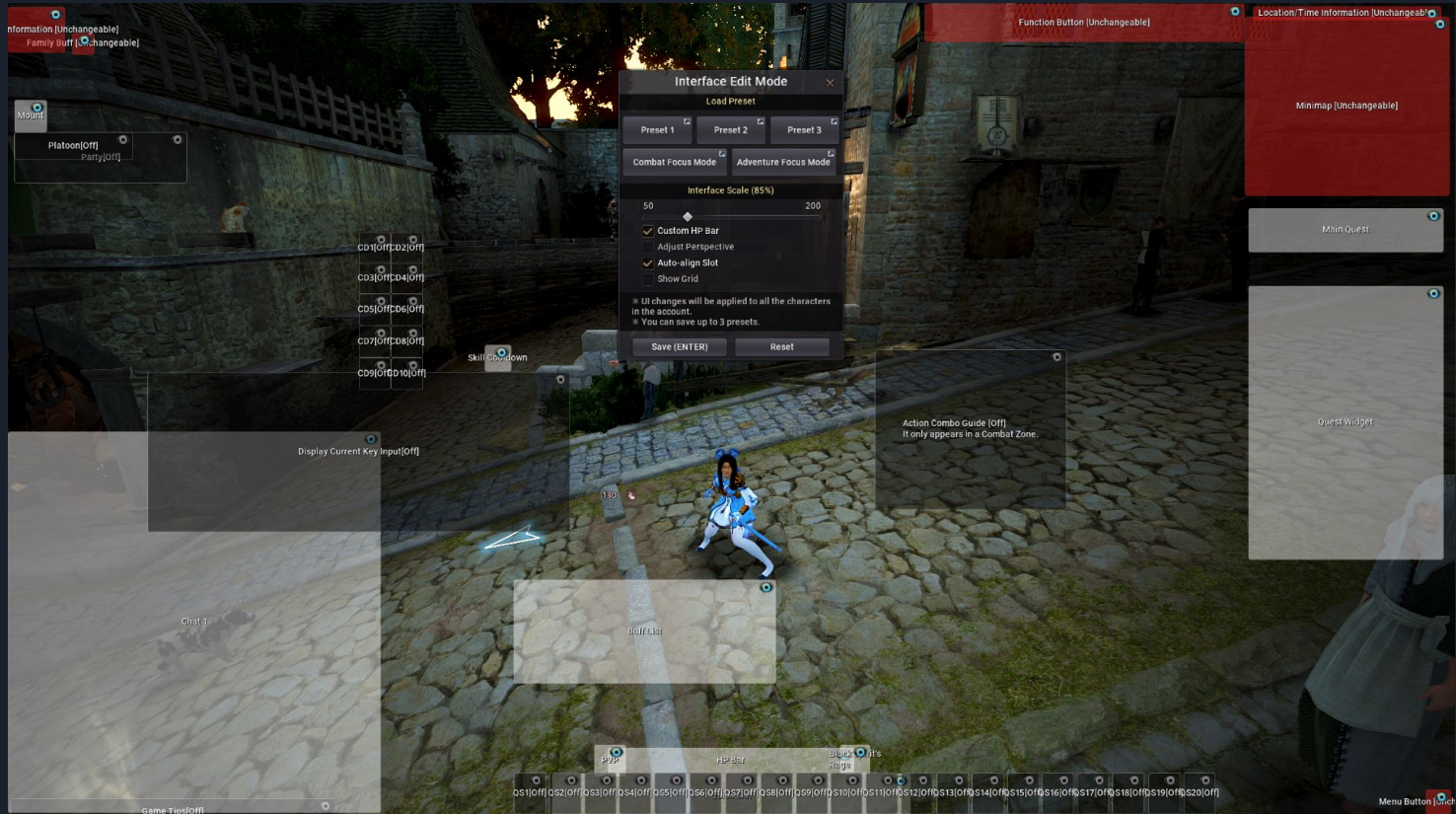
Installation

- Download the launcher from the game's website: blackdesertonline.com
- Create an account & purchase a game key on the same website.
- Log into the launcher, which then downloads the game to your local machine.
- When completed, click play on the launcher.

User Interface



User Interface





Gameplay

- Fast paced action combat in PvE and PvP
- Strategic, long term progression in life skills

→ example videos of gameplay.

Scoring

Players “score” by specializing in various activities. There are level, “life skills”, “gear score”, and other measurements of a character’s progression.

