SKOAR!*

LIVE TO GAME

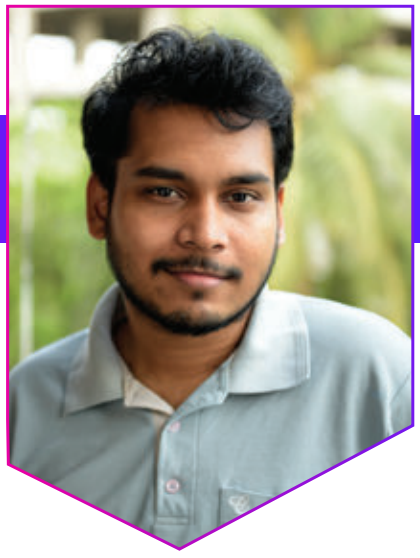
INTO THE Pokéverse



From modest beginnings to global phenomenon, dive into the franchise that took over the world.

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THE BIG THREE (BUT IN GAMING)



Manish "Trigger-Happy" Rajesh
SKOAR! Overlord | feedback@skoar.in

It seems odd to say it, but Microsoft is once again part of the big three in gaming. Why does it feel odd you ask? Well because the impression was that Microsoft always was part of the big three in gaming, alongside Sony and Nintendo. That could also just be my age showing. As it turns out, while Sony is certainly in the top three, Nintendo isn't. And neither of the three are actually number one, it's a wee company called Tencent, which I'm sure you've all heard of. Well, with the number of pies Tencent has its fingers dipped in, it only makes sense if you think about it.

Anyway, the reason I'm bringing this up is because Microsoft just announced their plans to purchase Activision Blizzard for a whopping $69 billion, making it the biggest tech purchase of all time. Not two console generations ago, if you asked me who was winning the console wars, I would have said Sony hands down. The main reason being the number of (good) exclusives on the platform. Xbox just seemed lackluster, with only Halo and Forza barely keeping it afloat. However, if you ask me the same question now, it becomes much harder to answer. While Sony still has all its exclusives in tow, they've started to forgo exclusivity for older titles, and opt for limited exclusivity for future titles. This is great news for PC gamers like me, but I definitely think it also has to do with the wild success Xbox Play Anywhere and the Xbox Games Pass is seeing.

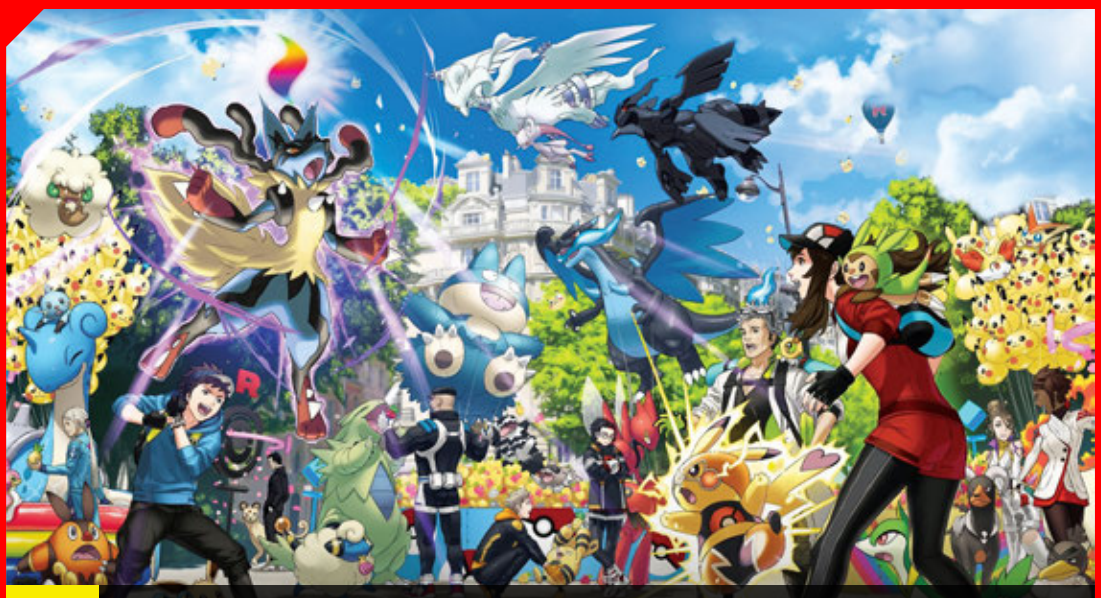
The Xbox Game Pass is incredible value for money if you own an Xbox or have a PC. The biggest issue with gaming on a

console, in addition to the high initial costs of purchasing the console itself, was the cost of games. The Xbox Game Pass solves this problem. With a small monthly fee, you have access to a massive library of games, with new titles coming to Game Pass on day one, even from massive AAA publishers, including those that Microsoft hasn't gobbled up yet. Each new acquisition makes Game Pass stronger. Even other companies have seen value in this, EA, and more recently, Ubisoft, both have their own subscriptions bundled up with the Game Pass. I think the only reason Sony finally decided to drop exclusivity was because they saw the threat that Microsoft and Xbox were finally posing. It was naturally a smart move; opening up your games to more platforms means more profit. God of War 2018 which just came out on PC was the most played game on Steam on the day of its launch, and we're crossing our fingers for Forbidden West making its way to PC soon.

Competition is always good for the consumer, which is ultimately what led to all this. Us gamers benefit from it the most. But I've got another question for you, what are your thoughts on Microsoft gobbling studios up? Are we heading towards a gaming monopoly? Let me know. *

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SKOAR!*
LIVE TO GAME

OVERLORD
Manish "Trigger Happy" Rajesh

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***Legal stuff we can't mess with**
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What's New



PUBG WITNESSES MASSIVE RISE IN PLAYERS

The popular battle royale game PUBG recently switched to a free-to-play business model. The transition to free-to-play proved to be the right step, as the developer Krafton stated today that the game had a 486% rise in new players in the week after the changeover.



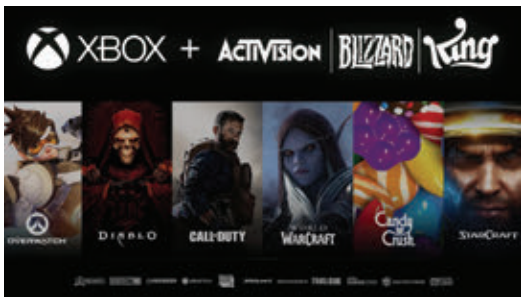
MICROSOFT TO PRESERVE CALL OF DUTY ON PLAYSTATION

Microsoft executives have confirmed that Call of Duty will remain on Playstation following the announcement that the tech giant will purchase Activision Blizzard. The $68.7 billion deal aroused concerns about the future of the popular video game brand.



SERIOUS EXPLOIT ON DARK SOULS PVP SERVERS

The PvP servers of Dark Souls 1, 2 and 3 have been temporarily deactivated due to the recent discovery of a serious exploit. This issue was discovered when Reddit user u/TripleBrownMeow made a post on r/Eldenring informing users about the exploit.



MICROSOFT TO ACQUIRE ACTIVISION BLIZZARD

Microsoft will acquire Activision Blizzard for a whopping 68.7 billion dollars. When the transaction closes, Microsoft will become the world's third-largest gaming company by revenue, behind only Tencent and Sony. This basically means that Call of Duty, Warcraft, Candy Crush and one-time PS One mascot Crash Bandicoot are essentially owned by Microsoft!

In a press release, Xbox head Phil Spencer stated, "Players everywhere love Activision Blizzard games, and we believe the creative teams have their best work in front of them. Together we will build a future where people can play the games they want, virtually anywhere they want." With Activision Blizzard's nearly 400 million monthly active players in 190 countries and three billion-dollar franchises, this just means that the future of Game Pass looks incredibly bright. With this sale, Microsoft will have 30 internal game development studios, along with additional publishing and esports production capabilities.



CRISIS 4 ANNOUNCED!

Crytek has confirmed the release of Crysis 4, just hours after the game's existence was disclosed on Chinese social media. An image appeared on Chinese social media site BiliBili, as reported by Eurogamer, that claimed to be a Crysis 4 reveal. Crytek China mentioned in their post, "The 'Crysis 4' project is confirmed, opening a new nano battlefield!".

A brief teaser clip was released, showcasing the classic Crysis Nanotechnology in action as the clip ended with the number 4 and the tagline "Join the journey. Become the hero." Crysis 4 appears to be a working title for the time being. Also, the YouTube thumbnail refers to it as the "4th instalment in the Crysis franchise," which coincides with former Crytek CEO Andrew Wilson's declaration in 2012 that the next Crysis game would not be titled "Crysis 4". Since Crysis 3 in 2012, there hasn't been a new core Crysis game, though the trilogy has seen remasters in recent years.

UP AND COMING



DYING LIGHT 2

The highly anticipated sequel to Dying Light should already be out by the time you're reading this. There aren't many games that have done zombie apocalypse as well as Dying Light, this should be on your radar.

Release date - February 4



HORIZON: FORBIDDEN WEST

Horizon: Zero Dawn was one of the few games that made us regret not having a PlayStation, but then it ended up on PC. We're really hoping Forbidden West makes it to PC too, because we really want to play it.

Release date - February 18



ELDEN RING

The next title from the brains behind the Dark Souls game, Elden Ring promises a different, but equally challenging experience, complete with a vast world to explore, and a lot more tricks up your sleeve.

Release date - February 25

TENTACLE: *In Pokemon, Psychic-Type weaknesses are based on common fears, i.e., ghosts, bugs, and the dark.*

LIFE IS STRANGE
TRUE COLORS



A PLAYABLE TEENAGE DRAMA

BY MITHUN "BARBARIAN_MONKEY" MOHANDAS
FEEDBACK@SKOAR.IN



Life is Strange, as a franchise, is quite unlike other genres of video games. It's not chock-full of action elements that would require tactical abilities, high accuracy or even require one to grind a little in order to progress. It's as laid back as a game can be. The pace is slow and you're looking at the world from a different perspective because the protagonist has been bestowed a new superpower through some odd sequence of events or by the use of the much-cliched Deus Ex Machina.

The franchise is designed to appeal to young adults who're fighting their way in the real world and discovering new rela-







tionship dynamics. It's basically ... a teen drama. Think Wizards of Waverly Place or a juvenile version of Twilight. Unlike the previous games in the genre, Life Is Strange: True Colors wasn't released in an episodic fashion. This way, you don't have a disconnect between the individual chapters and you can be done with the game in about seven hours. Also, Life Is Strange: True Colors is by Deck Nine Entertainment which had also made Life Is Strange: Before the Storm. The main games in the franchise were made by Dontnod Entertainment so expect a few things to be off. Whether those differences are good or bad, that's for you to decide.

STRANGE INDEED

All the games in the Life is Strange franchise revolve around the protagonist who is usually a teen that has discovered that they have unusual powers. In the first game, Life is Strange, we had Max Caufield who could manipulate time and go back a time by means of photographs. Then there was Life is Strange 2 which was centred around Daniel Diaz who ends up with telekinetic powers. The games have a fairly slow-paced timeline until a major and mysterious life-changing event occurs and our protagonist heads off trying to piece things together.

Life is Strange: True Colours starts off with Alex Chen, a 21-year old who has been in foster care since her childhood and is now moving to the idyllic town of Haven Springs to reunite with her brother Gabe. When we say idyllic, it really is all that. It's a small town in the midst of tall picturesque moun-

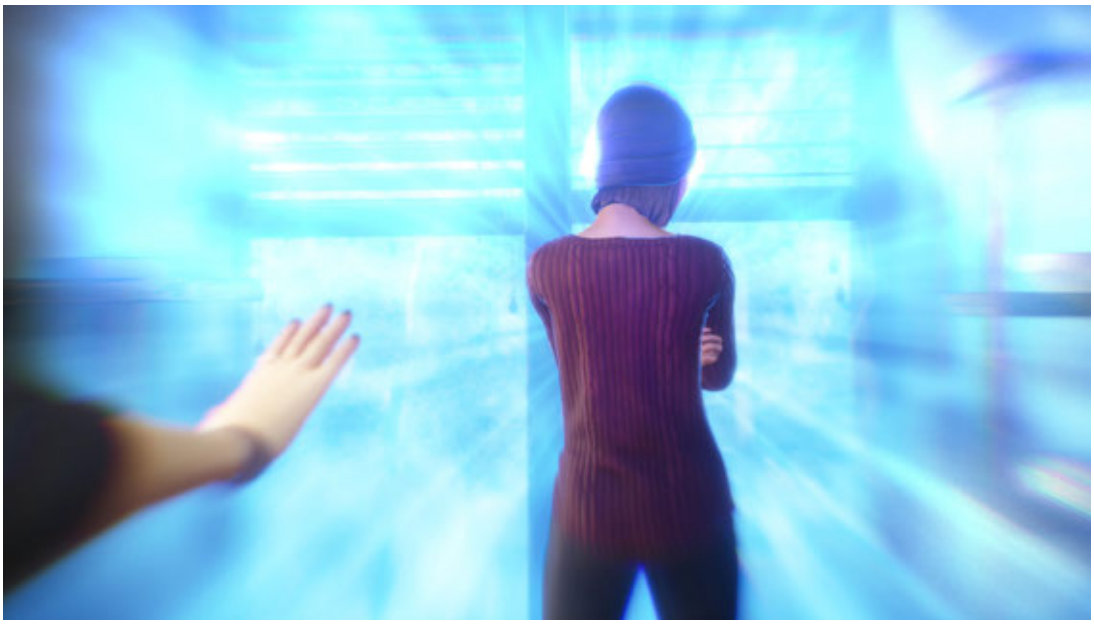
tains where everyone knows everyone else. The townspeople primarily work for Typhon, a mining company that is the epitome of all things evil.

