

>What's this?

2019 has been a year full of 'never-ever' games finally getting releases or news of a release. DMC5 and the RE2 remake happened, KH3 is also a thing, etc. Even Butterlord was announced to go into early access, and plenty more such as Bloodstained actually got a release too. Then to the surprise of some, an indie game known as Cube World came back into the limelight with a new beta for its patient followers to try out. But what was offered hit all the wrong buttons and left many fans angry.

What is this game and how did this happen? This document covers and chronicles the story of Cube World, from its pre-alpha footage to the final release in 2019, from the perspective of /v/irgins, and with an unexpected reboot announced in 2023 - may

There is a TL;DR at the bottom if you haven't checked the outline already.

>Pre-Alpha: Publicity

As far back as 2011, a voxel-based game known as Cube World was making the rounds on the internet with its developer, Wollay, posting gameplay and WIP footage on both his old [Blogspot page](#) BALEETED and [YouTube](#), but it began to pick up more attention from the public later in 2012 and 2013. It's important to note that this was back when people were huge on games like Minecraft and Terraria when the open world meme wasn't quite in full swing yet, so naturally the game looked intriguing to them due to Cube World's focus on exploration and action combat as a 3D game, complete with a fairly nice voxel aesthetic similar to 3D Dot Game Heroes. It should be said that the game didn't *play* like Minecraft, the similarity stops at using cubes for the visuals.

Even on /v/, the game garnered a small but optimistic following. Especially with those with a penchant for frogmen, they don't get a lot of games after all.

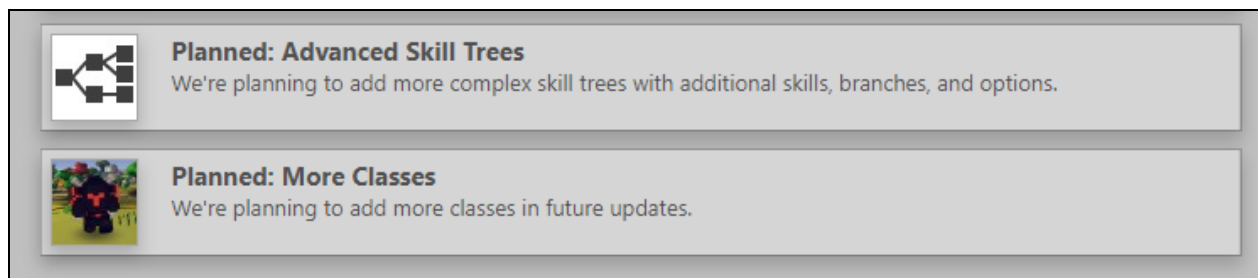
>Alpha: Vertical Slice

In mid 2013, a pair of streamers were found dicking around with an alpha build of Cube World. As you can tell, this led to people wondering when the fuck they'll be able to have their turn with it, but in early July Wollay did put his game up for sale on a [newer website](#) named Picroma, with the alpha playable for those who purchased it, including the ability to set up a server and play co-op with your friends. The site notably went under very heavy traffic from people wanting to buy the game, but was suspected to be a DDoS by the developer.

The gameplay of the alpha featured four classes that had multiple skills and two specializations that changed one of their skills and entailed a different set of passive benefits each. There wasn't too much to the game other than beating the shit out of mobs for EXP to level up with

and finding better gear, maybe some pets which are like AI companions, but it's important to note here that the gameplay loop and progression system worked well, gear and player alike, it just needed content to make the game less repetitive, some expanded-on game elements, and making early leveling a bit faster. As expected of an alpha, but it definitely showed some promise for fans, as this was thought to only be a taste of what was to come.

There used to be a **roadmap** or list of planned features on his website that detailed what we were to expect in the future, but it was changed recently. It's [here](#), do give this one a read as it'll be important later.



The screenshot shows two planned features in a list:

- Planned: Advanced Skill Trees**
We're planning to add more complex skill trees with additional skills, branches, and options.
- Planned: More Classes**
We're planning to add more classes in future updates.

To some people, this was part of the game that they were wanting to buy.

