

PlayStation 3 Forever



inFamous

Were the Launch Titles Really That Bad?

Tomb Raider Underworld

Stuntman: Ignition

& More

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Team Update

Matt

Editor

Believe it or not I am still working on **Final Fantasy IX** on the PlayStation Vita, still on disc 3, I am loving it but making slow progress. Looks like I will still be done before any remake gets announced. I have also been playing some **Minecraft** with my kids on the Nintendo Switch 2 as well as some **Two Point Museum**.



Kody

Contributor

I've been playing the recent **RoboCop** games, and just started to dive into the **Dragon Age** games. I've also been posting daily on Instagram, and hanging out with my dog.

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Letter From The Editor

News on Netflix



Welcome to the first issue of 2026! This November will mark the PlayStation 3's 20th anniversary. It's so remarkable to me to think about those core PlayStation services that have been running all those years and continue to run today like the store and trophy sync. But not all services will last forever.

In some actual PlayStation 3 news, Netflix have announced that they will no longer support the PlayStation 3 after 17 years. Netflix first launched on PlayStation 3 as a program accessed by a special BluRay disc.

According to one survey from a few years ago, only 6% of Netflix users use a console to access the service. The percentage of those console users that use a PlayStation 3 must be smaller even still. We must remember that the PlayStation 3 is not capable of outputting 4K either.

But some other services still remain - YouTube still works, but it's only a matter of time before it gets phased out too.

I've noticed in general that the amount of PS3 games in second hand shops has started to dry up. In my local branch I realized my collection at home was twice the size of the entire stock of PlayStation 3 games in the shop. The rarer titles are also starting to separate out and their value is increasing rapidly taking the PlayStation 3 from an easy to collect console into something a bit more niche.

There are still plenty of good games that are cheap which you could take advantage of if you were starting from scratch, but if you are reading this you are likely already in quite deep and it only gets more expensive from here on in.

I am very grateful to have the collection I have already but with well over 300 titles I have to be more picky about what I pick up and it might be time for me to go for some of those rarer, pricier titles now.

If you have any thoughts or stories about the state of PlayStation 3 collecting, please send us a message at contact@playstation3forever.com or message us on our socials.

Were The Launch Titles Really That Bad?

The Next-Generation of Gaming?

A console is only as strong as its library of games. The PlayStation 3 could do a lot of things at launch, such as playing music, browsing the internet, watching movies on the new Blu-ray format, but to justify that massive initial price tag, it also needed to have some killer titles to entice people to buy it.

From memory, I remember myself and friends being quite dismissive of the PlayStation 3 at launch due to the lackluster offering of launch titles. After compiling the list of launch titles, I was surprised that I actually hadn't played most of them, given I have played well over 350 PlayStation 3 games now and was eager to find out if what I remembered was true - were the launch titles really that bad?

I asked PlayStation 3 Forever contributor Alessio (see History of Japan Studio, PS3 Custom Firmware) what he remembers from this time:

I just remember working at GameStop at the time and none of the titles were very appealing. My co-worker had one and we played Haze, Genji and Heavenly Sword. We'd run all these trailers on the shop TVs and like 90% of the upcoming titles blew the launch titles out of the water. The sentiment was very much "why bother now?".

I won't be exploring the sports games from this

list. It's not that these games are necessarily bad, but I just don't have much experience with sports games, and I feel that they sit in a special bucket where, except for a few key exceptions, there is very little enthusiasm amongst most retro gamers to look backwards. If you were a big sports games fan, and there are a lot of them, a next-generation take on your favorite series would potentially draw you in, but for those of us looking for something unique, let's explore the titles.

The Launch Titles

Call of Duty 3

Genji: Days of the Blade

Madden NFL 07

Marvel: Ultimate Alliance

Mobile Suit Gundam: Crossfire

NBA 2K7

NHL 2K7

Resistance: Fall of Man

Ridge Racer 7

Tiger Woods PGA Tour 07

Tony Hawk's Project 8

Genji: Days of the Blade



Genji Days of the Blade seems like a great launch title to me. It's a bright, colorful, action game with some interesting mechanics. When we reviewed it back in Issue 4, I felt like it had some PlayStation 2 vibes about it, which is not a surprise given when it was released, but it didn't have that special spark that made me feel it was a next-generation game. I think its appeal is also quite niche and would unlikely to pull many people in to purchasing the console just to experience this. If I purchased a PlayStation 3 at launch and got this in a bundle, I would like to think I'd be quite happy.

