

# Is An MMO Mouse Really Worth Buying?

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Advanced gaming mice have been a mainstay of competitive and casual MMOs for years, often replacing a normal computer mouse for one with a variety of buttons up and down its sides. These keys are stand ins for the hot keys on your standard keyboard -- where active and passive character skills are chosen and mapped. But, are these often very pricey, sometimes inexpensive for lower quality, mice really worth it?

**A gaming multibutton mouse is a specific tool for gamers. They are popular with MMO players especially. MMORPG (Massively Multiplayer Online Roleplaying Game, or MMO for short) gamers look for specific qualities: number keys on the side, keyboard symbol keys on the other, and often a panel to set these on the bottom. Currently on the market are ten-button, five-button, twelve-button and even *seventeen*-button options.**

**MMO games typically have two or more bars that are movable from the top to the bottom of the screen, sometimes flippable so that they rest on the sides of the screen. As characters (mages, warrior, scouts and more) have a litany of skills, this helps players keep track of what to use and when. Overtime muscle memory takes hold and regular players are able to use customized hot keys without needing to look at their keyboard.**

**Razer Inc., an initially California-based and now multinational consumer tech company, invented the first mouse with serious gamers in mind. Their mouse was revolutionary and changed the way that mice are developed and produced for other tech companies as well. Representing a divide between casual and serious, even professional, gamers, the Razer Naga series gave way to a slew of copycats, all varying in price range and quality.**

**Most importantly, an MMO mouse is another way to add short cuts to a complicated set of skills and abilities. However, they aren't always worth the cost. The extra features are a bonus, but tech savvy gamers should consider whether or not they'll even end up using them at all.**

This may very well be a controversial take (actually, I'm sure it is) on a question MMO gamers have asked themselves when browsing Amazon for a decent mouse, but it's an important one to consider. Here's a couple reasons why, that we'll get into below: 1, they're expensive; 2, they're cumbersome; 3, a good deal of mainstream and indie MMOs aren't optimized well for them or hot key mapping on a mouse.

Take a look and decide what's right for you. This info might surprise you.

## **The Expense, A Big Deal: make or break**

How much are you willing to spend on gaming? Casual gamers, maybe not so much, but for more serious MMO players it's something that's probably on your mind. As you advance through quests and start to participate in game instances, raids and even PvP battles, you might wonder if your skillset will improve with having hot keys at the ready not only on your keyboard but also your mouse. If you've already dropped money to purchase the game, and maybe on micro-transactions like XP bonuses and cosmetic items, it's not like you're spending a whole lot

more than you already have. But if spending money on a game, besides purchasing one if not free-to-play (or pay to win, depending on which game is you play on the reg), is already something you're used to and comfortable with, then this question might not apply to you. But, there's still the question of *what* range is the sweet spot. Is buying an *uber* expensive mouse your best bet for quality, or somewhere inbetween?

You can consider dropping a huge amount on a gaming mouse, or not. The quality will be affected by the price. Like any other product, you get what you pay for. Nowadays there's a wide range of prices and varieties. Some are dependent on the keys, others are not. There's other aspects to consider: a USB or WiFi or Bluetooth connection, how many keys are needed and what's an unnecessary gimmick amount, if there's a panel for setting hot keys physically or if it's exclusively a software setting, if it lights up (do the lights pulsate? Is there a purpose to them -- i.e, do they show your look sensitivity speed, which are your favorite hot keys, etc?), and if the light colors can be changed.

## **Decisions, decisions, decisions: A Choice Overload**

Wow, *SEVENTEEN BUTTONS!* More is more, right? Not so much. The saying *less is more* certainly applies here. Realistically, most of these buttons are going to be left unused except perhaps by the most professional players, who are paid to spend hours mapping out keys while the rest of us have a few hours to get in game play between work, kids, or school. I don't want to spend a weekend figuring out how many out of seventeen buttons I might actually use on any given raid or whatever. Do you? Probably not, but again this is subjective.

Still, it's arguably ridiculous to expect anyone to have the capacity to press buttons at a rapid pace with one hand, especially if that hand happens to be too large to hit them accurately. Even

with my small hands I have trouble maneuvering around my overly complicated mouse. I'm more apt to jump up to the number and F keys at the top of the keyboard than to use *all* of the keys on my mouse. I do use a few of the keys occasionally, such as number 3 always being a burst healing spell (I almost always play supp) and number 4 sustain heal, with number 1 as attack and 2 to pick up items. I spent *a lot of money* on this mouse, and I barely ever use it except in the hardest boss battle, and even then I so rarely utilize these functions that I don't have the muscle memory to remember what I mapped and where, so half the time I'm fumbling trying to remember where it's at.

## Optimization and Setting Issues: An Inherent Fault

Not all MMOs are created equal. Google *gaming mouse not working with enter game here* and you'll find a litany of issues with some mice specifically and other games with patch issues and other optimizing problems. This maybe a quick hot fix or a lingering problem that devs are working endlessly on correcting. Other times it's an issue with the mouse software itself, a glitch or a permanent problem.

After spending a great deal on my mouse, and one for my husband (which works better, as it's more simple and has a better ergonomic design) I first wasn't able to connect the mouse to the game at all. Once troubleshooting software settings and fixing a problem with the driver I was finally able to get it to work -- *sort of*. Many of the keys didn't function correctly, and it wasn't user error. I looked up how to fix it and most of the answers on Reddit and the game forums led to simple conclusion: there's no fix, deal with it, sorry. Frustrating, infuriating? Yeah, a bit.

## Conclusion

Fortunately, most tech suppliers have a decent return policy. Overall, it's not worth the investment for the majority of gamers, especially those casual weekend raid warriors. A simple mouse will do. But if you do decide to take the plunge and buy a decent mouse you can decide from there if it's right for you.

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