

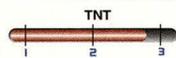
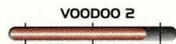
DEVELOPER →	Rebellion
PUBLISHER →	Fox Interactive
REQUIRED →	P200 MMX, 32MB RAM, 3D accelerator card, 128MB hard drive space
IDEAL →	PII 400, 128MB RAM, Voodoo 2 or AGP TNT card

ALIENS VERSUS PREDATOR

Because three is three times as nice

ACCELE-RATED

There's little if any visual quality difference, except of course the TNT can do higher resolutions than a single Voodoo 2. Either way, the game is smooth, fast, playable, and great looking. What more do you want?



API SUPPORT: Direct3D, Glide



Popping alien heads off with wrist blades is about the most entertaining frag there is.

Using a great-looking buffed-up 3D engine that captures the atmosphere of the movies perfectly, Fox Interactive's *Aliens versus Predator* is a hell of a game. It's a balls-to-the-wall action alien simulator wrapped into a package that will scare the crap out of you almost the whole way through — not to mention frustrate the hell out of gamers everywhere to no end.

Almost three different games in one, *AvP* invites you to slip into one of three roles — the oral hygienically-challenged Xenomorph, the Colonial Marine, or the Predator. Remarkably, the developer, Rebellion, has been able to recreate a vastly different feel for all three races in a near perfect fashion. The Alien is almost surreal to play, with its slightly fish-eyed view, breakneck speed, and ability to run across any surface from floor to ceiling, while the Predator's toughness and power shine through above the puny humans, who must rely on faster weapons, armor, and decent speed to survive.

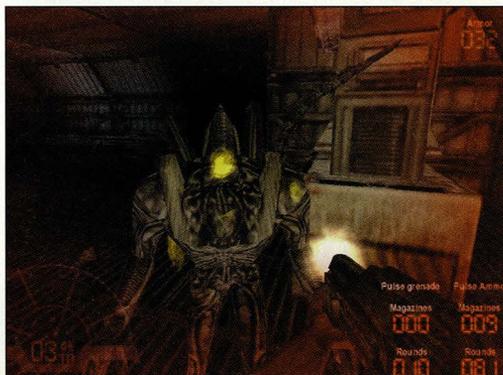
The game offers five Alien-based levels, and six each for the

Predator and Marine (though the last level for both is a Queen Alien match). Five bonus levels for each race — basically reworked maps from the other campaigns — supplement the relatively short, but well thought-out campaigns.

The look, feel, sounds, textures, weapons — basically everything — have been ripped straight from the films, and it all works great. The Marine levels are pant-spoilingly intense at times, as you hear the Aliens scampering around you, falling from air ducts, and screeching to attack with only the blip of the motion sensor for comfort. The Predator levels span Alien hives and human installations, complete with motion-sensing guns, as he hunts down the United States' finest and the Xenomorphs. Aside

from a normal human-like view, he has electrical-based vision for Alien hunting, thermal for humans, and then one for spotting fellow Predators (and his homing disk). He can also turn invisible, eating up his power source used to supply the electrical weapons and healing syringe.

The Alien has three attacks — tail whip, claw strike, and a decapitating head bite that sucks health points out of the hapless target. It also has two vision modes, one for navigation in dark areas, the other for hunting, where humans appear in shimmering blue. It's a pure joy to be this classic enemy in such a faithful recreation of its abilities, scampering with stunning speed around the levels, and scaring the





It's the new and improved Alien snack!



Careful aim is not needed in this situation.

ANNOYING ALIENS



Alf

ALF KNOWN FOR → Crash-landing on Earth in the late '80s, eating cats, playing Bouillabaisse-ball, and causing trouble for the Tanners
LEGACY → Mated with a Golden Retriever named Fluffy and raised a horrific litter of muppet dogs



Mork from Ork

MORK FROM ORK KNOWN FOR → Spawning from a bad episode of "Happy Days," drinking with his finger, talking to plants, and never getting any lovin' from Mindy. "Shazbol!"
LEGACY → Once Earthlings finally tired of Mork's silly little quirks, he had no choice but to start using heroin, become a junkie, and live out his last days dirty, homeless, and smelling of urine



Jar Jar

JAR JAR KNOWN FOR → Fish-flipping his way across a galaxy far, far away, and being the downfall of *Episode One*
LEGACY → Continued his downward spiral and became a poorly-animated character on a Saturday morning cartoon, "The Adventures of Jar Jar"



Cheech Marin

CHEECH MARIN KNOWN FOR → Claiming to be *Born in East L.A.*, smoking large amounts of marijuana, getting high, rolling joints, doing bong loads, and saying "Waatsappennin'!"
LEGACY → He has gotten old, quit smoking, and now hangs out on a house boat with that guy from "Miami Vice"

crap out of every soul. Supporting the sense of abject terror is the realtime lighting (each light source can be destroyed — a useful multiplayer tactic when fighting marines) and the enemy AI, where Aliens attack in packs and squads of marines work together. Character design and animation is fantastic, with intricate body part-sensitive hits that are so refined you can shoot the fingers off an Alien and cut its tail in two. Predators can't be dismembered, but humans certainly can, although they die instantly, whereas Aliens will try to keep on coming, spewing their acidic blood.

As a challenge, the game is bitterly hard, and there is no option to save at all during a mission, which is insane. While a standard quick-save would have diced the atmosphere, waypoint saves in some of the bigger levels (especially the Alien levels) would have prevented some of the frustration

of having to play whole levels over in order to proceed to the next. Multiplayer is incredibly fun with several different race and team-based games. Multiple Marines against one Predator is a great challenge, and with its generally commendable Internet performance, reason enough to buy this great game.

Had the main campaigns been longer with more reasonable save options, this would have been a near perfect game. It does everything else right — the graphics and pulsating sound are top notch, the atmosphere is thick enough to cut, the gameplay is exceptional, and the action and feel for each character is dead-on to the movies.

Unfortunately, while there's a sense of accomplishment when completing the missions, that feeling can be subdued by the frustration of having taken too many tries to succeed. Regardless, *AvP*

is highly recommended, and offers some of the most intense, distinctive, and downright frightening action ever on a PC.

— **JASON D'APRILE** is a magnet for attracting Alien Queen Bitches. Odd, since he's a very nice guy

GRAPHICS

Detailed, exceptionally animated characters, great lighting effects, and really nice looking levels, thanks to an engine that's somewhere between *Quake II* and *Unreal*, in terms of visual flare and goodies.

SOUND

Spooky, atmospheric, and ripped right from the movies, although only EAX 3D sound is currently supported.

DEPTH

The three characters are vastly different, with very unusual levels and tactics. Also, the multiplayer variety is quite impressive.

DESIGN

Solid level design with incredible atmosphere and suspense, but the levels are often rather linear, and hellishly hard at times.

RATING



+ Pluses

- Incredible atmosphere
- Great control
- Intensely frightening gameplay

- Minuses

- No save option during a level
- Therefore, it's frigginn' hard
- Though it may sound masochistic, I want more levels!



This is what we refer to as an idiot optimist. However, some of us refer to all optimists as idiots.