PREVIEW
STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT II

PREVIEW
NEED FOR SPEED PAYBACK

REVIEW
MADDEN NFL 18

STRATEGY
METROID: SAMUS RETURNS

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FREE ISSUE

ISSUE 52





MATURE 17+
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ESRB
Blood and Gore
Intense Violence

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ISSUE **52**

CONTENTS



COVER STORY

SUPER MARIO ODYSSEY 30

Mario captures our attention with his highly anticipated platforming debut on the Nintendo Switch. Get a small taste in our cover story.

EA SPORTS

MADDEN NFL 18

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NFLPA

***Requires Madden NFL 18 for Xbox One or PlayStation 4 (sold separately). Persistent internet connection and EA account required to play. Must be 13+ to create an account.**

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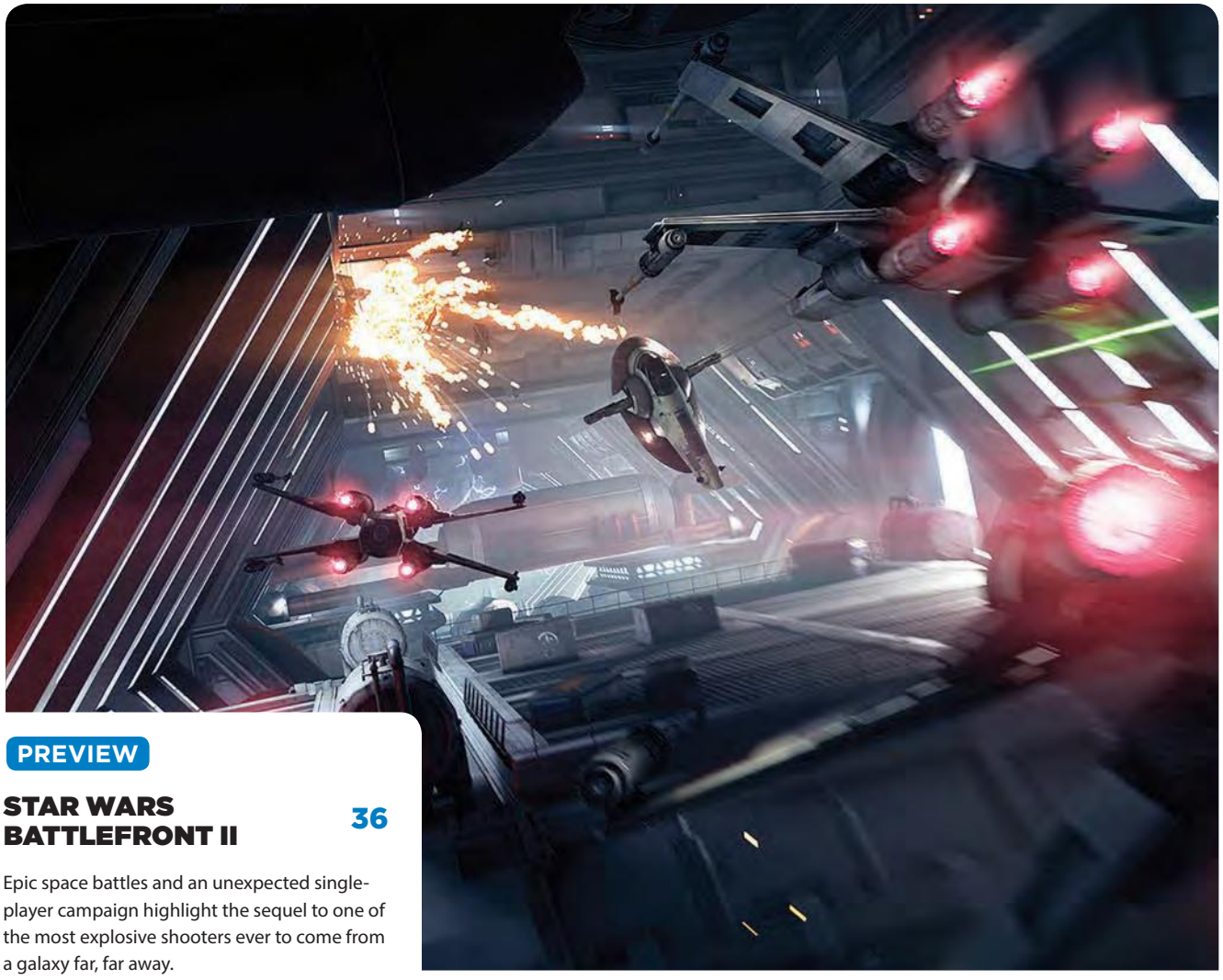
EVERYONE

E

ESRB

Comic Mischief
Mild Language
Mild Violence

CONTENTS



PREVIEW

STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT II 36

Epic space battles and an unexpected single-player campaign highlight the sequel to one of the most explosive shooters ever to come from a galaxy far, far away.

SECTIONS

EDITORIAL 08

GAME ON 10

5 TO PLAY 18

STRATEGY CENTER 46

PARTING SHOTS 50



PREVIEW

WWE 2K18 38

Featuring a massive roster of current stars and Hall of Fame legends, *WWE 2K18* unleashes more action than we can fit in our preview.

PREVIEW

NEED FOR SPEED: PAYBACK 42



REVIEW

MADDEN NFL 18 44

With an all -new story mode and some great tweaks to Madden Ultimate Team, find out if *Madden NFL 18* is ready for the Hall of Fame.



Built for 4K.

Play the biggest blockbuster games, and over 100 Xbox console exclusives with Xbox One. Xbox One S and Xbox One X are built to take advantage of 4K, and all your games and accessories work together.[1]

Xbox One X available November 7th

XBOX ONE

[1] Xbox One X supports 4K gaming; Xbox One S supports 4K game upscaling.

Microsoft

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ESRB esrb.org
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WELCOME
FROM THE EDITOR



THE BEAT OF ITS OWN DRUM

Nintendo confuses people. Not gamers, because they tend to figure these things out. But experts struggle to understand how, while other hardware makers rise, fall and sometimes disappear, Nintendo has remained a constant in the console world since it released the Famicom (the Japanese version of the NES) 34 years ago.

That's not to say some of its systems weren't more popular than others. The NES, SNES and Wii decidedly outsold the GameCube and Wii U. But die-hard Nintendo fans remain loyal, and the company repeatedly bounces back from any missteps.

Nintendo accomplishes this in two ways: innovation and software quality.

The Nintendo Switch exemplifies the company's commitment to innovation, as it's the first true hybrid console/handheld. But making the console portable wasn't enough. The designers also created the Joy-Con pads with excellent motion control; local connectivity like the 3DS; and a seamless transition from handheld to television gaming.

Players embraced the Switch immediately, thanks in no small part to the second thing the company does so well: making fantastic games.

The Switch launched with a serious Game of the Year contender, *The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild*. Since then, the company has released one big game per month with such heavy hitters as *Mario Kart 8 Deluxe* and *Splatoon 2*.

In October, players will see what could be the console's biggest release of its first year, *Super Mario Odyssey*. The first fully 3D *Mario* game since 2010, *Odyssey* redefines what players can expect from the series. Check out our cover story on page 30 and find out what you have to look forward to.

Nintendo has more treats in store before the year's end. For the Switch, *Fire Emblem Warriors* and *Xenoblade Chronicles II* are sure to please fans. The 3DS 's newest big release is *Metroid: Samus Returns,* and *Pokémon Ultra Sun* and *Ultra Moon* arrive in November.

And don't forget about the SNES Classic. With 21 classic games, it's the perfect way to celebrate Nintendo retro gaming.

Of course, some players prefer other consoles, and many play on more than one. We have plenty of previews, reviews and strategies for all of the systems. So take a look at this month's free print and digital editions of Walmart GameCenter magazine, and thanks for letting us keep you at center of everything gaming.

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Intense Violence
Blood and Gore
Suggestive Themes
Strong Language

XBOX ONE PS4™ Gun. illfonic

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GAME ON

GAMING NEWS, NUMBERS & GOSSIP

BY GAMECENTER STAFF

BIG ENHANCEMENTS FOR GAMES OLD AND NEW ON XBOX ONE X

The Xbox One X, which launches in November, will not only bring true 4K gaming into your living room, but improve and enhance games in numerous other ways as well.

Microsoft recently revealed that more than 100 games — both new ones old — will be seeing such enhancements for the Xbox One X, with more titles coming. (See the sidebar for some of the most anticipated titles.)

Assassin's Creed Origins gives us a good look at what's possible. On the Xbox One X, the game will render in 4K on televisions that support UHD, or output an oversampled image of higher quality on 1080p displays. The visuals will get HDR enhancement, while the game's audio will be richer and more immersive, thanks to Dolby Atmos support. The draw distance for elements such as grass, plants and rocks will be twice as far on the Xbox One X versus a standard Xbox One, and switching between characters will transition more quickly.

Meanwhile, for an example of the benefits on a previously released game, Square Enix ran down the upgrades that will be introduced to *Rise of the Tomb Raider*. The game will have three visual settings to choose from: Native 4K, Enhanced Visuals or High Frame Rate. HDR and Dolby Atmos support will be added; the resolution of graphical textures for Lara, NPCs and environments will increase; and anti-aliasing, reflections and other visual enhancements will be improved.

From old favorites to much-anticipated upcoming releases, players will experience games on the Xbox One X in ways never before possible. Before it hits shelves on November 7, pre-order your own console from Walmart.com or your local Walmart store.





