

User Interface Design for Games

David Kieras

University of Michigan

Introduction: User Interface Design for Games

Desirable Properties of User Interfaces for Game Software

**Software for Work
versus
Software for Fun**

Creative vs. Instrumental Work

Fun vs. Instrumental Aspects of Computer Games

Wrong Ideas about Usability in Games

**Usability is a Scientific and
Technical Issue**

**Suggested Approach to Developing Usable Game
Software**

How to Develop a Usable System

How to Evaluate a User Interface Design

Desirable Properties of User Interfaces for Game Software

Attractiveness, enjoyability.

E.g. quality of graphics, sound, animation, etc.

Strong influence on marketability.

Not further discussed here - I'm the wrong person!

Usability

How easy is it learn?

How easy is it to use?

Related to "playability," but not the same thing.

Usability is a technical problem, and has technical solutions.

Not an "art" any more than any other aspect of software.

A large, active discipline within computer science.

Well-developed concepts, theory, and methodology.

User interface field has many useful concepts and techniques for designing software to support work.

But what about games?

Overview of presentation

Usability of game software versus work software

Overview of usability principles and techniques

Example for discussion