Mobile Suit Gundam: Crossfire



I had to reach out to Alessio for this one as I do not own it and could not find it for a while until I realized it was known as Mobile Suit Gundam: Target in Sight in Japan and Europe and here's what he thinks of it.

It's a mech based action game with some light RPG elements. The story mode has two campaigns which cross over with each other to provide an interesting perspective from both sides. There is an

interlude between campaign missions where you can recruit and manage your pilots. The voice acting and music is also decent. On the negative the game does suffer from performance problems and some of the textures don't give you a warm next-gen feeling. It's definitely not a game that would have made me go out and buy the PlayStation 3, but it's definitely the type of game I would have loved to play. A solid B+ and one I might actually keep on playing a little longer.

Marvel: Ultimate Alliance



This is not a game I had played before writing this article. It's a sort of top-down, beat-em-up style of action game, a style quite popular at the time, and importantly, it has local co-op for up to four players all on a single screen (I played it with my kids). There are tons of Marvel characters to choose from, all with different play styles and powers, and more to unlock and encounter as the game progresses. This game was developed

for a lot of different consoles across both generations, and I do feel like it shows. The delivery of the story and the graphics really do make me feel like I am playing a slightly more polished PlayStation 2 game rather than anything truly next-generation. Given that lack of graphical performance, it comes as no surprise to me that this title plays in 1080p, which is one of the few that do on the system. Its strength, I think, relies on that couch co-op feature, and that would have been of interest to me at the time - but it's not a system seller for most.

Resistance: Fall of Man

I think this is really the only one on the list that had the potential to be a system-selling, blockbuster icon of the PS3, but unfortunately, Sony had decided to put its exclusive title into a genre that was already extremely saturated and had some tough competition. I think it's fair to say that as far as first-person shooters go, you'd probably have a better



experience with a Call of Duty on the Xbox 360 than with this one, but I still appreciate the game for creating a new narrative, universe, and throwing that curve ball on alternate history. I think it's not a system seller, but if you were getting an early PlayStation 3 title, it would make sense to get this for exclusivity, if not anything else. See our full review in Issue 1.

Ridge Racer 7



Now we are talking next-generation. Ridge Racer 7 is a fun arcade racer with impressive graphics and perhaps less impressive physics - although those physics may be intentional. Firing up the game today, I was shocked to see the online leaderboard still works and people are still racing and uploading times today. It also runs at 1080p.

Tony Hawk's Project 8



As a younger kid, I was completely obsessed with Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 1, 2, and 3 but stopped playing the series after those titles. I really enjoyed giving this one a test on the PlayStation 3. Compared to some other games on this list, this game offers depth and replayability. There are a lot of different activities and plenty of ways to hone your skills. I believe that if I had played this game when it came out, I would have easily spent hours and hours. But there is a problem - the performance is not so good. It's slow and choppy, and it's

clear it was not optimized for the PlayStation 3. This was so important at the time; why would you pay for a console so much more expensive than its rival and then buy a game for it that performs worse!

Call of Duty 3



It's quite interesting to look back at an earlier Call of Duty, a series that is still running to this day, to see what it used to be. It was a much more genuine attempt at a historical shooter than what it has turned into today, but it still had that action flare to it. This is a great FPS for a launch title. The graphics are good, the cinematic moments feel very next-generation, and the game runs well on the

PlayStation 3. Whilst Resistance: Fall of Man has its unique sci-fi twist and is an exclusive, in terms of raw FPS action, CoD 3 might execute it better. This version also attempted to include some six-axis motion controls for the melee actions, but I could not get them to work consistently, and fortunately, you can turn them off. I think this is a decent launch title.

Conclusion

Playing through some of these games now, I feel like we were too hard and overly critical about the launch titles for the PlayStation 3. I guess it is hard to remember the time in which you were about to spend a ton of money on a system and then another ton of money for a single game or two. It's for me to say a game is 'fun' when I have spent £5 on it from eBay.

But many of them don't feel like the big system sellers we saw later, like LittleBigPlanet, Uncharted or The Last of Us. Most of them were sequels in long-running franchises.

Looking at the Xbox 360 launch titles provides a really interesting comparison. Included in their list is Tony Hawk's American Wasteland, Call of Duty 2, Ridge Racer 6, and then a similar mix of sports titles. They had a few other exclusives but nothing that I would deem system-seller material

either. It's almost like Sony looked at that list and decided they would produce something similar, or it was simply coincidence given the periodic churn of sequels the game industry relies on.