ENHANCED FOR XBOX ONE X

- Anthem
- Assassin's Creed Origins
- CODE VEIN
- Conan Exiles
- Crackdown 3
- Darksiders III
- Dead Rising 4
- Diablo III: Reaper of Souls – Ultimate Evil Edition
- Dishonored 2
- Dishonored: Death of the Outsider
- DRAGON BALL Fighter Z
- FIFA 18
- Elex
- Fallout 4
- Final Fantasy XV
- Forza Horizon 3
- Forza Motorsport 7
- Gears of War 4
- Halo 5: Guardians
- Halo Wars 2
- Injustice 2
- Madden NFL 18
- Middle-earth: Shadow of War
- Minecraft: Xbox One Edition
- Monster Hunter: World
- NBA 2K18
- Need for Speed Payback
- PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds
- Resident Evil 7 biohazard
- Rise of the Tomb Raider
- Sonic Forces
- Star Wars II Battlefront
- The Elder Scrolls Online: Morrowind
- The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim Special Edition
- The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt
- Titanfall 2
- Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon Wildlands
- Tom Clancy's The Division
- Wolfenstein II: The New Colossus

BY THE NUMBERS

30+ Explorable regions waiting for players in *Assassin's Creed Origins*

40 Seconds you'll be able to rewind time in *Super Mario World* on the SNES Classic Edition. Other games will allow different amounts of time.

482 Approximate hours it took YouTube streamer Failstream to beat his ridiculously hard *Super Mario Maker* level so he could upload it

540p Special resolution that will be selectable in Rare's *Sea of Thieves* (along with a 15fps setting)

20+ Years the indie dungeon crawler Grimoire: Heralds of the Winged Exemplar was in development before its August release





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AN EASIER WAY TO THE REVOLUTION OF BATTLEFIELD 1

If you haven't jumped into the latest of chapter of DICE's beloved *Battlefield* series just yet, EA has a fantastic new deal for you.

Would-be soldiers can sign up for service with *Battlefield 1 Revolution*, a new physical release for the epic first-person shooter based on the battles of World War I. For the price of the original base version of *Battlefield 1*, consumers will get the full main game and free access to four major expansions with the inclusion of the *Battlefield 1* Premium Pass.

The first of those expansions, *They Shall Not Pass*, brings the French army to the game, along with four new maps set in France, a new game mode, and an assortment of other additional weapons and vehicles. The second expansion, *In the Name of the Tsar*, throws Russian forces into the mix, along with six snow-covered maps, 11 major new weapons and a host of other goodies. From there, anyone purchasing *Battlefield 1 Revolution* will have access to the final two expansions as they're released, with *Turning Tides* coming in December and *Apocalypse* arriving in early 2018.

Battlefield 1 Revolution will also come packed with additional content, including the Harlem Hellfighter pack, the Red Baron pack and the Lawrence of Arabia pack. This is the perfect way to catch up with what's been released for the game so far and to be ready when the next expansions come along.

Battlefield 1 Revolution is available now, so pick up your copy on Walmart.com or at your local Walmart store.

Walmart

RELEASE CALENDAR

All the great new games on the way to Walmart and Walmart.com

FORZA MOTORSPORT 7 MICROSOFT / XBOX ONE, PC	oct 3
MIDDLE-EARTH: SHADOW OF WAR WBIE / XBOX ONE, PS4, PC	10
THE EVIL WITHIN 2 BETHESDA / XBOX ONE, PS4, PC	13
ELEX THQ NORDIC / XBOX ONE, PS4, PC	17
GRAN TURISMO SPORT SONY / PS4	17
SOUTH PARK: THE FRACTURED BUT WHOLE UBISOFT / XBOX ONE, PS4, PC	17
WWE 2K18 2K / XBOX ONE, PS4, SWITCH	17
FIRE EMBLEM WARRIORS NINTENDO / SWITCH, 3DS	20
ASSASSIN'S CREED ORIGINS UBISOFT / XBOX ONE, PS4, PC	27
SUPER MARIO ODYSSEY NINTENDO / SWITCH	27
WOLFENSTEIN II: THE NEW COLOSSUS BETHESDA / XBOX ONE, PS4, PC	27
CALL OF DUTY: WWII ACTIVISION / XBOX ONE, PS4, PC	nov 3
NEED FOR SPEED PAYBACK EA / XBOX ONE, PS4, PC	10
LEGO MARVEL SUPER HEROES 2 WBIE / XBOX ONE, PS4, SWITCH, PC	14
POKÉMON ULTRA SUN/ULTRA MOON NINTENDO / 3DS	17
STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT II EA / XBOX ONE, PS4, PC	17

IT'S A-ME, ROCKET LEAGUE!

One of the biggest surprise hits in gaming in recent years has been Psyonix's *Rocket League*. While its predecessor, *Supersonic Acrobatic Rocket-Powered Battle-Cars*, saw moderate success, the studio's sequel mash-up of vehicular combat and soccer gained a huge following seemingly overnight. Now to the delight of Nintendo fans around the globe, *Rocket League* is making its way to the Switch.



Not only is it coming, but it's bringing some special Nintendo-themed content with it. Exclusive to the Switch version will be three cars themed around Mario, Luigi and *Metroid*'s Samus Aran. The Mario and Luigi cars are themed to each brother's personal color scheme and logo, while Samus' car is based on her space-faring Gunship. Boost trails will also be unique to each, with the two Mario cars leaving trails of stars while the Metroid car shoots a Wave Beam. These special car models will come included with all copies of the game, along with other exclusive cosmetic items such as Mario and Luigi hats.

The Switch version of *Rocket League* will be released this holiday season, and will feature full online multiplayer with the ability to cross-play with other players on Xbox One and PC. Secure your pre-order for the game at walmart.com or by visiting your local Walmart store.





ANIMALS, SWORD FIGHTING AND HIGH-TECH BODY MODS COMBINE IN BIOMUTANT

One of the most interesting new game announcements to come out of the recent Gamescom 2017 was THQ Nordic's upcoming open-world action RPG *Biomutant*.

What's so special about the game? Well, it starts with the main character, who is a firearm-wielding, sword-swinging, eye patch-wearing, mutagen-powered anthropomorphic chinchilla-fox creature. Our furry lead character lives in a lush post-apocalyptic world ravaged by a plague, where separate tribes now constantly go to war over the Tree of Life.

Biomutant's open world features a diverse landscape with mountains, jungles and networks of tunnels just waiting to be explored.

Bringing peace to the world of *Biomutant* won't be easy, as you'll be tasked with either uniting those tribes or eliminating them entirely. There will be other examples of player-driven choice as well, such as the ability to customize your character with different robotic prosthetic enhancements and biological mutations. These choices can change what options you'll have during combat, which blends together a mix of melee and firearms action similar to titles such as *Devil May Cry*. For example, you can grow spiky bars on your tail for more direct attacks, or gain telekinetic powers to make combat a bit more elegant. Crafting unique melee weapons and firearms will be integral to survival, as will learning new combat styles from masters spread across the world map. You'll even be able to make cosmetic changes to your main character such as picking its gender, body type, fur color and more.

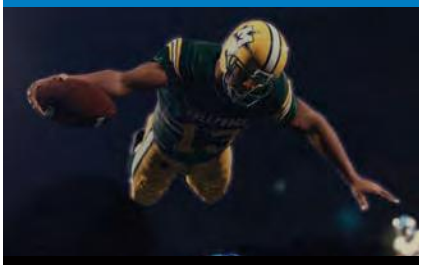
Biomutant's open world promises to feature a diverse landscape to play in, with mountains, jungles and underground networks of tunnels just waiting to be explored. To help you traverse the game's wildlands, you can choose from a variety of vehicles, such as jet skis, paragliders, mounts and even mechs.

If you're thinking that all sounds like a combination of ideas that might be hard to pull off, the team behind *Biomutant* is the Swedish indie studio Experiment 101, whose founder previously worked on other big, ambitious open-world games such as 2015's *Mad Max* and the *Just Cause* series.

With what's looking like a unique blend of characters, story, world and gameplay, this is a game that you're definitely going to want to keep on your radar. *Biomutant* is slated for release on Xbox One, PlayStation 4 and PC sometime in 2018.

Walmart's TOP SELLERS

THIS MONTH'S TOP-SELLING VIDEO GAMES ...



01 **MADDEN NFL 18**
EA SPORTS
XBOX ONE, PS4

02 **GRAND THEFT AUTO V**
ROCKSTAR GAMES
XBOX ONE, PS4, XBOX 360, PS3, PC

03 **CALL OF DUTY: BLACK OPS III**
ACTIVISION
XBOX ONE, PS4, XBOX 360, PS3, PC

04 **CRASH BANDICOOT: N-SANE TRILOGY**
ACTIVISION
PS4

05 **MINECRAFT**
MOJANG
XBOX ONE, PS4, XBOX 360, PS3, WII U

06 **NBA 2K17**
2K
XBOX ONE, PS4, XBOX 360, PS3

07 **SPLATOON 2**
NINTENDO
SWITCH

08 **MARIO KART 8 DELUXE**
NINTENDO
SWITCH

09 **THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: BREATH OF THE WILD**
NINTENDO
SWITCH

10 **CALL OF DUTY 4: MODERN WARFARE**
ACTIVISION
XBOX ONE, PS4, XBOX 360, PS3, PC

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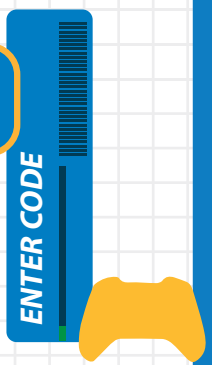
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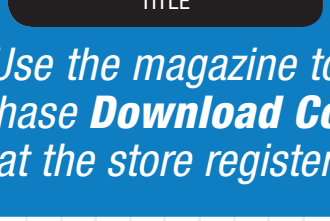
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Redeem the code printed on your receipt in your game console to download (when available) and then Play First without returning to the store!