Alex, our protagonist, soon discovers that she's an empath of sorts. Not like the Betazoids from Star Trek who can only sense and feel emotions but she can also manifest those emotions or manipulate them in others. In the game, this is communicated by means of coloured auras. Imagine if you could make everyone around you cheery at all times or if you could make someone super sad with just one fleeting thought.

BOOM

Remember when we said that the games in the franchise only pick up pace after a traumatic and mysterious event?









Well, that happens. And since the only real relationship Alex has is with her brother Gabe, it doesn't take a genius to figure out what could go wrong in a town controlled by a powerful mining corporation. Did someone say, "Lax safety measures?" If you didn't pick up on the hints then let's be more direct with you – Gabe dies. That's not a spoiler, it's literally written in the game's description on Steam.

Alex has to get to the bottom of the traumatic event and get all the answers that she seeks. So she bands up with the good people of Haven Springs and takes off on solving the mystery in a fashion that would make Scooby-Doo proud.

The gameplay is really zero-effort. Alex has hints dropped on her all the time, be it through her journal or messages on her phone. The game moves from one cutscene to another. In

a way, you could play the game with just one hand and you'd still finish it in the same amount of time as it would take if you played normally.

There are a lot of decisions to be taken and the responses have an effect on the storyline of the game. We've heard that there are six different endings but the choices are binary. There's no grey area or scope for ambiguity. So if you're expecting to change the outcome of the game by careful deliberation over each response like you could with Deus Ex or the early Mass Effect games, then you're going to walk away dissatisfied.

And since this game is basically one massive coming-of-age drama, you will come across a lot of displays of strong emotions. The game jumps from shock to drama, from joy to









MOAR!

DEVELOPER
Deck Nine

PUBLISHER
Square Enix

PLATFORMS
Microsoft Windows, PS4 / PS5, Xbox One / Series X/S, Switch

PRICE
₹2,999 (Steam)

sadness and what not. It really puts you in the mind of an emotionally charged teen, so kudos to the developer for that. And you do form strong connections with some of the characters in the game. Enough to warrant wanting to know how and where they end up towards the end of the game.

Another aspect is that there's a lot of inconsistent messaging in the game. Some decisions, when taken for another person, are termed wrong whereas when you're in the same spot, then the tables have turned. For example, you can absorb emotions from others and the game tells

you that's the wrong thing to do. People should experience a healthy mix of emotions. But you're completely free to ignore that life lesson to advance certain parts of the game.

VERDICT

Your experience with Life Is Strange: True Colors will very much depend on whether you're a young adult or not. The writing is decent but there's no challenge in the game. The dialogues are okay-ish, the decision system is weak and the pace is super slow. It's a playable teenage drama that stands out from video games in general. In a way, that's a good thing and you've got something to play that's unlike your usual FPS, RPG or MOBA title. However, if you're playing a game to escape from the drama of real life, then we wish you good luck. *







The New "Portal" On The Block

BY BY KSHIPRA 'FAAFDAAJALEBII' JADAV
FEEDBACK@SKOAR.IN

IfYou've probably heard of Portal. The OG puzzle game that most people (including us) swear by. The main objective of the game was pretty simple, get to the goal, whatever that may be. Actually getting there was the tricky part. You were given a portal gun which could fire portals onto walls. There was the orange portal and there was the blue portal. Go into the blue one and you'll come out from the orange one and vice versa. Using that knowledge, you had to solve all the "test-chambers" the game threw at you. Everyone fell in love with Portal, and Valve even blessed us with a sequel, Portal 2. Unfortunately, the Valve curse

means there will never be a Portal 3, yet, many games have tried to be a spiritual successor. Nothing we've tried has ever come close to replicating the experience we got while playing Portal. Except this game, LightMatter. This is a first person puzzle and logic game where you have to use the power of light to solve the puzzles to complete the game. If you have played Portal then you'll feel right at home with this game. If you haven't played Portal then play this game first and then play Portal.

OBJECTIVE

The main objective of the game is slightly more complicated than usual. You play as an "unknown person" who just randomly woke up in a laboratory which has been partially destroyed. With no sense of direction, you randomly start going through open doors until you hear a voice from the speakers above. The CEO of LightMatter Laboratories and the narrator for this game, voiced by none other than David Bateson – who has also been the voice of Hitman, Agent 47 for almost 19 years now. Your objective is to escape the partially destroyed building unharmed. To do that, you need to complete chambers and get to the "Green Exit Sign". Of course, getting to the "Green Exit Sign" is a task in itself. In order to get to the exit, you need to reach it in a way which doesn't kill you. We see you asking, what's going to kill you? The dark. This is a special type of "dark" you see, which dissolves all organic matter which enters it. Or, in the narrator's own words - "Think 'the floor is lava,' just with shadows that kill you,". So how does one get rid of the dark? By using light of course!

MOAR!

DEVELOPER
Tunnel Vision Game

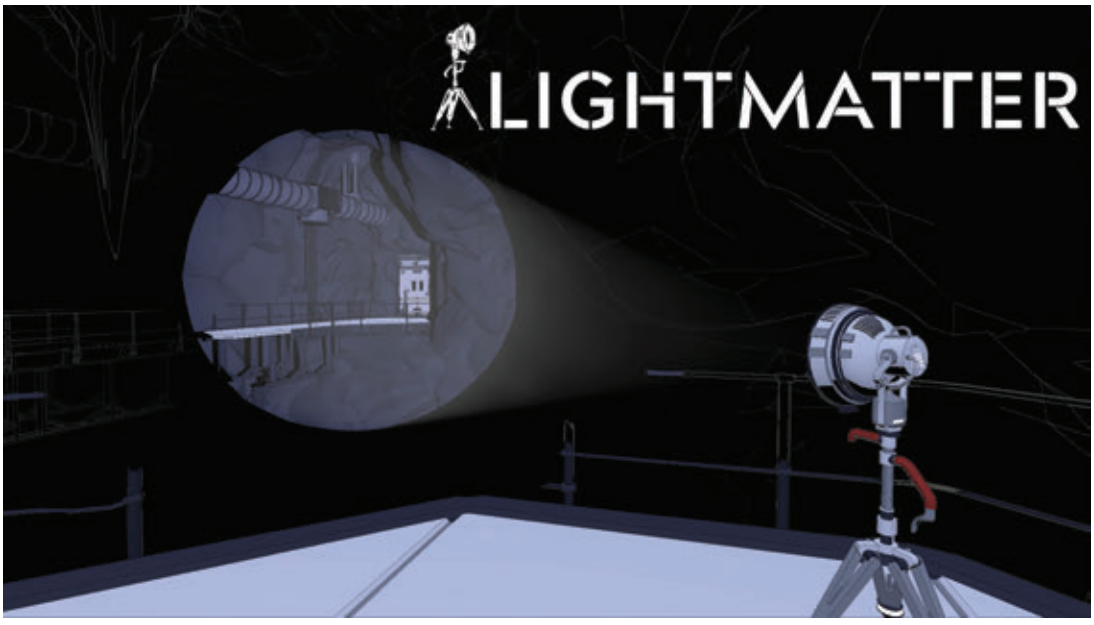
PUBLISHER
Aspyr

PLATFORMS
Microsoft Windows

PLAYED ON
Microsoft Windows

PRICE
₹529 (Steam)

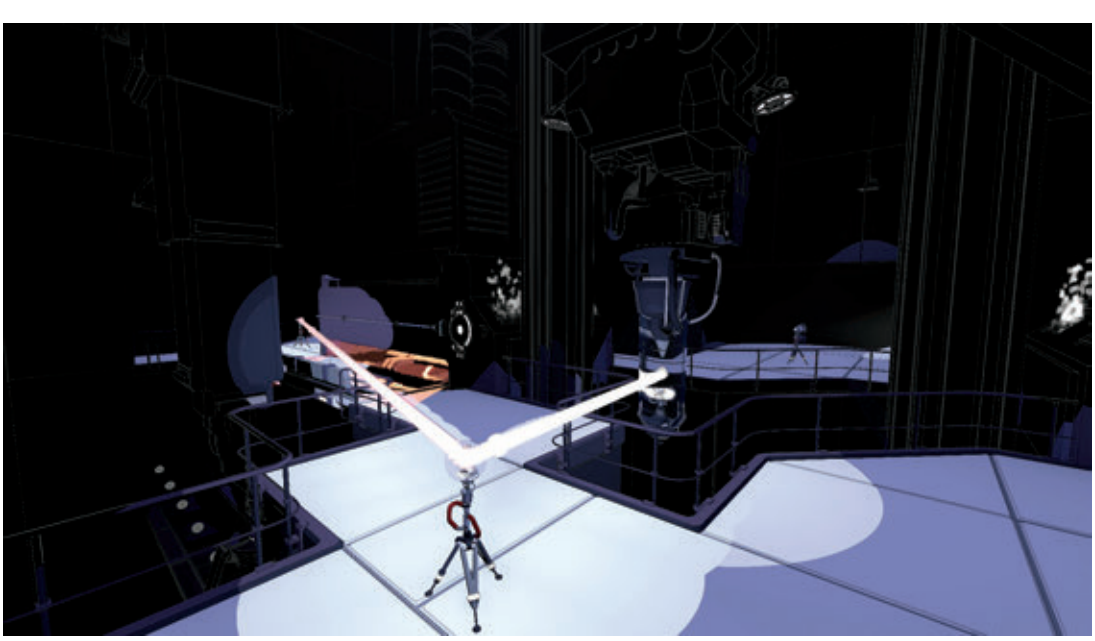
Every chamber will have one or more light lamps that you can use to your advantage. They can be used to lighting up dark areas in such a way that you can create a path to the exit sign. One of the reasons we liked this game so much was the simplicity of its objective. Like Portal, where your only objective was to com-

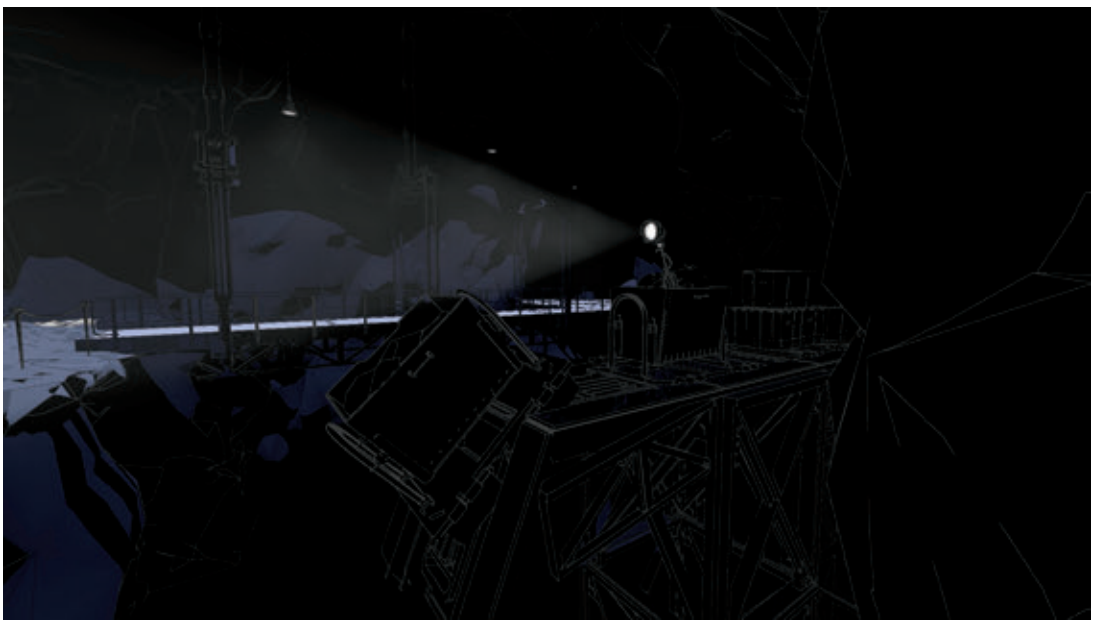


plete test chambers, here too, your only objective is to escape the darkness.