What is missing from that context is that those games came out over a year before the release of the PlayStation 3, and at the time of the release, the Xbox 360 was getting games like Dead Rising and Gears of War - a hugely successful and influential title. So at this time, the 360 had really got going and just kept getting good games, meanwhile, the PlayStation 3's extremely expensive option looked dated, and that's before you even consider that a lot of cross-platform titles didn't even run as well.

The PlayStation 3 made it through in the end, but it really could have done with just one more system-selling exclusive at launch.

Stuntman: Ignition

Ride Rage Repeat

ACTION DRIVING

RELEASED 2007



Stuntman: Ignition is a special type of game. A type of game that I feel has been priced out of the current gaming landscape. A game made by a development studio, not an indie title. It's not a groundbreaking, cinematic, genre-defining game; it's just a great idea, executed well, and provides a great deal of fun.

Stuntman: Ignition, the sequel to Stuntman released on the PlayStation 2, is a game where you take on the role of a stunt driver performing dangerous vehicular stunts for fictional movies. The premise of the

game is just fantastic, but I am almost more impressed by its execution.

The game commits hard to the concept. There are six different fictional movies, each one having a strong theme that

follows real-life movie franchises like James Bond, Bullitt, and even Batman. The stunt coordinator gives you a great explanation for each level, and the films' director comments on your performance. Not only that, but for each movie, you





can unlock a fictional movie trailer once you have hit a certain level of completion. It's these little touches which compound to create some great immersion, and you feel like the development team had a lot of fun with the concept.

Each movie has six different levels, each being a scene from the movie where you have to perform stunts in succession, such as driving between two cars without hitting them, performing jumps, and landing in areas, driving on two wheels, drifting around corners, etc.

There are also some extra levels dedicated to TV adverts and stunt shows where you might drive a bike through a ring of fire.

It is a tough, rage-inducing game at times, but that never stops it being fun. You might need to put it down for a bit,

but you'll want to come back. You are really looking for a perfect run. Each level is rated out of five stars, and to get the best rating, you need to essentially perform a combo, where for your entire run, you manage to perform a stunt within a short window of the previous stunt. This requires you to think outside the box and add extra stunts on top of what the level already wants you to do.

I think of this game as a great game for people who like driving games but are perhaps a bit tired of racing games.



Sadly this was the last in the Stuntman series of games after THQ had taken it over. The development studio closed down about a year after release and no further titles have been made.

It runs pretty well on the PlayStation 3. The load times can initially be a bit slow, but once the level is loaded you can restart in a few seconds, which enables you to keep retrying to perfect your run without too much frustration of waiting for loading. The graphics are really good for the time too.

This game can be purchased extremely cheaply. I can pick up a copy from a second-hand shop near me for £2 at today's prices. It is hard to say no at that price.

inFAMOUS

I remember really enjoying inFamous on release. I found the story engaging, the combat fascinating and the moral choice system new and interesting and it was always a game I wanted to come back to and replay but never did... until now.

InFamous released in 2009 and was the first PlayStation 3 game developed by Sucker Punch Productions, the studio that had made the brilliant Sly series of cartoon stealth games for the PlayStation 2. Fortunately the studio is still with us under the umbrella of PlayStation Studios and has most recently been creating the successful Ghost of Tsushima and Ghost of Yotei games.

Looking back at their history you can tell that this game was their first realistic open-world title. It's a very good entry, not all studios were capable of making the jump from PlayStation 2 to PlayStation 3, let alone something as ambitious as an open world but the game is certainly rough around the

edges, rougher than I remember.

Graphically the game is OK but not great. It's quite inconsistent in design overall, sometimes I found myself surprised at how good it could look, the way that the dark sewer lights up when you use your lightning powers is really great, but a lot of NPCs and other non important characters don't look so great.

The game starts right into the action where you take control of Cole MacGrath who has just awakened in the flaming hot centre of some sort of crater caused by an explosion. As a bonus to surviving he now has superpowers which let him control

electricity in a number of really interesting ways that develop over the course of the game.

One thing that stood out to me was just how bleak everything is. The city where the explosion occurred becomes cut off from the mainland and quarantined. Looters are running riot, people are being killed and attacked all the time and food packages are scarce. Personally I just found it quite depressing. Now that is a bit unfair on the game, this is clearly the mood they were going for and they succeeded but for me personally it didn't create the most inviting atmosphere to sit down to chill in.