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OCTOBER 2017





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XBOX ONE PS4 PC DVD ROM THQNORDIC PIRANHA BYTES

MATURE 17+ M ESRB
Blood
Strong Language
Suggestive Themes
Violence

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Landing October 27th

EVERYONE 10+

E 10+

ESRB

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Comic Mischief

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Nintendo

SUPER MARIO ODYSSEY™



SWITCH&PLAY



ONE

FORZA MOTORSPORT 7

RYAN COOPER, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, TURN 10 STUDIOS

"For *Forza Motorsport 7*, we wanted to focus on letting players experience the explosive power of motorsport: the sights, sounds, and feel of driving amazing cars at the limit. As such, we've reimagined the way our fans can experience cars, tracks and even the driver. The game has the most diverse lineup of cars in series history, with more than 700 cars, including the largest collection of Porsches, Lamborghinis and Ferraris in any racing game. It also has our largest track list ever, with every [return to the same track] a different experience thanks to dynamic weather and racing conditions. Additionally, for the first time in *Forza*, fans can personalize their driver's appearance with our massive Driver Gear collection, which includes hundreds of options spanning decades of race history and pop culture. There is also an all-new campaign called the Forza Driver's Cup, as well as new Leagues and enhanced spectating modes."

FACT FILE

PUBLISHER MICROSOFT STUDIOS
DEVELOPER TURN 10 STUDIOS
PLATFORMS XBOX ONE, PC
RELEASE DATE 10.03.17

PS4

Only at Walmart



FIFA 18 PlayStation®4 Bundle

Available September 29, 2017

EVERYONE E ESRB

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GREATNESS AWAITS



TWO

NHL 18

SEAN RAMJAGSINGH, PRODUCER, EA VANCOUVER

"With *NHL 18*, our goal was to take inspiration from the real world of hockey and capture the speed, skill and creativity of today's NHL. From a gameplay perspective, we have several new dekes which really gives our fans the ability to show off their offensive creativity. These dekes include between-the-legs passes and shots, one-hand dekes and tucks on the goalie, drag moves, the Datsyuk flip and much more. To counter all of the new offensive moves, we've also added a new Defensive Skill Stick to give players full control to take away passing lanes, deflect shots and block passes. We've also added a new 3-on-3 mode called NHL Threes, which is about accessible, fast-paced, hard-hitting, high-goal scoring, pick-up-and-play hockey, which takes all the best elements of authentic hockey and amplifies it in a small rink with minimal rules."

FACT FILE

PUBLISHER ELECTRONIC ARTS
DEVELOPER EA VANCOUVER
PLATFORMS XBOX ONE, PS4
RELEASE DATE 09.15.17

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ENFANTS et ADULTES

E

ESRB

Mild Lyrics
Chansons grossières



THREE

NBA 2K18

ROB JONES, SENIOR PRODUCER, VISUAL CONCEPTS

"We aimed for the sky with the Xbox One, PlayStation 4, Switch and PC versions of *NBA 2K18*, and pretty much revamped every major mode in those versions of the game. From all-new graphics and audio to revolutionizing our most-played modes, no stone was left unturned. With the introduction of The Neighborhood, we essentially turned MyCAREER from being a mostly linear adventure to an open one that lets you experience the climb to the top of your game in the way you choose to. MyGM also catches up to MyCareer by introducing its own interactive storyline that guides you in your ownership of an NBA franchise. Finally, our gameplay team has furiously worked to create an incredibly balanced game experience. *NBA 2K18* introduces a new motion engine that changes the feel of the game, while refining game mechanics and creating the most realistic representation of the NBA ever seen in digital form."

FACT FILE

PUBLISHER 2K SPORTS
DEVELOPER VISUAL CONCEPTS
PLATFORMS XBOX ONE, PS4, SWITCH, XBOX 360, PS3, PC
RELEASE DATE 09.15.17

PS4

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STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT II

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[2] Compared to Standard Edition launch date 11.17.17
[3] Exclusive to preorder and Deluxe Edition customers.

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TEEN T ESRB
Violence



FOUR

FIFA 18

Though the new *FIFA* is powered by Frostbite, the engine behind such games as *Battlefield 1* and *Star Wars Battlefront II*, no one gets to use The Force in this soccer game. Instead, this year's model adds a new animation system dubbed Real Player Motion Technology, which makes players move like their real-world counterparts. They'll also play like themselves as well, as this includes superstars' singular moves such as Cristiano Ronaldo's sprint, Raheem Sterling's unique turns, and Arjen Robben's distinctive arm movements. Speaking of which, *FIFA 18* also features FUT Icons, which brings such iconic players as Ronaldo Nazário to the virtual pitch. If you'd rather be your own icon, The Journey: Hunter Returns puts you in the role of the fictional futbol star in a continuation of last year's story mode that co-stars Ronaldo and other European football players.

FACT FILE

PUBLISHER ELECTRONIC ARTS
DEVELOPER EA VANCOUVER
PLATFORMS XBOX ONE, PS4, PC
RELEASE DATE 09.29.17

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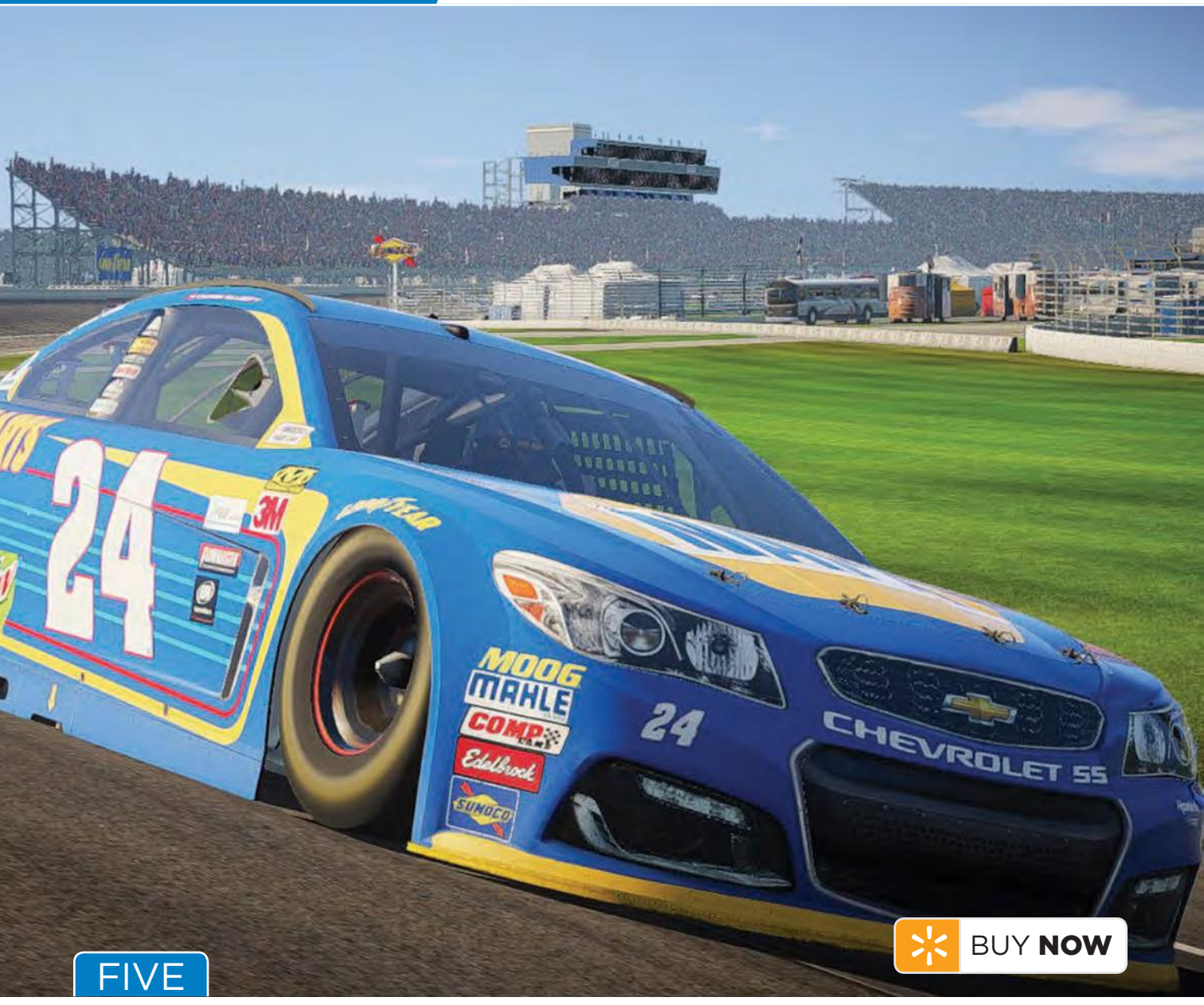
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FIVE

NASCAR HEAT 2

SEAN WILSON, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, 704GAMES

"For *NASCAR Heat 2*, we've added two racing series: the NASCAR Xfinity Series and the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series. They're like the minor leagues of baseball, and having them in the game allows us to offer much more depth. For example, we've added a new career mode where you work your way up from the truck series, through Xfinity, all the way to the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series. We've also added two-player local split-screen because NASCAR is a family sport, and we really wanted to give families the chance to play against each other. We've also added six new tracks, including Eldora Speedway, which is a dirt track for the trucks. This meant we had to add dirt physics, which are a blast. We also added a custom car creation area where players can create their own car designs for all series, and race them against friends online."