GAMEPLAY

The controls are simple, WASD to move, Space to jump and E or LMB to interact. That's pretty much it. Now, you might be wondering, couldn't one simply hold a lamp throughout the entirety of the game and get to the end? We thought that too but unlike other games where a lamp or any source of light spreads light in the form of concentric circles (thereby evenly illuminating all areas in the vicinity), in Light-Matter, lamps act more like torches. If you pick up a torch and point it at something, you'll notice that the farther away you point it, the bigger the circle of light.



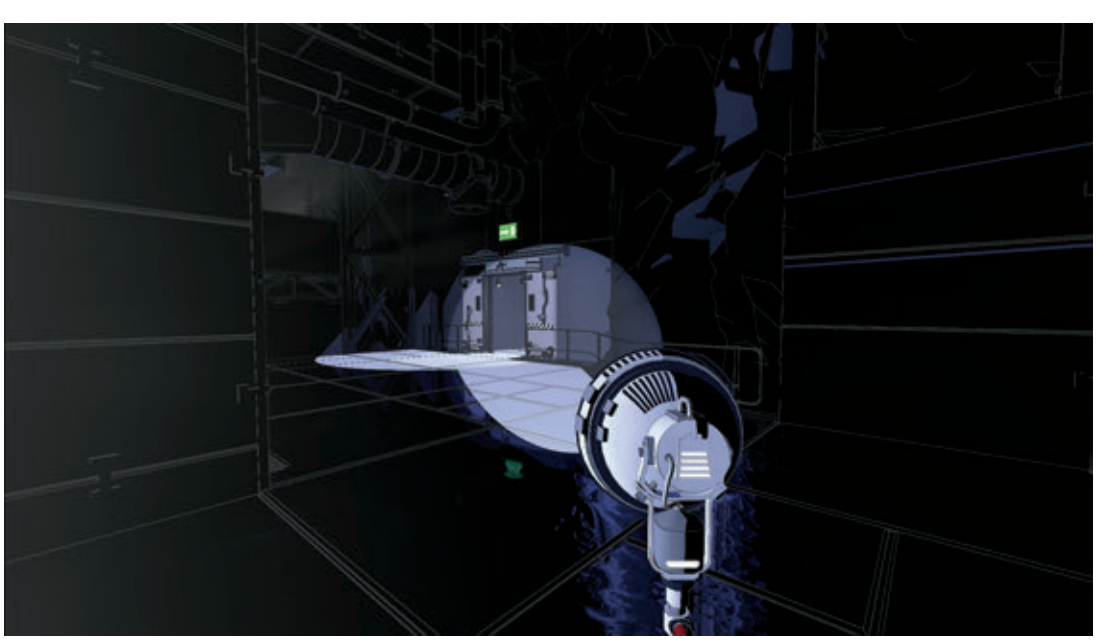


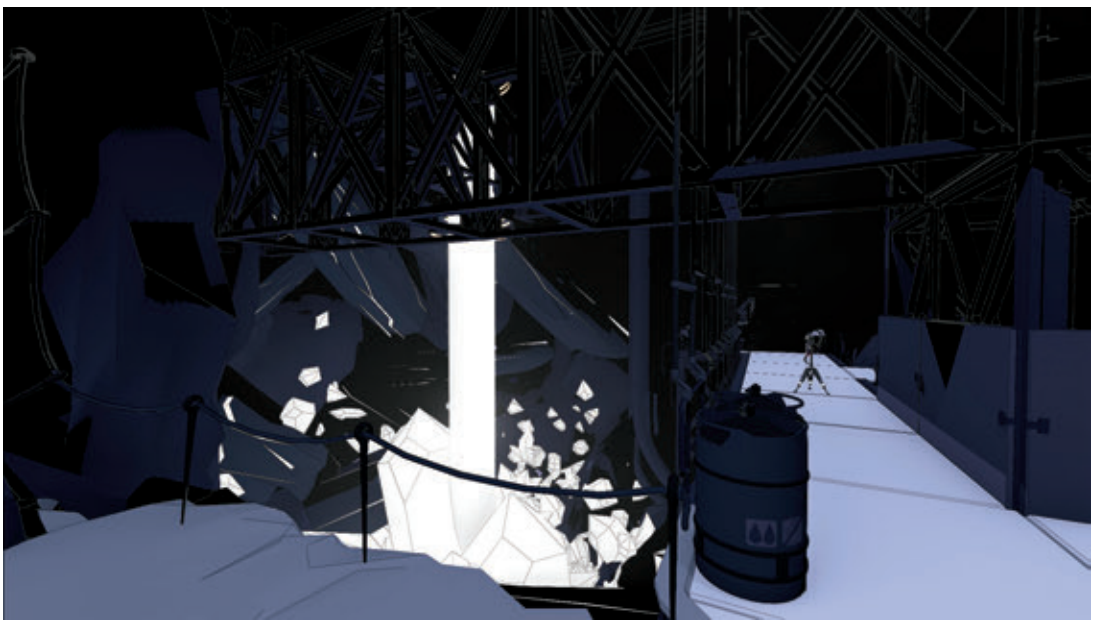
This is the reason why you can't just take a lamp and start walking. You'll have to place the lamp somewhere on the level in such a way that your pathway is illuminated. If you pick up the lamp and start moving, the path directly beneath you will not be illuminated and you'll die.

GRAPHICS

The graphics for this game are abstract to say the least. The areas hidden in the lethality of the shadows only have the outlines of objects and nothing else.

We liked the overall art style of the game, however, looking at some of the reviews online, they're not for everyone. The colour palette is pretty muted and nothing really pops out of the back-





ground unless it was meant to, like an interactive button or a lamp. All the lamps and the buttons have a yellow highlight to indicate that the player can interact with them. The art style used in this game leans towards the cartoonish side but just a little bit. We still think the game is a treat for the eyes if played at 1080p or higher on the maximum settings.

CONCLUSION

This game is a literal gem from start to finish. It samples and takes inspiration from Portal in a lot of ways and the best part is that the game actively embraces that. It's like the actual developer didn't want to just cash out on Portal's concept and puzzles but actually pay homage to it. You can literally see and hear that in multiple instances. One of them is when the narrator says "... not like those folks at Aperture Science" and the best one so far is when Portal 1's ending theme - Still Alive is sampled by the developer and put into the game as Level 28's soundtrack. How cool is that! The dev is literally paying respect to Portal's team and using their idea.

All the Portal references and easter eggs aside, LightMatter is a really fun puzzle game with gameplay worth around 2 - 6 hours, depending on how good you are at solving puzzles. We definitely did not take 10 hours to complete the game and we definitely did not have to look at walkthroughs of the game just to see the solution of a particular puzzle. The game's story is well written and the narrator's script is really good too. There's this one point in the game where the nar-

rator takes a break and we are left alone for a few puzzles. Granted that the narrator does come back and starts his blabbering again, but solving those puzzles alone, without the narrator, made us realise how heavy and narrator driven this game is and that's not necessarily a bad thing too! The game has a lot going for it and it checks almost all the boxes that make up a good game.

We highly recommend that you check this game out. The ending will definitely surprise you and leave you wanting for more. To depict that feeling more accurately, we'd like to quote a review from Steam - "This game is like fast food. It's tasty and initially satisfying but leaves you wanting more." *

Into the Pokéverse

From modest beginnings to a global phenomenon

BY MANISH "TRIGGER-HAPPY" RAJESH
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There isn't much that can be said about the Pokémon franchise that hasn't been said already. It is one of the most successful franchises on the planet, scratch that, it IS the most successful franchise on the planet, for a reason. The multi-billion dollar franchise (now worth well over USD 100 billion) which has only been around since 1996 played a big role in bringing the east and west together. Along with Dragon Ball and Sailor Moon, Pokémon was responsible for popularising anime in the west. It's the second highest-grossing video game franchise of all time, behind only its bigger brother, Mario. It is the highest-grossing entertainment franchise of all time, period, across all mediums, including video games, books, TV and more. So how did Pokémon get to where it is now? What were its humble beginnings and how was the journey to the top. Let's dive into the Pokéverse and find out.

In the beginning

Pokémon is the brain-child of one Satoshi Tajiri, who as a child, was rather fond of catching insects and tadpoles. It was this childhood activity that would be the spark for what would go on to become a global phenomenon.



Shigeru Miyamoto
Rivalled only by Lord Gaben himself

To make his dream a reality, Tajiri would form Game Freak, and later, a design studio called Creatures inc., along with his friends Ken Sugimori, Junichi Masuda, and others. Most of us have probably never heard of Sugimori, Masuda, or even Tajiri for that matter, but Sugimori is the illustrator of the original artwork for the Pokémon games. He also worked on concept art for the Pokémon movies and illustrated the Pokémon trading cards. Full credit for the original 151 Pokémon goes to Sugimori. Masuda on the other hand was responsible for composing the music and sound effects in the video games.

Anyway, after having formed Game Freak, it was time to conceptualise the game. The Nintendo Game Boy was a popular handheld console at the time, and the Link Cable further fueled Tajiri's imagination, as he could just picture insects travelling along the wire between players. And so, Tajiri came up with "Capsule Monsters" which he would go on to pitch to Nintendo. Which Nintendo would reject, several times. Yikes.

Of course, all was not lost. Nintendo would eventually agree to fund the project after a certain Shigeru Miyamoto took an interest in the idea and pitched it to the company.

Miyamoto had a few interesting ideas of his own for the Pokémon franchise, ideas which are still practised to this day. It was his idea to have paired versions of the Pokémon games, which is why to this day we see two releases of Pokémon games. The reasoning was, in order to emphasise the trading aspect of the game, players would need to link up with friends in order to actually "catch them all!".

For his contributions to the franchise, he has been immortalised alongside Satoshi Tajiri in both the games and the anime. In case you didn't know, in the original Japanese version of the anime, Ash Ketchum is named Satoshi, and his rival, who we know as Gary, is named Shigeru. Similarly, one of the default names for the rivals across all generations of the Pokémon games is Shigeru.

Gen 1 – Global domination begins at home

Initial sales for the first two Pokémon games were actually pretty modest. The Pokémon games did have somethings up

their sleeve though. Once debugging for the game was complete, Shigeki Morimoto programmed a 151st Pokémon – Mew – into the game. The idea was to reveal it as a post-launch event. That turned out to be a stonks move, as a magazine called CoroCoro announced a contest of which twenty entrants would get a Mew. 78,000 people(!) entered, and Pokémon sales shot through the roof.

The rise in popularity saw the release of Pokémon Blue, which was basically an improved version of Red and Green, with better graphics and sound. Eventually, the first set of Pokémon TCG (Trading Card Game) cards would also be developed, with its own set of rules. Even the cards became incredibly popular, and they still are to this day, with collectors willing to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on rare or limited edition cards.

When it came to other media, several manga adaptations of Pokémon were beginning to spawn, but it would be the anime series that was first aired on October 28, 1997 in Japan, that would shoot the Pokémon franchise to the moon. The anime would quickly propel Pokémon's popularity in Japan, and soon, Pokémon Centre stores, named after the Pokémon Centres in the game of course, would start popping up in Japan. Pokémon Centres specialised in Pokémon merchandise, including the video games, they also sold toys, cards, mangas, tabletop games and just about anything Pokémon-related you can think of. The first Pokémon Centre would open in Tokyo in 1998, and a new company, The Pokémon Company, would be founded to handle merchandising and the subsequent Pokémon stores that were planned to open in Japan and throughout the world.

Step 2 - World domination

In just two years, Pokémon was a phenomenon in Japan, so the next step was a no-brainer. It was time to go global. In September 1998, Pokémon Red and Blue would release in North America, and the slogan "Gotta Catch 'em All!" would be coined. Even the Pokémon TCG would make its way to North America in 1999, with Wizards of the Coast taking on publishing rights for the game.