Perhaps this bleak landscape is required for the game's moral choice system to really stand out. Like a lot of games, inFamous experimented heavily with narrative and gameplay choices that had overall effects on the gameplay and story. Put simply, you can use your powers for good or for evil, and each action affects an overall karma meter. There are a number of binary choices during main story missions that heavily sway this meter such as 'Do you take on a number of enemies by yourself?' or 'Incite a riot to distract the enemies for you?' with the former being the good option and the other the evil one. A lot of these choices are quite laughable in their simplicity and sometimes you could feel hard done by that there is no reasonable or sane middle ground.

My interpretation of this was that it was more about role playing and less about difficult choices that some games try to put on you. There aren't really any trick options. The world is in chaos, everything is going to hell anyway why not be evil and powerful? Or conversely be the one person who is going to fight back no matter how hard it will be and be a superhero for good.

In addition to the big choices, there are some little elements of gameplay that influence the meter, though not nearly as much, but this is an

important distinction often left out by a lot of games that tried this. By default most enemies get knocked out but you can specifically kill them which will of course contribute towards your evil points on the karma scale. Opposite to that you can choose to heal people, usually civilians, with the only cost to you being time and a small drain on your meter that is usually easily replenished.

As your Karma meter sways either strongly into the good or strongly evil it has physical ramifications to Cole which is another really nice touch. Like an evil Sith lord, too many bad options cause your lightning powers to turn red and your presence to be more shrouded in darkness.

The powers you unlock are also different depending on how good or evil you are and it makes little sense to straddle the middle of the road. Going all-in on either good or evil makes the most sense. The way these powers unlock and unfold is also one of the best systems I have seen that genuinely give you a sense of progression and power.

Despite some of the important ideas the game introduced I just didn't find it as fun to play as I was really hoping to. The overall clunky-ness to a new title like this could be overlooked but some of the repetitive missions and overall depressing environment just made it tough.

It's still a very important PlayStation 3 exclusive title that was a big deal for a short time and its sequels are much better but I was so surprised that my feelings on the game have changed and it does not amongst my rank of favorites mostly on tone but that's all on me.



The King of Couch Co-op

Playing With Your Friends

Matt

I played *Marvel: Ultimate Alliance* for the very first time for this issue's main feature with my two kids, and it reminded me of what a brilliant system the PlayStation 3 is for couch co-op.

I have such strong memories as a child playing games with my friends on systems like the Nintendo 64, PlayStation 2, and Gamecube, but often this was playing a party game like *Mario Party* or a game with a dedicated local multiplayer like *Timesplitters* or *007 Nightfire*. The PlayStation 3 saw a good number of games that had a proper co-operative story mode. You could experience the full game as it was intended with your friend, and that to me was a game-changer. I sought out games specifically for this feature to play with my friends.

Haze

Haze was a sci-fi shooter exclusive to the PlayStation 3, and by itself, it is not a great game, but it became so much more enjoyable playing it with a friend in co-op. Despite a few glitches my friend and I encountered towards the end of the game that caused the game to crash every other reload, we managed to finish the game. Playing the whole campaign together added an extra layer of fun to an otherwise average game experience.

Lord of the Rings: War in the North

As a huge fan of the movie series and other tie-in games, I was extremely hyped for this game, and it didn't live up to my hype, but the fact that it had co-op improved the experience a lot.





However, I recall there was a problem where we started the game as two players with two different characters. Then I played the next chunk of the game by myself. When my friend came around again to continue the story, their character had not levelled up along with mine and was comically weak by comparison. I was constantly having to revive them.

Army of Two and Kane & Lynch

Both of these games were designed specifically with co-op in mind, featuring two main characters, and they were both successful enough to have a sequel each. In a lot of the two-player co-op games, player one is the main character, and the other player is often just some grunt who goes along and is never featured in the game, so these made a nice change that the characters were specifically part of the story.

Some other notable mentions are: Call of Duty: World at War, Borderlands series, Resistance 2 & 3, Killzone 3 and Lost Planet 2

Three and Four Players

There are even some games which boast a co-op mode that allows more than two players. I have

already mentioned Marvel: Ultimate Alliance, but there is also the Tales series of RPG games where each player controls a character in the party. The LittleBigPlanet series allows for a wonderfully chaotic co-op experience where four players can try and get through the level together, and there are even some secrets that require four players to unlock.

