

# nintendo

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**GAME BOY**



No.7/Vol II May '93 £2.25

# GAME ZONE



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SCOOP REVIEW

# alien 3

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# ALIENS



There are few things in the universe less pleasant than a rampant mother Alien, but a rampant *Patrick McCarthy* is one of them. He intimidated us into giving him this review by sucking our faces for hours at a time.



You are Ripley, top space adventurer, ravishing beauty with a strangely protuberant mouth, and/or shaven-headed figure of fun. Inbetween writing *Ripley's Believe It Or Not*, the newspaper column with which you regularly dupe the public with tall stories about the sex life of badgers, you often sing pop songs in a pretend Irish accent and appear on television to make controversial speeches. For the moment, however, you have decided to cast aside popstar fame to concentrate on your

first love, the exploration of uncharted areas of deep space whilst asleep.

To this end, you are floating about, having fun in your knickers (so to speak) when the ship malfunctions and, just before exploding, dumps your sleeping form on the nearest colonised outpost, a nearly-abandoned maximum security prison. When you wake, you find that you're the only survivor of the crash and that said outpost has been taken over by those old friends of yours, the Aliens. (It must have got to the stage by now where



Ripley re-defines the concept of the 'space shower', much to the disgust of Gilbert and Widdowson Sward.



launcher and a rather impressive flamethrower with three grades of flame: red for minor burns, blue for complete skin grafts and green for the removal of large areas of rainforest. (You also have a scanner, which is crap.) So picking off the odd alien isn't too difficult.

Ripley makes her way through each mission running, jumping, swinging and, most importantly, crouching her way along like Torville and Dean with a machine gun.

The reason that crouching's so important is that most of the shooting has to be done from that position, since the vast majority of the aliens come at you very low to the ground. Of course, you can shoot in eight directions, and could therefore conceivably pick them off diagonally from a cool standing pose, but it's a lot easier, and far less hazardous, to get down to their level. When you're not crouching through choice, you're normally stuck in an air duct where you have no option but to crouch. It's the kind of position that would have most men's kneecaps popping out after a couple of minutes, but not Ripley's. Some might say she's missing out on the opportunity to use her kneecaps as missiles, but not to her face.

you dread going to sleep in those bloody cryogenic things - every time you wake up there's another mob of face-huggers in your sandwich box or a batch of eggs in your makeup or something.)

Anyway, having discovered where you are, and just who you're going to have to share breakfast with over the next few months, you obviously find yourself feeling none too pleased. Rent-o-kill are constantly engaged, so you decide to take on the task of defumigating the prison outpost of your bug-like chums all by yourself.

### missions

You begin the game standing in a poorly-lit corridor with a drive-in sized computer terminal just in front of you. Morons will ignore this, sprint elegantly down the corridor and start shooting the walls (yes, yes, yes, I know that you're unarmed in the film - but this is the game of the film, and it's different: ie there's nobody selling ice-creams and you don't have somebody sitting in front of you wearing a stetson). But the mature, sensible gamesplayer will do a James Brown-slide into the terminal and find themselves presented with a choice of seven missions (which can be completed in any order) and a blue print of the prison complex.

### blueprint

The blueprint of the prison complex can be accessed from any of the computer terminals dotted around the game. This is extremely useful if you're thinking of building a prison complex of your own and don't have any imagination. Almost as importantly though, you can use it to fully examine the location of the various mission goals and find out where everything from power-ups and alien eggs to junction boxes and all the best pubs are. You can even click on a door and explore the room or zone that the door leads to - it's a complete mission planner, in fact.

### mission selection

Once you've checked out the blueprints, it's time to select the mission you want to complete from the list of seven available on the computer terminal. Then it's off into the clink, to annihilate your slimey pals.

### weapons

As you make your way through the dark, brooding platformy environment, you'll be jostled on all sides by scuttling black aliens. Luckily Ripley has the kind of armaments usually only associated with the West Yorkshire Police: she can lay her hands on a pulse rifle, a grenade



Has this game got atmosphere, or what?

## the seven stages of alien

### face hugger

Face huggers leap out of eggs with all the aplomb of a bit-part actor in a West-End musical, and head straight for your face, where they change to First Date mode and try to put their tongue into your small intestine, via your mouth.

