

# Dungeon Crawl Stone Soup Survey 2012

*Conducted & compiled by jpeg & dpeg  
Results as of December 29, 2012  
Published in February 2014*



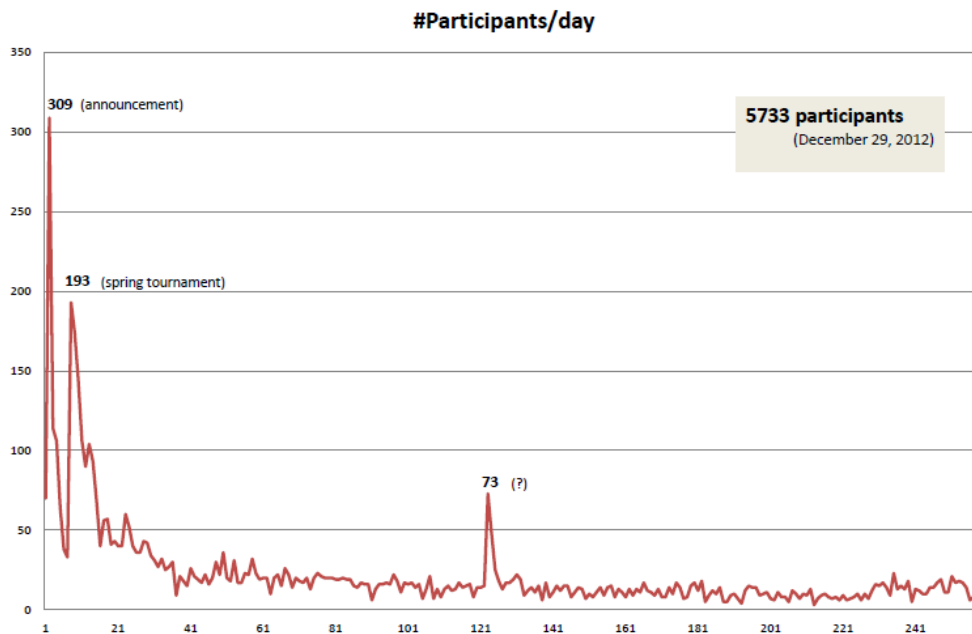
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# 1 Introduction

The survey was started on February 16th, 2012 and was originally planned to continue until the release of 0.11, but actually remained open until December 29th, 2012. In that time, the web form was submitted 5735 times. Two entries were entirely devoid of data and thus were removed from the data set. Also, there were an additional 1415 more entries that were aborted or simply never got completed. These were similarly ignored.

Like the previous survey, this one was announced on <http://crawl.develz.org> as well as in various online discussion places (mostly by players), and the link to the survey retained its prominent placement for as long as the survey was open. In addition, the 0.10 release contained a reference to the survey, along with the web address, in the character menu, so as to also reach players who don't normally take the time to read the announcements or take part in the online community.



We received almost 380 replies in the first two days alone, followed by a second peak a week later when a reminder was posted along with the 2012 Spring tournament announcement, after which participation decreased to eventually fluctuate at around, on average, 15-20 replies per day. After about 4 months (mid-June) there was a third, smaller peak of 73 replies in a single day before participation dropped back down to the previous low average. We've no idea what might have caused that. The reason we're mentioning all of this is that the first participants in such a survey tend to be the most active and most "hardcore" players with lots of playing experience, strong opinions, and a win-rate that's significantly above average. Thus, letting the survey peter out slowly hopefully allowed us to get a more balanced view of our player base.

Completing the survey took on average about 14 minutes, but most participants needed between 5 and 13 minutes to fill out the survey. Ignoring the outliers (where someone presumably left the web form open while doing something else) the longest time taken until the form was submitted was 74 minutes.

The survey tool ([LimeSurvey](#)) used cookies to keep track of whether someone had already submitted the form. Apart from that, no steps were taken to prevent manipulation or avoid double entries, and indeed, due to the long time the survey was open even accidental re-submissions are quite likely. At the same time, the sample size is large enough that we don't consider this a problem. When checking the data, we found no obvious patterns and, comparing to the previous survey's results, the results certainly look plausible. The survey was prefaced with a simple math captcha, and when browsing the comments, no attempts of spamming were detected.

## 2 Summary

There have been 5735 meaningful replies, arriving between 16/02/2012 and 29/12/2012, a period which included the 0.10 and 0.11 releases and tournaments.

The average participant is male (92%), 24 years old, and lives in the USA (46%). He strongly prefers the Tiles version (76%) because he feels that tiles are less confusing and easier to understand than ASCII glyphs. He is playing Crawl offline (72%) and would like to use the online game if it was as same comfortable.

The average Crawler has started playing Crawl within the last three years (74%), and hasn't won the game (76%) or even found a rune yet (66%), but has made it as deep as the Orcish Mines and Lair. He doesn't use spoilers or only in moderation to read up on the most deadly of enemies. He's quite likely to have played Diablo for a while (57%) and may also have tried NetHack (63%) or Dwarf Fortress' adventure mode (51%) at some point, but otherwise has little experience with roguelikes or comparable games. The survey was his first interaction with the devteam in any shape or form (85%).

Among the 1224 participants who did snatch a win, some have achieved additional feats of even greater difficulty: 430 won allruners, 375 have won more than five games, 197 have completed Ziggurats and 72 obtained streaks of at least three wins in succession.

About 15% of all participants consider themselves thoroughly spoiled by the time they won their first character whereas 36% consider themselves completely or mostly unspoiled, at least when it comes to monster properties. This has actually informed on-going Crawl development, as of 0.13, monster spells are disclosed to players, something that was regarded as the most pertinent spoily monster information.

The results of this survey and the previous one can be found at

<http://crawl.develz.org/wordpress/2009-dcss-survey-results>

<http://crawl.develz.org/wordpress/2012-dcss-survey-results>

### 3 Section A: Who are you?

Section A encompassed 3 basic questions:

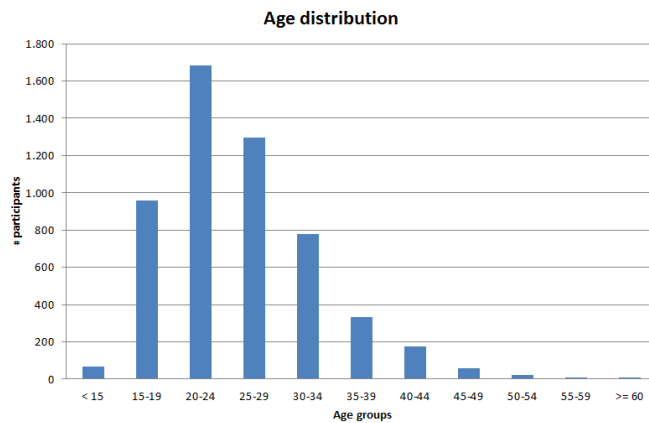
- A1 How old are you?
- A2 What's your gender?
- A3 In what country do you currently reside?

In short, the average player is male (92%), 24 years old, and lives in the USA (46%).

#### A1. How old are you?

Participants' age follows a Gaussian bell curve distribution, peaking at about 24 years. Most players can be found in the age group of 20-29. The total range of ages is surprisingly large, encompassing players from ages 11 up to 66.

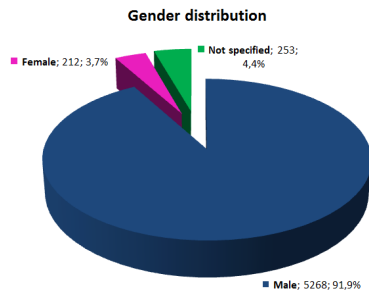
Count	Percent	Age range
68	1.2%	10-14
957	16.7%	15-19
1682	29.3%	20-24
1296	22.6%	25-29
777	13.6%	30-34
334	5.8%	35-39
179	3.1%	40-44
59	1.0%	45-49
24	0.4%	50-54
7	0.1%	55-59
5	0.1%	60-64
4	0.1%	65-69
354	5.9%	N/A



Minimum: 11      Average: 25.7  
 Maximum: 66      Median: 24

Interestingly, the average player is noticeably younger now than in the last survey  $2\frac{1}{2}$  years earlier (median age: 26, average: 27.2), which could mean that the older players have left or become inactive enough not to participate in such a survey, that there has been a large influx of young players (possibly due to the introduction of Webtiles), or that this survey was more successful at reaching the younger demographic. Most likely it's a combination of the three.

## A2. What's your gender?



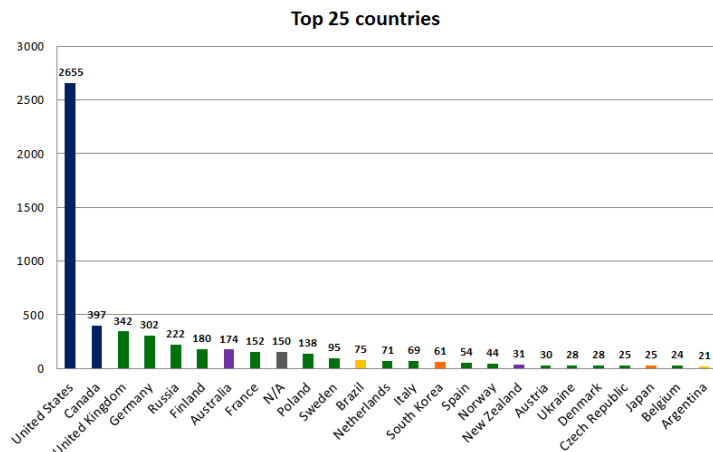
The player base is predominantly male. Surprisingly, there were actually more participants who refused to reveal their gender than those who identified themselves as female. The previous (non-anonymous) survey showed a higher percentage of female players (4.8%) but the sample size was much smaller (the survey closed at 270 replies) and gender was assigned manually according to the participants' names, so there was a high margin of errors. We will henceforth

refer to the average Crawl player as male, even though evidently many women also play, some of them making important contributions to the game and community.