There used to be a tool on github that downloaded the original client and co-op server files from the official server into a new folder and circumvents the DRM, but it appears to have been 404'd as the tool itself doesn't work anymore; you'll have to find the alpha client on your own if you wish to play it. Regardless, an 'essentials' mod pack for the alpha version exists [here](#), containing bugfixes and some extra quality of life.

>Vaporware: 'The Cube World Cycle'

While the alpha did get some bugfix patches, there wasn't anything else other than some news posts between November 2013 and January 2014, with the last two on Picroma.com being in June and July. This was where the infamous 'Cube World cycle' started to come into effect; Wollay would seemingly disappear from the internet, but would rarely post some development screenshots on Twitter every few months or years. They would drum up more excitement about a potential release among loyal followers, but to no response. This would continue on for six years, and sometime during this 'hiatus' the option to purchase the game was taken off the website.

With contact being so rare, there isn't really much to say here other than checking the [Twitter feed](#) from before September 2019 to see how he was working on the game in this large gap of time. As far as /v/ was concerned, it wasn't exactly an uncommonly-held theory that the game was a scam with Wollay taking the money and running. Others suspect he was a perfectionist that would probably never get anything out the door as a result, or it could've even been an elaborate troll with the update cockteasing. Many also thought that Wollay blew his chances at

making it big with the craze of voxel games passing away. But at the end of the day, most didn't really place any faith in the game seeing the light of day again.

Later on, a game called [Trove](#) would appear to try and steal Cube World's thunder with a similar premise of a voxel adventure game, but it isn't exactly a good game in the slightest. It took until early 2019 for the fans to prop up a project to make a voxel game somewhat based off Cube World. This one in particular was named [Veloren](#), an open-source project which is still finding its way, but remains the closest thing in common.

>Beta: Return and Downfall

In 2019, Wollay had posted tweets in January and July. Some suspect this was just the aforementioned cycle running its course, but then some tweets were posted in August and September. Not only a title screen, but also sixteen minutes worth of gameplay footage before announcing that Cube World would be [published on Steam](#) days later and that alpha players who already purchased the game would get keys, also letting them play a week early in what would be the 'beta' release. Wollay also wrote up a [short blog post explaining his absence and return](#) BALEETED, but a screenshot remains.

2019/09/07

Dear Cube World Community,

I think this is the right place for this. This is where it all started, where my little passion project came to life and became something much bigger.

Here is my explanation why everything took me so long, why there were no updates and so on...

When I released Cube World back in 2013 on our homepage, I was enthusiastic to finally share my game with you. It was a dream come true for me, I wanted to be a game developer since I was a kid.

As some of you might remember, we got DDoS'ed as soon as we opened the shop. It might sound silly, but this event traumatized me and kind of broke something inside me. I never told anyone about it, and I don't want to go into the details, but I'm dealing with anxiety and depression ever since. Social media didn't improve it, as you might imagine. I'm still not sure if it's a good idea to tell the world about it, but I wanted to give the fans an explanation.

There were several points in the past years where I considered releasing an update, but every time I was afraid it wasn't good enough. I'm also a bit perfectionist and it made me rework everything from scratch several times. The version I'm planning to release is basically Cube World 2.0. There are still many things I'd like to add in the future, but I think the version is already fun.

I hope some of you will enjoy the upcoming release. I'm currently working on the new homepage and still want to add some lore-related things to the game before the release.

Wollay

"basically Cube World 2.0" - remember that.

He likens the heavy traffic from the alpha as a DDoS attack, but it's highly likely that it was instead a ton of people just really wanting to play his game, and apparently he was on a low bandwidth Cloudflare plan? But sure, whatever.

A small download of the game with the title screen and beta release date was available as soon as the keys were distributed. During this time, the reception as far as /v/ was concerned was somewhat positive about the news. Sure there was plenty of questioning about what the fuss was around 'this cube game' was even about, how the game has little appeal today compared to six years ago, etc, but the people who played the alpha were talking about what they'd roll and some even datamined the client provided and so some were getting hyped over hearing the cool shit they found inside. Fast forward to the later part of the month - the beta got released, so how did it go?