### the internal parasite

This parasite does little more than leap out of your chest at socially embarrassing moments (like when you're having a quick bottle of champers with Norman Lamont).

### bambis

'Bambis' is the entirely inappropriate name for the aliens in their long-legged clumsy stage, and is a bit like calling a nuclear intercontinental ballistic missile a firelighter.

### developing aliens

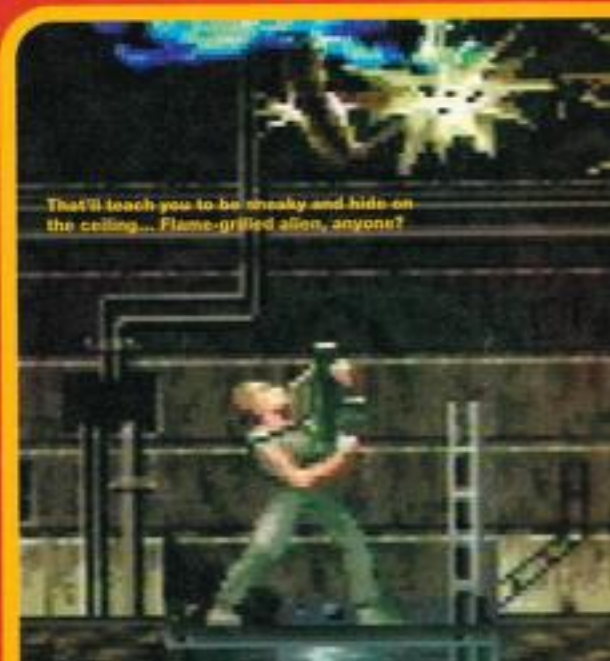
The developing aliens are a bit ideosyncratic, in that they take two hits to destroy where their older relatives only take one. Don't ask me why. Perhaps they haven't taken to eating gassy food yet.

### big aliens (eeeeek)

There are three stages of the biggest version of the alien, who all explode in typically over-the-top fashion when shot. The first is dark grey, and rather tetchy; the second is dark blue, and downright unpleasant and the final stage is an unholy deep red. They have a serious personality problem.

### mission position

There's no linear progression of missions in Alien 3, so you can complete them in what ever order you choose and while you're trying to complete one mission, there's nothing to stop you dashing to the planet surface and wiping out the eggs there before popping into the kitchen and making yourself a quick alien omelette for breakfast, either. You only have just one life to complete the missions, but there are plenty of power-ups dotted about to help you. Which is just as well, all things considered.



That'll teach you to be sneaky and hide on the ceiling... Flame-grilled alien, anyone?



**seal and secure no. 1**

Despite all your efforts at the Early Learning Centre, your training programme appears to be failing. The aliens are getting out of control: hanging about outside burger joints, chewing gum and wearing leather jackets – you know the sort of thing, you've seen *Happy Days*. Anyway, you'd better get down to the Assembly Hall and settle their hash before they colonise it. A quick blast of *Morning Has Broken* should do it. Then seal the doors shown on the blueprints to limit their movements. Either that or tie their back legs together.



**turn and burn**

The Mother (Mutha?) Alien has been smitten with those home-making, broody feelings that can creep up on even the most career-orientated female, and laid lots of eggs in the Waste Area. Many would say that's the ideal place for babies – but not me, oh no. The mission computer describes this as 'infesting' the area, but we know it's a perfectly normal process of nature, don't we? Mind you, we're still going over there to boil those eggs in a totally inconsiderate manner.



**party time**

According to the ever-reliable computer, someone called Golic has located rather a large cache of ammunition in the mining complex. This is slightly worrying because Golic is apparently a bit of a liar – he's already told you that Madonna's his mother, Prince Charles is his father and he's got his own real Thunderbird 2 – so you're not sure whether to believe him. Then again, think of the fun you can have with a huge pile of ammunition.



