

Steam now prioritizes helpful reviews over useless jokes and memes

With the latest Steam update, Valve is publicly testing a new helpful system for reviews.

The whole purpose of reviews, whether written by experts or users, is to help others make informed choices. Should I go see that movie? Should I eat at that restaurant? Is this game worth paying for on Steam? For that reason, Valve has a plan to support users.

Valve tests new helpful system for reviews

With the latest Steam update, Valve is publicly testing a new helpful system for reviews.

This system, as its name suggests, prioritizes helpfulness over everything else when it comes to Steam reviews. The idea is to promote user reviews that "help players make the best game purchasing decisions".

This system is currently enabled by default, but can be enabled or disabled for each game. So people who are less interested in actually helpful reviews and are just there to see the jokes, memes, and ASCII art (which you can even create in your Linux terminal) can still see these nonsense, but interesting.



Help people know which game to buy

Valve has correctly determined that user reviews should primarily exist to help people make purchasing decisions. However, given the nature of the Steam community and the old system where game reviews were sorted by votes, one-word reviews, jokes, memes, and ASCII art would often be at the top, pushing down relevant game reviews.

As well as using reviews to make purchasing decisions, you should also consider leaving a review on Steam.

While Valve is happy to tolerate this nonsense, they don't want to promote it and prioritize them over honest reviews that can help people know whether to buy the game or not. Therefore, a new useful system was born. So while they're still visible, they'll be placed further down the game's store page, after other, more serious reviews.

Valve wants to point out that this new system will not affect the game's scores, but this is still a work in progress. The system will sort reviews based on a combination of user reports, Machine Learning algorithms, and manual moderation.

Take your jokes, memes and ASCII art elsewhere!

This looks like a solid update! Because, while there should be a place for jokes, memes, and ASCII art, they should never take precedence over helpful reviews that actually help people decide what to spend their money on.

Steam users may want to try to ensure jokes still make it to the top of reviews. But we can't blame Valve for trying to control its community. The efforts of those who write honest reviews to help others should be appreciated.

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