My Information [?] [X]

Basic | Title | Journal | Challenge | History | Life Skill

Lv 61 **979D 3H 49M**

Battle Stats | **Life Info** | **Ranking**

| | | | |
|--------------|------|----------------|-------|
| Attack (AP) | 270 | Attack Speed | ----- |
| Awakening AP | 274 | Movement Speed | ----- |
| Defense (DP) | 307 | Critical Hit | ----- |
| Stamina | 2050 | Fishing | ----- |
| | | Gathering | ----- |
| | | Luck | ----- |

Family Fame: 4271 ✕ 2748 ↑ 691 ↓ 832

| | | | |
|----------|-------|-------------|-----------------|
| Breath | Lv.38 | Health (HP) | 3044 / 3452 |
| Strength | Lv.31 | MP | 841 / 841 |
| Health | Lv.34 | Weight | 531.0 / 2085 LT |

Horoscope: Treant Owl

| | | | |
|---------------------------|-----|---------------------|-----------|
| - Stun/Stiffness/Freezing | 47% | Karma | 300000 |
| - Knockdown/Bound | 37% | Energy | 342 / 580 |
| - Grapple | 37% | Contribution Points | 9 / 361 |
| - Knockback/Floating | 37% | Skill Points | 10 / 1730 |

Battle Stats | **Life Info** | **Ranking**

| | | | | | |
|-----------|------------------------|------------|--------------------------|---------|----------------------|
| Gathering | 55.65% Master 14 | Alchemy | 65.41% Master 8 | Farming | 98.87% Master 5 |
| Fishing | 33.61% Master 23 | Processing | 12.32% Guru 15 | Sailing | 70.55% Beginner 5 |
| Hunting | 80.38% Apprentice 8 | Training | 75.36% Professional 7 | | |
| Cooking | 59.36% Guru 3 | Trade | 37.81% Master 5 | | |

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Artwork



BLACK DESERT
ONLINE
REMASTERED



Sound and Music

Black Desert has recently (within the last year) received a completely new, high quality orchestral soundtrack.

Voice lines and ambient sounds are clear and add to the atmosphere.

Special Features

- Event based content is frequent and fun
- Battle Royale game mode was introduced for limited time
- No loading screens across entire game world
- Combat System





Bugs

There are too many to be listed, so here are some of the most common or game-breaking ones:

- 1) *Falling through the map*
- 2) *Ability to glitch into enemy structures during war, being invincible to others while being able to damage the structure from the inside.*
- 3) *Certain skills are tied to FPS. If fps is low (such as forcing fps to 5), movement skills can be many 100-times longer in distance*
- 4) *Witch (Class) applied a buff to enemy monsters that stacked → Increasing monster damage to player to the point where even easy monsters could kill the player in a single hit*
- 5) *Broken Physics - Using skills towards certain terrain would catapult the player into the air before dying to fall damage*

What's good (fun) about the game?

- 1) Combat is engaging, fast paced, and “modern” - No more tab targeting. Player has crosshair like in a First Person Shooter. Skills are intuitive, classes require memorization of key combination.
- 2) Wide variety of activities
- 3) Extensive, player driven economy
- 4) Frequent events
- 5) Regular content expansions that are free
- 6) Cheap base price

The image shows a screenshot of the 'Central Market' interface in a game. The main window displays a list of items for sale, including 'Brutal Death Elixir', 'Vanadium Ingot', and 'Bunch of Fire Fake Flowers'. Each item listing shows its base price, recent price change, and current stock. A 'Purchase' window is open for 'Brutal Death Elixir', showing its warehouse balance, capacity, and a price graph. The purchase window also displays the player's current balance, the item's price, and the amount to be purchased. The 'Buy' button is visible at the bottom of the purchase window.

Central Market

Warehouse Balance: 7,458,556,031
Manage Warehouse
Warehouse Capacity: 1037.2 / 5000 VT 31%

Buy
Sell
Volatile Price Items
Main Weapon
Sub-Weapon
Awakening

| Item | Base Price | Recent Price | In Stock |
|----------------------------|------------|--------------|----------|
| Brutal Death Elixir | 240,000 | 2425 | 2425 |
| Vanadium Ingot | 59,500 | 12376 | 12376 |
| Bunch of Fire Fake Flowers | 1,030 | 0 | 0 |
| | 9,100 | 0 | 0 |
| | 1,460 | 3 | 3 |
| | 13,300 | 2094 | 2094 |
| | 4,900,000 | 0 | 0 |
| | 1,680,000 | 1 | 1 |

Purchase

Brutal Death Elixir

In Stock: 2,425
Warehouse Capacity: 1.00 VT
Base Price: 240,000
Recent Price: 240,000
Total Trades: 135,056
Recent Transaction: 09-18 13:41

Desired Price: 239,000
Desired Amount: 1

Total Cost: (239,000 + 0) X 1 = 239,000
Silver Left after Purchase: 7,458,317,031

Buy

Buyers

| Price | Buyers |
|---------|--------------|
| 245,000 | |
| 244,000 | |
| 243,000 | |
| 242,000 | |
| 241,000 | Listed: 116 |
| 240,000 | Listed: 2184 |
| 239,000 | Listed: 80 |
| 238,000 | |
| 237,000 | |
| 236,000 | |
| 235,000 | |
| 234,000 | |
| 233,000 | |
| 232,000 | |
| 231,000 | |
| 230,000 | |
| 229,000 | |
| 228,000 | |

What's bad about the game?

- 1) Pay2Win mechanics emerging more and more
- 2) Buying the game without microtransactions is almost unplayable
- 3) Clear “Meta” for class choices, class balance is lacking
- 4) The game is developed in Korea, meaning changes to the game are suited to the Korean market first.
 - a) This also delays the timeline for new content here in NA
 - b) Lore and Story might not receive proper translation, causing confusing with the European and American players
- 5) RNG EVERYWHERE!!