**power link-up no. 1**

The power that runs the prison is failing, which could mean the loss of the fridge and the end of decent ice-cold tinnies. The problem appears to be in the Cone-of-Silence, the small pocket of fear-packed atmosphere that follows our beloved editor about the room. (You're fired. Get out, and don't come back, Ed.) Now you know why. Anyway, it's up to you to repair the junction box and bring the generator back on-line before the prison loses power completely and has to resort to drinking...warm beer. (Aaaaaiieee!! Art Ed.)



**rescue and release**

The ever-dependable scanners now show a large quantity of PDTs. I'm not really sure what that stands for. Practically Dead Types? (Personal Data Transmitters, actually. They're implanted in all the prisoners. Ed.) Whatever. The scanners show the prisoners must be cocooned in the Furnace area – so at least they'll be warm. It's best for you to go in and administer your own specialised medication – a high-powered bullet up the nose –

**the magnificent seven (missions actually)**

You start at the terminal, and from there set off to complete a series of seven missions – in any order that you like. Smart.



**hunt or hunted**

A vast mob of 'fully-fledged aliens' (presumably as opposed to apprentice aliens) have nested up on the planet's surface, and are busy producing offspring, growing their own root vegetables and begging for change for cups of tea. They're the latter-day version of a tribe of crusties, and you're the equivalent of a council representative who's received a complaint from the local residents' association – except that in this case the residents have been eaten. It's up to you to visit the surface and steam into their childcare facilities with your grenade-launcher.



**seek and destroy**

The aliens are absolutely swarming about down in the Cells area, once again working outrageous hours without the chance of a single extra penny in overtime (just like your dedicated Game Zone staff). Assuming that you've finished your jigsaw, have nothing better to do and fancy a bit of carnage, what will you utilise to kill them all? a) a Paddington Bear Hard Stare; b) a small photograph of yourself naked; or c) your enormously destructive flame-thrower. It's probably best to make up your mind before you go in.

**ripley's believe it or not**

Sigourney Weaver is a daughter of Dennis Weaver, star of *McCloud*, and Myrtle, one-time children's entertainer.

**believe it or not**

The Samoan active breed was bred by fixing...

## all about aliens - an entymologist writes

These so-called 'aliens' have had undeservedly bad press over the years - they have the same instincts to survive, love and nurture their young as any of the more superficially 'cute' species. They're just misunderstood. (And rather better at protecting themselves than most bunny-rabbits). Alright, so they jump on your face, crawl down your throat and then burst out of your stomach after several days - so what? I'm sure if we made more effort to relate to them, we'd understand their behaviour - after all it's mainly a cultural barrier, based on acquired social values which can be un-learned. After all, we all have unsavoury habits that we get up to in the privacy of our own homes, don't we? Well, I certainly do - but then I've never known the love of a woman.



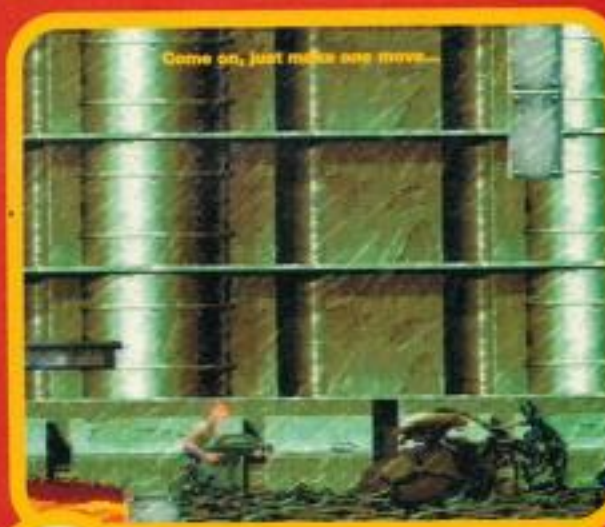
### smooth animation and fabbo graphics

The most obvious thing about the game is the quality of animation. Scrolling and moving are superbly smooth. The background graphics are pretty good, too. There's nothing particularly eye-catching, but it's all very successful on the moody-scale. There are blizzardy bits and spooky, misty bits up on the planet surface. I also like the way you can't see very far in either direction in the air ducts, too. This may be a deliberate attempt to induce panic, or it may just be that the people who drew them can't do details but are good at shading, and Acclaim got lucky. Who knows?