## A3. In what country do you currently reside?

Almost half of all participants hail from the USA, followed — after a huge gap — by Canada and the UK. The top three non-English speaking countries are Germany, Russia and Finland. The top ten answers (arbitrarily cutting off the list at 2% of survey participants) are the following:

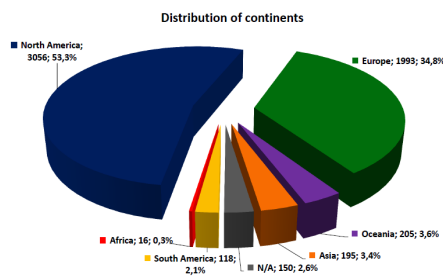
Count	Percent	Country
2655	46.3%	USA
397	6.9%	Canada
342	6.0%	UK
302	5.3%	Germany
222	3.9%	Russia
180	3.1%	Finland
174	3.0%	Australia
152	2.7%	France
141	2.5%	N/A
138	2.4%	Poland



We list the other countries, in decreasing order of mentions and grouped by ranges:

- 61 – 100: Sweden, Brazil, the Netherlands, Italy, South Korea;
- 31 – 60: Spain, Norway, New Zealand;
- 21 – 30: Austria, Denmark, Ukraine, Czech Republic, Japan, Belgium, China, Argentina;
- 11 – 20: Hungary, Ireland, Switzerland, Portugal, Israel, Lithuania, Serbia, Singapore, Turkey, Greece, Romania, South Africa, the Philippines;
- 3 – 10: Croatia, Estonia, Bulgaria, Latvia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Taiwan, Vietnam, Chile, Malaysia, Mexico, Belarus, India, Indonesia, Thailand, Venezuela, the Russian Federation, and Uruguay.

The following diagram shows the distribution grouped by continent:



There are a few additional N/A counts in this list compared to the one above because there were several different ways of declining to answer, including but not limited to just choosing “No answer”. The overall distribution of countries looks similar to the results in the previous survey, though South America, in particular, is much more strongly represented this time around. Also, there are surpris-

ingly few Asian players. This might be due to the language barrier, although one of the older Stone Soup version was actually translated into Korean (we think). Maybe with the many popular JRPGs with their highly polished graphics, roguelikes are less of a novelty in Asia. There is certainly more going on than meets the eye, as is witnessed by the Korean webtiles server established in 2013; it can be found at [kr.dobrazupa.org](http://kr.dobrazupa.org).

In general, seeing how the last survey required participants to send us an email and all questions had to be answered in text format, whereas this one included lots of multiple-choice questions, we’d expect the language barrier to have been lowered a fair bit. Still, the survey had a lot of questions, some of which were quite complicated, so it was still much more difficult for non-native speakers to take part than it could have been.

Out of curiosity, we list the first ten countries according to Crawlers per population. This gives a very different result, reinforcing the dominance of countries with English as native language. However, the traditional affinity of the Finnish people for rogueliking is clearly seen — they have the significantly highest proportion of *participants per million inhabitants!* Needless to say, there isn’t much of a language barrier for the Scandinavian countries, but the disparity between Finland on the one hand and Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Iceland on the other is remarkable.

Country	Rate
Finland	33.0
Canada	11.2
United States	8.4
Australia	7.5
United Kingdom	5.4
Germany	3.7
Poland	3.6
France	2.3
Russia	1.5

## 4 Section B: What kind of player are you?

Section B consisted of the following questions:

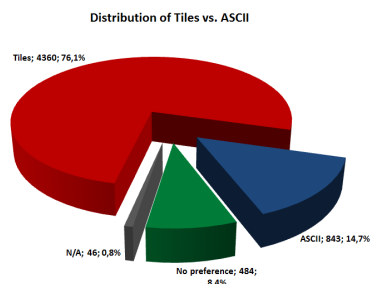
- B1. Given the choice, would you rather play Tiles or ASCII?
- B2. Given the choice, would you rather play online or locally?
- B3. Which versions do you actually play nowadays?
- B4. Outside of (maybe) tournaments, how often do you play Crawl?
  - b. If you hardly ever play or have stopped playing altogether, what's the main reason for this?
- B5. Have you ever won the game (without cheating)?
  - a. If you have at least one win, just how good of a player are you?
  - b. If you haven't ever won the game, what was the furthest you ever got?
- B6. Before your first win (or up to now, if you haven't won yet), did you actively read detailed spoilers about monsters?
- B7. When did you start playing?
- B8. What other roguelikes (or related games) have you played?
- B9. Do or did you participate in the Dungeon Crawl game development?

**Summary:** The average Crawl player strongly prefers the Tiles version (76%) because he feels that tiles are less confusing and easier to understand than ASCII glyphs. While he'd rather like to play online, he actually prefers to play locally (44%; 28% online), mostly because the Webtiles version is (or was, at the time of the survey) laggy and lacks (or lacked) certain features of the downloadable variant such as mouse support. He plays fairly regularly, often spending a few hours each week playing Crawl (33%). He's started playing Crawl within the last three years (74%), and he hasn't won the game (76%) or even found a rune yet (66% of non-winners), but has made it as deep as the Orcish Mines and Lair. He doesn't use spoilers or only in moderation to read up on the most deadly of enemies. He's quite likely to have played Diablo for a while (57%) and may also have tried NetHack (63%) or Dwarf Fortress' adventure mode (51%) at some point, but otherwise has little experience with roguelikes or comparable games. The survey was his first interaction with the devteam in any shape or form (85%). In particular, he has never submitted feedback or bug reports.

## B1. Given the choice, would you rather play Tiles or ASCII?

There's a very strong preference of Tiles over ASCII. We mention that both "console" and "ASCII" are used to denote the display using letters and numbers.

Count	Percent	Variant
4360	76.1%	Tiles
843	14.7%	ASCII
484	8.4%	I can't decide.
46	0.8%	N/A



This is the opposite of the previous survey's results, which favoured the console version by 54%. This is most likely due to the 2009 survey being aggressively promoted on IRC (mainly haunted by online players, at a time when Webtiles didn't exist yet) and only mentioned in passing elsewhere, thus making it much more likely for a given console player to even learn about the survey than a given Tiles player. Advertising the survey in the game itself probably had a huge impact on reaching players who don't normally read the website announcements and don't visit any Crawl related discussion forums. In addition, the introduction of Webtiles made the choice easier at least for players who live close enough not to be bothered by the input delay.

Count	Percent	Reasons for preferring Tiles (multiple choices were possible)
2546	58.4%	easier to learn and less confusing than the alternative
1077	24.7%	looks nicer
899	20.6%	more information shown on the main screen (inventory, minimap, also enemies' wielded weapons)
576	13.2%	has a nicer interface (mouse support, again inventory / minimap)
493	11.3%	"modern games need graphics"
455	10.4%	the player is more familiar with tiles (in Crawl or other games)
305	7.0%	more immersive due to dungeon and monster pictures

Count	Percent	Reasons for preferring console/ASCII (multiple choices possible)
302	35.8%	easier to learn and less confusing than the alternative
219	26.0%	the player is more familiar with ASCII (from Crawl or other roguelikes)
206	24.4%	feels more "traditional"
186	22.1%	looks nicer
147	17.4%	relies on the player's imagination, thus is more immersive
118	14.0%	the console version is the main way to play online
103	12.2%	information is clearer, more streamlined



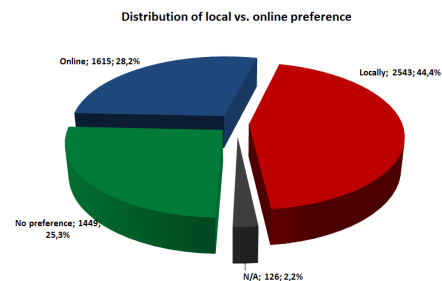
Both versions are lauded as “more approachable” and “better looking” than the respective alternative, which highlights that tastes differ and that the two variants probably address completely different needs. Both groups bring different arguments about why “their” version is better at displaying information and stimulating player immersion. And of course there’s the age-old name-calling between “noobs” (Tiles) and “nerds” (ASCII), who in turn demand the other group to “go with the times” (Tiles players about console) and “follow roguelike tradition” (ASCII players about tiles), respectively. Also, apparently ASCII is better for secretly playing at work or school, whereas the Tiles version excels at showing Crawl to non-rogueliking friends.

**B2. Given the choice, would you rather play online or locally?**

**B3. Which versions do you actually play nowadays?**

Overall, players generally prefer playing locally.

Count	Percent	Variant
2543	44.4%	Locally
1615	28.2%	Online
1449	25.3%	No preference
126	2.2%	N/A



Unfortunately, the question was ambiguously worded, so these results have to be taken with a grain of salt. What we meant to express with the question was something along the lines of, “In a perfect world where the online versions of both Tiles and ASCII were identical to their local installations, would you rather play locally or online?” What we got instead were plenty of answers claiming, “I’d like to play online but seeing how it’s so slow/incomplete/difficult to set up, I’d rather play locally.” when that was the sort of reply we’d aimed for with the follow-up question, “If this is different from what you’d like to play, why is that?” For what it’s worth, some of the reasons for (not) choosing the online version are the following (multiple answers possible).

Arguments against playing online:

Count	Percent	Reason
484	8.4%	laggy connection
242	4.2%	local interface is better
44	0.8%	didn’t know about online version
20	0.3%	too complicated to set up
19	0.3%	haven’t tried online play
19	0.3%	no trunk
9	0.2%	still too bad a player
5	0.1%	fixed user name == character name
5	0.1%	no wizard mode

Arguments for playing online:

Count	Percent	Reason
168	2.9%	player community/ghosts
42	0.7%	public highscore
12	0.2%	play from different locations
10	0.2%	no need to download

Arguments in either direction:

Count	Percent	Reason
137	2.4%	technical limitations
21	0.4%	update delay/upgrading

It's been a while since 2012, and Webtiles have seen many improvements. The website's border menu has been tidied up, too, so as to hopefully make it easier to find Webtiles. The mouse still isn't supported, though. Also, it actually is possible to play trunk online, at several servers.

Unfortunately (for the purpose of interpreting the results), the number of participants complaining about server lags is too low for us to be able to tell where setting up a server would have the greatest benefit. (Not that the devteam would be responsible for doing so, but maybe someone else could volunteer to do that in response to these results.) In fact, as of the beginning of 2014, the following servers are in use:

Server	Year	Link(s)	Location
cao	2006	<a href="http://crawl.akrasiac.org">http://crawl.akrasiac.org</a>	USA, Arizona
cdo	2007	<a href="http://crawl.develz.org">http://crawl.develz.org</a>	Germany
cszo	2012	<a href="http://dobrazupa.org">http://dobrazupa.org</a> , <a href="http://crawl.s-z.org">http://crawl.s-z.org</a>	USA, Florida
clan	2013	<a href="http://crawl.lantea.net:8080">http://crawl.lantea.net:8080</a>	Germany
rhf	2013	<a href="http://rl.heh.fi:8080">http://rl.heh.fi:8080</a>	Finland
ckr	2013	<a href="http://kr.dobrazupa.org">http://kr.dobrazupa.org</a>	Korea
cbro	2014	<a href="http://crawl.beRotato.org">http://crawl.beRotato.org</a>	USA, Georgia

Note that this is a snapshot (January 2014) and not meant to be a list of Crawl servers operating when you read this. Some of these might have stopped working, others may restrict to serving only webtiles or only console, and new ones may have sprung up.

