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## EVIL DEAD

**A FISTFUL OF BOOMSTICK**  
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	<b>EVIL DEAD: A FISTFUL OF BOOMSTICK</b> EXCLUSIVE! THE HILARIOUS HORROR FILM BECOMES A GAME .....P46
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**CHAIN GANG:** Don't worry. The dead don't feel pain... eh, Mim?



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**EXCLUSIVE!**  
**EVIL DEAD:**  
**A FISTFUL OF**  
**BOOMSTICK**  
 THE FIRST REVIEW ANYWHERE



**MAMMOTH PROBLEM:**  
 Forget culture, Ash has zombies to kill.



**FANTASY ISLAND:**  
 Faster battles! Faster movement! Hotpants!

177	HP	256	MP	24
177	HP	332	MP	27
177	HP	288	MP	27

**WIN!**  
**TELLIES**  
**AND DVDS**  
**GALORE**  
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**VERDICT!**  
THE REAL DEAL.  
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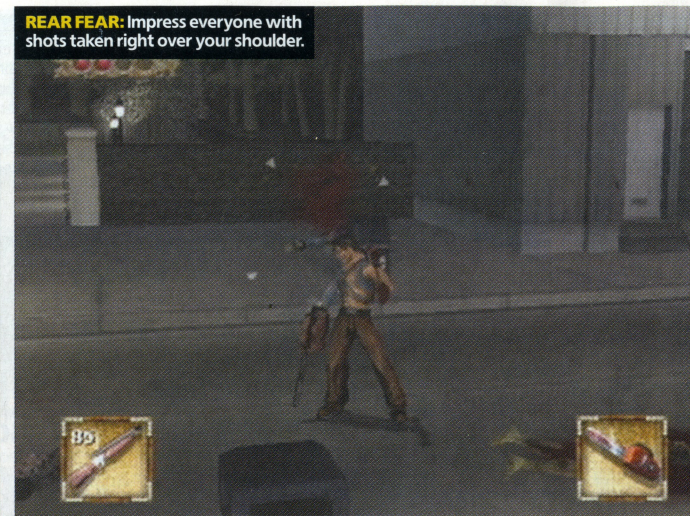
→ **INFO BURST**

OUT JUNE / PRICE £30 / FROM THQ / DOLBY NO / WIDESCREEN YES / 50/60HZ NO / PLAYERS 1 / RATING 18

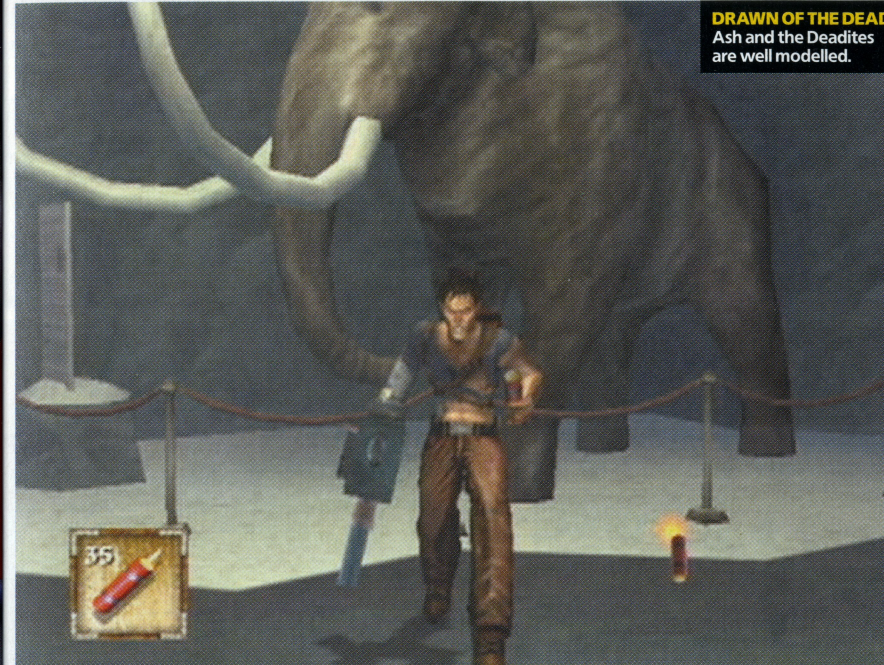
# EVIL DEAD: A FISTFUL OF BOOMSTICK

Five go mad in the woods or the ultimate in gruelling terror? Come get some!