### minor gripesville

We know you'd think us lax if we didn't stick a couple of minor whinges in, so here they are: if you get hit by anything you slump to the floor, then you get back onto your feet, even if you were crouching before you were hit - which is annoying if you're surrounded by aliens. It's also a pain having the scanner among your selectable weapons. It would be better if it was displayed in another corner of the screen.

These minor blemishes aside, *Alien 3* is an excellent platform game. The fact that you have to do it all in one go, makes it more of a challenge, and the three difficulty levels give it good longevity. ■



### verdict

Very good platform game, big on moodiness and strategy.



### not?

eldest  
one-time  
Hindley,  
tainer.

### ripley's live it or not?

uckold Monkey of Western  
a so-called because the male  
discourages other males to  
mate, then kills them both  
brakes on their golf-cart.

**END ZONE**

Graphics: [10 bars, 9 green, 1 red]

Sound: [10 bars, 9 green, 1 red]

Addictiveness: [10 bars, 9 green, 1 red]

Playability: [10 bars, 9 green, 1 red]

**OVERALL 90**

Out: May Price: \$49.99  
Publisher: Acclaim

aaaaargggghh!!!

If you fail to rescue one of the captives, this happens to them. It is neither funny nor clever. The moral: "If you see a Jelly Baby wearing dungarees hanging from a wall, do not cross the road to the other side." (Pretty useless moral. Ed.) You never know.



Aliens recommend Wash'N'Go

### plotty, plotty, plotty

**S**igourney Weaver, some bloke and a girl are asleep in this spaceship. They crash on a prison planet, the bloke and the girl are killed, and Sigourney is unconscious. She is rescued by some bald geezers who are criminals, except there is an alien in her stomach. Sigourney realises this after writing to John Hurt. Now she has to kill all the Aliens before the criminals can cut off her hair. But The Company want the Aliens alive!

(Actually, this game has very little to do with the *Alien 3* film. It's more like *Aliens*, although Sigourney is bald here.)



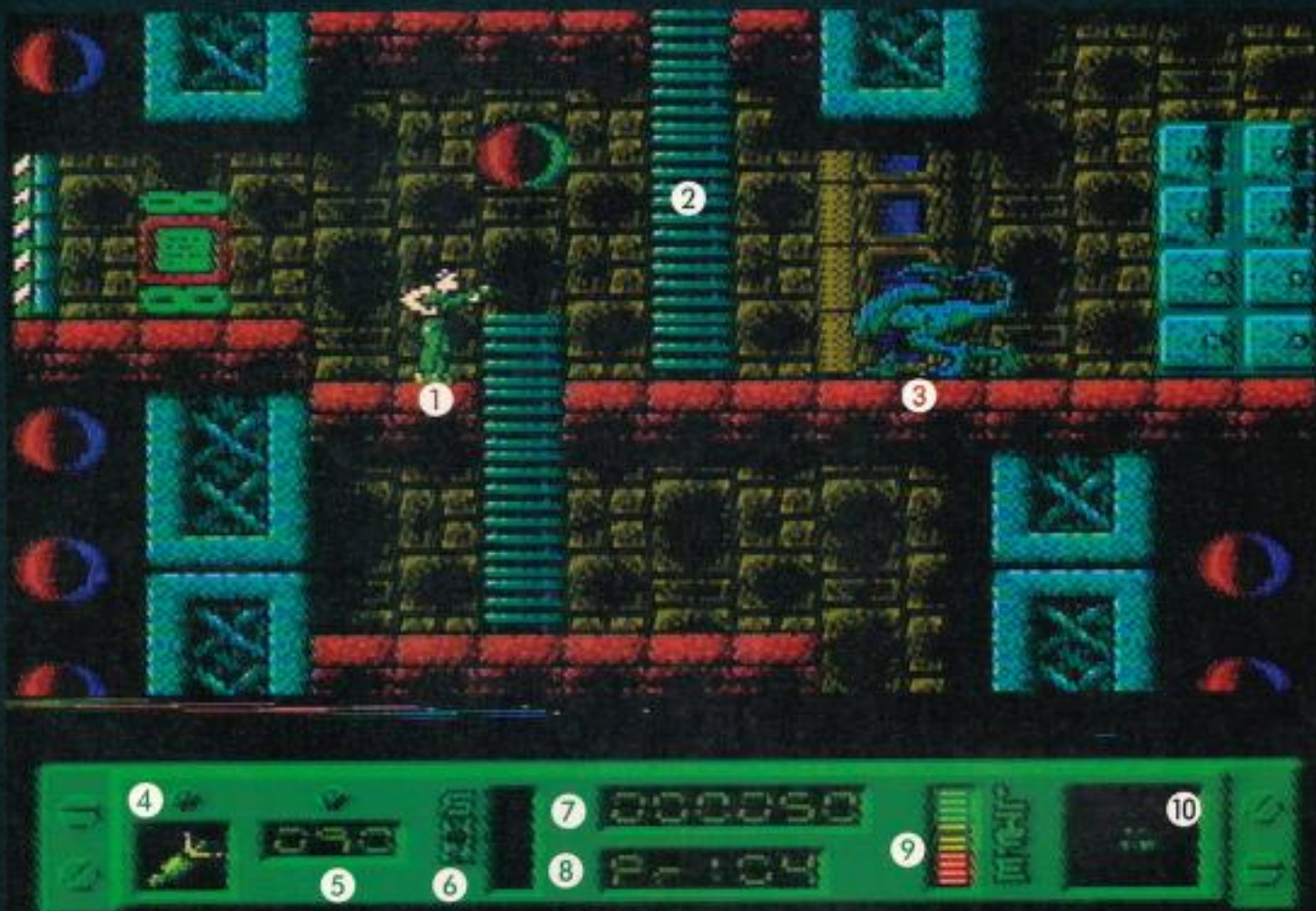
Platforming game? No, it's not. Not a moving platform!