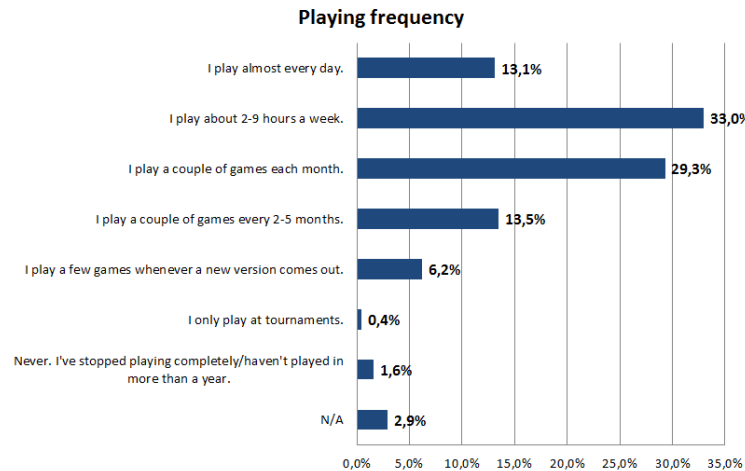
Participants experiencing lags hail from the following countries:

Count	Percent	Country (percentage of all players)
281	58.1%	United States (46.3%)
36	7.4%	Canada (6.9%)
22	4.5%	Australia (3.0%)
15	3.1%	Russia (3.9%)
15	3.1%	United Kingdom (6.0%)
14	2.9%	South Korea (1.1%)
13	2.7%	Brazil (1.3%)
10	2.1%	Finland (3.1%)
8	1.7%	Germany (5.3%)
5	1.0%	Poland (2.4%)
5	1.0%	South Africa (0.2%)
5	1.0%	Sweden (1.7%)

Asia, South America and Africa are all continents where the nearest server is very far away, so it's not surprising they are overrepresented here. Germany and the UK, on the other hand, appear to be well-covered. Keep in mind, though, that these numbers are much too small for any definite interpretation.

## B4. Outside of (maybe) tournaments, how often do you play Crawl?

Most participants play Crawl on a regular basis, at least every couple of months, many of them weekly, some even daily. We also got a surprisingly large amount of responses from players who don't actually play anymore or only participate in tournaments.



**Tournaments.** As a point of comparison, we also list tournament activity. Starting with the release of DCSS 0.4, there is a tradition to host a release tournament. Until DCSS 0.7, these took the whole of August; since DCSS 0.8, tournaments take 16 days (including three weekends). Another important milestone for popularity of tournaments was webtiles, which were available since 0.8. Rules for the tournaments can be found at <http://crawl.akrasiac.org/> and <http://dobrazupa.org/tournament/0.12/>.

Version	Period	Players	Runes	Winners	Winrate	
0.4	8/2008	385	101	50	1.23%	
0.5	8/2009	737	208	90	1.01%	
0.7	8/2010	1091	229	109	0.72%	<i>Runes</i> lists the number of players obtaining at least one rune during the tournament.
0.8	5/2011	1523	264	108	0.79%	
0.9	8/2011	1337	264	116	0.86%	<i>Winners</i> lists the number of players winning at least one game during the tournament.
0.10	3/2012	1568	372	183	1.10%	
0.11	10/2012	1545	400	214	1.18%	
0.12	5/2013	1735	478	279	1.40%	
0.13	10/2013	1749	526	246	1.37%	

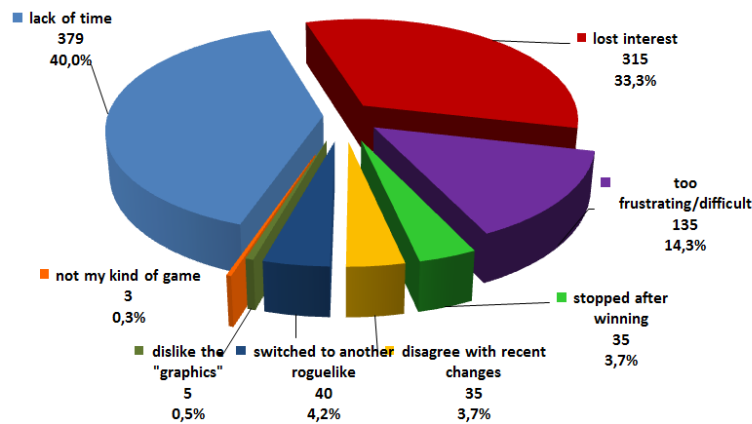
*Players* gives the number of accounts logging one complete game within the tournament period on one of the tracked servers. Because of dummy/double accounts, e.g. for roundrobin games, the actual number of players who willingly participate in the tournament is smaller, though not by much.

**B4b. If you hardly ever play or have stopped playing altogether, what's the main reason for this?**

Participants who have stopped playing Crawl altogether mainly did so because of a lack of time. Apparently they still follow Crawl development and/or discussion, though. Otherwise, they wouldn't even have known about the survey, let alone take the time to fill it out. Obviously, the number of players who left the community for good is much higher, and while this is a normal part of player fluctuation, negative emotions (such as anger or frustration) are presumably highly underrepresented in the responses to the follow-up question, "If you hardly ever play or have stopped playing altogether, what's the main reason for this?"

Count	Percent	Statement
379	30.5%	I'd love to play, but I just don't find the time.
315	25.3%	I just sort of lost interest.
297	23.9%	N/A
135	10.9%	The game is too frustrating/hard for me.
40	3.2%	I've found another roguelike I like better.
35	2.8%	No reason to continue playing after I beat the game.
35	2.8%	The game stopped being fun when a certain feature was added/changed/removed.
5	0.4%	I need better graphics in my games.
3	0.2%	It's simply not my kind of game.

Distribution of reasons for quitting



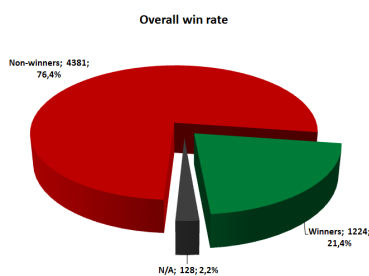
Note that the above diagram does not take the N/A answers into account.

Just after the release of 0.10, players were understandably still sore about the removal of the Mountain Dwarf (which was mentioned 30 times), though other features also were singled out, such as the AC nerf of DCSS 0.6, removal of Hive, and constriction making

naga more dangerous. Interestingly, the (small) subset of participants actively clamoring for the return of the Mountain Dwarf (or another Dwarf species) is surprisingly similar to the data set as a whole when it comes to e.g. age, gender, tiles/console and local/online preference, etc. The overall win rate is a bit higher, and, unsurprisingly, players who've only picked up Crawl at version 0.10 or later are much less likely to be concerned about a species they've only heard about.

### B5. Have you ever won the game (without cheating)?

More than three quarters of all participants haven't won the game yet.

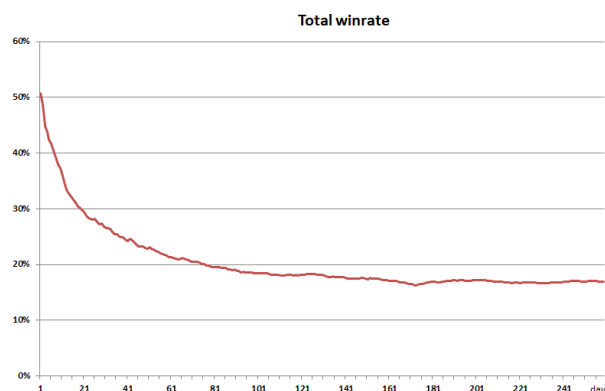


Count	Percent	Ever won?
4381	76.4%	No
128	2.2%	N/A
1224	21.4%	Yes

This includes players who've discovered Crawl only recently or only play casually as well as veterans who've spent years trying to beat the game, and also covers many different versions (trunk included) of varying difficulty.

For what it's worth, the win rate among console players (almost 33.9%) is significantly higher than among Tiles players (19.3%). However, console players are much more likely to be playing online (80% of all console players) than Tiles players (29% of all tiles players), which means they have the advantage when it comes to receiving tips from helpful spectators and to easily checking the knowledge bots. In fact, the win rate among all online players is 37.4% whereas for local players it's a mere 15.7%.

As expected, the more active players with one or more wins under their belt dominated the survey at first, but as more people chimed in, the overall winrate dropped and eventually stabilized over time.



### B5a. If you have at least one win, just how good of a player are you?

Among the players who did snatch a win, some have achieved additional feats (multiple choices possible) of even greater difficulty, with the following percentage values (of all winners):

Count	Percent	Statement
664	54.2%	I got my first win only recently (in 2011/12, with 0.8 or later).
430	35.1%	I've won at least one allrunner (collected all 15 runes).
376	30.7%	I've won more than 5 games.
197	16.1%	I've completed a Ziggurat (27 levels of increasing difficulty).
72	5.9%	I've managed at least one streak of three or more consecutive wins.

That last number is surprisingly high for Crawl's often cited difficulty and shows that the game isn't nearly as unfair as it's sometimes rumoured to be. Of course, such streaks are only obtained with a thorough knowledge of the game's mechanics (a lot more than the interface gives away) and a very patient — some would say paranoid — approach.

13% of all winners ticked none of these options, 38% ticked only the first (recent win). Moreover, 5 participants ticked all five options and another 29 all but the first one.

Of those whose first win happened only "recently", 14% started playing Stone Soup at version 0.10 or later, 60% started with a version between 0.5 and 0.9 (2009 or later) and 10% had actually started out playing the original Dungeon Crawl in the pre-Stone Soup days. Of course, that doesn't tell us whether they've been trying all these years or whether they wandered off in the meantime and only returned recently. Either way, it's good news for the devteam.

