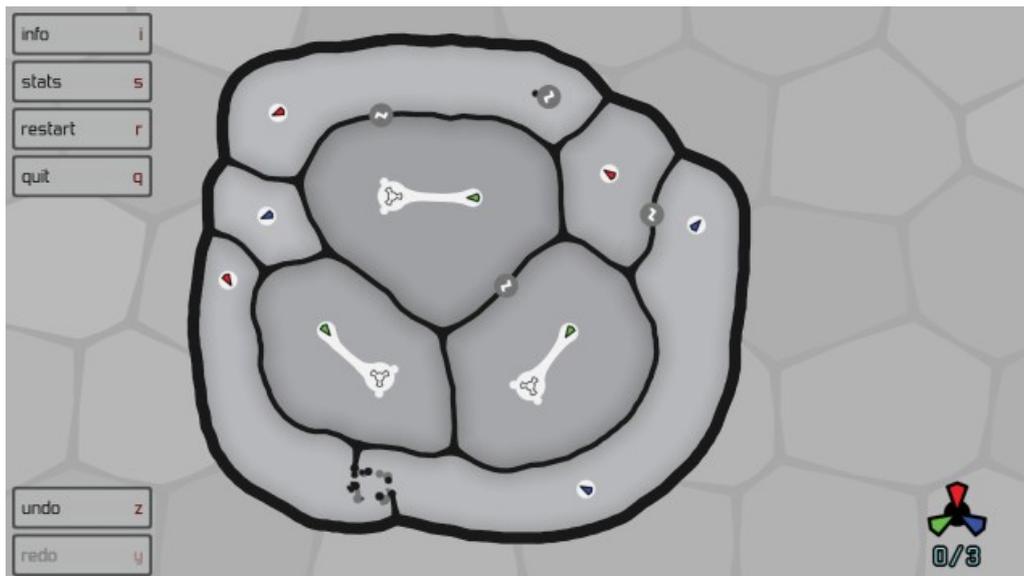


Game Review: Tricone Lab

By [James Lees](#), Gaming Editor (2016/17)

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Copyright: Partickhill Games Limited

Rating: ★★★★★☆

Platform: PC, Mac

Release Date: 12 November 2015

Developer: Partickhill Games Limited

I love a good puzzle game. To this day, one of my biggest gaming achievements is fully completing all six of the *Professor Layton* titles. But recently, it's felt like every puzzle game has had to be multi-genre: puzzle platformer, exploration puzzle, puzzle brawler, the list goes on. I still think there's something to be said for an unashamed, pure puzzle game. So does *Tricone Lab* fill that gap?

Tricone Lab follows your classic puzzle style. Every level has the same goal - in this case, to connect one of each coloured triangle to the connector to make Tricones. As the game goes on, more and more mechanics are introduced, making it more and more difficult. However, where many games introduce this in a very linear way, *Tricone Lab* instead offers a series of tutorial-esque levels for each mechanic that, upon completion, provide you with key for that puzzle piece. Beyond these levels, the rest of the levels are grouped by what pieces the puzzle contains and can only be unlocked by using the keys.

This is a fantastic idea: not only does it mean that whilst looking for harder puzzles you won't accidentally stumble across something you've never seen before, but also that if you come across something you don't like (for example, I didn't get along with the anti-cones) then you can easily see which puzzles have them and avoid them.

Whilst there is no music while solving the puzzles (a gameplay decision), the general feel of the game is great. It has an unmistakeable, and presumably intended, feel of messing around with cells in a lab,

although since I'm not a biologist I can't claim to have any specialised knowledge on the subject.

Another thing that I should praise the developer for is the Colour-Blind Mode. The game relies on moving certain coloured triangles, so to anyone with colour deficiency this could prove difficult. Whilst it only affects a minority of a player base, it's always great to see an option like that included.

Alongside one hundred standard levels on launch, *Tricone Lab* also has an editor that allows for very simple creation of puzzles. I had a good play around on it and discovered two things; firstly that the editor is very robust and allows for a large number of things to be happening at any one time, and secondly that I'm really bad at making puzzles!

So how is it overall? In all honesty, aside from the music and perhaps a few minor GUI elements that could do with a bit of cleaning, the game's really great. I only discovered that it's in early access whilst doing a bit of fact checking for this review, so that tells you just how polished it is. And whilst puzzle games aren't for everyone, *Tricone Lab* stands out as one of those that even on a relatively simple premise provides both a lot of playability and for a lot of challenges, even for puzzle veterans.



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