Ash Ketchum, the boy who never ages

Credit where credit is due, it would be the anime that would push Pokémon to where it is now, quickly becoming a household staple for children of the time. The first Pokémon movie, Mewtwo Strikes Back, which was released in 1999, even held the record for the highest-grossing opening for an animated film in the United States for a short while.

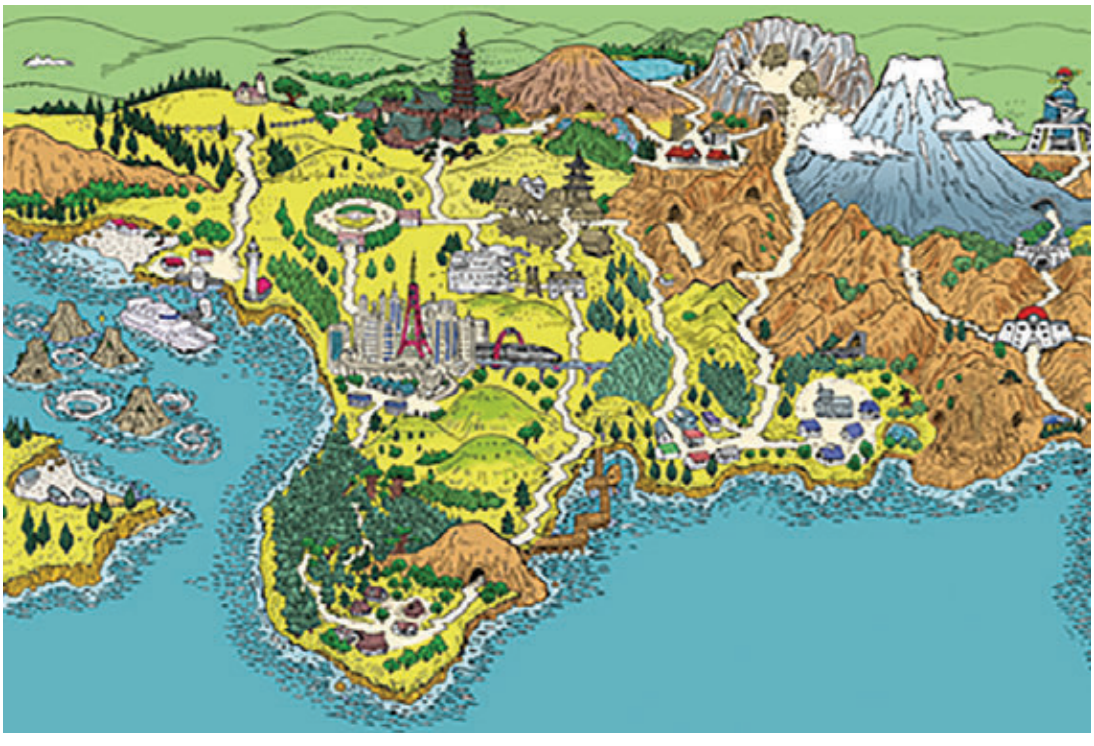
The Pokémon games use a complex rock-paper-scissors system, only, instead of three elements, there are 18 currently. Each element is strong and weak vs several elements, and then there are Pokémon who belong to two elements at the same time, which could make them even weaker to certain elements, or make it so they aren't weak to certain elements anymore. Additionally, Pokémon aren't limited to moves of their own element, a fire-type Pokémon could possibly learn a flying-type move, as long as it was within reason. Same with Water and Ice or Ground and Rock.

Another thing that was established in this time was that Pikachu was a fan favourite; understandably, it's one of the most popular and recognisable characters of all time at this point. Naturally, Pikachu was now the franchise's official mascot.

Gen 1 of Pokémon was explosive, and had a lot going for it, so much that we would need an encyclopaedia to cover everything. Before Gen 2 came around, we would see several Pokémon spin-offs like Pokémon Stadium for instance, a few more movies, entirely new game concepts like Hey You! Pikachu and Pokémon Snap, and even an anime-based musical called Pokémon Live!

Gen 2 - Of course, it doesn't end there

There's no way things were stopping at 151 Pokémon. Heck, Ho-Oh (Pokémon #250) was teased in the very first episode of the anime, and the first movie teased many Pokémon from the upcoming second gen. It was pretty obvious Gen 2 was happening, and come November 1999, Nintendo would release Pokémon Gold and Silver in Japan, for the new Game Boy Colour. Taking place in a new land – Jhoto – Pokémon Gold and Silver would introduce a slew of new mechanics to the Pokémon games. It would be the first game to introduce genders for Pokémon, which in turn allowed for Pokémon breeding for the first time. It was also the first game to introduce a time system in the game, with day-and-night cycles and a real-time clock. This allowed for different events to take place during the day and at night, and on certain days of the week. Pokémon Gold and Silver would also introduce a friendship system and the concept of 'shiny' Pokémon to the game,



A map of the Johto region

with the iconic Red Gyarados at the Lake of Rage. Even if you're not familiar with it from the games, you should be familiar with it from the anime. Players could also return to Kanto and face gym leaders from the original games. Pokémon Gold and Silver would be released in North America almost one year later, in October 2000. An eventual third version called Pokémon Crystal would release in December 2000 (July, 2001 in N.A.), and would be the first Pokémon game to feature animations for every Pokémon. It would also be the first game to allow trainers to choose their character's gender.

Gen 3 - Advancements incoming

Like with Gen 2, there were plenty of hints to confirm the upcoming 3rd gen of Pokémon. In November 2002, the new generation of Pokémon would be released on the Nintendo Game Boy Advance, namely, Pokémon Ruby and Sapphire. A new region to explore, 135 new Pokémon to catch, and of course, a new and more powerful console to make the game look better than ever with plenty of new features. These new features included Double battles, Pokémon Contests, Natures and Abilities for Pokémon, the addition of several new weather types, and of course, the introduction of two new villain teams, Team Magma and Team Aqua. These games were not backwards compatible like Pokémon Gold and Silver, because of the extent of the changes to the system.



Gen 1 gets a spankin' new upgrade

The new gen was, of course, reflected in the anime as well, with the first episode airing on the day of the game's release in Japan. One of the more significant changes in the anime was the introduction of May as a travelling companion, who was based on her game counterpart.

The new generation of consoles meant that a whole host of new Pokémon spin-offs games would also be making their way to the current generation of consoles. This included games like Pokémon Pinball for the Game Boy Advance, and Pokémon Colosseum for the GameCube among others.



Gotta wrangle em' all!

Around this time, we would see the release of Pokémon FireRed and LeafGreen, which were remakes of Pokémon Red and Green for the Game Boy Advance. This would bring Gen 1 up to Gen 3 standards, and also add support for wireless connectivity. Eventually, Game Freak would also release Pokémon Emerald, which was meant to compliment Pokémon Ruby and Sapphire. It was an updated version with new features, including an altered plot, animated Pokémon sprites, and the Hoenn Battle Frontier. It would also introduce the ability to re-battle gym leaders. We would also see the national dex being introduced in Pokémon FireRed, LeafGreen and Emerald, which allowed for all of the 386 Pokémon out at the time to be acquired.

Before the fourth gen of Pokémon came out, we would see spin-off titles released on the new handheld console from Nin-

tendo, the DS, including the popular Pokémon Mystery Dungeon games and Pokémon Ranger, which got nods in the anime as well. Both games were novel in the sense that you played as Pokémon in the Mystery Dungeon games and played as a Ranger and not a trainer in Pokémon Ranger, and used the stylus included with the Nintendo DS to catch Pokémon.

Gen 4 - It's only Gen 4?

Yeah, we're nearing the end of our pages and we're only on Gen 4, that's crazy. They've made a lot of these games. We'll try and keep it short to fit everything from here. Diamond and Pearl would release for the Nintendo DS in 2006, and would take trainers to the land of Sinnoh, a massive new place for



Pokémon Battle Revolution for the Nintendo Wii

trainers to explore with 107 new Pokémon to catch. These would be the first games to feature a pseudo-3D overworld, see the return of the time system which was absent in third gen games, visible gender differences in Pokémon, and also split Pokémon moves between physical and special moves. Remakes for the Gen 2 games, SoulSilver and HeartGold would be released three years later on the DS.

Gen 5 - Still trying new things

Even though Pokémon Black and White released on the DS like Diamond and Pearl, it looked like a next-gen game. The Unova region came with 156 new Pokémon, and none of the old Pokémon were available until the main storyline was completed, which was a first in the series. Further adding to the time system, now we had seasons in the game too, with Pokémon distributed across various times of the day and different seasons. We also saw the introduction of triple battles for the first time.

Another first with Gen 5, was the release of two sequels, instead of the usual one which had been the norm with previ-



Probably the best Pokémon plotline to date

ous generations. Fans were assuming Pokémon Grey, but instead got Pokémon White 2 and Black 2. Both games featured new Pokémon, changes to the plot and the region.

In conclusion (due to lack of pages really)

That covers Pokémon till around 10 years ago. In the 10 years since we've seen three new generations, including Gen 6, 7 and 8, and the jump from the Nintendo DS, to the 3DS and now to the Nintendo Switch, making it the first mainstream console to feature games from the main Pokémon RPGs. The grand total number of Pokémon as of writing this is 898, and we're sure that number will continue to grow larger. We expect it to hit the 1000 mark come Generation 9. What's your favourite Pokémon of all time? Write in to us at editor@skoar.in and let us know. My personal favourite is Shedinja. Check this article out online for more details!*



MOAR PEW PEW, LESS QQ

Up your FPS game with these **TIPS AND TRICKS**

BY BY PAARTH "CRUCIATOR" PAREEK
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INTRO

So you got trashed again, after a hard day of work or study, you logged into the game and you simply couldn't hit those heads. Well, We know how you feel, we've all been there! (still are but we don't talk about that) . We get it, you may not be as mechanically gifted as other people people in the world *cough*shroud*cough* but there are ways to train yourself to get better after working on my aim and watching endless guides on how to play so and so games better, here's a few things that we felt help a lot while you're trying to get better at the game you're playing.

THE BASICS

Let's start here, you may have heard from your 6th grade maths teacher that you should always clear your basics and to be honest, they weren't wrong, it matters a lot when it comes down to raw skill but even if you're not as good as the aforementioned mechanically gifted players, you can start by training your movement.

Movement

More often than not, people who are new to games move in such a way that you can simply tell by looking at a person that they are new and have only recently started playing fps at all.

Their movement can be described as linear, jaggy, and to be put in simple words, noob-like.

To train your movement, you can simply practice pressing the WASD keys in random fashion so that you are not hesitant to press them when needed. Once that is taken care of, don't forget that you can always walk diagonally instead of walking straight or running into a wall and of course, there's always your mouse to guide you into places where you'd wanna be.

Clearing Angles

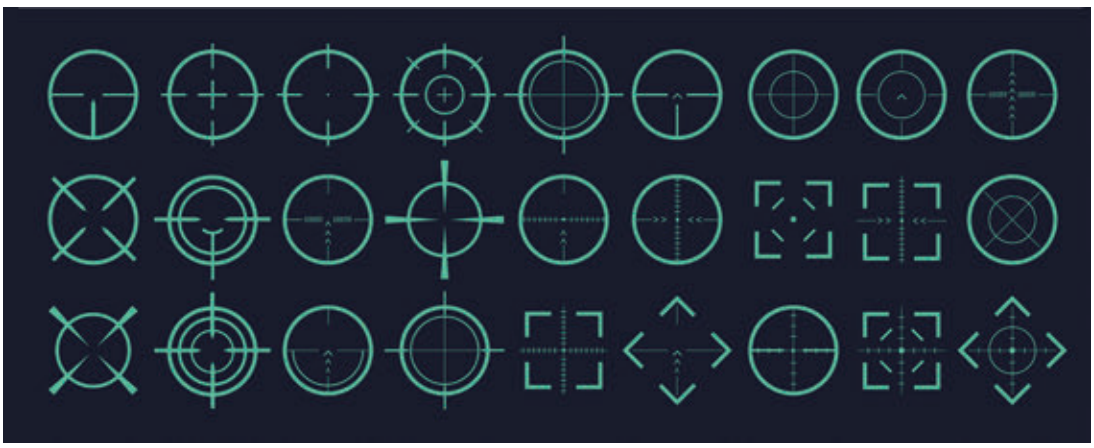
Here, we come to the second problem which is they don't look around much and don't clear angles which is a huge huge huge problem and yet very easy to overcome. All you have to do is make sure while you're entering a place which you think can have enemies, check your surroundings for places where people might be by moving your mouse in that direction and making a mental note that the angle you just checked is clear and if it is not, then shoot! That way, you eliminate the possibility of getting killed in-game in a way that would have otherwise been rather embarrassing and frustrating. Granted, this trick won't guarantee that you will get kills, but it does help in making you more attentive to the game and have a better presence of mind as to where the enemies might be in order for you to eliminate possibilities and gain a better knowledge of placements for the round/game in order to plan your strategy to tackle them.