It's worth mentioning that there are, of course, plenty of sports games, racing games, Guitar Hero, Rock Band, and other party games which all support multiple local players.

Playing online certainly has its advantages, but on some special occasions, you just can't beat playing with your friends and family in the same room. Some of the older systems like Nintendo 64 and PlayStation 2 have that experience plus a retro hit, but managing a big enough room for groups of four and navigating the sea of cables that litter the floor often makes the experience trickier. The PlayStation 3's controllers are wireless, and the console is capable of HDMI output, which is still an easy way to hook up to any modern system. Your only challenge is first being able to afford four controllers and then keeping them charged!

Tomb Raider Underworld

An enjoyable but bumpy ride

ACTION PLATFORMER

RELEASED 2008



Playing Tomb Raider Underworld was quite the rollercoaster. I frantically flipped between surprised enjoyment at how interesting the platforming was, followed by moments of crushing frustration when glitches and less accurate controls caused me to jump to my hilarious death.

It was my first time playing the game since its release in 2008 and the first time playing it on the PlayStation 3, having originally played it on the Xbox 360. It's been on my list to come

back to for a while since it has a relatively achievable Platinum trophy, and when fellow contributor Jon (See his article on PlayStation vs Xbox) sent me a flurry of messages about the announcement of two new Tomb Raider games, Catalyst and Legacy of Atlantis, it sparked a real longing for some Tomb Raider, so I got started with Underworld.

Tomb Raider Underworld is the last in a series of Tomb Raider games and the last iteration of this particular Lara Croft before the series was rebooted with

Tomb Raider (2013), released five years later also for the PlayStation 3. Underworld was also the last one to be published by Eidos Interactive.

The game does well to build on the foundations of the old Tomb Raider games but incorporates a more modern and fluid style of platforming that games like Assassin's Creed and Uncharted really polished.

The story of the game is a continuation of the previous two titles and centres around



Lara Croft following up on some adventures of her father, where she finds lots of relics and temples relating to Norse mythology. There seem to be quite a lot of franchises, God of War being a popular one, that have explored Norse mythology in recent years, so it was interesting to see it actually be done some time before. Lara Croft even finds and wields Thor's hammer Mjöllnir in the later parts of the game, complete with lightning powers; it's hilarious as it is awesome.

Excellent Platforming

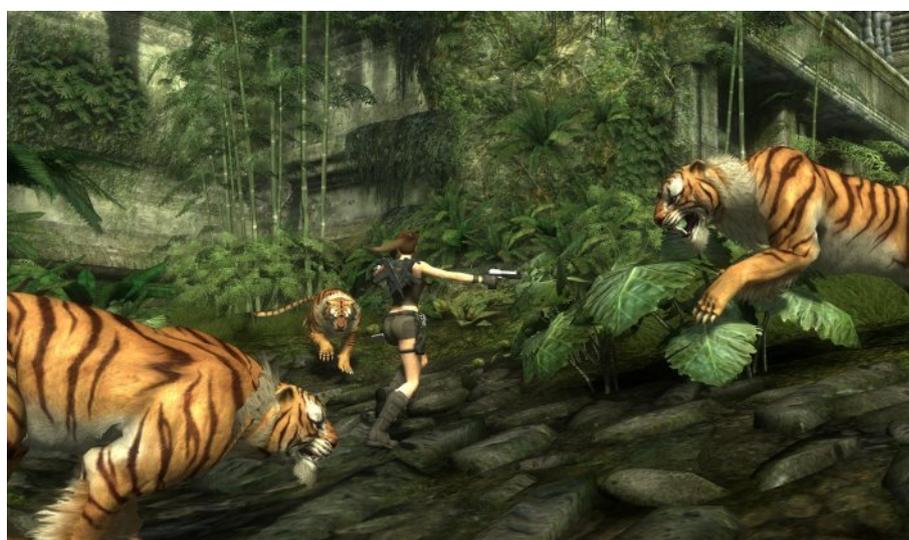
The main focus is, as it should be, platforming and adventuring. The layout of levels encourages some really creative platforming, and lots of sections have you going back on yourself, and the designers found a way to pack so much platforming into such small areas. As for mechanics, there is

hanging, shimmying, wall jumping, swinging on bars, all the usual things, plus a few movable objects and optional areas.