Nick Griffiths owns a book on UFOs and claims to have been the alien out of *Close Encounters Of The Third Kind* (Special Edition). Who better to review *Alien 3*, then? (Anyone. Ed.)



# alien 3



**A**liens have been portrayed as cute with big eyes (Mac of Mac & Me), as cute with big eyes (ET of ET) and as cute with big eyes (Gizmo of Gremlins). Children are growing up learning to trust weirdies from other planets, which is not a good thing.

They're not allowed to trust people who offer them lollipops, so why? Given a choice between befriending a bloke with a bag of sweets or some potential lunatic with a flying saucer, I know which I'd plump for.

So these Aliens come as a breath of fresh air. They aren't cute and they don't have big eyes. They even kill cats, which do no harm to anyone (other than spending their lives eating, sleeping and 'doing it', and no one moans at them or closes their bank account). Aliens are the negative publicity that beings from other planets deserve. Remember: ET wanted to phone home. Why, eh?

### aubergine

This NES version of *Alien 3* is based not on the excellent SNES version, but on the Sega versions. Oh, yeah - "Booo!" Right. Listen, Sega and Nintendo are as bad as each other. They have taken the kids' pocket money (£50 a week nowadays, presumably - used to be a farthing a year and a good hiding in my day, etc etc) and they have rubbed their hands together, making the same dastardly laughing sounds that all baddies make in films that aren't Russian.

It's an eight-level game, with four Guardian Alien (much bigger) levels. That's 12 levels altogether. And it's a platform shoot 'em-up set in mazes of tunnels. Oh dear.

You are a balding Sigourney Weaver, let loose on the planet Fiorina 161, which sounds more like a car. Your mission - should you choose to accept it (although you've wasted £40 if you don't) - is to release a load of tied up people who look like Jelly Babies in dungarees.

### ratatouille

There's a time limit of roughly four minutes for the completion of each level, which involves rescuing all the prisoners and then making it through the air ducts into the next level. There are four weapons of varying power at your disposal, though you'll end up using the grenade launcher for most of the game.

When, inevitably, you fail the level first time around, you're shown the position of the prisoners you failed to rescue. So, next time it's simply a matter of remembering where they are, remembering where the Aliens appear from, and going like Billy-O. (No idea who Billy-O was, nor why he was going so fast. Sorry.)