### B5b. If you haven't ever won the game, what was the furthest you ever got?

Among the players who haven't ever won yet, the highest milestones ever reached are distributed as follows (percentage values of all non-winners):

Count	Percent	Statement
478	10.9%	I've never been deeper than the first few levels of the Dungeon.
429	9.8%	I've reached the Ecumenical Temple.
1226	28.0%	I've reached both the Orcish Mines and the Lair of the Beasts.
762	17.4%	I've reached the entrance to The Vaults.
666	15.2%	I've had one or two runes in the same game.
326	7.4%	I've found three different runes (in the same or over several games).
382	8.7%	My best character died in Zot.
112	2.6%	N/A

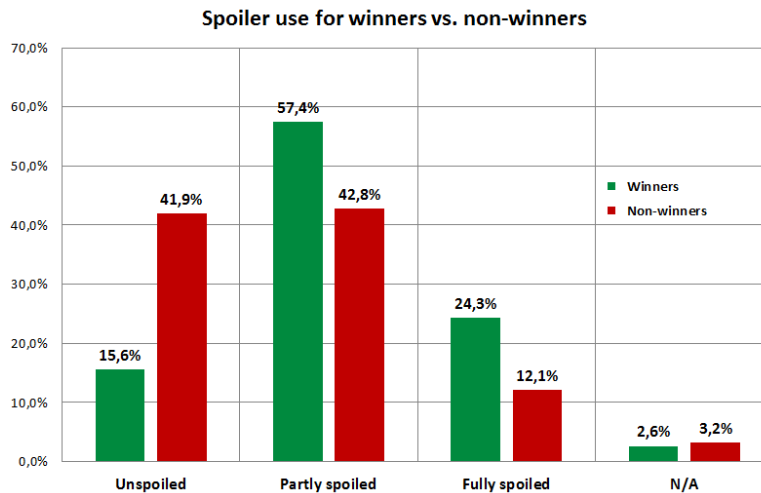
We're rather pleased about the comparatively smooth distribution both between the earliest and the latest two milestones. However, there appears to be a strong barrier once branches (and subsequently, runes) come into play. Many players dive immediately into the Mines or the Lair when they encounter them, whether for the variety or for the promise of a rune, and then die there. (Of course, that part of the game is also much longer than the early game.) At the same time, the deeper Dungeon is not exactly an easy alternative either, so it can be really hard to progress until the entrance to the Vaults, though obviously that's still easier than actually procuring a rune from one of the earlier branches.

We opted to combine the mention of having collected one or two runes since the previous survey showed that once you've managed to find one rune, it's only a matter of time until you can collect two of them. Beyond the obvious first two Lair sub branches, the choice of a third branch becomes much more difficult, so finding a third rune should be treated as a separate milestone. At the same time, we figured that the player's capability of dealing with different branches' distinct challenges was more important than the actual feat of gaining entrance to Zot. The caveat of counting three distinct runes even if collected over separate games also allowed us to distinguish between the three rune accomplishment and Zot itself, which (aside from accidents while exploring the remaining main dungeon) for most characters is the next obvious step once they've managed the former.

**B6. Before your first win (or up to now, if you haven't won yet), did you actively read detailed spoilers about monsters?**

According to the replies to this question, most players actually don't read spoilers or only moderately so.

Count	Percent	Read monster spoilers?
2068	36.1%	No.
1462	25.5%	Yes, about some of the most dangerous monsters.
1146	20.0%	Yes, about the more dangerous monsters.
841	14.7%	Yes, about all the monsters.
216	3.8%	N/A



This question is problematic in that it's extremely ambiguous. The idea was to get a gauge on spoiler usage among the player base, and we decided to concentrate on monsters as a very specific example because these are more clear-cut and require less explaining or prior assumptions that e.g. spell stats or weapon formulas. However, the trouble begins with the question of what constitutes a spoiler: If players are asking for help with their characters, would they consider someone telling them which enemies to avoid or how to deal with them as spoilery? Moreso, what about someone who doesn't even ask for help but just follows discussions which just happen to include detailed comparisons among different monster types? Does watching Let's Plays count? We've tried to mitigate this uncertainty with the qualifier that the player "actively read detailed spoilers", which unfortunately is still pretty open for discussion.

Another problem is the distinction between "some of the most" and "the more" dangerous monsters, which is highly subjective and likely to change with player experience, though we've tried to address the latter by the conditional "at the time of your first win". The answers were even more ambiguously phrased at the start of the survey ("some of the more", "the most"), so much so that we changed the wording after we'd already gotten a few hundred replies. Then again, at the time, the three "Yes" answers only differed in the single digits, meaning participants might as well have picked answers at random.

Even when it comes to our example choice, we completely failed to take into account that monsters are probably one aspect of Crawl where the perceived "need" for spoilers is fairly low. Sure, monster spells are kept hidden but there aren't that many different spell sets and the important exceptions (Banishment, Paralysis) are, once the player has barely survived them or else died because of such a spell, fairly easy to remember. Also, while some players would like to see specific values for a monster's hit dice, armor class or magic resistance, the exact values are not as important as the general impression the player can gain through repeated fights, even more so with randomization thrown



in. With resistances, a description for magic resistance, and even a rough estimate for monster difficulty being openly displayed, we hardly ever see feature requests to display more information about monster stats. Compare this to spell and weapon damage, especially the latter of which (along with weapon delay) is one of the most common questions in online conversation.

Also, the main reason for the high non-spoiler rate might as well be that players not active in the Crawl community might simply not know about the knowledge bots or spoiler sites. There are just too many unknown variables here for us to reach any reliable conclusion from this response alone. In hindsight, it might have been better to use specific situational examples for the statements such as, for example, “I check the spoilers for how to deal with enemies that kill a lot of my characters” versus “Whenever I encounter an enemy I haven’t seen before, I check the spoilers before I engage it,” and to also include “I’d love to read some stats about my enemies but I don’t know where to look for them.”

What we can say is that about 15% of all participants consider themselves thoroughly spoiled by the time they won their first character whereas 36% consider themselves completely or mostly unspoiled, at least when it comes to monster stats.

## B7. When did you start playing?

More than half of all participants started playing within the last five versions (0.6 or later). However, there are still plenty of players (almost 10%) who’ve played the original Dungeon Crawl.

Version	Year	Count	Percent	Count sum	Percent sum
Linley’s Dungeon Crawl	1997	195	3.4%	195	3.4%
Dungeon Crawl	1998–2003	369	6.4%	564	9.8%
Stone Soup 0.1	2006	91	1.6%	655	11.4%
Stone Soup 0.2	2007	64	1.1%	719	12.5%
Stone Soup 0.3	2007	192	3.3%	911	15.9%
Stone Soup 0.4	2008	490	8.5%	1401	24.4%
Stone Soup 0.5	2009	646	11.3%	2047	35.7%
Stone Soup 0.6	2010	629	11.0%	2676	46.7%
Stone Soup 0.7	2010	753	13.1%	3429	59.8%
Stone Soup 0.8	2011	707	12.3%	4136	72.1%
Stone Soup 0.9	2011	685	11.9%	4821	84.1%
Stone Soup 0.10	2012	826	14.4%	5647	98.5%
No answer		86	1.5%	5733	100.0%

One very obvious problem with this question — obvious in hindsight, that is — is that we forgot to take into account DCSS 0.11, which was released about four months before the survey was closed. Participants who had only just discovered Crawl probably checked either the closest alternative, “Stone Soup 0.10”, or simply “No answer”.

What we find interesting about these results is that 62.7% of all participants only discovered Crawl after the previous survey, whereas the other ones could in theory have taken part in that one, too. Despite the large influx of new players, the veterans who started out with the original Dungeon Crawl still form a surprisingly large group, comprising almost 10%.

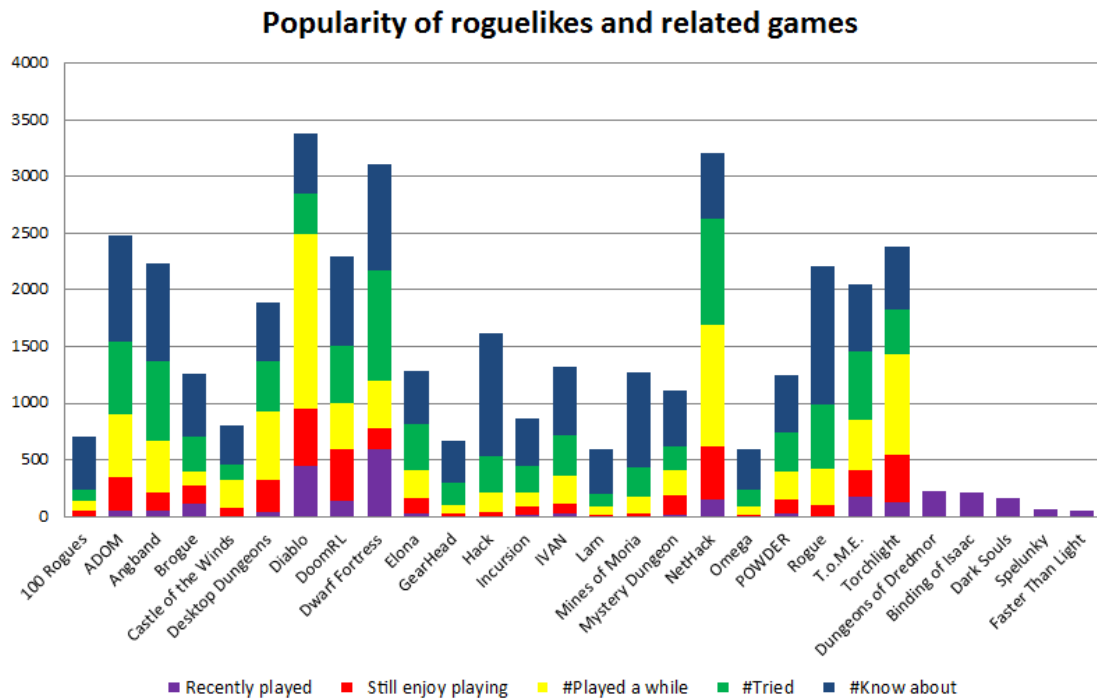
## B8. What other roguelikes (or related games) have you played?

Unsurprisingly, the most popular roguelike games are the **DIABLO** series (57%), **NETHACK** (38%) and **DWARF FORTRESS** (25%). These are also the most well-known games even among players who haven't given them a try (**DIABLO**: 81%; **NETHACK**: 79%; **DWARF FORTRESS**: 75%).