FACT FILE

PUBLISHER 704GAMES
DEVELOPER MONSTER GAMES
PLATFORMS XBOX ONE, PS4, PC
RELEASE DATE 9.12.17

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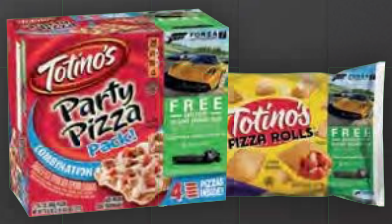
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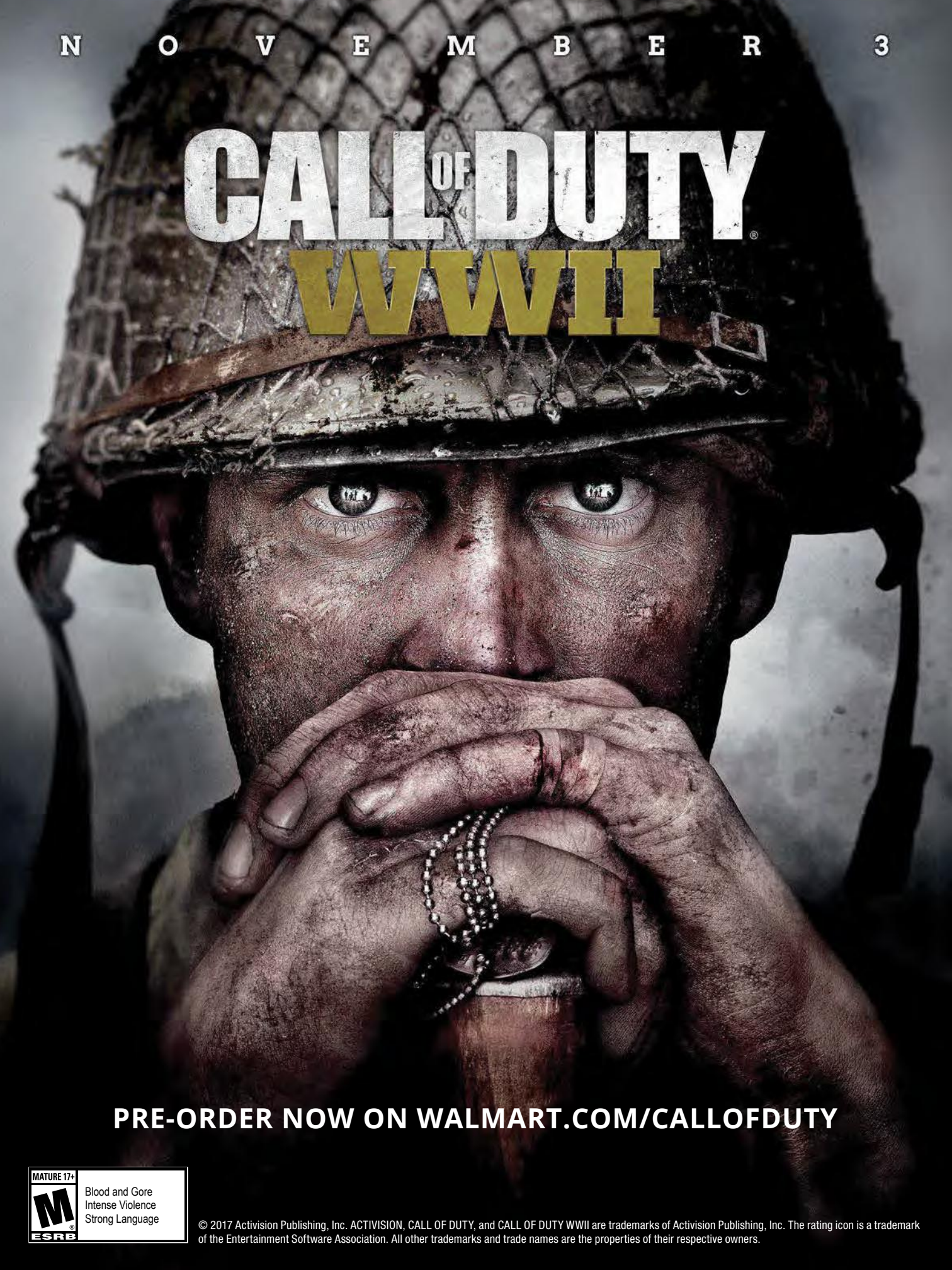


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SUPER MARIO ODYSSEY

HANG ON TO YOUR HAT

BY EMMA SCHAEFER

FACT FILE

PUBLISHER NINTENDO
DEVELOPER NINTENDO EPD
PLATFORM SWITCH
RELEASE DATE 10.27.2017

PRE-ORDER







The Nintendo Switch is off to a great start, but it's been missing the mustachioed man, the dauntless explorer, the former plumber, Mario himself. With *Super Mario Odyssey* entering the scene, that's about to change.

Nintendo's upcoming Mario game harkens back to the days of Super Mario 64 and Super Mario Sunshine's sandbox-style gameplay, giving Mario a huge open world to explore. As its name implies, Mario's journey will whisk him far outside the Mushroom Kingdom as he pursues Princess Peach, who has been kidnapped by Bowser to be his bride, and puts a stop to the wedding plans that have turned various Kingdoms upside down.

Mario won't be alone in his journey, however. His newest ally, Cappy, takes the form of Mario's Cap, and it's only with Cappy's help that Mario can face down his stronger enemies. Cappy can be thrown, boomerang-style, in a straight line in front of Mario, or serve as an extra jump point to cross particularly wide gaps. Toss him straight or in a circle, and he'll do damage to surrounding enemies. That's not Cappy's most important skill, however. If you throw Cappy at certain enemies and objects with exposed heads, it will temporarily capture them and grant Mario full control of that creature's abilities.

Throw Cappy at a Bullet Bill, for example, and Mario will effectively take over that Bullet Bill, allowing him to fly horizontally across gaps that are too wide to cross normally. Take over a Hammer Bro, and you'll be able to toss hammers just the same. The possibilities are endless: Some enemies can fly, cross lava,

Nintendo's upcoming Mario game harkens back to *Super Mario 64* and *Super Mario Sunshine*'s sandbox-style gameplay.

The Kingdoms

Mario's ship, the Odyssey, transports our hero through a series of colorful worlds. Nintendo's keeping a few of them a mystery, but we know of these so far.

Metro Kingdom

An urban world full of skyscrapers, the Metro Kingdom makes many references to the original *Donkey Kong* games, including an appearance by Mayor Pauline, now the mayor.

Sand Kingdom

The deserts of the Sand Kingdom have been frozen over, putting Tostarena Town and the Desert Oasis in peril.

Wooded Kingdom

Plants have taken over this once-industrial land, where Mario finds radios and rather anxious robotic watering cans in a lush forest.

Luncheon Kingdom

This colorful kingdom is full of crystals, food, crystalized food and a few sentient fork people.

Cascade Kingdom

As the name implies, this world has lots of waterfalls — but it's also full of dinosaurs!

Cap Kingdom

This misty world features an elegant, yet mysterious, black-and-gold color scheme and is filled with — you guessed it — caps and hats.

Cappy's Powers

Thanks to Cappy's magic, Mario's able to take control of both enemies and stationary objects to gain new powers. Here's a small sample of what's in store.

Uproots

In their natural state, Uproots appear to be small, flower pot-like enemies. Take control of them, though, and you'll see just how far their vine-like legs extend, boosting Mario to high, hard-to-reach places.

Bullet Bills

These classic Mario enemies could always fly straight across each level, and now Mario can use them to jet over gaps and open areas that don't have floors.

Moe-Eyes



Inspired by Easter Island's Moai, these rocky enemies sport some sweet sunglasses and hum a few bars of the *Super Mario Bros.* theme while walking around. Flip their sunglasses on or off to reveal invisible pathways.

T. rex

The full extent of the dinosaur king's powers has yet to be revealed, except for one surprising connection: According to the developers, controlling the T. rex should feel similar to controlling his smaller and cuter cousin, Yoshi.

detect invisible paths or grow vines to reach high-up places. Thus, Mario enjoys nearly limitless mobility across the land. Even inanimate objects such as traffic cones can be possessed and stretched to fling Mario to distant locations. This ability doesn't stop just because an enemy is larger or more powerful, either — Mario is even capable of controlling a king of the dinosaurs, a Tyrannosaurus rex.

To encounter such a variety of enemies, Mario travels far beyond his usual stomping grounds. He gains control of the Odyssey, an enormous hat-shaped airship powered by the Power Moons and Grand Moons. These Moons are scattered around each of the Kingdoms Mario discovers, often hidden behind a puzzle or a particularly tricky bit of platforming. Mario must collect enough Moons in each level to continue his travels. Unlike the Stars and Moons in past Mario games, however, collecting these won't send you back to the beginning of the level; you'll keep on exploring without any interruptions.



Mario is capable of controlling a king of the dinosaurs, a Tyrannosaurus rex.