That was fast

The hype train went from full speed ahead to jamming on the handbrakes in only a matter of hours. Minutes, even. What players found was that the game was worse than the alpha in nearly every regard and never really took anything from the feature list from earlier. Classes, world generation, and most importantly - the progression system, all took a hit in quality. None of the planned features from above made it in, the game was never truly expanded on after all this time.

Now, we'll be going into a few pages worth of breaking down the beta's changes. If you haven't played the alpha then that's fine, you should still be able to make heads of the core concepts of an open-world adventure game being examined.

First and foremost, **the game now region locks all equipment found**, and these regions in the game aren't all necessarily bigger than 3km either way, so this doesn't entail a ton of land for players to use their earned gear on. The moment you cross a border, you'll lose not only the area's paraglider or boat if you found them (and thus making sea travel a brick), but also the weapons and armor you are wearing will be literally *useless* unless you step back in the region. For a time, this actually caused scenarios where dungeons that end up crossing into the borders of other lands would straight up [make them impossible](#) without already finding gear for that region in advance. This happened often enough that it was somewhat surprising that the dev never accounted for it until a patch. Gear with a '+' can carry over to adjacent regions but it's much rarer and may not even drop for your class, and they'll only go out one area further if you 100% the next (with no way to tell).

Past that, the player can technically grab passive upgrades that can carry over, but they scale off in efficiency with diminishing returns and they're not too remarkable on what they actually entail. One anon who actually spent a good amount of time playing the beta explains this.

*"the stats fucking scale down the higher up you go
i would have been somewhat ok with that if levels actually contributed stat boosts, but this just means you'll
go from getting 9% speed from one artifact all the way down to 1% or less than 1% with enough
"progression"
16 levels
16 levels and i am not at all any stronger than what i was when i started
fuck this game, i finally burnt out"
~ Anon¹*

Furthermore, killing mobs doesn't make you level up anymore, so it's purely for self-defense or money since quests grant better drops. Crafting your own gear and upgrading them in general is also effectively moot given the aforementioned system.

Regarding other significant changes, classes are much more simplified with less usable skills as the hotbar is omitted for ultimate skills, which hurts Rogues especially. Map terrain is generally a lot less interesting and doesn't blend in biome transitions nicely either, although the alpha wasn't exactly an angel with towns predictably generating in the center of a region and special zones pretty much being generated on a grid. But the beta also does not allow players to enter in any seed they choose, despite the map not being handcrafted in any way it's taking another option away from players. Although the geometry isn't 1:1, [the map technically also repeats the same shapes and biomes every so often.](#)² On the other hand, it is more consistent for multiplayer purposes.

Beyond that, there are technically new things like eagles to fast travel to different nodes or players and actual questing systems at all, so it's not all awful. But the progression changes definitely overshadow everything else in importance, so Wollay ditching a working progression system for player regression in his efforts to try and encourage exploration of the game world ultimately ends up spoiling the entire package, especially because a lot of older systems already in Cube World were not designed around regional equipment. But it is integrated to the point that even if only the region lock was removed, it would mean that players can very easily steamroll the entire game otherwise and make it worse.

With Wollay confident enough to consider this 'Cube World 2.0' from the earlier blog post and some bugfixes addressing cross-region dungeons, there wasn't anything of a hope spot left. Nobody was given any explanation on why these changes happened, so a good chunk of the fanbase was pissed off to the surprise of nobody. After all, that is six years with no input from the fans, and content that was teased all this time on social media is completely absent.

It's more realistic to assume that he spent what only amounts to a few months working on this current build, or he scrapped it all and restarted development somewhere in 2017-2018.

¹ <http://arch.b4k.co/v/thread/479244110/#479267384> (includes screenshot)

² Footage taken by Anonymous.