I felt the platforming actually struck a really good balance. I have complained, as have others, that modern platforming can be a bit too easy. Uncharted has its famous yellow painted ledges to indicate exactly where you can jump, and you can see the path easily laid out in front of you at a glance. In Tomb Raider Underworld, ledges are mostly

distinct and clear about what you can and can't hold on to, but they are also just vague and hidden enough that you feel like you have to use your brain a bit in determining a path and where you can go.

One aspect I really appreciated in comparison to Uncharted was the lack of emphasis on combat. There are enemies in the game, but most of them are animals or undead creatures, and they are just sprinkled in between the platforming areas. Uncharted probably takes the opposite approach - platforming is sprinkled in between heavy combat sections. It's just as well, as the combat is pretty shallow. You have a choice of guns, which didn't seem to make much difference, and no ammo management except for the grenades. It didn't bother me as it was not the focus, more of a distraction.





Game-Breaking Problems

I was really enjoying the game for the first few levels until I hit the level - Southern Mexico. This area is where the game really started to fall apart for me. The game on the PlayStation 3 has a clear lack of polish and accuracy. Things like wall jumping just weren't reliable; the only way I found it was reliable was just to mash the X button as fast as I could. Quite often, you'd jump or glitch something, and you'd fall to your death. In the earlier levels, this mattered less as small mistakes didn't lead to much backtracking, but now the game was ramping up in difficulty and complexity, things

started to get annoying.

It is absolutely crucial to keep manual saves on the PlayStation 3 version, as in the Southern Mexico level, I encountered a game-breaking glitch which blocked my progress. I eventually conceded defeat and reloaded an old save and lost about 30 minutes of play time.

Tomb Raider Underworld certainly isn't one of the best in the series, although far from the worst. It is a real shame that the lack of polish and accuracy is quite detrimental to the game, and I do think it would put many people off, especially if they are used to modern games. But I really enjoyed it for its sense of adventure and

platforming, that was the part that kept pulling me back to it, there was a certain simplicity about it that I found really appealing.

The good news is a copy can be picked up cheaply, either as the standalone release or part of the Tomb Raider Trilogy, which includes Legend and Anniversary as well and the Platinum Trophy is obtainable relatively easily if that thing interests you (Check out this issue's Trophy Hunter article). If you really enjoy Uncharted but wish it had less emphasis on combat and you are willing to put up with some control issues, then it's probably worth you checking out this game.

Trophy Hunter

Tomb Raider Underworld

Tomb Raider Underworld is a game I had played before on the Xbox 360 but never on the PlayStation 3, so I was surprised when I checked that it had a relatively straightforward Platinum run, so it was going to be fun starting from scratch.

Looking at the trophy list, it seems fairly straightforward and ticks a lot of my boxes for a good Platinum list. Firstly, the Platinum can be done in one playthrough so long as you play on hard difficulty. Hard isn't too difficult, and you can even turn on invincibility cheats, which apparently do not block the trophies, but the game was easy enough that I didn't feel the need to try that.

As a general rule, keep a new save file for each location; you can keep as many manual saves as you want, and you should, as the game is quite buggy and glitchy.

There are a number of missable trophies you need to be aware of that I will go through in more

detail:

- Swan Diver, Swan Diver 2 & Master Swan Diver
- Roadkiller & Master Roadkiller
- Grenadier & Master Grenadier
- Weapons Expert & Weapons Master
- Swan Diver, Swan Diver 2 & Master Swan Diver

These trophies require you to do Lara's iconic swan dive, but it is only available in certain locations. The first one being in the room with the Kraken in the very first level, the next on Amanda's Ship, which is available in the mission after, and the last is in the mission after that - Thailand. These are easy to get out of the way as

you progress through the first parts of the game. The controls to perform this are, like the rest of the game, not that reliable and can be tricky to execute, meaning a lot of jumping off and either dying or climbing back to the top. But after a few goes, you'll get it.

Weapons Expert & Weapons Master

These are the next two that I worked on. For this, you need to kill enemies using the slow-mo function, which requires you to do some combat to build up the bar. If you start out using this as soon as you encounter enemies on the first ship level, you'll soon get it after a few





more levels, as there are plenty of enemies to try it out on, and I think the non-human enemies also count towards it. But you must get it before the end of the game, as you can't replay levels, and there are only a finite number of enemies.

Grenadier & Master Grenadier

These two have you kill two and three enemies, respectively, with a single grenade. I was starting to panic about this one, but if you wait until the Thailand level, there are plenty of times that a group of spiders attack you, and they count towards the trophy. It is much easier to throw a single grenade into a cluster of small spiders and get both trophies in one go. Again, use your manual saves as a back-up.

