

PROJECT Rocket Golfing

Developer:

Morgan McGuire at Casual Effects
Williamstown, Massachusetts, USA

Internet:

rocketgolfing.com
@CasualEffects

Release date:

13 April 2015

Regular Price:

USD \$2.99, CAD \$3.49, GBP £2.29

Platforms:

iPhone, iPad, iPod Touch

Contact:

morgan@casual-effects.com

Launch Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6X8HC-rjxOg>

Description

Project Rocket Golfing is a game about exploring an infinite, procedurally generated universe by playing mini-golf. The game features real orbital mechanics and celestial bodies. Players will encounter frozen worlds, alien plants and animals, lost civilizations, desert planets, binary stars, gas giants, and more.

Over time, players will master trick shots, craft advanced technologies, and discover many secrets. The more that they play, the more that they will encounter as the game continuously changes.

After the first few galaxies, players earn the ability to name galaxies. Each name generates a specific and unique set of solar systems. Discover special ones to share with your friends by name.

Project Rocket Golfing is also great for children. It is a safe space with no in-app purchases, no violence, no Internet access, and no failures or losses. It teaches carefully researched facts about space and includes quotations from famous scientists and astronauts. The core gameplay is as easy as pulling back a slingshot with one finger. Kids will enjoy naming galaxies after themselves and their friends.

Project Rocket Golfing was created in two months by professor Morgan McGuire for his own young children and adult friends. It combines his fascination with space exploration and love of deep, casual games.

About Casual Effects

Casual Effects is a small company in Massachusetts for independent computer games projects by Morgan McGuire and his friends. Morgan has contributed to the *Skylanders*®, *Call of Duty*®, *Guitar Hero*®, *Marvel Ultimate Alliance*®, and *Titan Quest*® videogame series, the Unity game engine, and NVIDIA GPUs.

Morgan is a professor of Computer Science, teaching game design at Williams College, the top-rated college in the US. He holds four degrees in computer science and electrical engineering from M.I.T. and Brown University. He is the author of three major books on computer graphics and games, and many scientific research papers and patents.

More Details

Project Rocket Golfing is a game about exploration and discovery. It is set in an infinite, procedurally-generated universe. It begins as mini-golf in space, on rocky planets. Progressing farther reveals new gameplay and new features in the solar systems. Soon, you'll encounter ice worlds, aliens, wormholes, binary stars, lost civilizations, and more.

Procedural generation

When playing, you'll name the galaxies that you discover. For example, you might name them after yourself, your friends, or science-fiction themes. Each name that you choose becomes a galactic seed. It spawns solar systems and the stars within them, and then planets, asteroids, and moons.

All from the name that you chose for a galaxy, the app runs a realistic simulation computes the elements, temperature, and humidity on planets. These influence the orbits, size, terrain, and alien species that evolve. This is why each galaxy is complex and unique. Often you'll discover a really interesting galaxy filled with lost civilizations, space stations, and natural resources. You can share the galaxy's name with friends or on social media. Then, other people can type it into their game and visit the same galaxy that you've created.

A Game for Everyone

I also wanted a game that I could play with my children: a mixture of real science and silly fun, no violence, no in-app purchases, no explicit tutorial, no way to lose, and no confusing saving or UI mechanics. You just pick it up and play.

The great theme of space exploration is bringing together the human race. There've been many great men and women involved in the science, engineering, and literature of space, from many nations. The game introduces these heroes through quotes and facts to celebrate human diversity and inspire the next generation of explorers.

Mobile

Project Rocket Golfing was specifically developed for mobile gaming. It can be played a few minutes at a time, but continually adds features over the first 20 hours of play and has no end. The interaction is elegantly simple and requires only thumbs. It can be played one-handed.

Space

The game captures Morgan's favorite moments from science fiction and real space exploration: first setting foot on a new world, gravity slingshotting around a planet, dancing between asteroids, deploying from a dropship, blazing atmospheric entry, clinging to the side of a space station, and breathtaking leaps into the unknown.

More About the Designer

Most of the games that Morgan works on involve hundreds of game developers and span multiple years of work. *Project Rocket Golfing* grew out of a 48-hour game jam hosted at Williams College during winter break. Morgan followed up over the next three months, refining the game play and testing with children, hardcore adult gamers, and many people who had never played any video game before.

To help inspire his students, Morgan used exactly the process and tools from his game design course when developing *Project Rocket Golfing*. He's released most of the source code online and over the next few months will reveal many of the technical details behind the game.