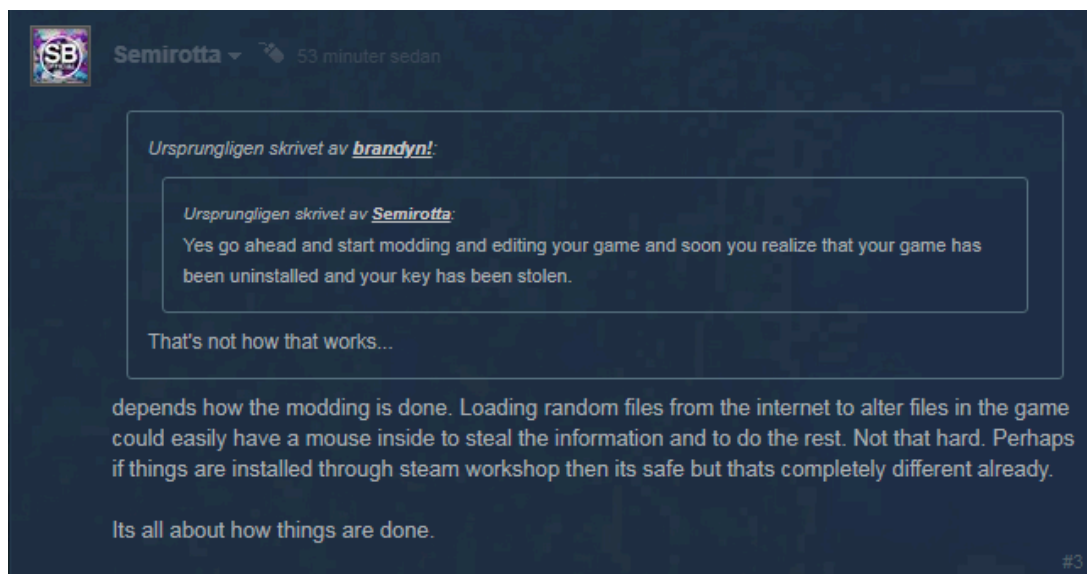
During this one week, the Steam forums fell apart at the seams [with moderators picked on arbitrary criteria](#) by Pixxie, Wollay's wife, from earlier in the month seeking to [delete critical discussion and other threads](#). There was a clear divide, and the aforementioned list of planned features from 2013 was also often cited as well.

>Final Release: The Fully Finished Product

After three bugfix patches in the week-long beta stage, Cube World released informally with no announcements or anything as much of a 'enjoy' message from either Wollay or his wife Pixxie, the game remains effectively the same as it did in beta. Twelve hours after release, the Steam store page reported mixed reviews. Even an enemy of /v/, Kotaku, [thinks the alpha is a much better game](#). [PC Gamer isn't a fan either](#).

The only remarkable event to come out of the release were /v/irgins stream sniping. Invading other players Dark Souls-style³ via Cheat Engine scripts, they manipulated how the game connected to friends via Steamworks and were also able to use friendly fire on them. Some naive streamers believed it to be part of the game. Wollay was even found during these invasions, [but he effectively had godmode enabled](#). The vulnerability got patched out the next day.

A fleeting meme about mice also propped up, spawned from a defensive fanboy likely misinterpreting what a [RAT](#) actually does.



There could be a mouse inside your computer RIGHT NOW

³ Some Twitch clips taken by anons here: [1](#), [2](#), [3](#)

Needless to say, a few drawfags started making some mouse porn, but nothing big. At this point, there was and still is very little to talk about with no new updates on the horizon.

>Conclusion: It's Shit

Cube World will be remembered for the wrong reasons. It was a game brimming with potential, and could have even possibly stood up on merits of its own against other voxel games of the time. However, Wollay instead exemplified the risks of buying games using an 'early access' model, intentional or not. Not only did he leave players in the dark for more than six years, but he had dramatically reworked his game in secret which was fundamentally very different than what many were expecting, and there wasn't a single opportunity to let fans share feedback.

With the final game overall being of dubious quality that didn't even expand on its own alpha and also a lack of potential future updates, many posters on /v/ already accepted the game's sealed fate as kusoge and all discussion of the game quickly dissolved on 4chan, only to be brought up from time to time as one example of the dangers of early access and unfinished games in general. Some even argue that **fucking Starbound**, in spite of Chucklefish's tomfoolery (that is easily tenfold of Wollay's), actually gets more things right, as it has a relatively basic gear tier progression system that works and makes more sense than Cube World's own.

