

Doom Eternal is another impressive Switch port

When the Switch version of the *Doom* reboot was released in the same year that Nintendo launched its hybrid console, it took quite a few people by surprise. Not only was it rare to see an ultraviolent first-person shooter on a Nintendo platform, but it was downright impressive to see such a technically advanced game work on the mobile hardware in the first place. Sure, the resolution was a little blurry and it only ran at 30fps, but it was *Doom* in your hands, which felt impossible at the time.

Doom was the first of several unexpectedly ambitious third-party Switch ports, a list that has grown to include the likes of *Overwatch* and *The Witcher 3*. So this week's release of its sequel, the excellent *Doom Eternal*, doesn't have quite the impact of the original *Doom* port. But in some ways, that's to its credit: *Doom Eternal* feels like a completely viable Switch game now, rather than an improbable technical feat stretching the limits of the hardware.

I've played through the opening hours of *Doom Eternal* on the Switch, and it actually runs better than the original game did. It's still locked to 30fps, of course, and it still makes use of much lower graphical settings and dynamic 720p resolution scaling to keep that frame rate locked in. But it generally stays sharper than the first *Doom* port, and the Switch has no problem keeping up with the fast-paced action, which is so hectic that it's often difficult to pay attention to the resolution. Loading times are much improved, too, and you have the option to play with gyro aiming (which the original game also got in an update a few months after release).

Doom Eternal is based on id Tech 7, the latest version of id Software's in-house engine – which is to say that it's a more technically advanced game than *Doom*, so it's great to see the Switch turning in a performance like this. A Switch version was planned from the start, unlike its predecessor, which may well have helped with optimization. The Switch version is also arriving pretty late after originally having been intended for release at around the same time as other platforms, so it seems like porting studio Panic Button made good use of the extra time.

The biggest noticeable cutback is in the cutscenes, which are quite a bit worse than on other platforms. They're running in a letterboxed aspect ratio and at a lower framerate than the game itself, causing a jarring effect whenever control is taken away from you for a narrative sequence. It's not a huge deal since it doesn't affect the actual gameplay – and I didn't like the cutscenes on PC in the first place – but it's definitely a compromise.

A more powerful Switch console is rumored for release next year, and I do wonder what it could do for games like *Doom Eternal*. Since it uses dynamic resolution to maintain performance, theoretically, the game could look a lot better right away if it were running on a Switch with a faster GPU. For now, though, *Doom Eternal* on the current Switch is a perfectly reasonable way to play the game if it's your only way to do so.

That brings me to the only other real problem I have with this version of *Doom Eternal*, which is that I don't really have much reason to play it. It would be perfect on a long flight, but I obviously haven't been spending much time on planes lately, and it's hard to see me opting for the Switch version when I'm staying at home with other hardware available. *Doom*

Eternal is also selling at \$59.99 on the Switch even though you can find it for cheaper on other platforms – or try it for nothing if you're an Xbox Game Pass subscriber.

But again, if the Switch is your only console or if your TV is constantly tied up, this is still a great option. While it doesn't feel quite as miraculous as *Doom* did three years ago, it's ultimately a better conversion.

Doom Eternal is out now for the Nintendo Switch.

<https://www.theverge.com/22169262/doom-eternal-switch-review>