**REAR FEAR:** Impress everyone with shots taken right over your shoulder.



**DRAWN OF THE DEAD:** Ash and the Deadites are well modelled.



**BANG AND CHAIN:** The chainsaw's roar and bark of the gun sound great.



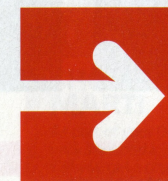
**FAREWELL TO ARMS:** Not all of the designs are especially exciting.

## GO THERE

### ENTER THE MATRIX

Like films that become games? Who doesn't? (Er, let's pretend *The Scorpion King* didn't happen.) Get yourself along to *Matrix* now.

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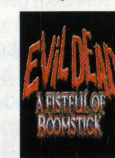


Vis Interactive's *State Of Emergency* always seemed to be an engine in search of a game. It had the potential to do so much more than it was asked to. Able to handle

hundreds of skittering enemies and a hail of hacked heads without choking on the gushes of gore or balking at the waves of frenzied humanity, it felt too powerful to be used merely on the simple riot simulator.

Such a powerful string of code deserved more, more than just a few random missions and the chance to paddle in lost limbs. It demanded a

## QUICK START



→ With the Arcade mode revealed as you clear the Deadites from each level, you have no choice but to sit back and enjoy Story mode as Ash explains how it all went wrong again. Once the intro's over, uncover the shovel and hold **Ⓢ** to fire off an one-hit kill. Now you can stay alive and save ammo long enough to find the chainsaw. Once it's attached, you can hold down **ⓧ** and launch a 360° slash that will kill everyone, or use this combo: tap **ⓧ** twice quickly and hold down **ⓧ** again for a second, then pop their heads off with **Ⓢ**.



### OLD SKOOL

Alongside the main story of Ash's attempts to save Dearborn from the Deadites, there is also an Arcade mode, locked at the start of the game. Completing a level reveals a selection of unconnected missions that give the game a little more substance. Some revolve around killing a number of zombies with only a minimal amount of ammo or a selection of unusual weapons and others demand a little more lateral thought. But not too much thought.

plot, a real sense of humour and a hero with enough charm, wit and chutzpah to hang the whole game on. Enter one Ashley J. Williams and a 22-year-old schlocky horror movie and suddenly you think you've got it all – and in spades.

In case you're not familiar with the string of cult movies (and if you're over 18, shame on you!), the three *Evil Dead* films slid from low-budget horror to campy comedy in a torrent of green blood, severed heads and Ash's casual one-liners. Picture a torrent of shuffling Ray Harryhausen-style zombies, a cabin full of latex horrors and one man with a chainsaw for a hand and a taste for shotguns. And if you still don't get what we're on about, you could just watch the second flick that brilliantly comes as part of the DVD package.

Now concentrate on the star: in the movies and this game too the hero is Ash, humanity's best hope against the invading Deadites. And the good news is that the great Bruce Campbell, a perennial B-movie legend, has been tempted back once again to provide the voice of the only man to have worse holidays than the Griswolds.

### SOUL CAMPBELL

Ten years after the last movie and a few seconds after a nicely-rendered intro, the game begins with hundreds of zombies lurching through the streets of Dearborn and Ash again fishing out his favourite double-barrelled boomstick. Of

→ **DID YOU KNOW?** In the first *Evil Dead* film, the zombie guts were made by dyeing creamed sweetcorn green.



**SPELLS AND SWELLS**  
The dripping blood reveals the level of health that our hero has, along with another green bar that depicts his Mana. When that bar is full, you can start summoning magic and spells.

**FEELING GROOVY**  
Able to decapitate, render and carve up almost every type of beast in just two blows, the chainsaw is the weapon of choice. Able to deliver short blows or long combos, the downside is that it is so slow that the most impressive moves are rendered useless. Anyway, no bonus means no combo.

**KILLING JOKE:** The comedy physics feel perfect for the movie.

**HELL'S MOUTH:** The script is as sharp and fast as the third film's.

**DEAD DOG'S LIE:** Steal a dog's soul to get into smaller tunnels.



**THE ART OF EVIL**  
Just to keep your interest up throughout the game, completing each level unlocks a gallery of concept art work and a trailer for the various movies. Featuring the sketches for locations, renders for the transformation of Dearborn and designs for the Deadites, they reveal just how complex the fast-moving character models are.



