Pilot a plane, race rivals on incredibly real motorbikes, try out the sequel to Little Big Adventure, discover some new words, or join Gary Lineker for a football bonanza

Home & Entertainment

The latest stories and products

Fans of Krush, Kill and Destroy will be delighted to know that a new special edition is on the cards. **KKnD Xtreme** will bring 30 more scenarios to challenge you, together with improved artificial intelligence.

Designed by old Sinclair Spectrum stars Melbourne House, KKnD hits the shelves in October.
Electronic Arts: 01753 549442

New from Red Orb, **Warbreeds** allows players to take control of four clans in a desperate battle for survival. Using DNA collected from fallen enemies, you must strive to

Continued opposite…

MICROSOFT FLIGHT SIMULATOR 98 Ⓤ

'**N**ow increase your thrust and gently pull back on the stick. That was good. Now retract your gear.' No, it's not the voiceover of some instructional video on intimate personal relationships but the static-distorted tones of your co-pilot trainer in Microsoft's Flight Simulator 98.

Anyone who has ever dreamt of piloting an aeroplane has almost certainly come across the Flight Sim series before. It's been around for 15 years and was one of the first serious attempts to simulate flight on a PC. In the latest Windows 95/NT-only incarnation, Flight Sim 98 takes full advantage of the recent advances in technology, such as MMX processors and the DirectX5.0 driver set.

Flight models for seven aircraft are present, ranging from the Boeing's docile
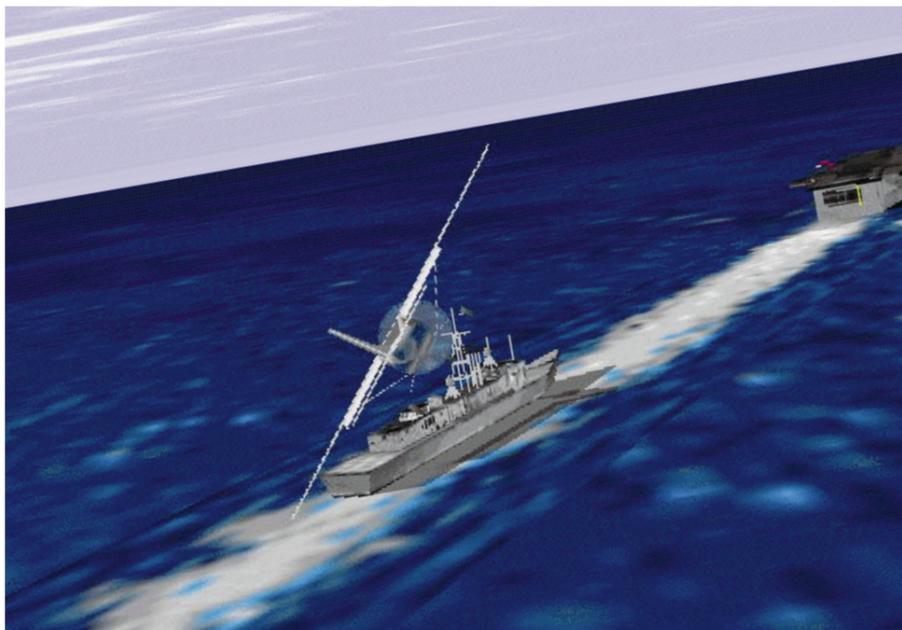
workhorse, the 737-400, to the highly manoeuvrable but seemingly uncontrollable JetRanger III helicopter from Bell. All have been designed to be as close to the real thing as possible and, though we're far from experts, they certainly seemed to respond realistically.

You can take off from and fly to some 3,000 airports dotted around the globe and the cityscapes of the major locations are plotted in three dimensions. The difficulty level is perfectly gauged, beginning with quick trips in a dual-control Cessna and building up to long-haul passenger flights with you seated as the captain.