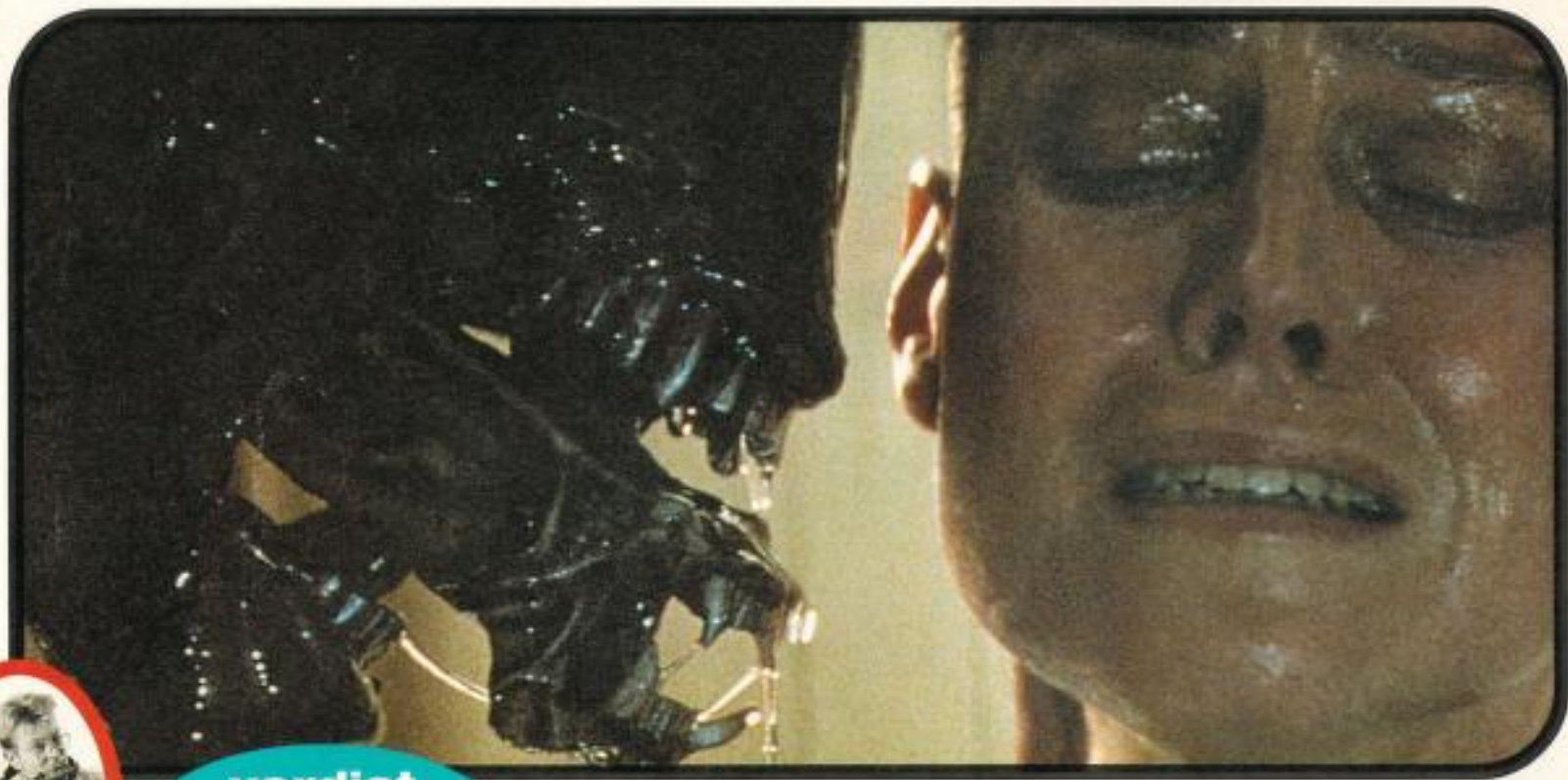
But I'm being harsh. Initially, there is some tension and, er, the Alien sprites