Game	played	tried	known	$\frac{\text{tried}}{\text{known}}$	$\frac{\text{played}}{\text{tried}}$
100 ROGUES	196	336	1039	32.3%	58.3%
ADOM	1136	2109	3509	60.1%	53.9%
ANGBAND + variants	890	1930	3208	60.2%	46.1%
BROGUE	481	954	1818	52.5%	50.4%
CASTLE OF THE WINDS	420	613	1125	54.5%	68.5%
DESKTOP DUNGEONS	1212	1865	2631	70.9%	65.0%
DIABLO	3278	3833	4662	82.2%	85.5%
DOOMRL	1219	1947	3122	62.4%	62.6%
DWARF FORTRESS	1420	2902	4318	67.2%	48.9%
ELONA	505	1099	1856	59.2%	46.0%
GEARHEAD	125	415	964	43.0%	30.1%
HACK	297	800	2441	32.8%	37.1%
INCURSION	478	988	1876	52.7%	48.4%
IVAN	248	590	1166	50.6%	42.0%
LARN + variants	116	283	848	33.4%	41.0%
MINES OF MORIA	262	662	1941	34.1%	39.6%
MYSTERY DUNGEON	521	823	1535	53.6%	63.3%
NETHACK	2195	3589	4499	79.8%	61.2%
OMEGA	125	332	865	38.4%	37.7%
POWDER	504	1032	1755	58.8%	48.8%
ROGUE	609	1455	3262	44.6%	41.9%
T.O.M.E.	1041	1916	2797	68.5%	54.3%
TORCHLIGHT	1862	2463	3384	72.8%	75.6%
BINDING OF ISAAC	206+				
DARK SOULS	164+	These games are other roguelike-like games mentioned in section D's question about "games recently played"			
DUNGEONS OF DREDMOR	221+				
FASTER THAN LIGHT	51+				
SPELUNKY	61+				

The previous survey included a (free text) question about other roguelikes Crawl players had played. We used the results to compile a sizable list for this question, including all roguelikes that were named at least seven times (arbitrary cut-off), though we took the liberty to group variants of a single core game together, with the most prominent example being **ANGBAND**. In addition, we included a few games that were released

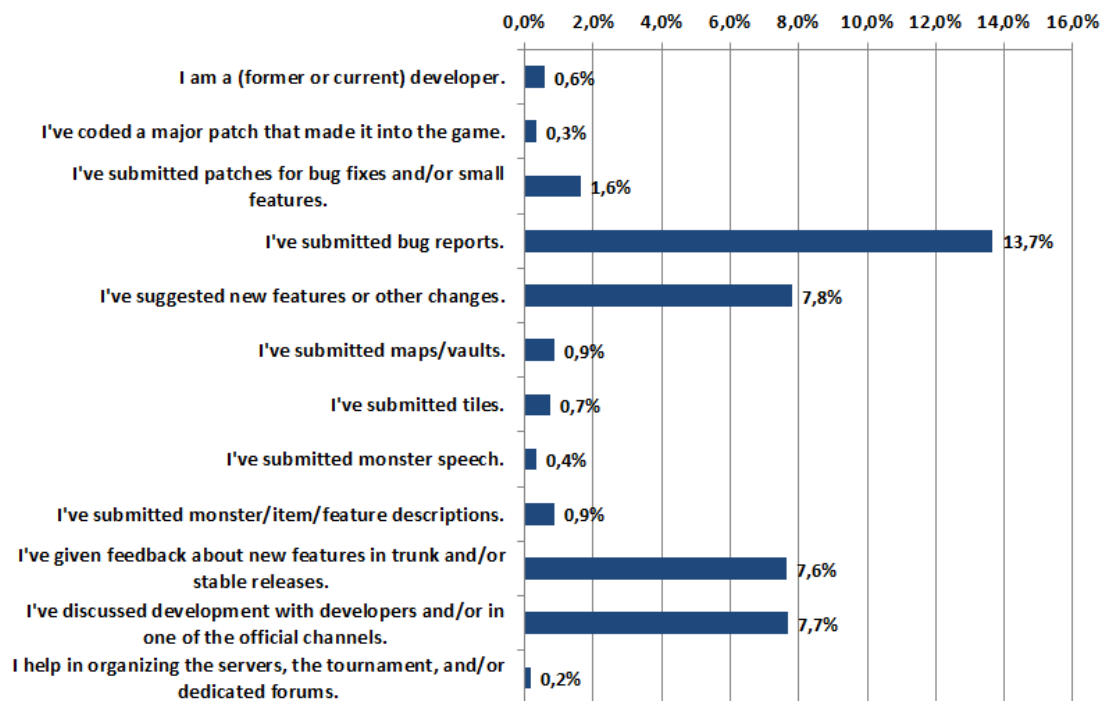
in the meantime, namely 100 ROGUES, BROGUE, DESKTOP DUNGEONS and TORCHLIGHT. There were a few other games we probably should have included (DUNGEONS OF DREDMOR, BINDING OF ISAAC, possibly also DARK SOULS, SPELUNKY and FASTER THAN LIGHT) that got plenty of mentions in section D’s “recent games” question. Note that these numbers (only counting games played “within the last three months”) are higher than for several games actually included in this list, only a part of which have seen recent play.



DIABLO, NETHACK and TORCHLIGHT have the highest ratio of participants knowing about them also giving them a try. DIABLO and TORCHLIGHT also have the highest ratio of participants who tried them and then continued playing for a while, though this might also have something to do with them being commercial games. ROGUE, being the genre-namer, also is really well-known (69%) but is comparatively rarely seeing play (45% tried/known ratio). Among the least well-known games in our list are LARN, OMEGA and GEARHEAD. 100 ROGUES, HACK and LARN have the lowest tried/known ratio, and GEARHEAD, HACK and OMEGA have the lowest played/tried ratio.

## B9. Do or did you participate in the Dungeon Crawl game development?

85% of all participants haven't ticked a single option, indicating no participation in the development process at all. If they do get involved, bug reports and suggestions/feedback are the most common form of input. 21 former or current (at the time) developers took part. Their replies are excluded in the comparison of the remaining answers (multiple choices possible):

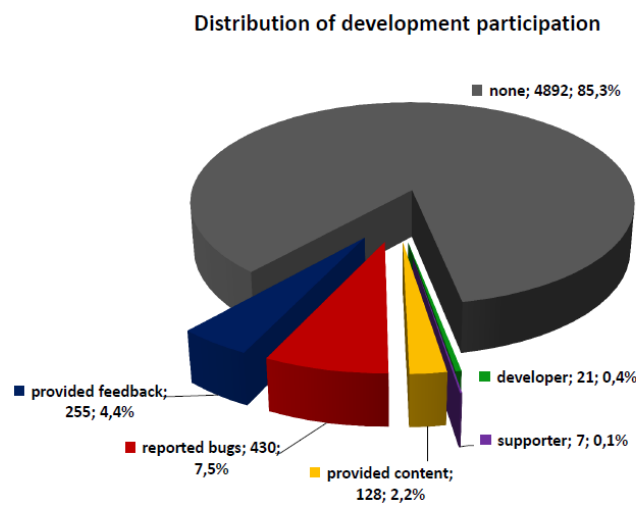


Count	Percent	Statement
12	0.2%	I've coded a major patch that made it into the game.
60	1.1%	I've submitted patches for bug fixes and/or small features.
505	8.8%	I've submitted bug reports.
289	5.1%	I've suggested new features or other changes.
32	0.6%	I've submitted maps/vaults.
27	0.5%	I've submitted tiles.
16	0.3%	I've submitted monster speech.
30	0.5%	I've submitted monster/item/feature descriptions.
253	4.4%	I gave feedback about new features in trunk or stable releases.
284	5.0%	I've discussed development in the Tavern, on ##crawl-dev, etc.
7	0.1%	I help in organizing the servers, the tournament, or forums.
4892	85.6%	None of the above.

Among those participants providing content, smaller patches are by far the most common thing submitted (60), followed by vault designs (32), descriptions (30), tiles (27), speech (16) and major patches (12).

Participants can be sorted into the following groups, again ignoring developers and not counting participants already placed in any of the previous groups:

Count	Percent	Statement
7	0.1%	technical/community support
129	2.3%	provided content (if not already supporter)
430	7.5%	submitted bug reports (if not already any of the above)
255	4.5%	provided feedback (if not already any of the above)
4892	85.6%	none of the above



When looking at the survey participants who previously played no part in the development process at all, the age, gender and country distribution are remarkably similar to that of the general group of all participants. They are slightly more likely to play Tiles and locally (2% difference each) and they are less likely to have ever won the game (5% difference). They are also slightly more likely to have started playing with one of the recent versions (2% difference for 0.10 or later, 3% for 0.5 or later, including 0.10), slightly more likely to abstain from the tournament (2% difference) and slightly more likely to stick with the official releases (5% difference). Even their favourite features are remarkably similar. All in all, this is not the large difference we expected, and it appears that the vocal minority is in fact speaking for the silent majority when providing feedback and suggesting new features.

## 5 Section C: How do you play?

Section C was skipped for the 92 participants who haven't played in more than a year (question B4) and encompassed the following questions:

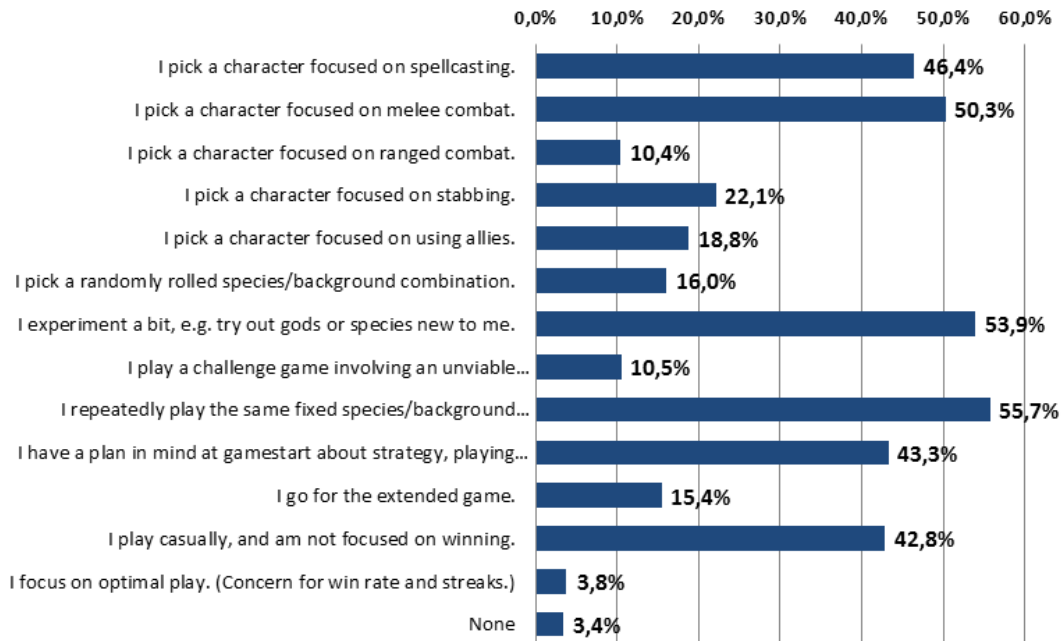
- C1. Which of the following (playing style related) statements are often true when you start a game these days?
- C2. Which of the following methods have you tried to improve your progress in the game? Did they help?
- C3. What's your preferred method of movement in Crawl?
- C4. What's your preferred method of using items in Crawl?
- C5. Do you take part in the tournaments?
- C6. Do you play "trunk" (the beta version of the upcoming release)?
- C7. Do you (also) play Crawl versions other than the latest stable release and/or trunk?
- C8. Have you also tried the other game modes in Stone Soup?
- C9. How often do you visit the following popular Crawl meeting places?