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Multiplayer

While *Super Mario Odyssey* is chiefly a single-player game, you can invite a friend along for some local co-op fun. Instead of dropping in as Luigi or Princess Peach, however, the second player will take control of a character that's already there — Mario's hat, Cappy. This changes the abilities of both characters. Player one, as Mario, will be able to run, jump and carry objects, while Player two, as Cappy, can fly independently and attack enemies.

This combination can alter the design of some puzzles, so it's to the players' benefit to work together. For example, the player controlling Cappy can take down enemies while Mario concentrates on jumping from platform to platform. With careful timing and teamwork, Cappy can serve as a series of platforms from which Mario can jump across large gaps and reach the end of some puzzles.



Super Mario Odyssey is sure to take us on an unforgettable journey.

Ensuring a smooth journey was a priority of the game's designers, as they changed how Mario's deaths and checkpoints work. You can activate checkpoints simply by walking over them, and if you fall off a high ledge or get stomped by a Goomba (how embarrassing), you'll reappear at the checkpoint. These serve a second purpose, though: The checkpoints link together to form a fast-travel system. In addition, if Mario's health is reduced to nothing, you're no longer reset to the beginning of the level. Instead, the game will drain a few coins from your inventory and carry on from a checkpoint.

Mario veterans might not consider this a big deal, but coins have gained new value in *Super Mario Odyssey*. Two types of currency are available to collect: the standard round golden coins found everywhere and differently shaped purple bits, designed uniquely for each Kingdom. Scattered across the various lands are Crazy Cap Stores, where Mario can spend his accumulated currency on power-ups, accessories and different outfits to change up his look. Naturally, hats play a major theme. One side of each store deals in normal golden coins and the other in local currency, so you'll need to explore each world thoroughly to buy local goods.

Many other surprises await, including major bosses to fight across the Kingdoms (Bowser's not the only baddie out there, after all), and stages that may change as the game goes on. The same area may be revisited under different circumstances, such as in clear weather versus a thunderstorm, or in the daytime versus at night. There's even a hint of classic 2D *Mario* in the mix, with Warp Pipes that allow Mario to become two-dimensional so he can leap up obstacles or solve a puzzle before popping back to three-dimensional space.

Whatever the Kingdom, time or dimension, *Super Mario Odyssey* is sure take us on an unforgettable journey.





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PREVIEW

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STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT II

THE FORCE IS STRONG WITH THIS SEQUEL

BY NICK PLESSAS

Star Wars Battlefront II is no longer far, far away, and fans are learning more about the game with each passing month. The most recent *Star Wars Battlefront* rebooted the series and brought it to the current console generation. While it was a quality experience overall, it lacked some of the original series' charm. With its direction clear, *Star Wars Battlefront II* is taking another shot at the mark.

Star Wars Battlefront II's first advancement is its story campaign, a feature missing from the previous outing, set immediately after the events of *Return of the Jedi*. Players take the role of Iden Versio, the leader of the Empire's elite Inferno Squad, seeking vengeance for the Emperor's death. The campaign's gameplay will be equally dynamic, with numerous engagements on the ground and in space, some of which are experienced through a handful of the narrative's greatest heroes.

Hero characters have a modest impact on the game's story campaign, but their presence is much grander in *Star Wars Battlefront II*'s highly anticipated competitive multiplayer. Developer DICE has improved the multiplayer in nearly every way. Apart from the implementation of multiple Star Wars eras for much broader multiplayer variety, *Star Wars Battlefront II* innovates on the last game's basic multiplayer structure. The simplistic loadouts

***Star Wars Battlefront II*'s first advancement is its story campaign, a feature missing from the previous outing.**





FACT FILE

PUBLISHER ELECTRONIC ARTS
DEVELOPER EA DICE
PLATFORMS XBOX ONE, PS4, PC
RELEASE DATE 11.17.2017

DREAM HEROES

There are more than a handful of Hero/Villain characters already confirmed for the game, with even more teased through leaks. Here are three characters we are hoping to see, but no one should expect them.

IDEN VERSIO



Since players spend the entire single-player campaign with this character, it only makes sense to let them take her into multiplayer after getting so much practice.

JAR JAR BINKS

Hate this him you want, but *Star Wars Battlefront II*'s multiplayer spans across all three eras. Jar Jar Binks exists in the lore, so we might as well put him to work fighting those droids.

BB-8

This might be even more far-fetched than Jar Jar, but think about it: Give the little droid a variety of supportive abilities and great speed, and it could be a real asset for a team.



of 2015's *Star Wars Battlefront* are gone, replaced with four standard trooper classes that each bring distinct skills to the fight, such as the Heavy class's personal shield.

Aerial ships and the aforementioned Hero characters have also undergone a dramatic shift. Instead of occupying the random map pick-ups, their acquisitions require players to purchase them using currency earned over the course of the match. These changes give the experience far more specialization than the previous game, rewarding players for focusing on their strengths. If ground combat really isn't your thing, you'll be happy to learn that multi-stage Starfighter Assault space battles are coming back in full force, no longer restricted to DLC purchases.

Fans offered several suggestions after playing 2015's *Star Wars Battlefront*, and DICE seems to have taken many onboard. If *Star Wars Battlefront II*'s finished product ends up being as good as it looks, we should expect to enjoy it for quite a while.

PRE-ORDER

WWE 2K18

RINGSIDE PANDEMONIUM

BY RAY CARSILLO



FACT FILE

PUBLISHER 2K SPORTS
DEVELOPER VISUAL CONCEPTS/YUKE'S
PLATFORMS XBOX ONE, PS4, SWITCH
RELEASE DATE 10.17. 2017

It's never easy finding ways to improve on a game that has annual iterations. Despite this, Visual Concepts decided to rebuild its entire game engine behind the *WWE 2K* series from the ground up after feedback about last year's game, and it looks like it's going to pay huge dividends in *WWE 2K18*.

Shedding the weight of making games for Xbox 360 and PS3 this year was a key factor in freeing up the resources Visual Concepts needed to focus on the graphics and engine rebuild. This has resulted in the most realistic WWE game we've ever seen. New facial animations, supremely accurate wrestler entrances and new lighting that plays realistically off dozens of different materials produces an image that makes *WWE 2K18* look almost as good as a live event would on TV.

Visual Concepts rebuilt its entire game engine behind the *WWE 2K* series.

But why stop at just visuals? *WWE 2K18* also touts entirely new audio from key WWE personnel. JoJo is the new ring announcer in this year's game, and although Michael Cole returns as the play-by-play man, he has all-new dialogue alongside Byron Saxton and Corey Graves, recreating their old three-man RAW commentary team. This helps up the realism and accuracy when compared to the real-world product that *WWE 2K18* is trying to mimic.

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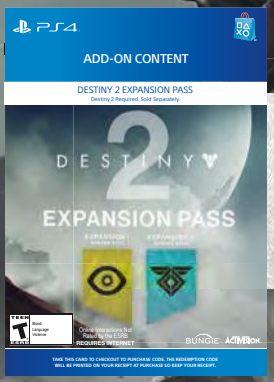
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DESTINY 2



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A SLOBBERKNOCKER OF A MATCH

Another benefit of rebuilding its engine from scratch is that Visual Concepts can fit more wrestlers on screen at once with no slowdown. This means they are finally adding back in a match type that fans have been clamoring to see for years: the 8-man tag-team match.

Instead of the traditional two-versus-two setup of most tag matches, the 8-man match is a four-versus-four scenario that allows for more friends to pick more wrestlers and simulate more chaotic action than ever before. You can mix and match characters from the roster to create your own stable of characters like The Four Horsemen, or schedule it in WWE Universe mode as a way to feature multiple tag teams on a night when your fight card might be filled up with singles matches. Either way, any time eight guys are in the ring, you can be sure the fists and fun will be flying.





Luckily, the changes go beyond mere aesthetics, and the action in the ring has seen an upgrade as well. One change in particular has made it easier to create a more thrilling match for players and keep the flow of the game going smoothly, and that is the new carry mechanics.

The "neck-pinch" of years past that had you drag prone opponents has been done away with. Instead, players can actually carry their opponents in a variety of ways, similar to what is seen on WWE programming, to realistically place their prone bodies in position for some truly awesome punishment. Fireman's carries, crossbody carries or even sitting wrestlers on your shoulders will allow you to better position yourself for follow-up attacks before performing moves like Sheamus' Rolling Fireman's Carry, Big Cass's Fallaway Slam or Seth Rollins' Turnbuckle Powerbomb. You have to be careful, though, since the longer you hold an opponent, the greater opportunity they have to counter your carry.

Even with limited time between entries, *WWE 2K18* is pulling out all the stops this year to make sure we get the most realistic WWE product yet. And with every major feature of the game seeing upgrades, you'd have more luck beating the Undertaker at Wrestlemania than proving them wrong.

WWE 2K18 pulled out all the stops to give us the most realistic WWE product yet.







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**RONALDO EDITION FOR THE XBOX ONE, PS4 AND PC IS AVAILABLE SEPTEMBER 26.

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PRE-ORDER



FACT FILE

PUBLISHER ELECTRONIC ARTS
DEVELOPER GHOST GAMES
PLATFORMS XBOX ONE, PS4, PC
RELEASE DATE 10.10.2017

NEED FOR SPEED *PAYBACK*

THE STREETS ARE PAVED WITH REVENGE

BY EVAN SLEAD

The 23rd entry in a long-running franchise, *Need for Speed Payback* turns the driver's seat into a director's chair. By sticking to the high-octane aesthetic of the series while pulling in the cinematic action-packed style of racing/heist movies, developer Ghost Games combines killer racing gameplay with Hollywood blockbuster aesthetics. It's time to put revenge into overdrive.