Crosshair placement

With that, we come down to the third basic trick that can help you be better by a LOT!

You must've seen the small crosshair in the middle of your screen that may differ from gun to gun but is customisable in quite some games. Either way, where you place your crosshair in the game while moving around and clearing angles is something you should definitely be paying attention to and here's how.

What we should first pay attention to here is that even while shooting an enemy, where exactly you hit your enemy decides how much damage you deal to them. And the best and most effective place to hit people on, is, you guessed it,



the head. Headshots are the most effective way to kill your enemy the quickest and that is also the most difficult because the hitbox on the head is the smallest compared to the other parts of the body such as the torso or the legs.

[Factoid : The order of most damage dealt to least damage dealt is Head>Torso>Leg]

You see, when your brain is given a stimulus, it takes the time to receive the signal, generate a response, and then actually respond. Here, the stimulus would be you spotting an enemy, the generated response would be to shoot, and just as you would be about to do it, you get killed. Annoying, isn't it? Well, let us explain what happened here, you started out well, spotted the enemy, great! Now, right as you were about to shoot, the amount of time you took to actually move your crosshair to hit the enemy's head or any of the hitboxes of the enemy, the enemy shot you and killed you off.

Now how do we avoid that?
Well here's how.

The next time you check a corner, keep your crosshair in a place where you think the head of the opponent will be. That way, the time needed for you to move your crosshair into the opponent's hitbox is completely removed from the process and gives you a better chance of eliminating the enemy before they actually give you enough damage to kill you.

Crosshair placement also plays a huge role in peeking angles which is our next and one of the most important basic qualities in an FPS player.

Peeking

Peeking is the most basic quality that is needed in a person playing an FPS game.

You usually don't notice it when you've just begun playing an FPS multiplayer title but as you move forwards, it is something you definitely need to practice and pay heavy attention to.

Mostly dominant in games like CS:GO, Valorant, and other Tactical FPS shooters, Peeking plays an important role in clearing angles and gaining important information that is needed to win the round in the game you're playing.

There are four major kinds of peeks which are listed down below :

1. Jiggle peek
2. Wide peek
3. Shoulder peek
4. Jump Peek

a) Jiggle Peek : The most common and most effective kind of peek, Jiggle peeking comes in handy mostly when you are taking a peek into some place for the first time and do not have any information with regards to the angle you are about to peek. A jiggle peek is a quick peek you do around the corner whose duration is long enough for you to spot the person you wish to see and short enough for them



to not be able to kill you unless they're using hacks :P. Jk. Though, if they are pre firing on the angle you're peeking, you might get killed even if they're not using hacks.

However, in the majority of times, you won't get killed while jiggle peeking.

Now, how exactly does one perform a jiggle peek?

Well here's how : Stand facing the wall which has the angle you wish to peek. Now let's suppose that you are next to a wall, and the moment you press A to move towards the left, you'll be exposed to anyone and everyone who is looking towards that opening. So now what you'll do is that you're gonna press A until the point you're exposed a little bit and take information. Then, as soon as you've seen all you want to see, quickly press D to get back into cover so that nobody gets enough time to shoot you and deal damage.

Here's a small clip that you can check out if you couldn't understand it just by reading.

Jiggle peeking is also an essential part of a technique that I will be covering further into the article so make sure this is something you are frank with.

b) Wide peek : A wide peek is a peek that basically requires you to move out of cover in a distance that the opponent wouldn't expect you to at that moment.

A neat trick is to jiggle peek a few times so that your opponent thinks that you're going to jiggle peek again but instead go for a wide peek next catching them off guard and giving you the advantage.

For eg. If you've been jiggle peeking and you are sure that the opponent has noticed you and has their crosshair placed to the exact place your head would be when you'd jiggle peek, this is the peek you should go for. This would set the opponent off their balance and give you the element of surprise(Abbreviation : "Ah" lmao, sorry I saw that on a tshirt I couldn't resist).



That element of surprise gives you enough time to actually aim at their heads and take them out before they take you out themselves.

c) Shoulder Peek : The shoulder peek is a variation of the jiggle peek which is done when you want the opponent to either give away their position or if there is a sniper holding that angle. First, you start off with a jiggle peek in order to lure shots from the opponents and then, for a sniper, you instantly peek right after they shoot their shot as they need to cock their gun again right after shooting it once. In the case of a rifle, keep peeking until they run out of ammo and then, peek and kill!

Make sure you don't get carried away and get back-stabbed by another opponent while you're trying to get the opponent to reload.

d) Jump Peek : A Jump Peek is a peek where you jump right around the corner and then while you are mid air, you change directions to get back into cover so that you gain information and don't even expose yourself for one full second.

In order to jump peek, you need to line yourself up parallel to the surface of the wall, jump while pressing the direction key you want to be jumping in('A' for left, and 'D' for



right) and then move your mouse in order to navigate through the air.

Here's a link to a proper tutorial by none other than Valorant Masters Champion SEN dapr :

ADVANCED TECHNIQUES

Moving on to the more advanced techniques you need to work on and practice, We now get to the advanced techniques.

Building a Warmup Routine

The first advanced technique that people start working on is building a warmup routine so your reflexes are well trained and you are at your best performance during the game.

People use various tools in order to warm up for their games such as AimLab which provides for an amazing tool to train your aim and warm up before your games. You must have seen multiple pros using it such as TenZ, Shroud, s1mple, and many more players who put up awe striking scores on the Flickshot task.

However, the flickshot task isn't the only task you should be focussing on.

AimLab has proven to be an amazing free aim trainer and

it is certainly more than enough for someone just starting to use aim trainers and is looking to just get better overall.

A common rookie mistake when just starting off with Aim-Lab however is to grind one task and one task only. So make sure instead of doing that, you check out different tasks and work on all round development instead of simply getting a 100K score on Flick-shot and then having terrible scores in perception because a player who is too good at one thing but not very good at others, isn't someone who is well rounded or even someone who is able to perform good in-game.

In AimLab itself, there are multiple different tasks that you can try which help you get better in the game overall.

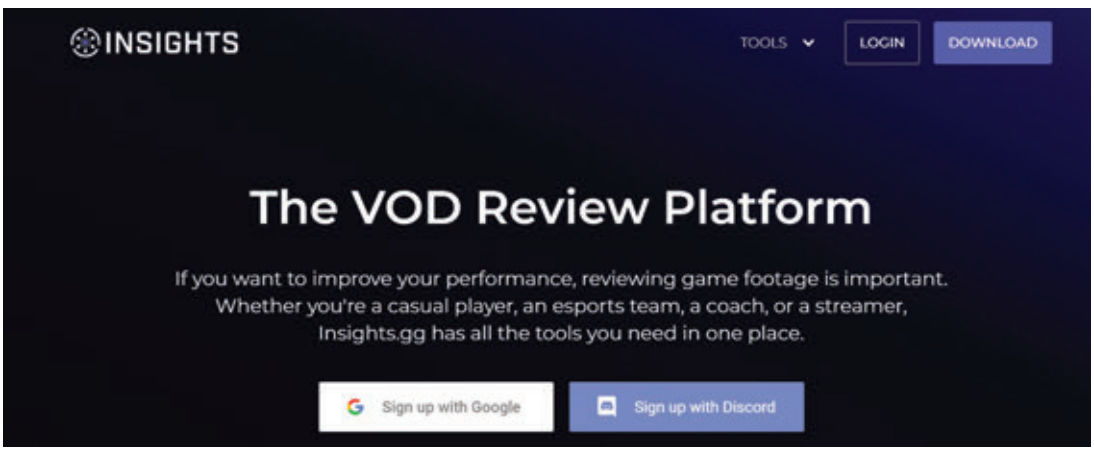
And if that's not enough, here's the cherry on top of the Sundae, you can design you brown tasks in AimLab!

Yes you heard it right! Your OWN tasks. You could make scenarios where you play to get better at things you're not very good at and practice them so that you start getting bet-ter at it.

This way, you get a personalised experience. For a newbie however, I wouldn't recommend it, start by just doing the simple tasks that aimlab has and slowly and steadily go towards more advanced stuff.

VOD Review

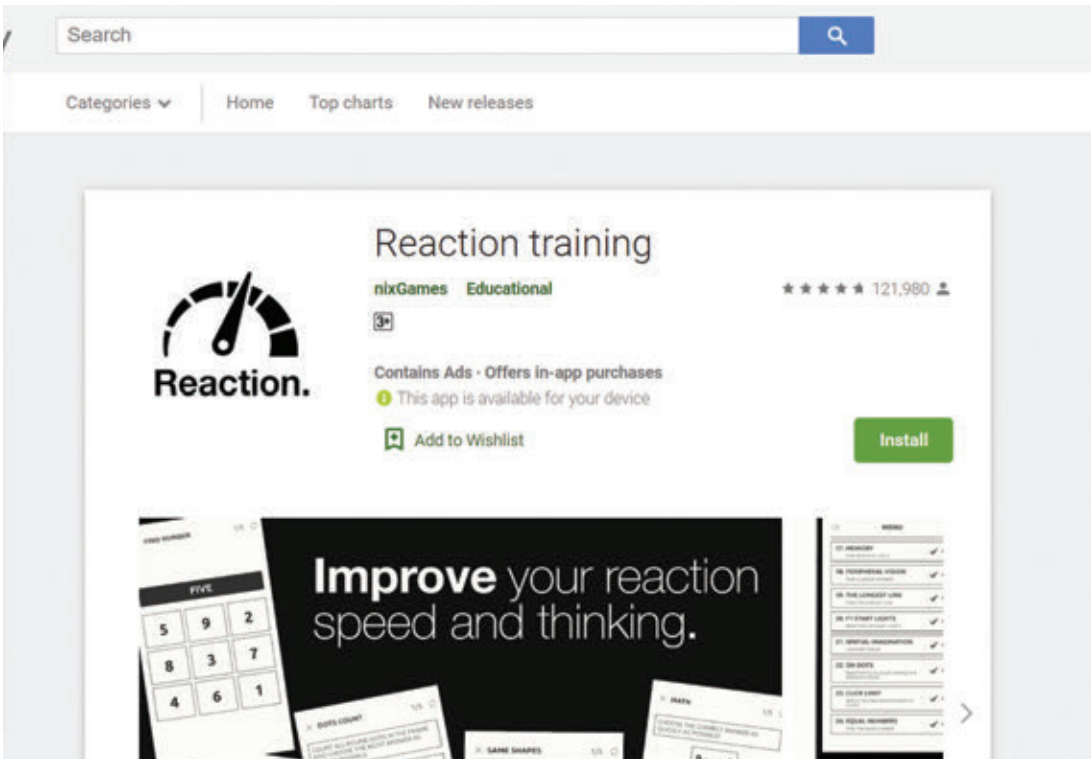
Coming down to one of the most important things in the history of Competitive games and eSports, VOD Reviews.



VOD reviews are a great way to analyse your gameplay and find mistakes that you had made in the previous games you played.

Of course, during a VOD review, you will always have to give your full focus to the video you're watching and keep an eye on every single thing you're doing. Pay special attention to the callouts being given by your teammates and how you reacted to them or played around them and what you could've done better and trust me, you will always find something to do better next time.

And with the technology and apps available in today's date, there are multiple ways you could simply have your vods saved to the cloud or directly get insights without actually having to record anything at all. Apps such as insights.gg and blitz.gg are apps that record your gameplay and go



through your vod to give you insights as to when and where exactly did you go wrong and what could have been done better. It even detects which character you were playing and records what your win rate percentage on that particular character is, giving you a clear perception of your playstyle and telling you what role suits you and what doesn't.

Reaction Time Training

As mentioned before, the time your brain takes to react to the information given to it matters a lot when being fed new information every waking second during a game. Therefore, it is important that your reaction time is as low as possible and don't fret if yours isn't!

Just like everything else on the list, there are ways to get better at this as well.

There are apps available for Android and iOS that allow you to train your reaction time such as reaction training by nixGames available on the Play Store for free.

Decreasing the time required for you to react to any new piece of information given to you will not only make you better at games but will also help you in bettering your hand eye coordination and make you a faster human being overall.