### what's what?\*

- 1 You. This is you. It's also Sigourney Weaver. Weird, huh?
- 2 Ladders. Some ladders.
- 3 An Alien. They're scary, but remember: "In space, no one can hear you let wind."
- 4 Weapon select. You have four weapons at your disposal. This shows which you are using.
- 5 Ammo meter. How much ammo you have remaining (maximum 99 rounds).
- 6 Gun meter. If used for too long, your weapon overheats. This shows you when. Very handy (if you have nothing better to look at).
- 7 Score. Your score.
- 8 Time/Prisoners remaining. How many prisoners still to be rescued, alternating with your time remaining.
- 9 Life meter. How much life you have left. It says it all about '90s society that life is reduced to a few ill-formed lines on a TV screen.
- 10 Radar. Pick up batteries to activate this. When activated, a few white dots appear, along with a bleeping sound. This could be either the captives or the Aliens - whatever, you'd be better off making your own bleeping sound and drawing small dots on a piece of paper. Technology, it seems, is not what it used to be.

(\*you may well ask)



**verdict**  
It isn't cute and it doesn't have big eyes.

look quite good and, erm, you can toy with your weapons and make things go 'Bang!', and... well, those are the best bits.

**courgette**

It doesn't take long for the initial attraction to wear off. Even the final levels differ only vaguely from earlier ones. There's a rather nice waterfall background, admittedly, but that's not awfully space-age. Not as space-age, say, as an astronaut or as vacuum-packed, freeze-dried ice cream.

It's all a matter of climbing ladders, descending ladders, blowing a door open, killing a couple of Aliens, rescuing a Jelly Baby and then trying again.

There are the boss levels, too, of course. The Guardian Angels wander around the London Underground system wearing red berets, beating up young people who have turned on the busker singing 'American Pie'. They do not spit (unlike footballers). The Guardian Aliens, on the other hand, do not wear berets and they spit acid. Still they are not very hard to defeat once you work out where's the best place to stand.

**asparagus**

If this was the first game of its kind, we'd all play it and go "Eeeeeee!", "Wooohah!" and stuff like that (since we're all pretty childish here). Instead, it's the 368th of its kind and, frankly, we've seen it all before but better. The sound is tiresome and uninspired, the gameplay is adequate though little more, and there's been a noticeable lack of imagination at work here. In the world of vegetables (since an analogy is undoubtedly required), *Alien 3* on the NES is a carrot. Better than a potato, but still only suitable for stew and for vegetarians. ☹

**the arms trade**

**Dangerously insane Middle Eastern gentleman:** "Psst, got any weapons for sale?"

**The British government:** "Certainly. Just one thing: you're not going to use them against 'Our boys in the Gulf', are you?"

**Dangerously insane Middle Eastern gentleman:** "Maybe."

**1 pulse rifle**

Fires continuously, not very powerfully. Rifle tends to overheat if used for too long, rendering it useless (and you dead).

**INSET: spare ammo**

**2 flame thrower**

'Throws' flames (not possible manually). Useful during close combat or inside the air ducts.

**INSET: spare ammo**

**3 grenade launcher**

Launches grenades. The most powerful weapon. Two shots kill aliens in early levels, and three later on.

**INSET: spare ammo**

**4 hand grenade**

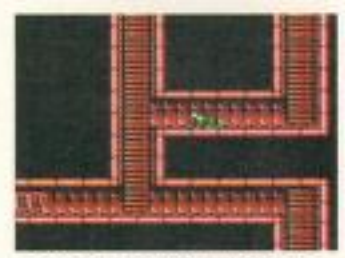
A grenade without the launcher. Drop them while you're on ladders. Alternatively, hoist ladder over shoulder and turn round several times, knocking the same person over repeatedly.

Pretend to be oblivious to this and call yourself Charlie Chaplin. Make a career out of this ladder 'gag', then die of old age some years later.

**INSET: spare grenades**



Guardien Alien: "Do you like my beret?" Sigourney: "Oh very stylish!"



"Where did I leave that umbrella?"

**LEAD ZONE**

Graphics: [Progress bar]

Sound: [Progress bar]

Addictiveness: [Progress bar]

Playability: [Progress bar]

**OVERALL 60**

Out: May Price: £39.99  
Publisher: Acclaim