Graphically the game can be stunning. Take to the air over London, for example, glance down at the accurately mapped River Thames and you could easily believe that you're speeding over the capital. Ground features vary in both frequency and detail level and range from hillocks to the Houses of Parliament

We were fortunate enough be able to play Flight Sim using Microsoft's new Sidewinder Force Feedback joystick. This adds a new dimension to the flying experience, and we found ourselves fighting instinctively with turbulence and receiving a deathly shudder as we adeptly landed our Cessna nose-first for the umpteenth time.

As usual, to get the most out Flight Sim 98 you'll also need a fairly powerful PC. The game will run on a 486 processor, but we really would recommend at least a 133MHz Pentium for best results.

Continued…
create faster and more powerful creatures to help your cause.

Set to be a big hit with strategy fans, Warbreeds will arrive in February 1998.
Broderbund: 01429 273029

F-15, the next-generation jet combat simulation from Jane's Combat Simulations, lets you climb into the cockpit of the world's deadliest strike fighter. Crisp 3-D visuals are promised along with two battle campaigns and more than 2.5 million square miles of terrain over South-west Asia.

More information can be found on the Internet at:
www.janes.ea.com
Electronic Arts: 01753 549442

More details have come to light about the long-awaited **Hexen II** from Raven Software. As well as having four characters for you to play (Necromancer, Paladin, Assassin and Crusader), this sequel will be compatible with new 3D accelerators supporting the GL graphics system such as Orchid's Righteous 3D and the Videologic Apocalypse 3Dx.

The final game should be available by the time you read this, and a playable demo with two characters is now available to download from the Activision Web site.
Activision: 01895 456700

Flight Simulator is not a game for arcade freaks or those after a quick thrill – in fact, it's not really a game at all. Stick with it though, and you'll discover that it's one of the most rewarding ways to pass time with your PC. An absolute triumph.　　Scott Colvey
● £49.99 (inc VAT, £10 cash-back voucher for existing owners)
● Microsoft: 0345 002000

Microsoft Flight Simulator 98	
Overall	★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Minimum requirements: 486DX2 66MHz (Pentium recommended), 8Mb of RAM (16Mb recommended), Windows 95/NT, SVGA graphics card, 2x CD-ROM drive and 75Mb of hard disk space.

AGE RATINGS

Age ratings: We have assigned viewing suitability ratings for each game.
U = Universal;
PG = Parental Guidance;
15 = suitable for viewing by 15-year-olds and above;
18 = suitable for viewing by 18-year-olds and above.

MOTO RACER

Motorbike racing games for the PC are thin on the ground so anything that comes along boasting two-wheeled action is an event in itself. Moto Racer comes from Delphine Software of 'Fade to Black' fame, so no matter how poorly it plays, it should at least look the part.

Moto Racer's formula is hardly new – pick a bike (eight racers, eight motocross, each with different characteristics), choose a race (single or championship) and buckle up your helmet. Views range from front mudguard-cam to behind-the-rider, and there are eight tracks and up to 24 other riders.

So far, so dull but from here on, everything changes.

Forget every racing game you've seen on the PC – Moto Racer has redefined the genre. The important point is that it supports 3D accelerator cards via Direct3D and, with the right hardware, nothing like it has ever been seen before outside of an arcade. It looks fantastic even without a 3D accelerator, but you need a lot of PC to run it at the maximum resolution of 640x480.

Superbly realised tracks range from simple winding tarmac through twisting dirt tracks and tortuous frozen skidpans. Bikes and riders look incredible too and as you watch them lean into bends, steal a glance behind at the opposition and open the throttle to wheelie ahead of the pack, you could almost be watching the real thing on *Grandstand*. Watch the fluid camera tracking of a race replay and it's hard to believe you're not.

We played Moto Racer on a P200MMX Mesh PC with an Orchid Righteous 3D accelerator and the game looked unbelievable.

Looks aren't everything of course, but thankfully Moto Racer has gameplay that more than matches its appearance. It's no simulation and the controls are easy to master. Whether you're fighting your way to the lead, getting your knee on the tarmac through a tight bend or popping a mid-air stunt, everything just gels and feels spot-on.