CONCLUSION

In the end, all I'd like to say to you, my dear reader, is that if you're playing for fun, you need not perform any of these tasks to get better, you can simply go online, have fun with new people you meet and make memories. However, if you are one of those people who want to turn esports into a career opportunity for yourself, you will have to follow these tips one day or the other and I can promise with a 100% guarantee that if you follow the advice given to you in this article, you WILL see improvement. *



OVERAMBITIOUS

BY MANISH "TRIGGER-HAPPY" RAJESH
FEEDBACK@SKOAR.IN



Going into Rainbow Six: Extraction, we were expecting something similar to Rainbow Six: Siege, and while there are certainly similar elements, the experience is quite different. Those of you who have played Rainbow Six: Siege can attest to it being a great tactical team-based FPS. With Extraction, we certainly get the same tactical gameplay, however they've completely dropped the PvP element and gone for co-op, PvE only gameplay. Read on to find out whether or not that actually worked out in Extraction's favour.

GAMEPLAY

Rainbow Six: Extraction is built on the same gameplay elements and mechanics that Siege is built on. So gunplay and other gameplay mechanics, and even the operators, are essentially the same. What has changed is the core gameplay loop.





Like we just mentioned, they've dropped PvP completely, and instead, you've now got to deal with Archaeans, which are basically the equivalent of goop zombies. Set in an alternate universe to Siege, in Extraction, the Archaeans have taken over the planet, and it's up to the Rainbow Exogenous Analysis & Containment Team, or REACT, to eradicate them. In order to do this though, you need to gather intel. This gathering of intel is basically Rainbow Six: Extraction's core gameplay loop. Each time you drop into a new zone, you've got three randomised objectives that you need to complete. The difficulty for each objective scales from first to third; basically, the longer you stay, the harder it gets. These random objectives vary, from hunting down an elite Archaean, to planting and defending a bomb, extracting an asset, scanning Archaen nest thingies, etc. You're free to extract at any point once you've dropped into a zone, and of course, extracting after having completed more objectives will net you more research and XP.

Operators gain XP as you use them, and levels are unique to each operator, so you'll want to use the operator you want to level up more frequently. Levelling up will unlock new guns and perks for your operators, allowing you to alter their abilities or get small boosts that will help with extractions. These include damage reduction, increased ammunition etc. Ability modifications help deal with Archaeans more effectively, like being able to stun goop zombies, or track them more easily among other things. Some elements, like weapon customisa-

tion, have been stripped down in Extraction as compared to Siege, and your options basically come down to whether you want to go in loud, or quiet. Other than that, it's just cosmetics. While your operators gain XP, you will also increase your progression level, which will unlock new locations, assignments, gadgets and operators for you to use.

During our playthrough, we realised that this game is definitely better played in squads, and is a lot less fun when played alone. Just the fact that there are ability and role-based operators should give you enough of a clue that you'll have a better time with friends. Sure the game scales the difficulty down for you, but it's simply not as fun. Also, there are a number of objectives which are seemingly impossible to do when solo. Planting and defending three bombs in three different locations is difficult to do alone for instance. With Extraction, squads are capped at three players (sorry, fourth guy). Having a squad equipped to deal with every situation certainly makes things a lot easier, considering the fact that just like in Siege, you can be killed fairly easily. You want to stay as far away from Archaeans as you can, because if they get the flank on you, you most probably won't make it. Unless you've got that squad we were talking about to back you up. However, if you do end up getting killed, well, you're not exactly dead. Your operator instead ends up MIA, sealed inside a protective foam, and you lose all the XP you would have gained for that run. Your next mission in the same zone will have a new objective, rescue your operator. We thought this was a pretty cool mechanic. Another element that per-





sists after you leave a zone is operators keeping the same HP until they get a rest (don't use them for a while). This forces you to try and get used to other operators, and step out of your comfort zone every now and then, which is not necessarily a bad thing in a role-based tactical team shooter.

The early levels of Extraction are fairly easy, you could potentially even run and gun at this point without too much issue. However, as you progress a bit further, you'll find that things can get quite difficult. You'll find yourself relying more on your REACT! gadgets, like the recon drone, and your own operators abilities more often in order to get the job done. Information and stealth become invaluable. Alerting an Archaean and not immediately dispatching it will result in it calling for reinforcements, and activating all nearby nests which start spitting out more Archaeans. You really don't want a horde of goop zombies descending down on you.

THE ARCHAEANS

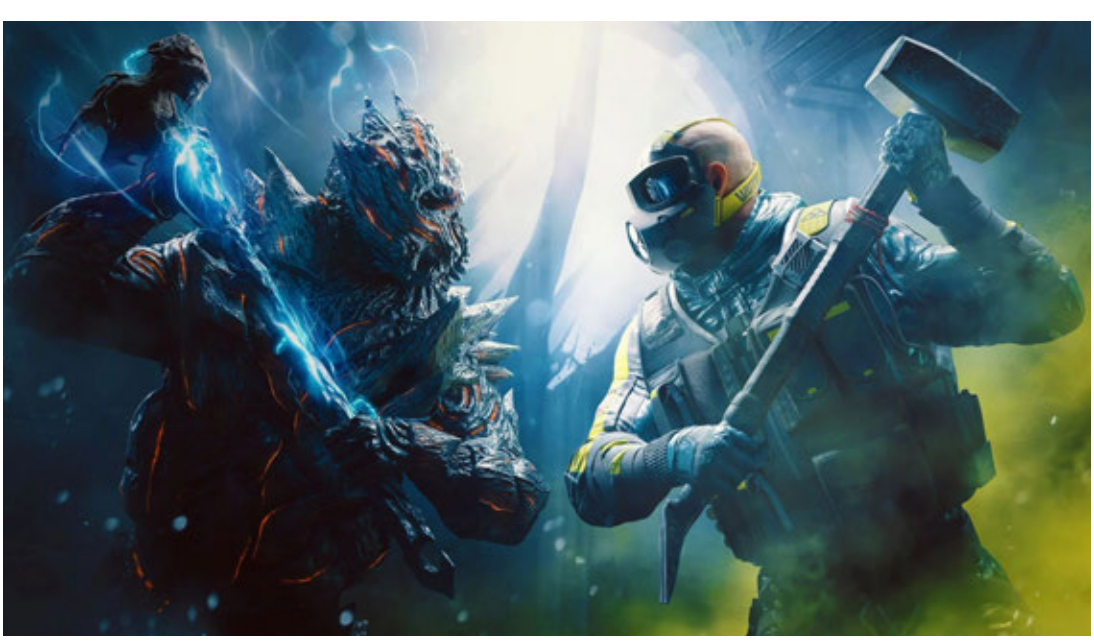
Speaking of the goop zombie parasites that have taken over the planet, they are varied and diverse, and you're quickly introduced to a lot of them as you peruse through the starting zones. The Archaean aesthetic screams Venom, with the black, organic, living jelly looking material that sticks to both the Archaeans and the environment. On the ground, this goop will hinder your movement speed, while increasing Archaean speed.

Archaean nests spread this goop out of them, in addition to actually spitting out live Archaeans when alerted. It's clear here that Extraction has attempted to go for something similar to what we have in the Left 4 Dead or Back 4 Blood games with the different classes of Archaeans, and while we appreciate the variety, there simply isn't enough difference between the various Archaeans to be able to tell them apart.

Finally, we come to the Proteans, which are the exciting boss battles of Rainbow Six: Extraction. Proteans are basically mutated goop versions of operators, and what we're assuming would happen to them if they didn't have the protective foam to protect them from the parasite. Proteans have plenty of tools in their belt to deal with us, including being able to teleport around the and goopified versions of operator abilities, which bring a level of challenge to the encounters.

GRAPHICS AND AUDIO

They've gone for a survival horror vibe with Rainbow Six: Extraction, and the visuals definitely look the part. The first time you're dealing with Archaeans and aren't quite sure how to deal with them can be terrifying, as the goopy red-eyed hordes start charging towards you. The nest placements are also sneaky, allowing for them to sneak up behind you without you realising it. The spreading black gloop over the walls and the floors, and the infested maps all definitely do a good job of setting up the ambience for the game.





MOAR!

PUBLISHER
Ubisoft

PLATFORMS
Xbox One, PlayStation 5, PlayStation 4, Xbox Series X and Series S, Google Stadia, Amazon Luna, Microsoft Windows

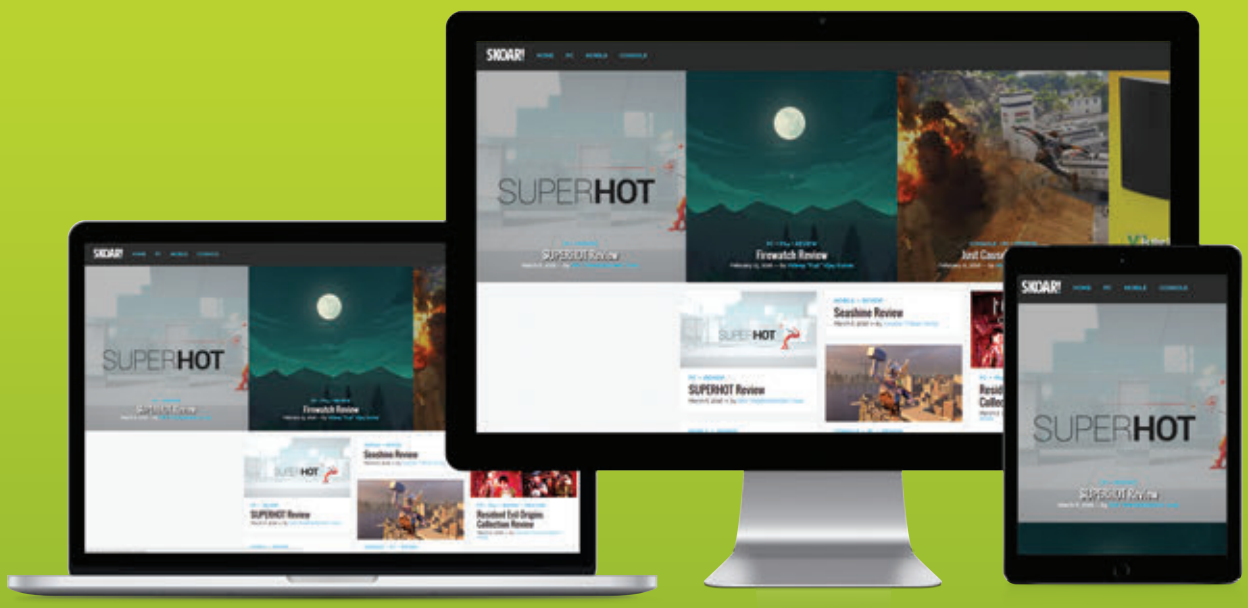
DEVELOPERS
Ubisoft, Ubisoft Montreal

PRICE
₹1999 (EGS)

The sound design is also pretty good, when it comes to the environments and the Archaeans themselves. However, we found the weapons seemed to lack impact behind them, but that's a niggle honestly.