**HAIL TO THE CHIN**  
The Deadites don't seem that keen on returning to their own world, preferring to attack innocent bystanders and go after Ash. In a neat touch, each civvy also has a demon form for after they are turned.

**GORE IS GOOD**  
It's a horror movie, what were you expecting? Thanks to the SoE engine, heads, Deadites, arms and legs all go flying as Ash stars whupping people with his chainsaw. Gory? It's a thing of bloody beauty.

**TEMPLE OF BOOM**  
It was a close call but Ash prefers his boomstick to even the chainsaw, and you can see why. Able to take explosive, shrapnel and incendiary ammo types, the 12-gauge double-barreled Remington is S-Mart's top of the line and retails for about \$109.95.

## "Even the three-times defeater of the undead doesn't go around with his chainsaw attached"

→ course, even the three-times defeater of the undead doesn't wander around with his trademark chainsaw permanently attached, and so finding one and some more ammo for your shotgun becomes your first mission, as does slaughtering the legion of chasing corpses that appears on ever street corner and shutting down the dimensional portal. And that is pretty much *A Fistful Of Boomstick*: part exploration, mainly combat, but mostly lashings and lashings of gore.

**DEALT A BAD HAND**  
As in all good shoot-'em-ups, controlling the gutty slaughter is simple enough. The left stick directs our hero while the right one flicks the mostly reliable camera in 360°. During the frequent

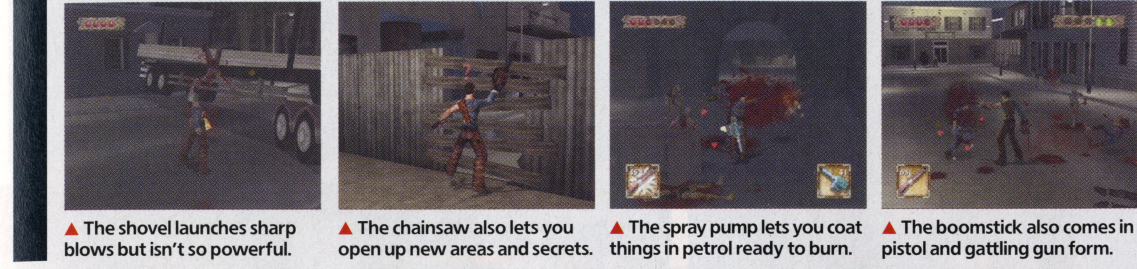
battles, pressing **Ⓢ** blocks any attacks and **Ⓢ** lets you speak to coppers, while **Ⓢ** locks on your weapons. Despite being one-armed Ash is famously also able to fight with two weapons and so he can fire his sawn-off with **Ⓢ** while you control his other sawn-off – the chainsaw-bearing stump of his right hand – with **Ⓢ**.

And you must use both left and right, as not one of the 13 weapons is enough alone to beat back the on-rushing undead, not when the number of dead-heads on screen can climb to 50. To balance out this relentless hand-to-stump combat there is also a series of puzzles scratched on Ash's To Do pad. Although they don't demand much in the way of lateral or cerebral consideration, they mostly revolve around

**DID YOU KNOW?** Look on the wall in the cellar scenes in *Evil Dead II* and you'll see one of Freddy Krueger's gloves hanging near the steps. Director Sam Raimi included this after *Evil Dead* was shown on a TV in a scene in *A Nightmare on Elm Street*.

## → THE CUTTING EDGE

The finest killing tools from 13 wonderful weapons.



## → TASTE THE BLAINE

Saw the lady in half and don't put her back together. That's magic, Evil Dead-style.

**THE VALLEY OF OUR SOULS**  
→ They might have shuffled off this mortal coil but even the undead have a soul. Collecting them, along with a copy of the Necronomicon Ex Mortis, gives you the power to cast spells to heal yourself, strengthen attacks and even control foes.

**BOOKER PRIZED**  
→ There are seven spells to learn during the game and each one is noted down in the book. Activating them means hitting a sequence of buttons correctly, but get them wrong and Ash mumbles his lines, forgets the words and gets blasted backwards. It's worth doing just for fun.

**COP SHOOT COP**  
→ Your magic is also a key part of solving the puzzles. In this case, you need to sneak around the back of the police station but the hordes of Deadite cops make it nearly impossible. The only way through the thin blue line is to possess an officer and force him to do your bidding.