On an ordinary if powerful PC, Moto Racer is a racing game that everyone should have in their collection. Throw in a 3D accelerator card and this is the only racing game you should need. What a pity our star ratings only go up to five. Julian Prokaza

- £29.99 (inc VAT)
- Electronic Arts: 01753 549442
- www.mracer.com

Moto Racer	
Overall	★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Minimum requirements: Pentium 90MHz, Windows 95, 16Mb of RAM, 2Mb DirectX3a-supported SVGA video card, 2x CD-ROM, DirectX3a-supported sound card. Pentium 133MHz or faster, 16-bit sound card recommended.

LITTLE BIG ADVENTURE 2 – TWINSEN'S ODYSSEY

Two peaceful years have passed since the mighty battle with evil interplanetary dictator Fun-Frock. Now, the planet Twinsun is in trouble again, invaded by aliens from Zeelich. And, it's up to the heroic Twinsen, a young Quetch with a name very similar to the planet, to save the day. LBA2 is the long awaited sequel to what many considered the greatest adventure game ever. It's lost none of the charm of the original; and is much bigger (with 220 locations on three planets) and more detailed, with a more powerful game engine than before. LBA2 may lack the immediate realism and, possibly, the adrenaline rush of first-person adventures such as Quake or Duke Nukem. But, thanks to the intricate attention to detail of the settings, plot, design, and characters, you're quickly drawn into an epic world that resembles some kind of interactive movie epic.

Each of the scenes is beautifully designed and rendered. And, unlike many adventures, you're not restricted in where you can go, what you can see, and what you can do.

There's a haunting soundtrack, which wonderfully accentuates the drama as the plot unfolds. Even if solving complex puzzles doesn't appeal to you, it's fascinating just to explore your surroundings, take in the scenery, soak up the atmosphere, and meet hundreds of interesting and bizarre characters along the way.

One of the great things about LBA2 is that you can take things at your own pace. Game controls couldn't be simpler. You select whether your Twinsen is in a normal, sporty, aggressive, or stealthful mood, then use the cursor keys and space bar to get around and interact with objects and other characters. Actions include fighting, jumping, opening, and so on – depending on your current mood and circumstances.

This is a great and worthy successor to one of the classic arcade adventures. Don't miss it. Mick Andon

£39.99 (inc VAT)
Electronic Arts: 01753 549442

You can solve puzzles or just explore Twinsen's world, and meet strange characters.

Little Big Adventure 2 – Twinsen's Odyssey	
Overall	★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Minimum requirements:
DOS – Pentium, MS-DOS 5 or higher, 8Mb of RAM (16Mb recommended), 4x CD-ROM drive, VESA-compatible SVGA video card, Sound Blaster or compatible sound card.

Windows 95 – Pentium, 16Mb of RAM, 4x CD-ROM drive, DirectX 2 or higher, DirectX-compatible SVGA video card, Windows 95-compatible sound card.

HMV GAMES CHART

	Title	Manufacturer	Price
1	Dungeon Keeper	Electronic Arts	£29.99
2	Constructor	Acclaim	£29.99
3	Little Big Adventure 2	Electronic Arts	£39.99
4	Dark Colony	Take 2	£29.99
5	Command & Conquer: Red Alert	Virgin	£44.99
6	Theme Hospital	Electronic Arts	£39.99
7	Carmageddon	SCI	£34.99
8	Fifa Soccer Manager	Electronic Arts	£39.99
9	Flight Simulator 6	Microsoft	£49.99
10	Civilisation 2	Microprose	£19.99

This chart is based on the latest available figures at the time of going to press.

The latest version of Maris's desktop planetarium, **Redshift 3**, will be available early in the new year for around £35. The interface has been redesigned so it's now even easier to explore the galaxy. There are star maps and pictures of the planets and moon: there's even a movie on the search for extraterrestrial life, plus all the latest star discoveries.