VERDICT

Rainbow Six: Extraction comes across as a game trying to be a co-op gunner like Back 4 Blood while still trying to maintain its tactical Rainbow Six: Siege roots. As a result, it doesn't fit well under either blanket. Maybe it'll carve its own niche? Unfortunately, the game can quickly become repetitive after a point, even though the initial stages are fun when you still have new things and objectives to explore. The lack of a PvP angle also doesn't exactly bode well for the game's longevity. However, with the game heading to Xbox Game Pass, maybe it'll see more people giving the game a try. We'd definitely be interested to see where the game goes from here, because the potential is definitely there. *



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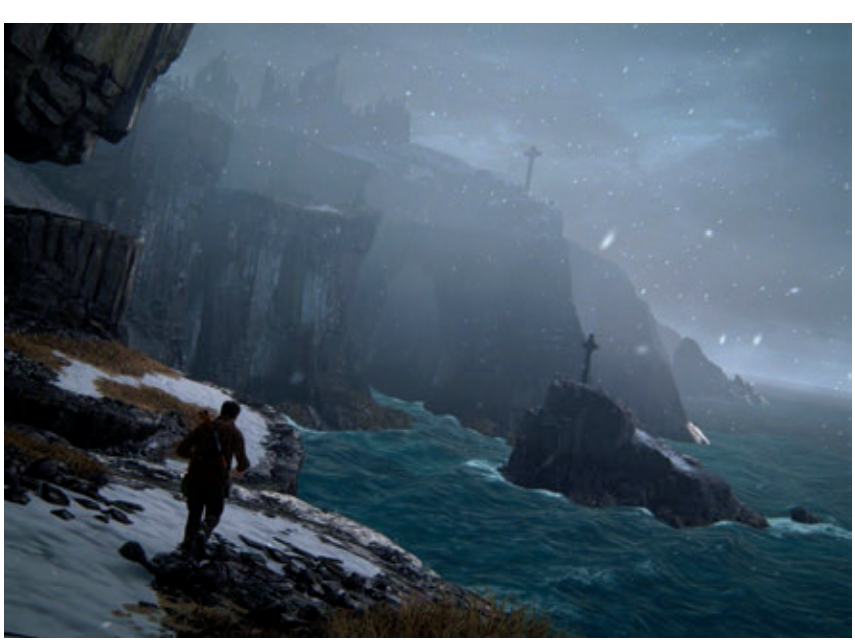


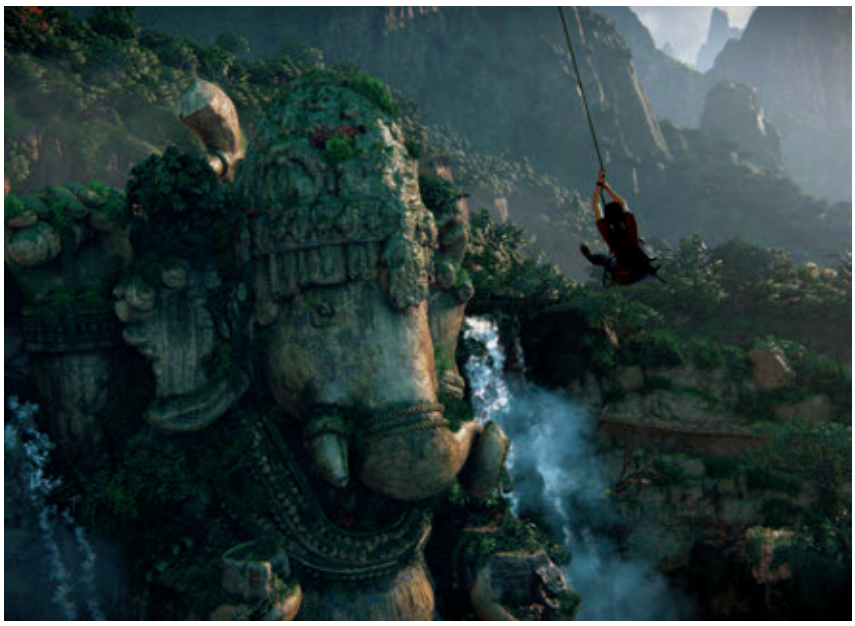
REVISITING ONE OF PLAYSTATION'S BEST SWASHBUCKLING ADVENTURES

BY BY SAMEER "PSYCHOMANTIS" MITHA
FEEDBACK@SKOAR.IN



Naughty Dog is one of Sony's most celebrated developers with franchises like Crash Bandicoot, Jak and Daxter, The Last of Us and Uncharted under its belt. With the Uncharted franchise, Naughty Dog gave us the swashbuckling Indiana Jones adventure we've been yearning for a very long time. The game offers an enticing treasure hunting story, constant plot twists and action set pieces to give Hollywood block-busters a run for their money. Uncharted 4: A Thief's end and Uncharted: The Lost Legacy launched for the PS4 and were two of the best in the franchise. The stories are self-contained enough for newcomers to enjoy and have enough of a backstory to keep fans of the franchise happy. While we won't dive deep into the story of the two games remastered for the PS5 (review), in this review we will go through what's new and answer the most important question - is the Legacy of Thieves Collection enticing enough for you to revisit this swashbuckling adventure once again?





Plenty of graphical options for PS5 gamers

One of the main reasons to revisit Uncharted: Legacy of Thieves Collection are the upgrades you will get for the PS5. All of these are directly linked to the gameplay mechanics. First up we have the DualSense Controller. While Astro Bot Playroom dialled things up to 11, Uncharted's implementation of the DualSense features is more in line with what we've seen on Ghost of Tsushima (review). There is tension in the triggers when you fire a gun and when you interact with a puzzle or even drive the jeep on different terrain there is unique feedback on the controller to add to the immersion. Every interaction feels slightly more immersive thanks to Sony's new controller.

If you fired up Uncharted 4 or the Lost Legacy on the PS4, you were greeted with a loading screen that took its own sweet time to fire up the game. Granted there are no loading screens throughout the game unless you decide to skip a cutscene. Both these instances of loading are converted into a flash of a black screen for merely a second thanks to the PS5's SSD.

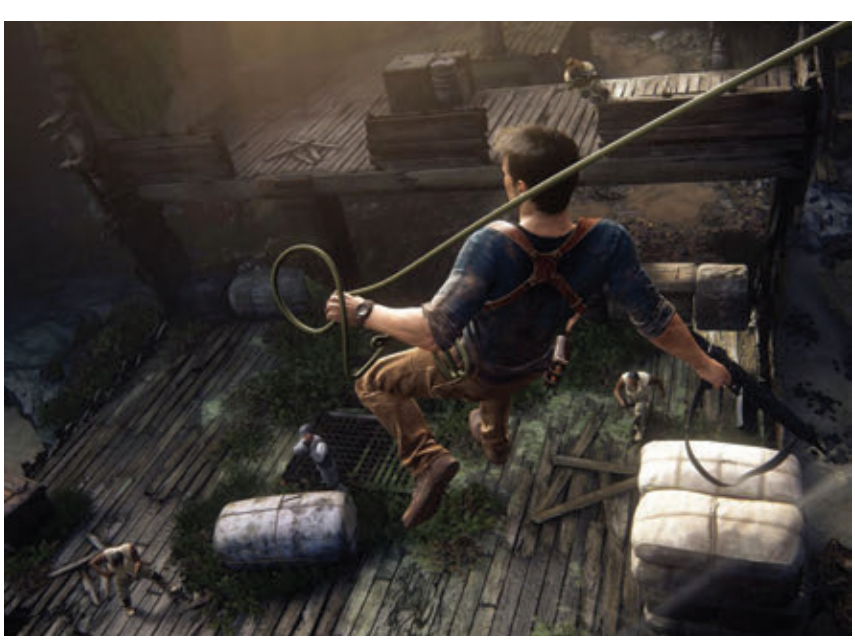
Last but not least are the graphical options. On the PS4, players enjoyed the game in 1080p 30FPS on the base PS4 and 1440p checkerboarded to 4K 30FPS on the PS4 Pro. However, we finally have not only a smooth 60FPS mode on the PS5 but also a 120FPS mode for those with compatible displays. Sony says that in Fidelity Mode you can play the



game in 4K at 30FPS while performance mode renders the game at 1440p upscaled to 4K and gives players 60FPS. The 120FPS mode renders the game in 1080p. While I did try out all the modes on an LG B9 OLED TV that supports 120FPS, I ended up sticking to the Performance Mode that offers 60FPS as it gave me the best of both worlds - smooth frame rate along with good visual fidelity.

Two swashbuckling stories with some of the best action set-pieces

This part is important for those of you that are new to the franchise. In simple terms, if you like cinematic third-person action-adventure games, then this is definitely one for your collection. The story, and more importantly, the gameplay in

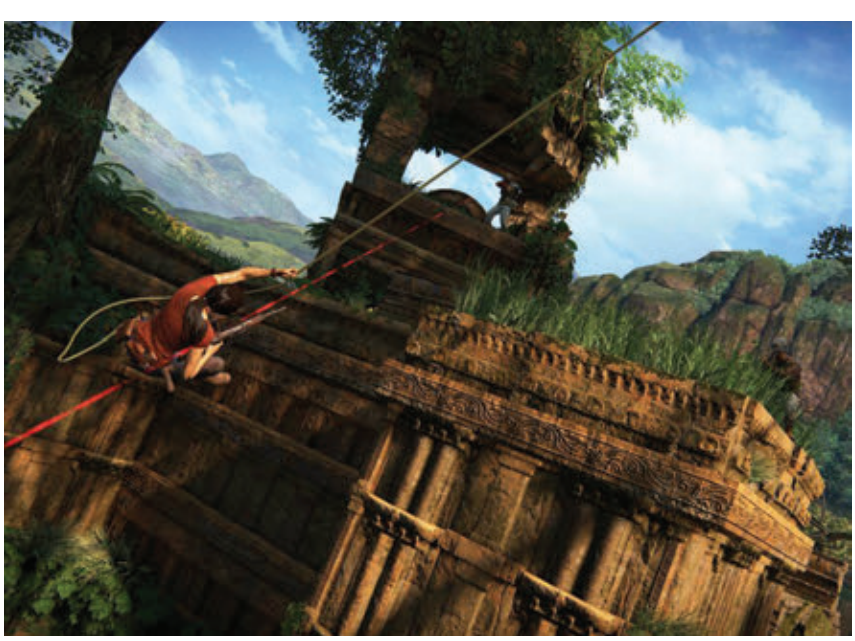




Uncharted 4 and The Lost Legacy has aged like fine wine.

While the gameplay mechanics are simple third-person cover-based shooting, it is the environments and enemy AI that forces you to move around the relatively large combat zone keeping you at the edge of your seat. The puzzles, though simple, will still make you scratch your head and the set pieces (which this game has quite a few off) will get your heart racing.

The chase sequence in Uncharted 4 where Nate tries to reach Sam involves a walk through a market, then a jeep ride through a city, getting dragged in the mud while clinging to a train and hopping between trucks to get to the front of a convoy. It's just exhilarating and looks stunning. In the Lost





Legacy, the ending train sequence which is essentially a homage to the fantastic Uncharted 2 on the PS3 is one sequence I think all gamers should experience.

So, while the story is typical of an Indiana Jones adventure, it is the characters, the plot twists and above all the cinematic set-pieces which will ensure you don't put the controller down till the credits roll.

Easy save transfers

Speaking of revisiting the adventure, when you fire up the Uncharted: Legacy of Thieves collection for the first time, it will ask you if you want to import your PS4 saves. It's as simple as hitting yes and you can literally pick up right where you left off on your previous-gen console. All your, trophies and even extras are all unlocked just as they were when you finished the game for the first time. And the beauty is that you can jump back into any chapter you like (provided you've finished the game) to experience a specific section if you don't want to play the complete game all over again.

Coming to PC in 2022

We know that the Uncharted: Legacy of Thieves collection is coming to the PC in 2022, but we don't know the system requirements for the game. But looking at the recent God of War 2018 PC port (review), we can safely assume that this will be one that PC gamers will enjoy. So, if the stock shortages



are preventing you from getting your hands on a PS5 and you have a decent gaming rig, you can enjoy this game in 2022.

Aged like fine wine!

While finishing both Uncharted 4 and The Lost Legacy can take about 20 hours, the one thing I kept reminding myself of is that the games were released in 2016 and 2017 respectively. That's five years ago. While 5 years isn't a long time, we have games like Dishonored 2, Gears 4, Hitman and Forza Horizon 3 all released in 2016 and are still enjoyable even today. But the remaster for the PS5 can stand toe to toe with any game launched in 2020 which makes it easy to recommend for anyone rocking a PS5.

MOAR!

TESTED ON
PS5

DEVELOPER
Naughty Dog, Iron Galaxy Studios

PUBLISHER
Sony Interactive Entertainment

PLATFORMS
PS5

PRICE
₹2,999

We played a review copy of Uncharted Legacy of Thieves Collection on a PS5.

Verdict

Sony has Implemented two strategies with PS4 games on the PS5. We have games like Days Gone (review), God of War 2018, The Last of Us Part II, Horizon: Zero Dawn and more that have received a free patch to enable the game to run at 60FPS on the PS5. Then we have the likes of Ghost of Tsushima Directors Cut, Death Stranding Director's Cut, Spider-Man

Remastered and more that go beyond the resolution and framerate bump but come at an upgrade cost. They offer additional features like new content, support for PS5 specific features and more. Uncharted: Legacy of Thieves collection falls in the latter. If you haven't played either of the games or are looking to revisit them in glorious 60FPS then I recommend you add them to your collection.

PS4 to PS5 Upgrade

As far as upgrades are concerned, Sony says, "Players who purchased Uncharted 4: A Thief's End, Uncharted: The Lost Legacy, or Uncharted 4: A Thief's End & Uncharted: The Lost Legacy Digital Bundle have the option to pay an additional fee (Rs 500) to upgrade to Uncharted: Legacy of Thieves Collection. The upgrade will be available starting at launch on January 28, 2022.

Owners of PS4 disc copies must insert them into the PS5 every time they want to download or play the PS5 digital versions. PS4 game disc owners who buy the PS5 Digital Edition disc-free console will not be able to get the PS5 version for the discounted price.