The citizens of Fortune Valley are used to dangerous street racers plaguing their roads. However, an elusive cartel, The House, is increasing the mayhem, so a vigilante needs to take charge. Players control the crew — hacker Mac, wheelman Tess and leader and ex-street racer Tyler Morgan — who must hit the streets of Fortune Valley and bring down The House.

If the cartel weren't enough, the local police also have their radar set on the crew, and this time around, they're ready to rumble. As you accrue Heat Levels, the cops take to their own souped-up vehicles such as Rhinos and Corvettes, and have the ability to deploy road-blocks and spike strips during hot pursuits.

Fortunately, players can use some of Tyler, Mac, and Jess' tricks to hold their own. Get behind the wheel of some of the world's fastest and most coveted cars, including the upcoming 2018 BMW M5. As added flair, the new Vanity Items system allows players to detail any car the way they want, making every livery personal and unique.

For bragging rights, the new Autolog online feature posts the best scores from your races with your friends onto the game's leaderboard. However, you don't need to be connected all the time. Gamers looking for a solo experience can enjoy the main campaign offline. Either way, *Need for Speed Payback* promises to deliver the series' best action-packed adventure yet.

Developer Ghost Games combined killer racing gameplay with Hollywood blockbuster aesthetics.





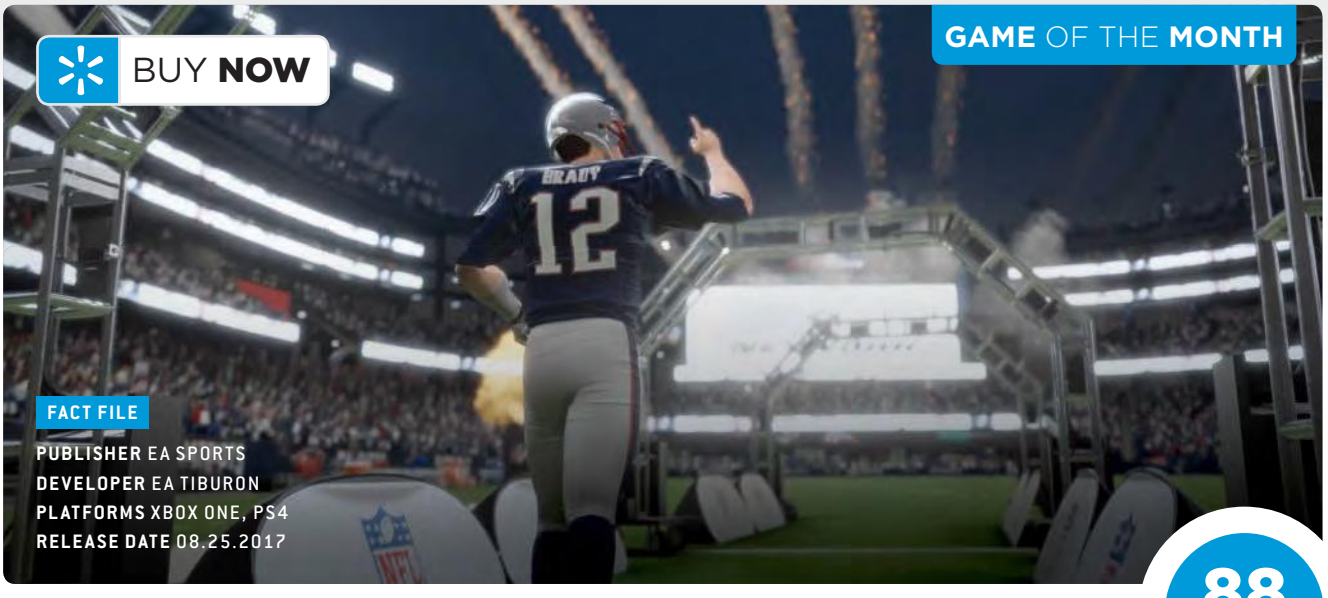
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88
100

MADDEN NFL 18

FROSTBITE MAKES THIS SEASON THE SERIES' MOST REALISTIC

BY MARC CAMRON

Yearly updates of sports games fall into two categories: incremental updates that offer roster changes and a few gameplay tweaks, and major overhauls. *Madden NFL 18* definitely falls into the latter category, though some updates succeed more than others.

The *Madden NFL 18* move to EA's DICE's Frostbite 3 engine is obvious the minute you turn on the game. Larger, more detailed character models take to a field featuring sharper textures, while more subtle lighting highlights their uniforms and gleams off their helmets.

Visually stunning in every way, *Madden 18* comes closer than ever to the promise of photo-realism in sports games. Impressively fluid animations sacrifice nothing to the game's overall excellent controls. Clearly, game designers have taken advantage of this powerful new engine, which also runs games such as *Star Wars Battlefront II*, *Need for Speed: Payback* and *FIFA 17* and *18*. If you're a fan of amazing graphics, you'll want to play this game.

The overhaul doesn't stop there, though. For the first time in the series, *Madden 18* features a true story mode, Longshot. This single-player campaign follows a once-promising recruit as he prepares to make a comeback and enter the NFL draft. It seems like fairly standard stuff, but the execution shines.

The well-chosen cast delivers on a solid script and creates compelling characters you'll care about. The motion-captured animations take full advantage of the Frostbite engine's power, making for some beautiful cutscenes.

Longshot really succeeds because players become emotionally invested in the fate of the lead character, Devin Wade. Throughout the campaign, players make RPG-style choices that affect Wade's draftability and social standing. These choices drive the story and, combined with the result of the games played during the story, determine where Wade ends up.

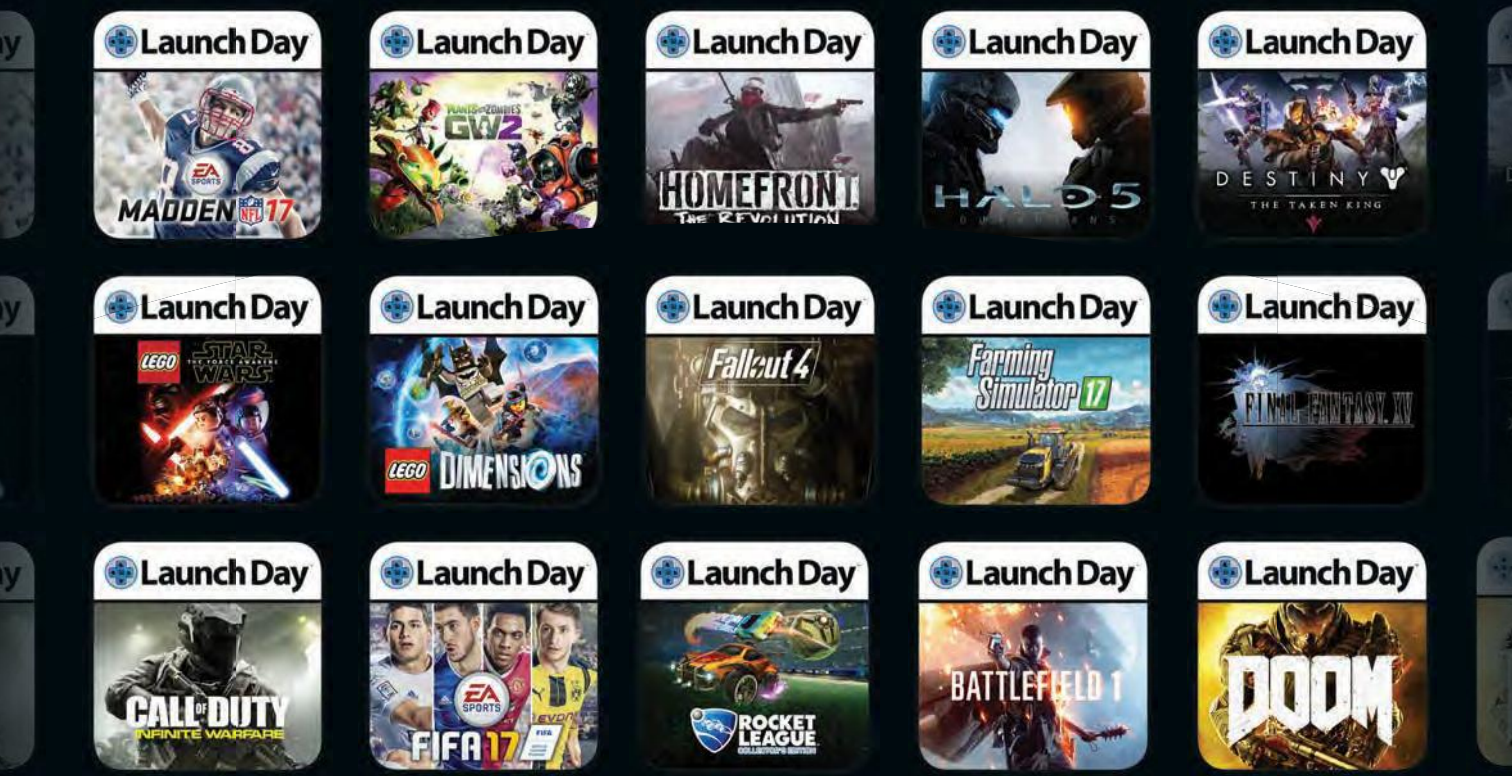
When you finish Longshot, you'll receive a nice reward for your Madden Ultimate Team (MUT), which includes a number of specific single-player challenges as well. MUT features only modest changes, but there's still plenty of depth for those interested in hybrid fantasy/reality football.

