

Reviewed by: Misha Sakellaropoulo

From Nathan Sturtevant comes Dome Wars, a game based on the original Macintosh 'Artillery' game but with so much more. The object of Dome Wars is simple: be the last remaining tank (dome) at the end of a round. Your choice of weapons is enormous, but sometimes the defensive power ups prove to be the pivotal point of the round.

Dome Wars has been out for more than a year now, with public beta versions being available through a vast range of online services and the world wide web. However I consider version 1.0.4, which was just released, to be the first full version. Bugs plagued the original 1.0.0, like the following versions as well. But 1.0.4 has all but a couple bug problems solved, including all the compatibility problems found in previous versions on some machines.

Dome Wars isn't the type of game that's trying to stand out with stellar graphics or incredible music. Instead Dome Wars seems to have but one goal in mind: to be one of the most fun games available. Does it accomplish this? Well, yes and no.

Computer controled domes.

Offering up to ten players in a game including 5 different computer controlled styles of play Dome Wars is enough to bring enjoyment to any size group of people. However, as a one player game it leaves much to be desired. Currently the only 'bot to take advantage (or rather purchase) some of the larger, more powerful weapons is the "idiot". The idiot, though, just randomly launches it's missiles in whichever direction hoping to hit something. So if it's you and an idiot remaining, chances are you'll end up victorious. "Straight shot", another 'bot, fires it's missiles at max power and, as its name implies, in a straight line - no lobs. If he has a clear shot at someone, that someone will be hit 99% of the time. However, if the straight shot is atop a mountain he too will just launch missiles praying to hit something. The "lobber" targets a dome and lobs missiles at that dome until he or the dome has been destroyed. While the odds of being hit by a lobber on its first shot are slim, you will eventually be hit since the lobber adjusts his aim by a couple degrees towards you until it successfully hits you. The "cyborg" has to be the most unfair 'bot out there. He'll target someone, and hit them on its first shot 99.9% of the time. If you're without a shield and a cyborg targets you, good luck living. If you play with one cyborg in a game it's too one sided towards you (if you're good) and the cyborg. If you play with all cyborgs the odds of living are very slim. The last 'bot is probably the best. "Revenge" combines the tactics of straight shot and lobber, but targets the dome that launched the missile that landed nearest to him. A one-player game with nothing but revenge 'bots can prove to be one of the most amusing, however it quickly gets repetitive.

Scaled 50%

The weapons included in Dome Wars include everything from small to large warheads, to multi-shot and guided missiles. While the guided missiles are rather hard to use, they do indeed work. Other weapons include the funky missile, a missile that upon impact blows up into 3-6 other missiles, as well as napalm, a liquid that takes the shape of a crevasse or what have you (napalm is very powerful, if 30% of a dome gets covered with it that dome will quickly destruct). Then of course the weapons range from small (cheaper) to larger (more expensive). An amount of money is designated at the start of the game and after every round, depending on how you finish that round, you'll make some money.

The bottom line.

Dome Wars fills the Macintosh gaming spot for a fun multi-player game that doesn't require the use of multiple machines and a network. Dome Wars' small size and wealth of options are also pluses, but the textured graphics for the mountain and backgrounds need improvement. If you're looking for a multi-player game Dome Wars is your definitely your best bet.

graphics
music*

sound effects

challenge
fun factor

addictiveness

concept
story line

game play

n/a

overall

Dome Wars' System Requirements:

- 1.4 megabytes of hard drive space
- 1 megabyte of RAM

- 13" monitor capable of displaying 256 colors
- 25MHz 68030 processor or better

Download Time: ~15 minutes (14,400)