With effectively only an alpha to extract any enjoyment from, those wanting to fill the void are now trying to place their hopes on [Veloren](#), an open source project. In 2024, it is still ongoing development but allegedly lacking much direction.

>Omega: It's Happening (Again)

Nobody was ever expecting anything to come out of Cube World officially ever since. After all, the final game is unanimously *shit* and never got any more updates. However, in May 2023 Wollay had made a new blog and uploaded a video showcasing his work in progress titled 'Cube World Omega'. In a [post](#), Wollay explains that he gave this name to the project because of the Alpha, as he'd "like to develop it in the spirit of that version, but with a new engine and new features", implying that he wants to make a new build closer to that than what we got. Since then, he has been posting clips of his work at irregular intervals, either with days or months in between.

In February 2024, [he went to try out Unreal 5](#) to see if it might be worth using over a custom engine, and has seemingly stuck with it after posting more in May. As of then, no real gameplay demonstrations have been shown.

/v/'s reaction to this is maybe lukewarm at best, questioning whether Wollay can finally deliver a good game in earnest in the odd thread that brings up the game. Not to mention the game will also have to compete with an oversaturated market of open world games that the industry

currently deals with. It remains to be seen whether a public build might be available in the coming years or not, as Wollay's habits seem to have not changed much at all.

>TL;DR

Game dev releases an alpha that some people have fun with and goes missing for six years with some content teased on Twitter. He comes back with a new beta version that's generally worse across the board - mostly due to a shift from the tried and true RPG gearing + level core to a system reliant on region-locked gear every few kilometers, and never consulted the fans about the change earlier. Very little of the content teased is present, shit effectively did a 180° turn and this Cube World isn't the game many alpha players wanted.

For one day, /v/ gets one last hurrah with a Cheat Engine script that enables PvP and goes stream sniping players, they also find the dev and he wasn't even using the region-locked gear. Since then, the game has fallen off the surface and is only brought up on occasion to incite anger.

Unexpectedly however, development officially restarted in 2023 and it remains to be seen how Cube World Omega will go. /v/ is, unsurprisingly, still skeptical.

>Extra Notes

Cube World would later be one of the subjects ridiculed in /v/ - The Musical VII.

Wollay's wife 'Pixxie' is credited as a co-creator but it isn't known how much influence she has over development exactly, but she seems to have taken to managing the forums. Some did theorize that she may have even taken over the project in secret. As of Omega's development, it's not known if she continues to be involved, or is even still with Wollay.

As you might tell off the mod pack from the alpha section, the older game is not encrypted and thus **modding is technically possible but considered difficult**. Additionally, dataminers supposedly revealed that a lot of the older systems and skills are apparently still in place in the newer build alongside newer stuff mentioned earlier.

Par for the course, the general reaction to the beta 'downgrade' on /v/ varied from angry and/or disappointed alpha players to those laughing at those who believed anything good would come out of the game after all this time, and the odd baiter claiming the board was too casual to appreciate region-locking gear. Few people willing to play for hours were exemplifying more of the game's weaknesses as they played.

During beta, gear quality degradation on death was brought up, but this never happened. It was also said at one point that '+' gear was only relevant inside a 'kingdom', but it was confirmed that it only carries to the adjacent lands of the parent location unless they are 100% complete too.

There were 40+ positive reviews on Steam prior to the beta release, due to a slipup that enabled people to write theirs down on the 19th of September, before anything playable was put on Steam. This fact isn't as relevant with the final game receiving mixed reviews on average.

The release game's map 'looping' was theorized to be ~640km, but the earlier WebM seems a lot less than that.

[Back in 2013, Wollay stated that he was working full time on Cube World.](#) There were no updates in regards to whether his situation changed on the matter other than talking about his apparent depression after returning.

Despite the old development blog being deleted, all past YouTube videos are still up. The older 'Picroma' website has completely erased all Cube World information for a [new website](#) about the newer game.

Thanks to other anons from /v/ providing extra material, giving some pointers, video footage, and compiling some of their own information.