One final new mode, Play Now Live, offers deeper interaction during the ongoing season than previously available. Weekly updates will allow players to both predict and change the outcomes of games and in-game situations. Play Now Live provides a bit of amusement, but it isn't as fully realized as the Longshot mode. It will be interesting to see how these updates affect it as the season progresses.

The rest of the game is largely untouched. There's a tweaked mechanic here and there — such as the new Target Passing, which isn't quite ready for prime time — but most of the gameplay, as well as the progression through the Franchise mode, remain the same as last year's version.

That shouldn't dissuade you from picking up a copy of *Madden NFL 18*, though. Between the updated graphics and the Longshot mode, players can have plenty of new experiences here. *Madden* might be the only game in town, but it's a great one.

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DESTINY 2

Adieu

Recommended Level: 1
Recommended Power: 10

Even though the situation appears lost, and your body is damaged almost beyond repair, you must stagger on, finding your lost Ghost and escaping the war-torn city. A journey of discovery can then begin and a rebirth of sorts can occur once you meet a predestined group of resistance members led by Hawthorne.

Escaping the Last City

The Ruins of Humanity

Enemies Encountered
CABAL: War Beasts, Legionary

Important Allies Louis
Hawthorne

Objectives
Follow your vision.

New Actions to Learn
Weapon Bullet Spread
Precision Kills
Postmaster Items
Archivist Engrams
Reputation
Vendors
Vaults



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1 The Last City

Super: Not available **Grenades:** Not available
Warning: Restricted Zone



After falling from a great height, your only option is to shuffle down into the ruins of the city's canal and **maneuver slowly** through the wreckage as Cabal patrols lumber about above you. You're fortunate to **reunite with your Ghost** before leaving the city for the wilds of the countryside.

Severe Damage Inflicted!

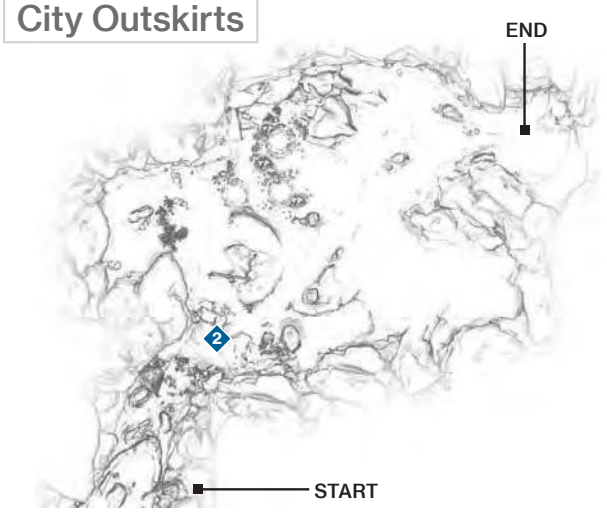
Your current health and wellbeing are critical. Check your Character Menu to learn the exact nature of your damaged equipment; your armor can best be described as "scorched" and offers little protection. You have but a single Kinetic weapon (Sidearm) and a damaged Ghost. However, that fall didn't kill you.


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2 City Outskirts

Super: Not available **Grenades:** Not available
Warning: Restricted Zone

City Outskirts





Stumbling into the sunlight, you continue your vision: a bird of prey flies from its perch into the snow-covered crags ahead. Drop down to a remote **Guardian outpost**, where you can reach down and grab an **SMG (Energy)** from the deserted area. Deserted, that is, until you witness **a pack of War Beasts** bounding to your location.

Restricted Zone! Your Light Fades Away

This is your first Restricted Zone, which requires caution (especially in your current fragile state). Your Ghost cannot resurrect you here, so ensure that you aren't mauled to death by War Beasts, or you'll have to retry this wandering.

The War Beasts attack in a large pack but charge you around three at a time. See if you can aim down your sights and pick off (or wound) as many beasts as you can at range (**shoot their heads for optimal damage; a critical hit aiming plan you should now be very familiar with**). Then, finish them with gunfire or a melee attack at closer quarters (as they only exist to charge and savage you). The first War Beast that you defeat spills out ammunition. You may want to switch to the SMG for this battle, if you're getting overwhelmed. Stay at the outpost for the battle, as you have a good view of the incoming foes. After the battle, your first Objective begins: follow your vision across the rocky ground and **up the snowy gully**, as the bird circles in the distant sky.

Twilight Gap



3 Twilight Gap

Super: Not available **Grenades:** Not available
Warning: Restricted Zone

Follow the falcon through the snowy gorge to a cliffside path, where you can witness the full horror of the Cabal attack. Continue around, heading up through a mountain pass and down into a rocky slope to a snow-lined clearing.

When you drop down, a **Legionary and around 15 War Beasts** appear (gradually; the beasts arrive in packs of 3-5 foes). If possible, move to the base of the central rock where the Legionary appears from, and headshot him before he can fire. That way, you aren't dodging his attacks while thwarting the War Beasts. Then, step back and tackle the four-legged fiends with your **SMG and melee swipes**; **keep moving**! You can flee the area by running directly ahead, but it's better to learn how to remove War Beasts as a threat and attack them with nimble maneuvers, then retreat to higher ground.



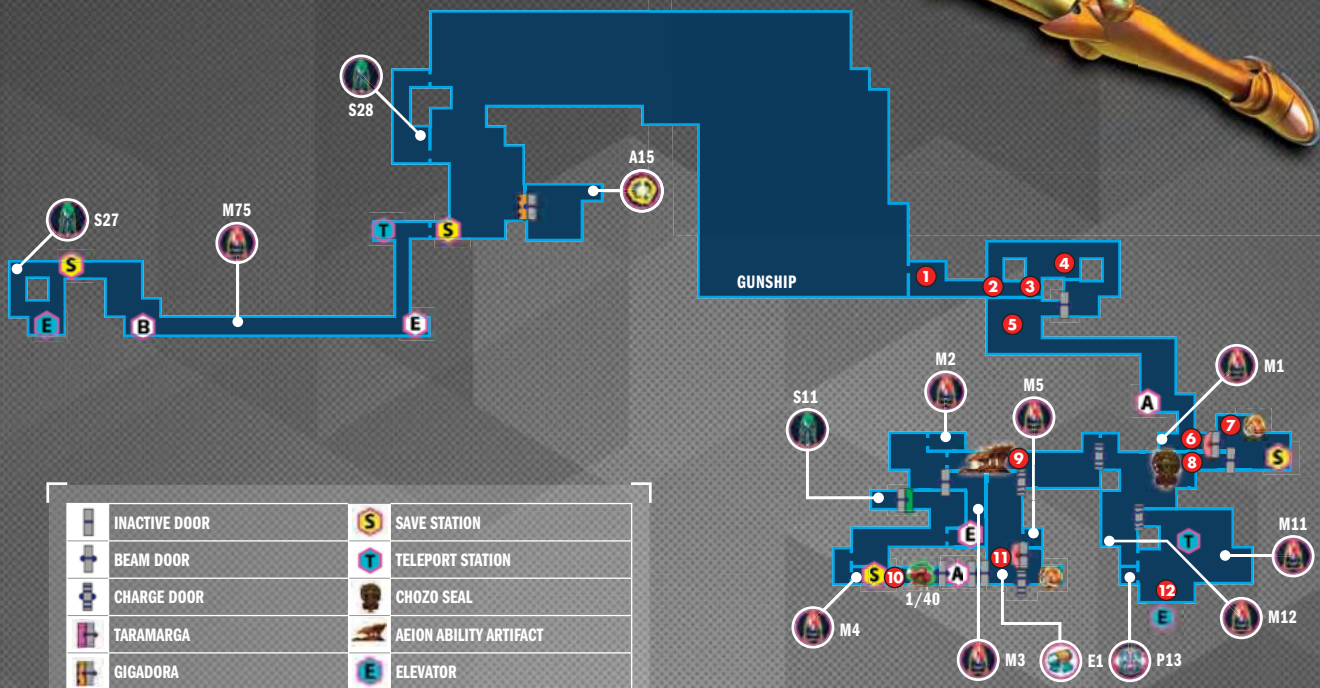

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Metroid™: Samus Returns

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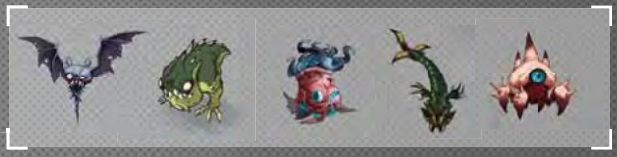
SURFACE





	INACTIVE DOOR	S	SAVE STATION
	BEAM DOOR	T	TELEPORT STATION
	CHARGE DOOR		CHOZO SEAL
	TARAMARGA		AEION ABILITY ARTIFACT
	GIGADORA	E	ELEVATOR
	GRYNCORE		ENERGY TANK
	RED DOOR		AEION TANK
	GREEN DOOR		MISSILE TANK
	YELLOW DOOR		SUPER MISSILE TANK
A	AMMO RECHARGE STATION		POWER BOMB TANK
E	ENERGY RECHARGE STATION		METROID
B	BIG AEION ORB		ITEM SPHERE

METROID HUSK (ZONE MAPS ONLY)