A screenshot of a game store interface showing a list of items, all of which are marked as 'SOLD OUT'. The items are:

| Item Name | Description | Price |
|---|--|-------|
| Weight Limit +300LT | Character's weight limit permanently ... | 2,800 |
| Weight Limit +200LT | Character's weight limit permanently ... | 1,700 |
| Weight Limit +150LT | Character's weight limit permanently ... | 1,350 |
| Weight Limit +100LT | Character's weight limit permanently ... | 1,000 |
| Weight Limit +50LT | Character's weight limit permanently ... | 600 |
| Serendia Worker's Lodging +1 Expansion Coupon | Permanently adds 1 slot to the workers ... | 200 |



How does it compare to similar Games?

Similar Games: Archeage, Final Fantasy XIV, World of Warcraft, Guild Wars 2

What does it do better?

- Fast paced combat that's not tab-target based
- Immersive open world that is not segmented by loading screens or fast travel

What does it lack?

- Quality lore and story line
- "Easter Egg" like interactions with the gameworld
- Innovative ideas for new implemented content



Audience for this game

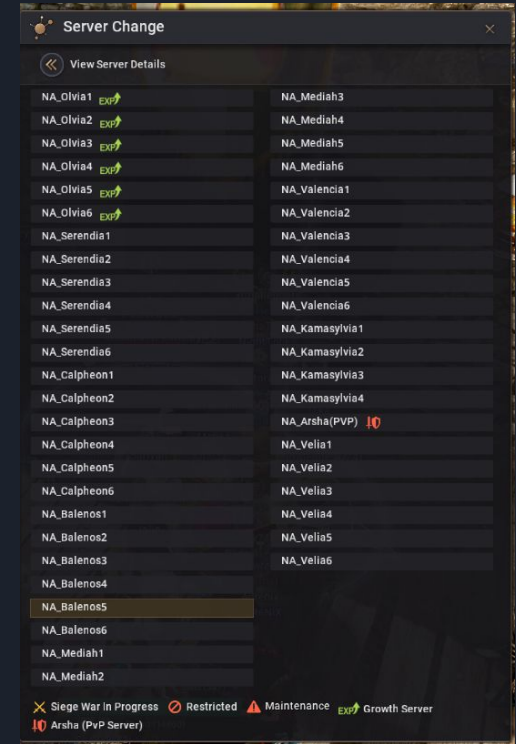
The audience for BDO is largely based around a few key aspects:

- Must have some disposable income to be able to explore the game in the way it is fun and not overly tedious
- Have enough time to interact with the game mechanics and understand market interactions

From my experience: Mostly 18+ year old, up to early 30's, but also retiring age.

Are there design mistakes?

- 1) Perform damage and skill registration as well as damage fully client-side.
 - a) This lead to major exploits for damage modification and “speed hacking” through file changes / injections on the client.
- 2) The game has (up until recently) had no instanced elements -> everything is part of the actual world.
 - a) 36 channels of the same world.
 - b) During War times (every night 9PM EST) player population is forced to 6/36 channels if participating in war -> crowded servers, lag, desync etc.



How to improve the game?

- Reducing Pay2Win aspects, focusing on Pay2Fashion instead
- Instantiate “dungeons” to accomodate for player numbers
- Balance out existing classes
- Integrate more ways in obtaining key items
- Reduce RNG involvement

| | |
|-----------|--------------|
| 1,610,000 | Orders: 74 |
| 1,600,000 | Orders: 10 |
| 1,590,000 | |
| 1,580,000 | Orders: 120 |
| 1,570,000 | Orders: 238 |
| 1,560,000 | Orders: 733 |
| 1,550,000 | Orders: 1164 |
| 1,540,000 | Orders: 130 |
| 1,530,000 | Orders: 444 |

| | |
|-----------|---------------|
| 1,000,000 | Orders: 24381 |
| 990,000 | |
| 985,000 | Orders: 187 |
| 980,000 | |
| 975,000 | |
| 970,000 | |
| 965,000 | |
| 960,000 | |
| 955,000 | |
| 950,000 | |
| 945,000 | |
| 940,000 | |
| 935,000 | Orders: 5 |
| 930,000 | Orders: 5 |
| 925,000 | Orders: 100 |



Summary

Black Desert Online: IS IT WORTH PLAYING?

- IF you are looking for the most advanced MMO gameplay experience in terms of combat and are not turned off by the “optional” microtransactions. - YES!
- IF you have a beastly PC, good internet, and school isn't really that important after all. - YES!
- Do you want to engage in online gambling without your friends and family knowing? - YES!

Otherwise:

- IF you are looking for lore, short-term fun, and like your bank account. - NO.
- IF you would like to turn your PC off while sleeping. - NO.
- IF you are looking for a complete, balanced game. - No, not yet.



Sources

<http://www.somethinglovely.net/bdo/>

<https://www.blackdesertonline.com/>