In short, he is almost certainly familiar with some form of online information about the game although he doesn't actively contribute to online Crawl discussion places. He probably uses the number pad to navigate his characters. He does not take part in the tournaments (91%) but would like to (51%) and he does not play 'trunk', the development version (>70%) — quite possibly because he might not know about the existence of either of these.

### **C1. Which of the following (playing style related) statements are often true when you start a game these days?**

Players like to try out new gods, backgrounds, or species, but will usually pick the same species/background combination for a while (often already with a plan in mind on how to develop the character) before switching to something else. They slightly prefer melee characters over spellcasters, both of which are much more popular than stabbers, ally-based play or ranged combat specialists. Many players play casually, and only a small minority of players describe themselves as attempting to play "optimally".

## Preferred play styles



Count	Percent	Statement
3142	55.7%	I repeatedly play the same fixed species/background combination for a while.
3042	53.9%	I experiment a bit, e.g. try out gods or species new to me.
2835	50.3%	I pick a character focused on melee combat.
2617	46.4%	I pick a character focused on spellcasting.
2441	43.3%	I have a plan in mind at gamestart about strategy, playing style and god.
2415	42.8%	I play casually, and am not focused on winning.
1248	22.1%	I pick a character focused on stabbing.
1061	18.8%	I pick a character focused on using allies.
904	16.0%	I pick a randomly rolled species/background combination.
871	15.4%	I go for the extended game. (Tomb, hells, Pan)
592	10.5%	I play a challenge game involving an unviable species/background combination.
586	10.4%	I pick a character focused on ranged combat.
214	3.8%	I focus on optimal play. (Concern for win rate and streaks.)

Since the question was about frequently played characters, it is not surprising that the most versatile builds (melee and magic specialists) are more common than the more streamlined builds. Still, it is worth keeping in mind the common complaints about ally-based play (“too tedious”, xp loss) and hunters (“annoying item management”, not powerful enough).

The somewhat casual approach to playing the game might go a long way towards explaining the comparatively low win rate. It’s great that players are willing to branch out and experiment. (Note that this number of players capable of trying “new” things



is limited by the amount of players who haven't already seen everything.) New species and gods, in particular, will always be appreciated.

It is interesting to observe that, while not directly related to the survey, versions since 0.11 have seen changes which attempt to make rangers and summoners more attractive. For example, ammunition carries no enchantments, reducing inventory problems. Regarding summons: anything summoned by a monster will disappear if the summoner is dispatched; player summons will only work well when the character sees them — this rule change (a nerf!) makes summon builds less aggravating to play, at least for one of the authors of this report. Needless to say, a lot more remains to be done, but it is interesting to observe how player concerns are being address, even if in ways no anticipated by them.

## **C2. Which of the following methods have you tried to improve your progress in the game? Did they help?**

When players are looking for information about how to get better at playing Crawl, they consider spoiler sites as the best resource to do so (95%), followed by asking others for help (94%) and using the knowledge bots (93%). The least helpful tools appear to be watching other players (70%), playing the tutorial or hints mode (75%) and reading the source code (79%).

Method	total tried	helpful/tried
Spoiler sites	4418	94.5%
Asking for help	1762	93.6%
Learndb/knowledge bots	2250	92.5%
Online discussions	2695	90.0%
Reading the manual	3847	87.5%
Spectators giving tips	905	84.4%
Reading the source code	588	78.7%
Tutorial/hints mode	3464	74.8%
Watching other players	2378	70.2%

We would have liked to be able to distinguish between tutorial and hints mode but due to "hints mode" originally being named "tutorial", we thought this would be too confusing and ended up lumping the two together. Still, it looks like the two of them are considered among the least helpful resource available to the player, which is rather disappointing. It would have been immensely interesting to know what players were looking for. After all, the tutorial or manual are not supposed to hand out detailed combat formulas, and for more experienced players, the tutorial is unlikely to give any information they don't already know.

### C3. What's your preferred method of movement in Crawl?

The number pad (if available) is the most popular method of movement for Tiles and console players alike. Among console players, it is followed by the vi keys, which are really unpopular among Tiles player who prefer moving by mouseclick instead. Some players use a combination of arrow and vi keys.

Tiles players			Console players		
Count	Percent	Movement by	Count	Percent	Movement by
2210	51.4%	number pad	420	50.9%	number pad
924	21.5%	mouse click	283	34.3%	vi keys (hjklyubn)
677	15.7%	combination	97	11.8%	combination
391	9.1%	vi keys (hjklyubn)	2	0.2%	mouse click
98	2.3%	N/A	23	2.8%	N/A

The two mentions of mouseclick preferences were made by players predominantly playing the console version who like using the mouse on the rare occasion they're playing tiles.

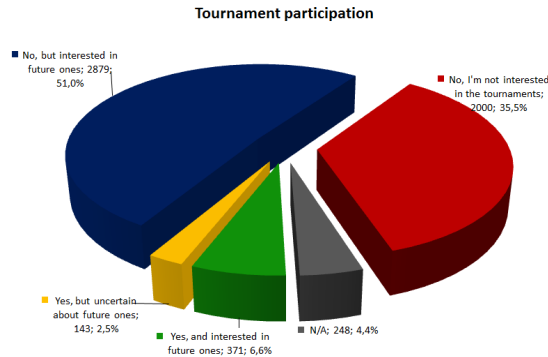
### C4. What's your preferred method of using items in Crawl?

While the great majority of console players favours using the single letter commands to use items, the preference is pretty evenly split between mouseclick and single letter commands for Tiles players. Only a minority of either group ( $\approx 5\%$ ) actually use the commands from within the item description.

Tiles players			Console players		
Count	Percent	Item usage by	Count	Percent	Item usage by
2032	47.3%	mouse click	748	90.7%	single letter
1971	45.8%	single letter	44	5.3%	item description
199	4.6%	item description	9	1.1%	mouse click
98	2.3%	N/A	24	2.9%	N/A

### C5. Do you take part in the tournaments?

Only about 9% of all participants have taken part in at least one of the tournaments so far, though 51% show interest in doing so.



### C6. Do you play "trunk" (the beta version of the upcoming release)?

The majority of participants doesn't bother with trunk and only ever plays officially released versions.

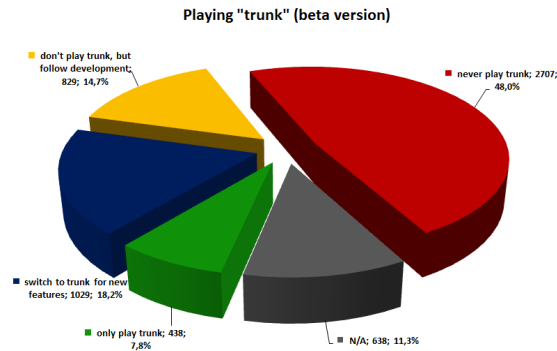
Count	Percent	Playing trunk?
2707	48.0%	No, I only ever update for release versions.
1029	18.2%	Yes. I always check out the stable version, but I switch to trunk for cool new features.
829	14.7%	No. Trunk is too unstable for me, but I like to keep informed about what is happening in trunk.
438	7.8%	Yes. Except during tournaments, I only play trunk.
638	11.3%	N/A

The higher number of N/A votes (compared to the previous question) might point to participants not knowing about trunk to begin with.

### C7. Do you (also) play Crawl versions other than the latest stable release and/or trunk?

88% of all participants don't play other versions than the most recent release or trunk. Among the alternatives, previous Stone Soup releases are most common (usually to finish pre-existing characters, or to indulge in then unnerfed features), whereas Crawl light is seeing the least amount of play.

Count	Percent	version description
483	8.6%	an older Stone Soup version released a while ago
158	2.8%	an older version of the original Dungeon Crawl
89	1.6%	a Stone Soup version I patched/modified myself
30	0.5%	Crawl Light (a Stone Soup fork)
4940	87.6%	none of the above



Among older Stone Soup releases, the following versions were named:

Count	Percent	version numbrt
70	1.2%	0.10
128	2.3%	0.9
60	1.1%	0.8
29	0.5%	0.7
16	0.3%	0.6
13	0.2%	0.5
7	0.1%	0.4
5	0.1%	0.3
11	0.2%	0.2
8	0.1%	0.1

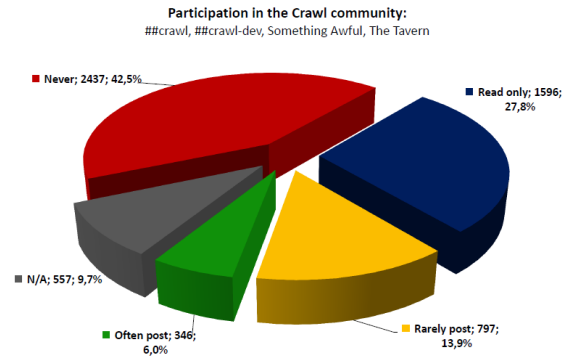
### C8. Have you also tried the other game modes in Stone Soup?

Roughly about half of all participants have given the alternative game modes Dungeon Sprint (58%) and Zot Defense (54%) a try. Those who did greatly preferred Dungeon Sprint (24%) over Zot Defense (14%).

Game mode/mini game	tried total	tried percent	disliked/tried	liked/tried
Dungeon Sprint	3306	57.6%	33.7%	24.3%
Zot Defense	3063	54.3%	52.3%	13.7%

## C9. How often do you visit the following popular Crawl meeting places?

43% of all participants don't follow Crawl discussion in any of the four places offered for this question (the Tavern, Something Awful forum, the IRC channels ##crawl and ##crawl-dev). Another 28% only ever read but never join into the discussion. Only about 20% actually post something, even occasionally.



Count	Percent	group
1143	20.3%	active poster
1595	28.3%	lurker (only reads)
2406	42.7%	neither
465	8.2%	N/A

Obviously, the list of discussion places was far from complete. The most commonly suggested alternatives were the roguelike reddit thread (7%, subsequently added to the discussion links on the website), the chan boards (5%) and the Bay12Games forum (2%).