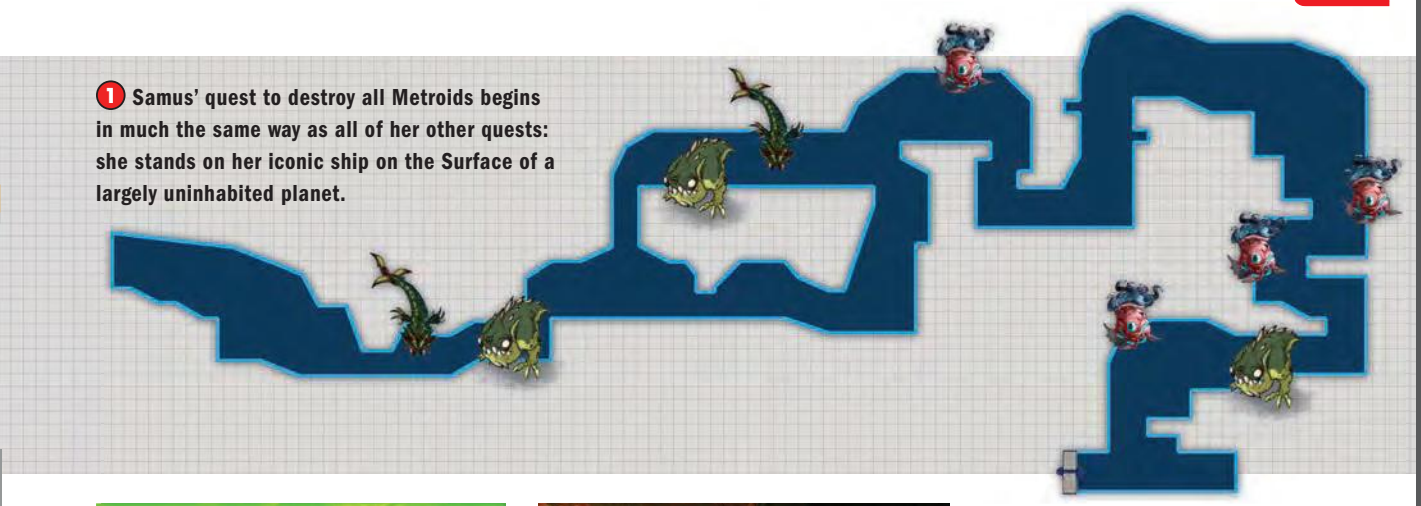
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1 **Samus' quest to destroy all Metroids begins in much the same way as all of her other quests: she stands on her iconic ship on the Surface of a largely uninhabited planet.**



There's not much to do on SR388's Surface—not yet, anyway. Head to the right to come to what looks like an abrupt dead end.

THE GUNSHIP



Samus' ship, a highly maneuverable Gunship, is filled to bursting with machinery to help her on her missions across the galaxy. You'll likely never be in this area, but if you find yourself back on the Surface and you're hurting for health and resources, stand on top of the ship's center to save, as well as refill all of your supplies.

The path ahead is barricaded by Blocks; shoot them with your Power Beam to destroy them and progress forward.



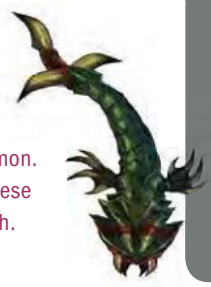
Almost every destructible Block type reforms if left alone. If this happens, shoot them again.

SR388'S TERRAIN

Progressing through SR388 is tricky. You run into an overabundance of dead ends and paths that seem like they should continue when you're looking at the map, but they don't. The key is usually to locate destructible Blocks amidst the terrain. Finding your way may involve more than simply shooting a Block; often the Block only breaks when shot by a certain type of weapon. You get plenty of tools to help you identify which Blocks are destructible and which aren't. Remember that if you're stuck, look for a destructible Block.

ROCK ICICLE

These enemies are the lowest life-form on the planet and pose next to no threat to the observant bounty hunter. Often they act less as adversaries and more as sources for health-refilling orbs and ammunition. They spawn ceaselessly from their holes; sit nearby, gun aimed and ready, and fire away as they come out. It's a slow method, but SR388 is a dangerous place, and being low on health is common. Refilling your supplies off these little critters works in a pinch.



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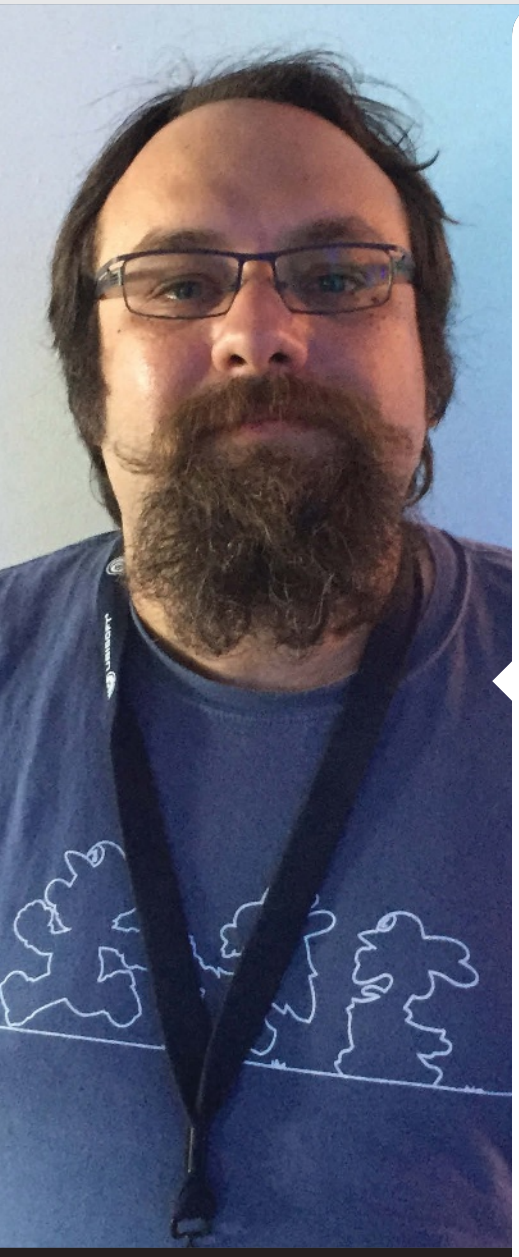
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1 on 1 with

DAVIDE SOLIANI

CREATIVE DIRECTOR, MARIO + RABBIDS: KINGDOM BATTLE

Video games have featured some odd partnerships throughout the years, but none more so than Nintendo's mascot Mario and Ubisoft's comically mischievous Rabbids. *Mario + Rabbids: Kingdom Battle* was easily the biggest surprise of the summer as the tactics-based gameplay showed both franchises in a fun new light. We sat down with Davide Soliani, the game's creative director, to learn more.



VITAL SIGNS

OCCUPATION

CREATIVE DIRECTOR, UBISOFT MILAN

GAME HIGHLIGHTS

JUST DANCE 2014, JUST DANCE 4

WGC: How did the idea of bringing together Mario and the Rabbids come about?
Davide Soliani: It stemmed from the contrast between the *Mario* universe and the *Rabbids* universe, and we wanted to embrace that contrast because it allowed us to brainstorm about new game mechanics, new humor, new music and new visuals. It was really a source of energy to come up with something new, and from the beginning we knew that if we were to present something to Nintendo, it had to be something they themselves already weren't doing, otherwise there was no point. We wanted to surprise them. And since we are fans of tactical games, we thought it'd be interesting to do something turn-based and refresh the genre, not revolutionize it.

> **"From the very beginning, we said we must collaborate with Nintendo because the whole idea was born from mixing the Mario and Rabbids universes together."**

WGC: Was this something you were working on already and wanted to bring Mario in, or did you want to collaborate with Nintendo from the beginning?
DS: From the very beginning, we said we must collaborate with Nintendo because the whole idea was born from mixing the Mario and Rabbids universes together. Five different designers and myself locked ourselves in a room for three weeks, and we came up with 13 different ideas, and we scratched them off one after the other until we arrived at the game we have today. Of course, it's a bit more complicated now compared to when we started, but yes, it was Mario and Rabbids from the start.

WGC: What pressure was on the dev team to make sure you got Mario, another company's mascot, right?
DS: It's not just one, but two major companies looking at what you're producing, and of course the pressure was very high, but the team itself was already feeling the pressure because they were so passionate about pitching something completely new. We had a lot of respect for the Nintendo universe, we are Nintendo players, so we treated Mario like he was our own and I believe Nintendo perceived our respect for the character as well as the team's commitment and that's why the collaboration worked. That being said, every time we sent them a new build or made a new presentation, of course the pressure was incredible. When I presented the game to Miyamoto-san, the man who inspired my entire career, I was in shock in a way. But I always tried to keep my cool because I had to present for Ubisoft. If it had just been me, I'd have probably asked for [an] autograph. *[Laughs]*

WGC: What are you and the team most proud of with this game?
DS: It's a mix of elements. First is the accessibility. Second is we renewed the world of the Rabbids. We felt it was time to detach from the past and do something completely new with them. New visuals, new world and plenty of surprises the players will find later on. So, I think it's just the overall package of all those elements coming together that made the team most proud, especially after E3. Before E3, everyone was passionate and committed to making the best experience we could provide, but at E3, when we finally got to see the positive player reaction to what we were doing, it was amazing because we were a little unsure up until that point. And after E3, it was like a whole new team, everyone's spirits were lifted up. Players sometimes do not realize how much power they have because those reactions translate into energy and the team used that to keep going.

WGC: If you had a Rabbid version of yourself in the game, what would its personality and abilities be?
DS: My special ability would be crying, I guess. *[Laughs]* And you wouldn't shoot at me out of pity. But in the game, I guess I would be some sort of tank. A tank that cries.



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