Atlas of the Ancient World examines all the major civilisations of the world, from the Stone Age until the fall of the Roman Empire. It's historically accurate and lets you investigate cities, archaeological digs and even ancient musical instruments. For £29.99, you get 52 documentaries and 2,000 illustrations.
Maris Multimedia: 0171 488 1566
www.maris.com

If exploring ancient civilisations takes your fancy, then **MISSION: The Pharaoh's Challenge** takes you on a quest for Egyptian objects. This done, you must solve puzzles to release the Pharaoh's soul to the afterlife: on-line links let you find out more. Coming out simultaneously, and also priced at £19.99, is **The Roman Challenge**, in which you visit a Roman town.

Quite different is **Virtual Toy Factory**. Having created a 3D animated character, you follow him round a fantasy toy factory to rescue Professor Whizz Bang from the clutches of a nightmarish snake.

My Oxford Word Box

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s **t** u v w x y z

New from Oxford University Press this month are two educational CD-ROMs. As their titles suggest, they're intended to introduce children to words and pictures, as well as tying in to the National Curriculum. The Word Box is based on the best-selling My Oxford Picture Word Book and meant for children aged three upwards.

The interface is plain almost to the point of being boring, but as soon as you click on a letter to bring up words, all that changes. All the words are colourfully illustrated and defined with short phrases; there's even a poem for most of the words – read by Sandi Toksvig. Click on any of the pictures and it turns into an animation, helping to make the definition even clearer.

There aren't any cross-references as such – they would be too complex for this disc – but words are linked together. It's as important to know how words are used and what they go with as it is just to know their meanings, so it's welcome that 'honey', say, takes you to 'sandwich-making', and then on to 'bread', 'toast' and 'jam'.

Finally, but very importantly, the Game Bear takes you to a series of fun word games. Simple they may be, but they're fun and manage to reinforce the spelling and sound of words very effectively. The Teacher Cat is full of praise once the exercise is over – it's great positive reinforcement.
This is fun, colourful and good value – its only rival is Dorling Kindersley's My First Incredible Amazing Dictionary. John Sabine
● **£19.99 (inc VAT)**
● **Oxford University Press: 01865 267815**

My Oxford Word Box					
Overall	★	★	★	★	★

Minimum requirements:
PC – 486DX2-66, Windows 3.1 or later, 8Mb of RAM (16Mb for Windows 95), 1.5Mb of hard disk space, SVGA display, 2x CD-ROM drive.
Macintosh – 68040 or Power Macintosh, System 7.01 or later, 5Mb of RAM (9Mb for Power Mac), 1.5Mb of hard disk space, 256-colour display, 2x CD-ROM drive.

Teddy's five on the tenth of May!

My Oxford Picture Box

The Oxford Picture Box aims to introduce slightly older children than those the Word Box (above) is aimed at, to the world of art. It contains just over 100 pictures taken from the collection of the National Gallery in Washington DC, and claims to develop perceptual skills and artistic judgement.

Sadly, there is little to back up this claim, and there seems neither rhyme nor reason to the choice of pictures included. They have supposedly been chosen to appeal especially to children, but we couldn't see the appeal at all. Maybe it lay in the fact that about half of the pictures seemed to include a little girl in a seventeenth-century pink frilly dress and most of the rest were gentle pastoral scenes – maybe not.

After traipsing round the Gallery looking at some of the pictures on the wall – and being left in ignorance about everything except the title and artist – a quick trip to the Games Room seemed like blessed relief. Unfortunately, the games seemed to consist of placing a couple of jigsaw pieces correctly, and matching a few words to the corresponding item in the picture. A bit more variety might have kept us there longer.