Discussion platform	posters total	posters percent	lurkers total	lurkers percent	neither total	neither percent
##crawl	517	9.2%	569	10.1%	3886	68.9%
##crawl-dev	112	2.0%	509	9.0%	4303	76.3%
Something Awful	379	6.7%	860	15.2%	3754	66.5%
the Tavern	465	8.2%	1295	23.0%	3290	58.3%

Unsurprisingly, the least visited discussion board is the development IRC channel. The most popular one is the official forum, which has 23% lurkers, but the most active one is the ##crawl channel, which has 9% posters.

## 6 Section D: Parting comments

Section D consisted of 3 questions to be answered with free text.

- D1. Is there anything about Crawl that you especially like?
- D2. Which computer game(s), other than Crawl, have you played most in the last three months?
- D3. Do you have any suggestions on how to improve Stone Soup further?

It was mostly this section that caused the immense delay in publishing the survey results as we had greatly underestimated both the popularity of the survey and the amount of work needed to slough through all the comments. (We loved them, though. Thank you!)

About 18% of participants left all 3 boxes blank, though most at least took the time to list their favourite games. Obviously, being open text boxes, all questions allow for multiple answers.

**Summary:** Following the suggestions, the typical Crawl player would embrace new content of any kind with open arms: branches, gods, species, spells, you name it. On the other hand, he doesn't think the game is perfect and has a number of features in mind that should be changed, with 'better/more gods', 'better melee combat' and 'better interface' leading the field. Removal of content is contentious — this is to be expected, but focus on reevaluation of existing features (which can lead to nerfs or removals) is part of the design philosophy, and thus not a secret.

## D1. Is there anything about Crawl that you especially like?

76% of participants left a comment on this question, though some of them got this one and D3 (suggestions) mixed up. In general, favourite features go across the board. The most often cited one is what can be summed up as replayability and general variety of choices regarding species, backgrounds, gods and playing styles. Other popular mentions are the challenge and complexity of the game, accessibility (“easy to learn, hard to master”) and the interface. Some players took the chance to express their happiness with (then) recent changes such as the removal of the need to grind for skill optimization, or were just happy that the game is still undergoing active development.

Since the list is rather long, we’re cutting it at 1% of mentions. You can read the full list from <http://crawl.develz.org/wordpress/2012-dcss-survey-results>.

Count	Percent	Favourite feature	Count	Percent	Favourite feature
1352	23.6%	No answer	175	3.1%	comparison to NetHack (mostly favourable, but also fondly reminiscent, plus a few feature requests)
957	16.7%	challenge			
921	16.1%	general variety			
653	11.4%	species variety			
498	8.7%	random content	173	3.0%	monster variety
486	8.5%	background variety	154	2.7%	lack of grinding
425	7.4%	flexible character development	125	2.2%	unique species
408	7.1%	replayability	114	2.0%	permadeath
394	6.9%	religious system	108	1.9%	character creation
387	6.8%	Other	105	1.8%	aesthetics
345	6.0%	accessibility	103	1.8%	sense of progress
338	5.9%	tiles version	94	1.6%	polished content/gameplay
337	5.9%	interface	90	1.6%	design philosophy
329	5.7%	depth/complexity	90	1.6%	mutations
283	4.9%	skill system (mainly "manual" training)	88	1.5%	tactical combat
266	4.6%	autoexplore/travel/fight	86	1.5%	strategy
213	3.7%	general fairness	80	1.4%	branch variety
208	3.6%	item variety	75	1.3%	flavour
191	3.3%	magic system	74	1.3%	transparency
186	3.2%	level generation	69	1.2%	meaningful decisions
185	3.2%	game balance	67	1.2%	artefacts
177	3.1%	active development	65	1.1%	the community
			61	1.1%	everything ☺

The remaining features include unique enemies (players love to hate Sigmund), the (removed) Mountain Dwarf species, Xom, the tutorial, portal vaults, ghosts, and a surprising number of features that we consider perfectly normal for the genre (such as the game being old-school and turn-based, having a console version, allowing saving at any point, and being both open source and open development).

We were a bit surprised at the number of players singling out the difficulty of the game as one of their favourite features or going out of their way to point out the general lack of unfair deaths. In other news, NetHack was the only roguelike to crop up in any relevant number of comments to be worth mentioning.

## D2. Which computer game(s), other than Crawl, have you played most in the last three months?

This was the most popular of the free text questions: only 18% of participants left this section blank or left a generic "N/A" type of answer.

As a group, roguelikes and roguelites are seeing more play than any other group of games. Here's a list of roguelikes mentioned in responses to this question. We apologize in advance if we've overlooked any other roguelikes (which we probably have, there are so many of them.) High-ranking (more than 50 mentions) roguelikes not included as an option in question B8 (pertaining to other roguelikes played) are marked with an asterisk (\*).

Count	Percent	Roguelike or related game	Count	Percent	Roguelike or related game
1174	20.5%	ROGUELIKE GAME (group)	14	0.2%	DWELLER
590	10.3%	DWARF FORTRESS	13	0.2%	CAVES OF QUD
445	7.8%	DIABLO SERIES (group)	13	0.2%	INCURSION
221	3.9%	DUNGEONS OF DREDMOR*	13	0.2%	ROGUE SURVIVOR
206	3.6%	BINDING OF ISAAC*	9	0.2%	UNREAL WORLD
180	3.1%	TO ME	8	0.1%	ROGUE
164	2.9%	DARK SOULS*	6	0.1%	CARDINAL QUEST
158	2.8%	NETHACK (and derivates)	6	0.1%	SIL
139	2.4%	DOOMRL	5	0.1%	TRIANGLE WIZARD
121	2.1%	TORCHLIGHT	4	0.1%	DEADLY ROOMS OF DEATH
113	2.0%	BROGUE	4	0.1%	DIN'S CURSE
61	1.1%	SPELUNKY*	4	0.1%	DUNGEON MASTER
54	0.9%	ADOM	3	0.1%	FROZEN DEPTHS
54	0.9%	DOOMRL	3	0.1%	HALF-MINUTE HERO
52	0.9%	ANGBAND	3	0.1%	MINES OF MORIA
51	0.9%	FASTER THAN LIGHT*	3	0.1%	RED ROGUE
43	0.8%	DESKTOP DUNGEONS	3	0.1%	SPORKHACK
33	0.6%	POWDER	3	0.1%	UNNETHACK
29	0.5%	ELONA	2	0.0%	ASCII SECTOR
23	0.4%	IVAN	2	0.0%	AZURE DREAMS
22	0.4%	DEMONS SOULS	2	0.0%	GARDEN OF COLOURED LIGHTS
17	0.3%	MYSTERY DUNGEON (Shiren — Fushigi no dungeon)	2	0.0%	HYDRA SLAYER
			2	0.0%	OMEGA

Mentioned once: ACEHACK, CASTLE OF THE WINDS, DUNGEON HACK, DUNGEON MINDER, ENDLESS DEPTHS, ENDLESS DUNGEON, GUILD, HYPERROGUE, LAMBDA ROGUE, LOST LABYRINTH, MAGE GUILD, SUPER-ROGUE, SWORD OF FARGOAL, THE SLIMY LICHMUMMY, TOTALLY RANDOM HERO, TOWER CLIMB.

For the record, we've lumped games into this section if they fulfill at least one of the following criteria:

- it's listed in the Roguetemple database: <http://forums.roguetemple.com/irlldb/>
- a websearch brought up a description of it being a roguelike or having roguelike elements
- the gameplay focus lies on combat in a procedurally generated dungeon and/or involving permadeath
- going by the Wikipedia entry, it sounds like it could be a roguelike-like game
- the creator is Linley Henzell ☺



However, games were only counted in the "roguelike group" category if they were either already included in question B8 or they were listed in the Roguetemple database. In general, games were counted towards a group only once per participant, so if someone e.g. mentioned having played DIABLO I, II and III, the counter for the DIABLO group was only increased by one.

Confusions between games sharing the same name are entirely possible.

We note that both 100 ROGUES and LARN were listed in question B8 but haven't seen recent play by a single participant. In any future survey, these games would be good candidates for swapping against some of the more popular ones. They have been in the list because the reporters have some affiliation with their respective developers — not good enough a reason to list them, unfortunately.

As for the most popular non-roguelike games mentioned, again we're making a cut at 1% of participants' answers: for the full list, go to the CDO page given above.

Count	Percent	Non-roguelike game	Count	Percent	Non-roguelike game
804	14.0%	ELDER SCROLLS series (group)	86	1.5%	MOUNT AND BLADE
717	12.5%	ELDER SCROLLS 5: SKYRIM	86	1.5%	ZELDA series (group)
530	9.2%	LEAGUE OF LEGENDS	74	1.3%	GUILD WARS
423	7.4%	MINECRAFT	71	1.2%	SUPER MARIO game (group)
306	5.3%	TEAM FORTRESS	71	1.2%	flash game (unspecified)
297	5.2%	CIVILIZATION	69	1.2%	PORTAL
262	4.6%	WARCRAFT series (group)	68	1.2%	ELDER SCROLLS 3: MORROWIND
251	4.4%	other	68	1.2%	THE BATTLE FOR WESNOTH
236	4.1%	WARCRAFT: DEFENSE OF THE ANCIENTS	67	1.2%	EUROPA UNIVERSALIS
214	3.7%	STARCRAFT	67	1.2%	REALM OF THE MAD GOD
172	3.0%	MASS EFFECT	64	1.1%	CALL OF DUTY
171	3.0%	FALLOUT	64	1.1%	roleplaying game (unspecified)
138	2.4%	WORLD OF WARCRAFT	63	1.1%	KINGDOMS OF AMALUR
133	2.3%	TERRARIA	63	1.1%	LEGENDS OF GRIMROCK
131	2.3%	STAR WARS:	62	1.1%	ROME: TOTAL WAR
		KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC	62	1.1%	WORLD OF TANKS
124	2.2%	BATTLEFIELD	60	1.0%	BALDUR'S GATE
119	2.1%	FINAL FANTASY series	60	1.0%	BASTION
110	1.9%	TRIBES: ASCEND	60	1.0%	EVE ONLINE
107	1.9%	DEUS EX series (group)	59	1.0%	Playstation game
103	1.8%	CRUSADER KINGS	58	1.0%	COUNTERSTRIKE
100	1.7%	POKEMON	57	1.0%	HEROES OF NEWERTH
97	1.7%	BORDERLANDS	57	1.0%	SAINTS ROW
90	1.6%	STAR WARS series (group)	57	1.0%	UFO/XCOM series
87	1.5%	racing game (group)	55	1.0%	HEROES OF MIGHT AND MAGIC

The STAR WARS group has fewer entries than KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC alone because we screwed up: players used a lot of different abbreviations for the latter, in particular, and we forgot to include some of them in the check keeping track of the series as a whole. The overall total of STAR WARS players is slightly higher than SW:KOTOR but most of the mentions also included the OLD REPUBLIC.