Roadkiller & Master Roadkiller

After the first few levels are over, you start a level with a motorbike. Here, you have to run down multiple enemies with the bike; most enemies, especially on hard, require going over a couple of times before they die. I think there are some panthers in the area where you first get the bike, and I managed to get both of these trophies quite quickly by creating panther roadkill.

Clearing up

After those trophies were done, I just continued my playthrough and completed the game to get the remaining story-based trophies and the difficulty trophy. The only ones I had left were to collect all the relics and treasures.

After you finish the main game, you unlock Treasure Hunter mode, which is like a free roam around all the levels with the puzzles completed and all

enemies gone. It's quite a neat idea to let you have free roam through all the platforming in a level; it must have been quite a design challenge to make platforming sections traversable in either direction.

As far as I could tell, there is no in-game way of finding treasures other than simply walking around and searching, so I had to fall back to a video guide for this phase of the trophy hunt. In hindsight, I think I should have just done this whilst playing the game. It was quite tedious having to watch the video, pause the video, play the game, and then rinse and repeat. Inside the game manual, they advertise the official guide book, so I wonder if this whole treasure hunt was a way of selling a need for the book.

It was very easy to collect most of the relics; the only one I had difficulty with was the very last level, where the platforming controls were so controller-throwing infuriating, but with enough persistence, I got it and with that, another Platinum trophy on the digital shelf.