Looking for any information at all, we stumbled on the Archive. This has more details of some of the pictures hung in the Gallery; none from this century though. The extra information is more of a story about the painting – the tale of St George and the dragon for instance – than any artistic detail

The Picture Box is not really suitable for a child to work through on their own and to get any benefit from it you'd need to spend a lot of time looking at and discussing the works of art with your child. The lack of detailed information in the handbook about each picture means this isn't possible unless you already have a fair bit of knowledge. A good gallery catalogue is far more interesting.
Don't bother with the Picture Box: it's not expensive, but it's really just not worth the effort. John Sabine
● **£19.99 (inc VAT)**
● **Oxford University Press: 01865 267815**

My Oxford Picture Box					
Overall	★	★	★	★	★

Minimum requirements:
PC – 486DX2-66, Windows 3.1 or later, 8Mb of RAM (16Mb for Windows 95), 1.5Mb of hard disk space, SVGA display, 2x CD-ROM drive.
Macintosh – 68040 or Power Macintosh, System 7.01 or later, 5Mb of RAM (9Mb for Power Mac), 1.5Mb of hard disk space, 256 colour display, 2x CD-ROM drive.

Struggle for Peace: The Troubled Century

If you're studying the twentieth century at school, anywhere between GCSE and A-Level or their Scottish equivalents, then the Struggle for Peace disc may look attractive. It looks at the period until the end of the Second World War, and comes shrink-wrapped with a textbook that takes you to the fall of the Berlin Wall.

The book, unfortunately, sets the tone for the CD-ROM. It's superficial and gives a slightly distorted view of events, more through its omissions than through any factual inaccuracies. What's more, it includes a fair amount of original source material to give an impression of the period – but this is so heavily edited as to be almost unusable.

The disc is much the same. The information it contains is largely accurate, but with surprising omissions – it jumps great chunks of the Russian and North African campaigns without explanation. Some of this can perhaps be justified on the grounds of space, as a choice has been made to use small text boxes, but the multimedia content is as

More Information
Dunkirk
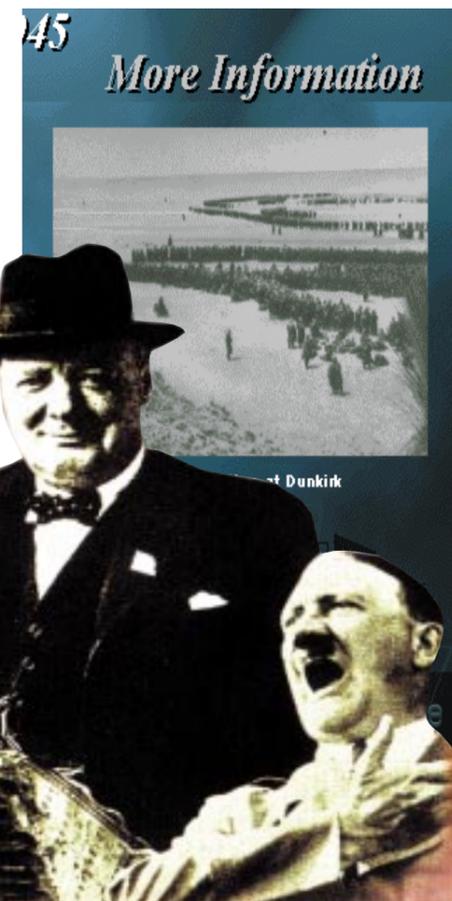
Along the way, there are toys to play with including a 3D etch-a-sketch and a virtual construction kit – more of these can be downloaded from a special Web site. Don't forget, though, that the climax involves beating the snake.
Anglia Multimedia: 0171 579 4106
www.anglia.co.uk

Launched during National Pregnancy Week, **The Girlfriends' Interactive Guide to Pregnancy** costs £24.99 from Zablac. It's a CD-ROM with practical advice for both mums and dads to be about issues from hormonal changes to maternity clothes – as well as the development of the baby.
Zablac: 01626 332233
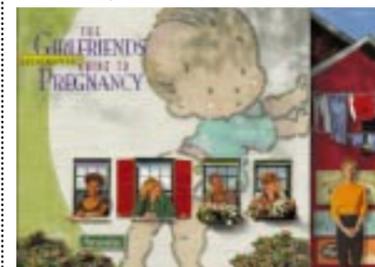
Beatrix Potter comes to your PC on three discs from Europress. **The Magic World of Beatrix Potter** is a children's activity disc, **The Adventures of Peter Rabbit and Benjamin Bunny** is an interactive adventure and **Peter Rabbit's Number Garden** helps to teach arithmetic skills. All the CD-ROMs feature the well-known characters, together with colourful pictures and animations. Prices to be announced.