The "Other" group counts comments pertaining to games (filtered manually) by participants who otherwise didn't name any specific games.

### D3. Do you have any suggestions on how to improve Stone Soup further?

38% of participants didn't comment here at all, and another 19% commented but did not actually make a suggestion. The remaining answers, like the favourite features, cover a wide area of topics. In general, players are rooting for on-going development and want more of the same: more species, more gods, more branches, more spells, you name it. Features that, according to the player base, need improvement include melee combat, the interface, both the early and late game, Demigods, the tutorial and hints mode, the Abyss, and Felids. The most common suggestions for new features are an easier "newbie mode", multiplayer support (how?!), sound integration and support for mobile platforms. Also, at the time of the survey, the removal of the Mountain Dwarf was still a sore point.

Here's a list of features of which players would like to see more:

Count	Percent	Suggestion	Count	Percent	Suggestion
325	5.7%	more species	32	0.6%	more portal vaults
210	3.7%	more/improved gods	30	0.5%	more food/remove food clock
165	2.9%	more backgrounds	25	0.4%	more uniques
104	1.8%	more branch variety	20	0.3%	more variety
85	1.5%	more allies/improve ally-based play	17	0.3%	more starting gods/early altars
79	1.4%	more/differentiated spells	10	0.2%	more role-playing
63	1.1%	more of everything	5	0.1%	more humour
54	0.9%	more monsters	3	0.1%	more Sprint maps
52	0.9%	more vaults	3	0.1%	more interaction with gods
51	0.9%	more mutations	1	0.0%	more mini games
46	0.8%	more/better loot			(i.e. Sprint, Zot Defense)
32	0.6%	more flavour	1	0.0%	more servers

In hindsight, the calls for new species have been heeded — there seems to be an endless stream of interesting ideas for new species. Some of the recent ones (the Octopodes of 0.10, the prospective Gargoyles of 0.14, and the potentials Formicids, Vine Stalkers) have been invented, discussed and coded by players, in fine congruence with the proclaimed open attitude of DCSS.

Finetuning and additions in the divine department took place, but at slower pace than before. Part of the reason might have been the amount of god work in the past. However, good ideas for gods are still around, and there is no reason to expect quiescence in this regard.

Adding backgrounds or branches seems harder: there are few good ideas for the former, and the effort to set up a branch is enormous (it's much higher than for a species or a god). Nonetheless, 0.11 features a fourth Lair subbranch, the Spider Nest, to rotate with the Snake Pit, the Shoals, and the Swamp (two out of these four branches are randomly selected for any given game). On the other hand, a lot more care has been expended by the developers to revisit existing branches and vaults, which is certainly a good trend.

Here's the much longer list of features participants think need improvement:

Count	Percent	Suggestion	Count	Percent	Suggestion
210	3.7%	more/improved gods	9	0.2%	nerf Torment
197	3.4%	improve melee combat	12	0.2%	improve the Vaults
196	3.4%	keep improving the interface	12	0.2%	keep true to the design philosophy
152	2.7%	improve the early game	11	0.2%	easier access to highscore/morgues
107	1.9%	improve Webtiles	11	0.2%	improve Fedhas
94	1.6%	improve the late game	11	0.2%	improve Hexes
85	1.5%	more allies/improve ally-based play	9	0.2%	improve autopickup customization
67	1.2%	improve the graphics	9	0.2%	nerf distortion
57	1.0%	transparency about combat/spell calculations	9	0.2%	website improvements
56	1.0%	improve Demigods	8	0.1%	nerf Grinder
56	1.0%	make the game a bit easier	8	0.1%	nerf orc priests
49	0.9%	improve tutorial/hints mode	8	0.1%	tone down the nerfs
46	0.8%	improve ranged combat	7	0.1%	nerf banishment
39	0.7%	improve the midgame	6	0.1%	explain game mechanics better
36	0.6%	improve Abyss	6	0.1%	improve Lugonu
36	0.6%	improve Felids	6	0.1%	nerf Necromutation
33	0.6%	improve player ghosts	6	0.1%	reduce number of ood monsters
32	0.6%	be more like NetHack	5	0.1%	improve Artificers
32	0.6%	improve spellcasters	4	0.1%	improve Beogh
31	0.5%	improve sneaking/stealth	4	0.1%	improve Mephitic Cloud again
29	0.5%	shorten the game	3	0.1%	add a donation button
27	0.5%	make remapping keys/defining macros easier/more obvious	3	0.1%	improve Demonspawn
25	0.4%	improve Swamp	3	0.1%	improve labyrinths
24	0.4%	differentiate weapon types	3	0.1%	improve timed portals
24	0.4%	improve Xom	3	0.1%	more rune variety
24	0.4%	improve monster/spell descriptions	3	0.1%	nerf constriction
22	0.4%	improve auto-explore	2	0.0%	improve Dragon Form
22	0.4%	nerf centaur packs	2	0.0%	improve Elyvilon
21	0.4%	improve heavy armour	2	0.0%	improve/remove the disc of storms
19	0.3%	differentiate species	2	0.0%	let monsters insult the player
19	0.3%	nerf paralysis	2	0.0%	light/darkness
18	0.3%	get rid of unfair (insta)deaths	2	0.0%	make monsters more like players
18	0.3%	improve level generation	2	0.0%	merge Vehumet and Sif Muna
17	0.3%	improve communications with the player base	2	0.0%	nerf Trog
17	0.3%	improve hybrids	2	0.0%	reduce message spam
14	0.2%	improve Jiyva	2	0.0%	remove manual skill training
14	0.2%	make using buffs less tedious	2	0.0%	universal use command
13	0.2%	improve Zot Defense	1	0.0%	combine takeoff and remove commands
13	0.2%	improve documentation	1	0.0%	improve the id minigame
12	0.2%	improve Okawaru	1	0.0%	improve watching/recording games
12	0.2%	improve inventory management	1	0.0%	nerf deep dwarf mirror damage
12	0.2%	improve poison magic	1	0.0%	nerf hydras
			1	0.0%	nerf invisibility
			1	0.0%	larger game window

Some players disagreed with some recent (or not so recent) changes, while there was always also support for the same features. Others suggested completely new features, some of which they know have been suggested and rejected before:

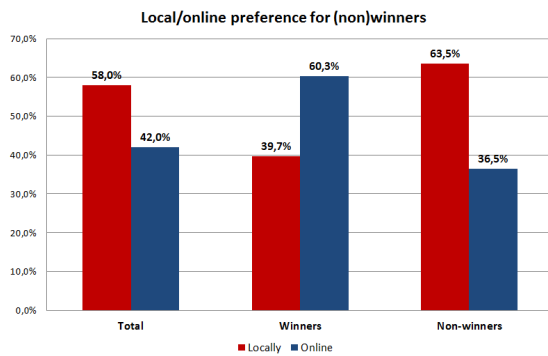
Count	Percent	Suggestion regarding past change	Count	Percent	Suggestion for new feature
248	4.3%	bring back Mountain Dwarf or a dwarf replacement	99	1.7%	difficulty levels/newbie mode
40	0.7%	stop cutting features/delay cutting until the replacement is finalized	69	1.2%	co-op/multiplayer mode
29	0.5%	bring back hive	65	1.1%	sound support
16	0.3%	fewer gimmick species	60	1.0%	Android/iPad/mobile support
12	0.2%	keep true to the design philosophy	45	0.8%	add sidequests/achievements
6	0.1%	rename Tengu back to Kenku	45	0.8%	integrate the knowledge bots
4	0.1%	keep cutting stuff	37	0.6%	savepoints
3	0.1%	let Draconians wear armour again	36	0.6%	integrate online play into local client
3	0.1%	nerf constriction	26	0.5%	add selling to shops
3	0.1%	turn scrolls back into spells	25	0.4%	add story arcs
2	0.0%	bring back Gnomes	22	0.4%	in-game options editor
2	0.0%	don't get rid of Halflings	20	0.3%	dual wielding
2	0.0%	give back Evaporate to Transmuters	19	0.3%	add 3D graphics
			19	0.3%	animated tiles
			16	0.3%	add a crafting system
			14	0.2%	translations
			12	0.2%	add species with good Armour
			9	0.2%	non-hostile monsters/monster interaction
			8	0.1%	allow setting traps
			4	0.1%	add a vault editor
			4	0.1%	stealing from shops
			3	0.1%	add an open area outside the dungeon

For anyone interested, you can find the list of repeatedly brought up and rejected ideas and some other ideas that were dismissed at

<https://crawl.develz.org/wiki/doku.php?id=graveyard:start> and  
[https://crawl.develz.org/wiki/doku.php?id=dcss:planning:wont\\_do](https://crawl.develz.org/wiki/doku.php?id=dcss:planning:wont_do).

## 7 Comparing players by skill

When comparing winners to non-winners, the most obvious difference lies in the preference of local vs. online play. While players who have never won the game greatly prefer playing locally (64%) over online (37%), the preference goes the other way around for player who've won at least once (40% locally, 60% online). This is ignoring the N/A replies, of course.



Winners are also much more likely to have used spoilers (16% spoiler-free vs. 42% for non-winners). Obviously, the greater number of new players (17% of non-winners started with 0.10 or later, but only 3% of winners) plays a large role here. This also affects their likelihood of participating in the development: 91% of non-winners have never provided feedback or bug reports, which is true for only 61% of winners. It's possible that giving

feedback makes more sense for players playing trunk, which is also more popular among winners (48% vs. 20% for non-winners). Likewise, winners are much more likely to have taken part in at least one Stone Soup tournament (25%) than non-winners (5%). This can partly be explained by winners having had more opportunities to doing so, though the previous survey also showed that many players felt they weren't "good enough" for taking part in the tournament and expressed a desire to start doing so "once they'd beaten the game".

Both the favourite features and suggestions brought up in section D don't differ by much between the two groups. Winners are a bit more likely to demand an improvement of the late game (5%) over the early game (4%), but the numbers don't differ by that much, i.e. players who never even got a rune ask for improvements of both the early and the late game with 2% votes each. Though we haven't scoured the comments for this, it seems likely that they focus on different problems, with new players asking for an easier early game and veterans for a more varied, possibly more challenging one.