Dead Space

Surviving in Space

Kody

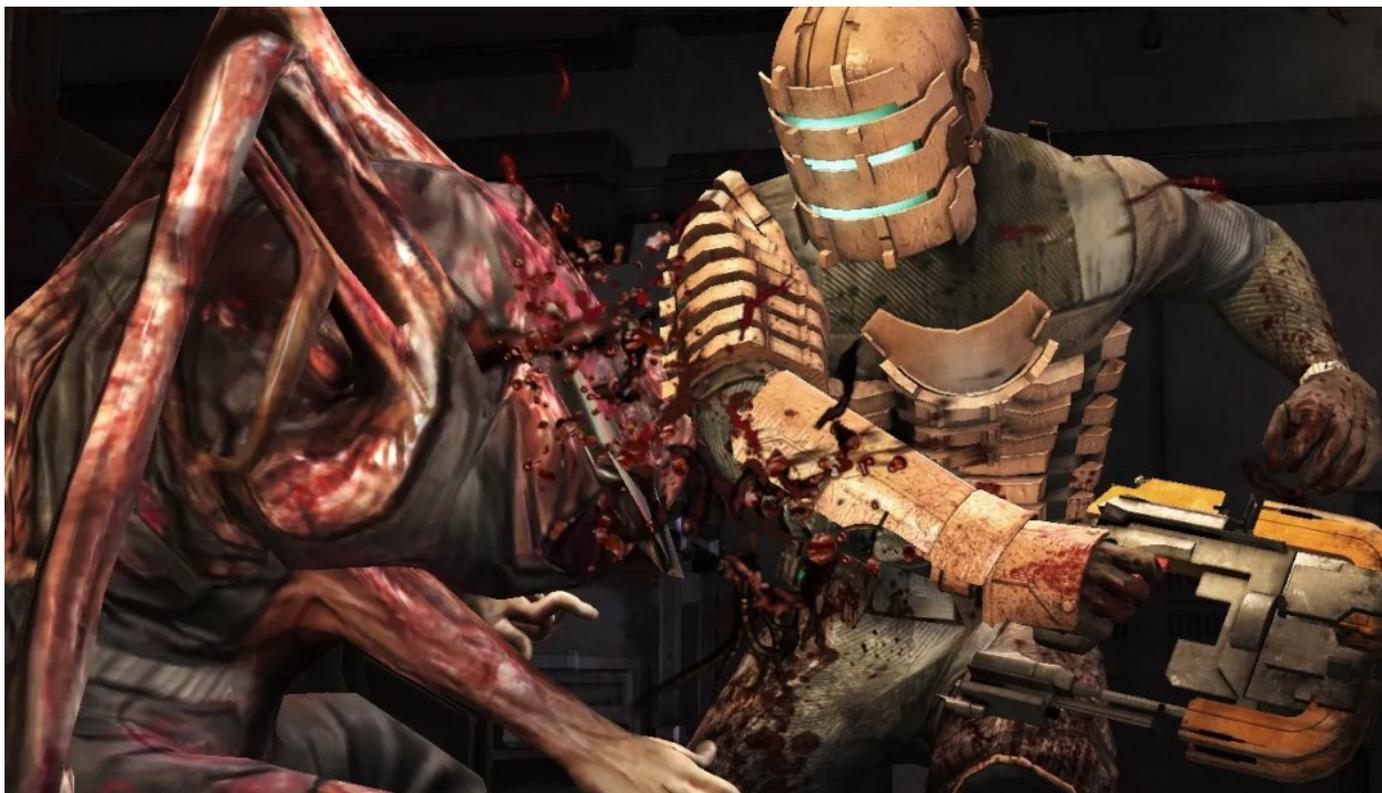


The PlayStation 3 isn't a system that's really known for its survival horror. Frankly, it was an entire generation that seemed more focused on frenetic action games, and that crossed over into the horror genre. Resident Evil decided to focus more on action and muscular characters with Resident Evil 5, and moved even further into the action territory with Resident Evil 6. One of the things that makes a game like Resident Evil 2 so perfect is that its main character, Leon S. Kennedy, is a rookie cop thrust into a zombie outbreak. It's literally his first

day. There's terror in his inexperience, and it's palpable for you, the player. Silent Hill went off the rails around this time, too, leaving a void for a truly great survival horror franchise to take off.

EA Redwood Shores, which would later become known as Visceral Games, saw this opportunity and, fortunately, jumped on it. In 2008, released in a 10-day window with BioShock and Far Cry 2, Dead Space was the answer to survival horror going off the rails.

If you've never played the game, you play as Isaac Clarke, an engineer who has been contracted to be part of a search and rescue mission for the USG Ishimura, a so-called "Planetcracker" that was being used to mine the resources in an illegal mining operation on the planet Aegis VII. Isaac is also aboard the rescue ship in hopes of finding his girlfriend, Nicole, the senior medical officer aboard the Ishimura. To no one's surprise, the ship carrying Isaac and the rest of his search and rescue crew is immediately met with disaster, and finds our crew stuck aboard a massive



necropolis floating through space.

While the atmosphere might not be nearly as scary in 2026 as it was in 2008, largely due to the remake dialing it up further, it's hard to deny how successful the eerie, cramped world of the Ishimura is in scaring the hell out of you. The very first encounter with the necromorph's is burned into my memory, and that first time you go down a dim, blood-soaked hall and hear movement in the vents has never failed to miss.

This is my third playthrough, and although I was ready for much more of what the game was going to throw at me, there was still an immense sense of

dread as I traversed through hallways riddled with blind corners and vents that could introduce me to a necromorph at any point. While the drab haze of the seventh generation has been re-litigated into something that people are nostalgic for, I'd argue that it's the optimal graphical style for this kind of game. While a game like Resident Evil 5 would feel warm, bathed in the sun of Africa, the Ishimura feels cold, industrial, and unwelcoming. It's held up exceedingly well, and I absolutely love the way this game looks.

In the same vein, the gameplay has, for the most part, aged incredibly well. It's hard to deny Resident Evil 4's influence on

horror wholesale, and that's especially true for the over-the-shoulder, third-person camera angle. Rather than having a heads-up display of any kind, you can see everything on Isaac's person: health and stasis are indicated by a gauge on the back of his mining suit, and the amount of ammunition in your weapon can only be seen while aiming. It's a brilliant system, and it's a shame that more games haven't taken the route of diegetic displays.

My biggest gripe with the game, however, is also found in the gameplay design. While this was remedied in the remake, the original game suffers from mandatory turret sections that, unlike the rest of the gameplay,

are anything but smooth. While I was able to get through both on my first attempt, this was my third playthrough, and I still almost died in both. It's a shame because that's really my only problem.

Dead Space is a wonderful game. The fact that it's as successful in what it wants to do nearly 18 years later, and in the wake of a masterful remake, is worthy of immense praise. If you've somehow not played the original Dead Space, there's never been a better time, especially if you're working on building a PlayStation 3 library. This is a game that rewards multiple playthroughs, puts out a radio signal for those who love unrelenting difficulty, and

delivers a solid new game plus system. While I've had my copy for several years, this game is still only going to cost you \$10 to \$15 in the US, and that's for a complete copy. The game came with my highest recommendation years ago, and it still has it in 2026.