Meanwhile, **GCSE Physics and English** are the latest in Europress's range of secondary school software. The Physics disc includes more than 150 tutorials to provide a sound theoretical basis to pupils' knowledge, while a virtual laboratory lets them run their own 'experiments'.

GCSE English goes through the 1998 syllabus and uses lectures from a cartoon Jane Austen as well as tests and games to help improve your grades. It has five modules including Reading and Grammar, and includes tuition in some of the more subjective aspects of writing. Both discs cost £19.99.
Europress: 01625 859333
www.europress.co.uk

World War II 1939-1945

disappointing. The pictures are small and the videos few; they fail to give any real impression of the period.

Struggle for Peace might have redeemed itself with the 'interactive role play simulations' that are promised on the box. These take the form of explorations where you can replay decisions taken by, say, German generals during one of the world wars, scoring points as you go. Some of the analysis is a bit suspect, but this is a matter of interpretation. Unforgivable, though, is the fact that none of your options relate to the last decision – you can't actually affect the course of the war no matter how hard you try, so you have no chance to see what your decisions might really have meant.

Struggle for Peace really adds nothing to a good GCSE course, let alone one at a higher level. John Sabine

- £24.99 (inc VAT)
- YITM: 0161 627 4469

Struggle for Peace: The Troubled Century				
Overall	★	★	★	★

Minimum requirements: 486, Windows 3.1 or later, 8Mb of RAM, 8Mb of hard disk space, 2x CD-ROM drive, SVGA graphics.
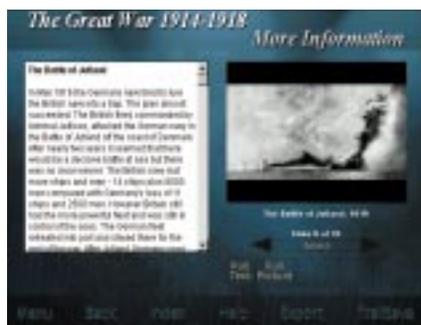
Gary Lineker's Real Football

Football has never been so popular, a fact that has not gone unnoticed in the field of home entertainment. And endorsing the latest offering, in this case from Anglia Multimedia, is none other than Gary Lineker.

Teaming up with Anglia Multimedia and the *Daily Express*, the former England goal-poacher has lent his dulcet tones to a CD-ROM covering the fortunes of all Premier league clubs this season. This can be updated either weekly via the Internet, or monthly through a CD-ROM subscription.

From pictures of stadiums to squad details and club histories, the disc includes just about everything you could want. You or the computer can predict scores, and Lineker shares his football knowledge, giving his opinions on team chances.

Golden Games, Gary's favourite Premiership encounters since 1992, sometimes contain video clips of goals, but more often than not you get the image of Gary himself, reading his script from the comfort of a studio.

We did chortle at the Hall of Mirrors, a photographic gallery of footballers whose faces you can manipulate and alter. Posh Spice would have been horri-fied by David Beckham once we'd finished with him.

On the down side, we noticed that on occasions the sound doesn't work when starting up, which is somewhat peculiar and, more to the point, a little annoying, as a fair bit of the CD is spoken. As glitches go, it's quite a big one.

Oh, and by the way, Gary reckons Manchester United will go down… Just kidding.

If you like football tables and statistics, you'll like this, especially being able to update results from the Internet. Even if you're not able to surf the Net, the update CDs are free bar p&p, which is a nice touch. Jim Haryott

- £29.99 (inc VAT)
- Anglia Multimedia: 0171 579 4106

Gary Lineker's Real Football				
Overall	★	★	★	★

Minimum requirements: Windows 3.1/95, 486DX or higher, 4Mb of RAM (8Mb recommended), Sound Blaster, DOS 5.0, SVGA, 2x CD-ROM. Also Mac-compatible.

Club Analysis | Premier History | League Computer | ½ Time

Hall *of* Mirrors