

Free Flash Games II: Bugwave

Part II: Bugwave

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Bugwave

Waves of bugs are trying to reach the other side of the arena. Your job is to stop them. To do so, you must use the forces of nature: air, water, fire, and earth to construct barriers and kill the bugs before they reach the other side. The challenge is each defense you place has a cost, and money is limited. Can you stop 60 waves?

Bugwave is a tower defense strategy game. One player has compared it to chess, where both players move simultaneously. It's a fair comparison. Unlike chess, bugwave is simple to learn, and possible to beat with a little practice, at least the easy and normal levels, although normal takes quite some time to learn how to beat. It is strongly suggested you start at the easy level. It is G rated for everyone.

Unlike some games, where it continues and gets harder and harder until you lose, bugwave has an end, 60 waves to be precise. If you beat all 60 waves before you run out of life points, you win. For each bug that makes it all the way across, you lose a life point. You can not get any life points back, so keeping the bugs from crossing is paramount.

There are two types of bugs, fliers and ground. Each wave will either be all fliers or all ground, although it possible to have more than one wave in the arena at the same time. The ground bugs must walk around any defensive towers you place in the arena, while the fliers will fly right over them. Both types of bugs will always take the shortest path to their exit. Those that enter on the left side will always exit on the right side, and those that enter an the top will always exit at the bottom.

While the fliers can have a direct path to the other side, unlike the ground bugs, they are fewer in number, appear in only a few waves, and die more easily than ground bugs. All fliers have some resistance to air base attacks. Resistance to an element reduces the damage the bug takes from a tower of that element. Resistance can reach 75%, but no bug is totally immune to any element.

The ground bugs are what you will face in most waves. Some are fast and others are slow. Each type of ground bug has resistance to one of the elements, except air. The ground bugs have far greater numbers than the air bugs, can take more damage, and some of them have a nasty trick. When you kill one, it divides into four smaller, and weaker, versions of itself. These smaller versions do not generate any money for killing them, but will count against you if they reach the other side. These smaller bugs can occasionally jump a wall, although this seems to a bug (pun intended).



Figure 1: A winning setup for normal difficulty.

To combat the bugs, you must place towers in the arena. Each tower costs money, so you can't place as many as you want. In addition to costing money, each tower has a range and damage. The damage is of a fixed element.

All towers will automatically shoot at any bugs in range. You can not, nor do you need to, control the towers. All towers can, for a price, be upgraded to do more damage and have greater range. Each wave gets tougher than the last, so you will need your towers to dish out more and more damage as the game progresses.

There are four basic classes of towers:

- Single shot - Each shot hits one bug only. These towers have the highest firing rate. The water bazooka, great wall, and ice needles are the single shot towers. Ice needles has the highest firing rate of all the towers, but will only shoot at air bugs. Still, it hits the air bugs hard, so you will want at least one, in the proper place.
- Maybe multiple shot – Each shot can hit more than one bug, but is not guaranteed to. It seems to depend on how close the bugs are to each other. Think splash damage. The volcano and lightning are the two towers in this category. These towers have a medium firing rate.
- Multishot – Each blast will hit every bug in range. However, they are the slowest firing towers. They are also more expensive, and, overall, have a lower damage potential on an individual bug basis. Despite all that, the "hit every bug in range"

feature makes them extremely useful. The earthquake, tsunami, freezer, hurricane, and ring of fire are all multi-shot towers. The TNT tower is also a multi-shot, but you only get one shot with it, and you must detonate it manually.

- **Booster** – These two towers are different. They do not fire at all, and do no damage. However, they boost either the range or damage of any of the other types of towers they touch. Diagonal/corner touching does count, so one booster could boost up to 8 other towers. More than one booster can boost the same tower, even boosters of the same type. There are range and damage boosters. Note that boosters are not very useful until the tower(s) they are boosting reach level 3, preferably level 4. They do count as a barrier ground bugs must walk around.

Two of the towers have a secondary effect. The freezer will freeze bugs, even ones with ice resistance. The freezing doesn't last very long, but while frozen, the bugs will move slower, giving your towers more time to shoot at them. Being hit with a volcano blast, but not ring of fire, seems to undo the freezing, but just for a split second.

The hurricane will pick up bugs and spin them around, always depositing them back where they were picked up. While spinning, the bugs can not move forward, but can still be shot at and killed. Thus the hurricane can slow the bugs down. A secondary effect of the hurricane, especially with the higher levels of hurricane is as the bugs are spinning around, the spinning can bring the bugs into the range of towers that would otherwise be too far away. Thus towers the bugs have already passed safely out of range of can get in another shot or two, and towers they haven't come to yet can take an early shot. Higher levels of hurricane result in longer spin times.

Hurricanes have a very slow firing rate and a bug can only be caught in one hurricane at a time. Therefore, you should never have any hurricanes with overlapping ranges. Properly placed, you only need one. Also, it is impossible to select towers in the hurricane's range while it is active, so you can't upgrade, or sell, those towers until the hurricane stops unless you have it selected before the hurricane starts.

Development of bugwave seems to have been abandoned and the original site has been returning an error message for quite some time, so any ads for version 2.0 or references to www.bugwave.com can be ignored. In addition, you won't be able to save your score and see how you did compared to other players. However, version 1.5 of the game can still be found at many places around the Internet, including http://www.mochimedia.com/games/play/bugwave-v1_5.

Conclusion

In part 3 of this series, you be introduced to another time waster. Homecoming has never been so challenging, but you'll have lots of dead time to get there. See you then!