Doom Eternal joins this year’s game-delay club, will launch March 2020

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Doom Eternal—the highly anticipated sequel to the hell-shooter series’ 2016 reboot—has left our list of most anticipated games of 2019. On Tuesday morning, game publisher Bethesda announced that *Doom Eternal* needs another four months in the oven. That means it will launch on PC, Xbox One, and PlayStation 4 on March 20, 2020.

That list of supported platforms is missing a big name: Nintendo Switch. Tuesday’s delay includes an additional, indefinite delay of the sequel’s port to Nintendo’s weaker console, thus breaking the developer’s original promise that Switch buyers would get to rip and tear into *Doom Eternal* the same day as everyone else. “We will announce [the Switch port’s] date in the future,” the company’s statement vaguely reads.

Publisher Bethesda took the opportunity to delay another related game out of November 2019, as well: *Doom 64*. This first-ever port of the 1997 shooter onto non-N64 platforms is still coming to PC and modern consoles, Bethesda says, but it, too, will launch on March 20, 2020. Now, at least, that port will become a free pre-order bonus for buyers of *Doom Eternal*.

But we’re not sure why Bethesda and id Software couldn’t get *Doom 64* ready by this holiday season to tide series fans over during the bigger game’s delay. (In the meantime, if you own a legitimate copy of the N64 original, we suggest ripping its files and launching them on PC via the incredible *Doom 64* EX mod.)

- Most of this gallery is taken from real first-person gameplay, which is why the screen is smothered in a HUD. Milliseconds after this “glory kill” moment, your hero punches this demon’s head so hard that it explodes.
- Another glory kill. It was hard to capture clear images of these violent, health-refilling attacks; they’re all pretty quick in action.
- New default mod attachments come to nearly every *Doom Eternal* weapon.
- The trick with the super shotgun is to make sure to shoot before you get all the way to your target. The momentum will still drive your blast directly into the foe, and the recoil of your shot will conveniently bounce you away from its limp body toward your next target.
- The provided gameplay footage didn’t include examples of this new sniping attachment being used to pick off specific pieces of bad guys’ artillery and armor.
- Instead, it made peons’ heads go boom. Still satisfying. (This image was captured just before a head-‘splosion.)
- This, by the way, is what happens to the previous demon’s head roughly two frames later.
- In this game, you get an armor pickup whenever an enemy dies while it’s caught on fire. Conveniently enough, the new “flame belcher” attachment can torch an entire crowd *en masse*.
- There’s also the *Doom 2016* standby of running a chainsaw through an enemy to turn its body into useful ammunition. (Don’t ask us how that science works.)

- Decisions, decisions: do I go in for the glory kill, since the enemy on the left is staggered and glowing?
- Nah, let's focus explosive ballista fire on the bigger, scarier-looking one.
- Terrifying, right? Hold on, lemme crank this one up a smidge…
- …there. You can practically smell its cow-carcass breath from here.
- Dash forward to close distance on your foe.
- Then set it on fire, because why not.
- We should kill this one.
- A new "extra life" system brings you back to life mid-mission if you lose all your health. I liked it as a way to speed gameplay up in my first playthrough, while I imagine turning it off once I've gotten the hang of the game.
- There's a little green meter beneath the afflicted enemy. Fill that meter up all the way, and the beastie will explode and harm any other bad guys nearby or below. Bigger enemies take longer to fill with this deadly radiation, but their enemy-damaging blast radius grows, as well.

The scope of the delay seems substantial, as the entire game won't even be ready by March 2020, according to today's statement. The new game's "Invasion Mode," which lets online players become the bad guys in other real players' single-player campaigns, will be delayed as "a free update shortly after launch." id Software isn't saying exactly how "shortly" that will be.

This delay is a particular bummer, considering how polished *Doom Eternal*'s gameplay world premiere felt at a pre-E3 event this summer. As I wrote:

> *I don't often get as jazzed about an in-development video game the way I have about Doom Eternal. After playing its 20-minute E3 demo to completion for my first time, I yelled,*

> *“AGAIN! AGAIN!” like a child unwilling to get off of a rollercoaster (and was thankfully granted another go at the fun). Upon getting home and preparing this article before Bethesda’s E3 press conference, I combed through a full playthrough video provided by the developers like a sad ex flipping through a photo album. I had to look again. I wanted to remember.*

I guess I’ll have to watch those old video clips for another few months to wait out this return of the game. Here’s to hoping the delay helps id Software fulfill the demo’s promise: more of the same *Doom 2016* action, only with more open skies, fewer claustrophobic corridors, and a perfectly ramped-up combination of new monsters and new weapons alike.

If you’re keeping score, *Doom Eternal* joins a high-profile list of games originally promised to launch in 2019. These include *Animal Crossing: New Horizons*, *Wasteland 3*, and *Psychonauts 2*. (We’re still wondering whether Valve will join that list with its repeatedly promised “VR game,” currently slated to launch in “2019.”)

Even though it’s not a game, you’re also welcome to add the upcoming *Sonic the Hedgehog* film onto that list. It, too, received a high-profile delay into 2020 after an outcry over its premiere live-action trailer earlier this year.

Listing image by id Software

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