

# ALIEN 3

**Virgin, £TBA  
Cassette, £TBA Disk**  
**It's hardly sociable, is it?  
 To jump onto someone's  
 face and impregnate them?  
 Or, come to think of it,  
 ripping them apart in a  
 single flick of a tentacle!**  
**Aliens are a nasty bunch  
 and should be wiped out on  
 sight. JAMES 'FACE  
 HUGGER' PRICE sets his  
 flamethrower on Deep Fat  
 Fry...**

Look, it's not a bad thing to play games on other systems, okay? Rarely a day goes by without us receiving a letter that condemns every console/16-bit game in existence. Personally, I've always believed that each system has its merits, and to dismiss every other format... it's just pointless, right? The C64 has a massive software base, with some of its titles head and shoulders above other machines' efforts in terms of playability, design and general excellence. These days, multi-format releases are commonplace; on the C64, they tend to be a little dodgy due to the fact they're cut-down versions of games designed



two previous Alien films). Newt (a young girl rescued in the previous film), Bishop (a simulant partially killed by the alien queen in Aliens) and Sgt Hicks (a member of the doomed team of marines in Aliens) crash down on the prison planet known simply as Fiorina 161. Hicks and Newt die instantly; Bishop is, due to the fact the planet is devoid of



technology required to repair him in any way, effectively dead as well. Ripley is rescued by the prisoners and their small contingent of supervising officers, and spends a week recuperating in the prison's infirmary. After recovering sufficiently, Ripley becomes convinced that a Face Hugger — a creature responsible for the forcible (and subsequently fatal) impregnation of the alien seed — was aboard her craft before and during the crash. Unbeknownst to the unfortunate alien-killing veteran, that very creature escaped immediately after the collision with the planet, and infected a dog.

Unfortunately, Fiorina 161 is devoid of any potential alien-wasting weapons, leaving the prisoners vulnerable. Picked off one by one, they eventually dispatch of the Giger-designed creature

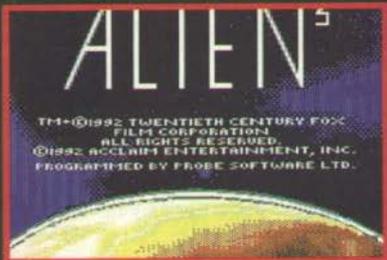
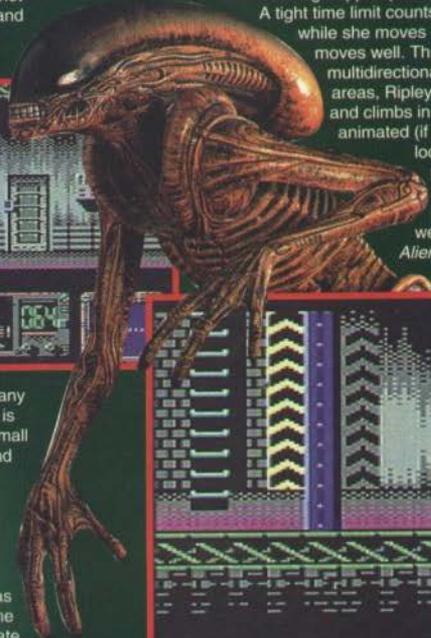
by way of an elaborate plan — trapping it and submerging it in molten metal.

## Disregarding the plot...

So here's the real laugh of the day; in C64 *Alien 3*, Ripley's absolutely loaded with weapons. Flamethrowers, repeater rifles, grenades... you name it, she'll blow up an alien with it. Of which, coincidentally, there are many — the one critter of the film appears to have become literally hundreds during the conversion. Through nine-or-so levels, Ripley has to avoid (or destroy) the alien menace while finding and rescuing trapped prisoners.

A tight time limit counts down while she moves — and she moves well. Through the multidirectionally-scrolling areas, Ripley runs, shoots and climbs in a well animated (if a little rough-looking) manner; the aliens are also fairly well-defined. *Alien 3's* backgrounds are

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specifically for other — mainly 16-bit — systems. Of course, there's an exception to every rule; releases such as *Robocop*, *Navy Seals* and others have been far better than their counterparts. Which, quite neatly I feel, brings us onto the subject of *Alien 3*. Having been released on the Mega Drive and SNES to much critical acclaim, it's now available for the C64. It compares favourably.

In the *Alien 3* film, Ellen Ripley (heroine of the



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● One thing that DID bug us about Alien 3 is that, when Ripley slides (above), it's a slow and ponderous happening. Surely it could've been a bit faster, yes?

— at times — stunning, providing cosmetic excellence while not impeding the main flow of the game.

Film licences became big business around 1985, when software houses began to realise just how lucrative movie tie-ins can be. Sadly, the quality of the actual games was frequently neglected; glossy advertisements, packaging and — of course — the well-known name often disguised

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unplayable software with little in common with their cinematic subject matter. If we're honest, quality film-based games are few and far between — you know what? Alien 3 is one of the 'few'. It doesn't follow its parent's plot closely — quite the opposite in fact — and despite its obvious

technical excellence, it's glitchy in places. But with its large amount of options, surprisingly unobtrusive multi-load and large, well-designed levels, Alien 3's a winner.

It sounds good, it's large and challenging... in fact, I'd go back and play it for a while longer if it wasn't for this damn

stomach-  
ache  
I've  
got...



**JAMES! 94%**

**MILES!**



● Wow! After playing this on SNES, Megadrive and Amiga I was a little dubious as to how well the C64 would cope, but concern turned to relief seconds after taking up the joystick. Instead of turning out a poor, formula effort bearing no relation to its classy 16-bit big brothers (Addams family anyone?), C64 Alien 3's a straight conversion of the Amiga game (almost — level layouts vary a little). So should they have bothered? Yes, yes and thrice yes! Worra great job Probe have done — retaining all the game's atmosphere with slick sprites, quality animation, all set in a dank, claustrophobic game world faithful to the film (are you sure about this Miles? — Ed). Ripley has an impressive array of firepower but it's up to you to decide what's best and where. Basically, Alien 3 proves the ol' 64 can still mix it with the best of them — it's a first-class tie-in, grade-A conversion and wicked action adventure no gung-ho xenophobe should neglect to own.

**91%**



● Hey! This is a big caption, isn't it? What literary gems can I write here, I wonder? If only Clive left small spaces, like that nice Claire woman. Ahh, but that's just life, I suppose. Now where was I...

**CURVACEOUS COLLECTABLES**



**Pulse Rifle**

Fires rapid bursts of mildly powerful shots.



**Rocket Launcher**

Slow but devastating — useful against the three gaurdians.



**Flame Thrower**

Has a short firing range, but works wonders in close-up battles.



**Grenades**

Lethal but slow, this weapon's one for emergencies only.



**GALE WARNING**



■ **PRESENTATION** ■ GREAT TITLE SCREEN, MANY OPTIONS



■ **GRAPHICS** ■ SUPERB BACKDROPS, GOOD ANIMATION



■ **SOUND** ■ SUPERLATIVE TUNES AND FX



■ **USABILITY** ■ TRICKY BUT COMPULSIVE



■ **LASTABILITY** ■ LOTS OF LEVELS, THREE SKILL SETTINGS

**87%**

**91%**

**88%**

**95%**

**90%**

**FORCE FACTOR 93%**