**FIGHT THE FLAB**  
→ You can even turn one zombie against another by guiding your spirit into one of these Guardian gut-buckets and letting them take the damage. If that doesn't work, the Seismic Wave or Rain of Fire will, and since every kill recharges your power, it makes the spells an easy standby.

collecting one item from a demon-infested corner and taking across town to unlock another area where the beasts lurk inside.

**GORE THE MERRIER**  
Slasher movies, like survival horror games, are built around surprise. Claws that grab from beneath the stairs, beasts that leap out of the dark and things that go 'Uuuuurrgh' in the night provide the peaks in the tension that draw you in and keep you playing for the next wham off the adrenal gland. This isn't the case with *Evil Dead*. Granted, it is more a shooter than creep-a-thon but the atmosphere stays at a constant pitch.

Rarely do the Deadites get the drop on you because they are monotonous in their persistence: each time you stop one appears, each time you run around corner another one pops up. They rarely swarm all around or can be found running in the opposite direction because their AI is damnably dumb even for zombies. Killing them becomes as pallid as the creatures' decaying flesh, and even the colourful carnage of another torn torso can't stop you wishing for a little more variety. The model for this type of game should be *Devil May Cry*'s somersaulting, combo-launching complexity and its bad-ass attitude, but Ash's feet

**SHOP S-MART!**  
As part of your Dead pack, included in your £30 you get a copy of *Evil Dead 2* on DVD. If you haven't seen the film, it almost makes the whole game worth buying! Famous for its low-budget effects, the whole project is dragged out of the mire of 80s schlock by the brilliant direction of Sam Raimi, the hilarious slapstick carnage and the brilliance of Mr Bruce Campbell.

remain rooted to the floor and so survival and repetition remain more important than style. Likewise the discovery of Dearborn drags rather than excites. The flat buildings don't give the town the most enticing of facades, and you'll be really surprised at how much you have to run through its featureless streets. You find yourself tramping from town hall to church and back again, trying to work out tasks that seem simple on your To Do list but demand slightly illogical leaps. The solutions must have seemed obvious to the developers, but when you're blundering around a museum with a beeping stick there seems no reason to blow up unmarked patches of wall, making the puzzles frequently frustrating.

**ASH'S TO ASH'S**  
In the often identikit genre of free-roaming shoot-'em-ups, *Evil Dead* wouldn't distinguish itself if it weren't for the quality of the script and Bruce Campbell. Genuinely funny one-liners are delivered with the same dry wit that has been pilfered for characters from *Duke Nukem* onwards. Sadly, with this game based around the boomstick and not the film's slapstick, we have a superb hero in a game that delivers – just not often enough.

Alex Cooke

**WATCH OUT FOR...**  
The blade and bullet combo! It can fillet, it can slice, it can cut through your car and still dice tomatoes. The chainsaw is the ultimate weapon, and combined with the shotgun it just gets better.

# REVIEWS

Ash is a cult hero – but can he save this?

**EVIL DEAD IS MADE UP OF...**

- 12% SMASH TV
- 13% ED: HAIL TO THE KING
- 50% STATE OF EMERGENCY
- 25% EVIL DEAD 2

**SHLOCK AND GORE:** Thankfully more has been taken from the movie and less from the appalling *Hail To The King*. But the main influence has been Vis Interactive's own *State Of Emergency*, which has virtually been transplanted wholesale to become the Arcade mode. A game that was in turn inspired by the ancient *Smash TV*.

**THE VERDICT**

**GAMEPLAY** 07

- + Cool hack 'n' slasher with more blood and lost heads than ever.
- Clumsy puzzles, plenty of wandering and dull combat.

**PRESENTATION** 07

- + Fifty deadheads and a hundred quips on screen all at once.
- Flat backgrounds fill similar-looking streets and zombies.

**LIFESPAN** 06

- + Six huge levels and Bosses plus an expanding Arcade mode.
- The novelty of being Ash wears thin and frustration can set in.

**OVERALL**

A great engine, an even better hero and a free DVD... but while the game is brilliantly bloody, its lack of variety stifles a good selection of its ideas.

**OR YOU COULD TRY...**  
**DEVIL MAY CRY**  
Dante provides the wit and lots more thrills.

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