PlayStation Plus members who claimed Uncharted 4: A Thief's End via their PlayStation Plus subscription are not eligible for the digital PS5 upgrade". *



MOBILE MADNESS

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Angry Birds Journey

Rovio Entertainment's Angry Birds Journey (formerly called Angry Birds Casual) is a single player slingshot puzzle game. It's the nineteenth game in the expanded mainstream series, and the eleventh mobile game to feature the slingshot gameplay mechanic. However, the game resembles the tile-matching style of the recent Angry Birds releases such as Angry Birds Match and Angry Birds Dream Blast. The birds operate as plays for the user, with the characters appearing in a random order. In addition to defeating pigs, the birds' new task is to free imprisoned hatchlings. Before freeing them, you might have to complete the missions attached to them, such as shifting around their containers to the bottom of the stage or to the top to be able to free them.

The entire game has a simple, minimalistic design with beautiful and fresh graphics. The obstacles are more colourful than the standard yellow bricks and the animation is lively and crisp. The gameplay is simplistic, as there are 5 chapters and different levels to complete in them. As the levels progress, the storytelling is through images and not animated videos, which isn't exactly the greatest aspect of it. If you lose completely, you have to wait to refill your life bar to be able to play again. Your rank is based on the level of the player and you cannot play completed levels again. Overall, this game is definitely worth a try. Seems pretty standard for an Angry Birds franchise release, with the same storyline and few modified characters. It's a good game to

pass your time and feel accomplished when you earn all those stars, but there are much better games to play if you want to focus on the storyline and get some action along with it. If you're here for nostalgia, however, this is the game for you.

DEEMO II





DEEMO II is a fantastic rhythm game that involves in-game narrative to complement the many tracks you play. DEEMO II sets itself apart from its rhythm-game competitors with a light-hearted rhythmic gameplay and a free-roaming adventure section in which your avatar explores several places, including the local railway station. The story revolves around Echo, a young girl who has "bloomed" but resurfaces, and Deemo, a station guardian. The two must work together to save their world through music. Rayark International announced this sequel to its popular story-based rhythm game DEEMO in May 2020, and the title went into pre-registration at the time.

Now, Rayark has finally released DEEMO II, over two years after the pre-registration listing was posted, however we don't think the wait was completely worth it. For one thing, the game has performance issues, and to make matters worse, Rayark has crammed the whole game with monetization. The rhythm gameplay, on the other hand, is still as good as it has always been, but the lack of polish and overzealous monetization pulls the whole

thing down. The world detailing, the art and music are outstanding for sure, and even the tale is adequate, but the game keeps chugging regardless of the graphics level. On top of that, the forced exploration of the story wastes time since the game's goals are poorly defined, allowing the player to roam around aimlessly. To make things worse, the framerate is capped at 30FPS maximum, which isn't very delightful to play in for everyone. Even if you can get past the tech issues, the monetization and stamina system are far too obnoxious to leave the game enjoyable. All in all, it is a gorgeous yet poor follow-up to a very potential title.

LINIA SUPER





The goal of the game is simple: to draw a line between two colours to match them. To step things up though, each level is a dynamic, slightly fascinating swirl of forms and colours, and you must figure out when and where to draw your straight line to connect the colours and complete the task. We have seen many shapes and puzzle oriented games but Linia Super has a consistent edge to it. An ever-dwindling time bar watches, judges, and mocks your attempts to complete the line-drawing, colour-sequence spotting puzzles. It feels like you're always rushing, one eye on the clock and the other trying to figure out when the best time is to lift your finger. This gives the game a certain gravity, just the right way.

There are a variety of levels to toil your head around, each with its unique art style and theme, but they all have the same fundamental draw-to-connect mechanic. As you try to complete a puzzle, the clock is ticking away, forcing you into increasingly frantic scrawls. You can certainly add seconds to the clock too by spending the coins you earn or purchase, giving you more time to locate the proper line. However, because you have so little time to begin with, you're frequently scrambling to replenish the bar before you've even had a chance to soak in the patterns you need to know. While this makes the game attract your full-on attention for the first few levels, it might not always end up in favour of the game itself though. We are not saying that it is a bad game, but instead of allowing its concepts to breathe, it constantly rushes you, forcing you to make decisions before you've had a chance to think about them. In the end, this causes more frustration than enjoyment to most players. Except for that two-sided sword, the game does the traditional shapes and puzzle style really well.

Cut Grass





Cut Grass is a casual lawn-mowing game that is advertised to calm your nerves in a stressful time due to its simplistic swipe-style controls. True as advertised, it is simplistic. Way too simplistic for our taste. You are the main character in the game: a blade that can cut through grass. You literally only have one

job. The initial download of the game takes a little longer than usual. Once the home screen loads up, you directly see the blade positioned on what looks like a number 1 made of grass. You have to cut through that grass without any obstacles to advance to level 2, so it is pretty easy.

After the basic level 2, however, ads pop up after you finish cutting the grass on every single number. After playing the game for a while, you will know the ads better than anything else. The only redeeming factor of the game is the pleasing visual of pink and white roses after you finish the level. While it stands up to its description of being a basic game, there are much better games to play if you want to simulate the act of mowing. A game called "It's Literally Just Mowing" applies the same concept of zen and satisfaction with better graphics. When the wind blows across its green, lush lawn or sunbeams shine through it, it's a sight to behold. If you enjoy looking at gently moving grass, "It's Literally Just Mowing" won't disappoint. We advise you to play that instead. Cut Grass would do much better by removing all the 30 second advertisements after every single level, and revamping their game to be more customizable and zen-like. It has a long way to go.

Retro Goal

Justifying its name, Retro Goal may appear to be a simple arcade soccer game at first glance, but that is not the whole of it. While you may manoeuvre pixelated players on a pitch with simple controls, you are also responsible to do more than that, which ultimately decides the outcome of a match. Retro Goal is unique in its approach as it splits the difference between almost every type of soccer game you can imagine, and it does so in such a manner that each component feels deep and meaningful without being overpowering. There are only three team facility bars to keep track of, as well as a limited list of new players you can test out at any time. You'll never have enough money to keep increasing your staff, but you'll always have a concentrated list of things to juggle, provided you have just the proper amount of things to try and achieve.

Apart from that you can do things like choose your team's formation, make substitutes, improve your team's facilities, and





even manage morale as the manager. You can also sign extra players in between matches, which can also lead to problems such as deciding who to criticise after a bad loss. Retro Goal makes you ride with your team for an entire season, after which you can either switch to another team and reset all you've established, or stick with the same club and strive to perform better next year. Retro Goal is a free-to-play game that allows users to try everything the game has to offer over the course of 10 matches. The unlimited edition of the game is about $ 0.99 after that, aside from a variety of other extra in-app payments you can make to enhance your team's profits or outright acquire exceptionally great players.great animation and is surprisingly fun for a gacha ARPG. You can easily sink hours into this one.

Peace, Death! 2

Peace, Death 2 is a sequel to an entertaining puzzle game. If you haven't played the first part, it was a fun little game in which we had to assign customers to paradise, hell, or purgatory based on their characteristics and qualities. The first game was more time-based, and we had to finish all of our clients in a set amount of time. The second game takes us to the same environment and asks us to sort people into paradise, hell, and purgatory, but the main gameplay is quite different this time around.

We really enjoyed the second part of the 'Peace, Death' series, and believe it is the worthy successor of the first one, albeit with





a more fascinating gameplay concept. It includes new side-quests and builds on the scenario. In general, the environment is lighthearted and full of pop culture and real-life references. Clients we meet during the course of our workdays are frequently based on characters from movies, video games, and other works of fiction, as well as some genuine people, such as politicians and internet superstars. The references aren't forced upon us; they're just there for those who recognise them. They don't have much of an impact on the gameplay. Our task as a reaper is to sort clients into one of three places, same like in the original game. This time, though, it is not timed, and we are not assigned to one client at a time. We are now given numerous clients at a time, and we must choose who travels to the provided place from among them. Even though the original game was enjoyable, this one reigns superior in many ways. It's a pretty cheap game to buy and promises approximately 8 hours of entertaining gameplay and gags in one session.

Heads Off

Heads Off is a weird game. It's mainly a platformer game made by PONOS Corporation. In the game, you play as a severed head (yes, you read that right) rolling on an endless platform. Since it's an endless platformer, there is no realistic end to the game but as far as a single level is concerned, it gets real difficult after a point of time. You see, the concept of the game is very weird and dark in the first place and that's exactly how the game





turned out to be. There is no real story or objective to achieve in the game either. It's just severed, rolling heads on a platform. In the movement department, things get a bit interesting. The way you roll forward or any other direction for that matter is through screaming. Tap the screen and the head on your screen suddenly starts screaming. And it'll gain velocity in the opposite direction of it's scream. As far as movement and controls are concerned, that's pretty much it. The screams themselves are pretty hilarious to listen to and they definitely add a comical aspect to an otherwise dark and gloomy environment + gameplay. This addition perfectly balances out the game. Through the platform, you'll collect 3 types of drops. White, yellow and blue. The white ones are in abundance, the yellow ones are rare and the blue ones are super rare and will only show up for particular heads. What do they do? Well, you can use them to grow new heads from a tree. Just when you thought it couldn't get any weirder, it did. Each head comes with it's own scream and ability to move. Some heads are heavy and won't take off the ground that easily. Some heads are very light and it becomes really difficult to control them. If you're interested, you can also read a randomly generated dark story on the side of your screen as you progress through the platforms.

All in all, Heads Off is a really good game if you want to pass some time and try to look like a maniac while you're at it. Just a bit of advice from us, NEVER play this game without your headphones on. The screams can get pretty scary and weird.

Little Big Robots - Mech Battle

Little Big Robots is an online PvP battle game made by Keystorm Holdings Ltd. In the game, you team up with four other players (including you) in a mecha suit and battle against the enemy team. You'll be put on a map and in the centre of the map, gems will spawn. You basically have to capture the gems, kill the enemy team and hold the gems on you till the round ends. If you get killed, all the gems that you were holding get dropped on the ground for anyone else to pick up. That's pretty much all there is to the game, at least battle-wise. Other than that, you can choose from a variety of robots which all have their own unique



abilities and special attacks. Coming to the movement department, you can move your mecha suit from the left joystick and aim + fire from the right joystick. If you tap the right joystick instead of dragging it to aim, you'll automatically fire towards the nearest enemy to you. Honestly, we found ourselves smashing the right joystick more than dragging it. Other than that, you get two more buttons which recharge overtime. Press the button with the lightning bolt on it and your mecha suit will perform it's special attack. Press the green button below it and you will heal. Obviously, both cannot be used continuously and they will require some time to charge up before they can be used again. For the robots themselves, you get a fixed variety of them and

you will gradually unlock all the robots as you keep levelling up. In the weapons department, there are a number of weapons that each robot can equip but it can only be done one weapon at a time. Just like the robots, you will gradually unlock the weapons as you progress and level up in the game.

All in all, Little Big Robots is a good time pass game which can be played during those boring short breaks. The only downside is that as of now, the overall gameplay just doesn't seem as polished as compared to the graphics of the game and (although this is a nitpick) the walking speed of the robot is very slow and can annoy some people. Other than that, it serves as a pretty decent casual action game.

Combat Master





Combat Master gives the impression of being a Call of Duty:Warzone Wannabe with every single aspect you see in the game. From the colour scheme in the menu, the loadout screen, the way your character runs and slides, and even the way it holds the gun while you're running. However, once you get into the game, you will see that the graphics are pretty decent and the game is well optimised and hence, it gives good frame rates. However, when you get to see the maps, you realise that they are blatant copies of other maps from various different games. You've got the scrapyard map which very much resembles the

Killhouse map from Call of Duty. You've got the trainyard which is directly inspired from the CS:GO map and a couple more. The few maps I did see that were original were quite small such as the Farm or the Hangar X87 or the Art Gallery. The gameplay of the game is, as I said, quite smooth but it is the overpowered weapons in the game that make it difficult to play. Someone with a knife bunny hopping away could easily kill someone else who is using an SMG or a rifle. In a similar way, people using overpowered SMGs were not a rare sight as the game provides for easy kills if you're using them. Of course, no game these days is complete without in-game purchases and well, this game isn't immune to that. There are multiple sets that you can buy in the game and well, I wouldn't exactly say that they're overpriced, but then again, I wouldn't pay that amount for a game that almost nobody knows or plays as of today. Overall, the game was fun to play once I got the hang of it but then again, I'd rather play that is a bit more balanced and not so one sided towards players who had paid to get a few skins in the game. *

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