

23 Jun 2004

HARRY Potter creator JK Rowling is just six seconds away from joining another world elite. The 38-year-old millionaire has revealed she's a wizard at the computer game Minesweeper. When she gets stuck writing Harry's latest adventure, JK takes a break and goes in search of 'mines' on her computer. To gain entrance into the globe's top 100, she must complete the three levels in less than 95 seconds. But despite her £430million personal fortune, she can't buy the success and currently her best time is 101 seconds.

Rowling, who has a luxury home in Edinburgh, a country estate in Perthshire and a £4.5million pad in London, took to computer games and chewing gum after ditching cigarettes. Minesweeper is a worldwide craze and addicts have posted hundreds of websites devoted to the game. Rowling makes her revelation on her new website.

She writes: "In the bad old days, when I wanted a few minutes break while writing, I used to light up a cigarette. I gave up smoking in the year 2000 and now chew a lot of gum instead (hence the state of my desk). But chewing gum does not give you an excuse for a nice little brain-resting break. So instead, I like to escape the complexities of the latest plot by playing a game of Minesweeper. Since giving up smoking, I must boastfully inform you that I have become rather good and that my current best time for expert level is 101 seconds."

However, Rowling refuses to give any hints about the names or the plots of the next Harry Potter books she's working on.