

Gamers react with overwhelming disgust to DLSS 5's generative AI glow-ups

[embedded content]

Many of the reactions have focused on how DLSS 5 turns in-game faces into overly detailed, uncanny valley versions of the original models. Reactions have compared the effect to air-brushed pornography, “yassified, looks-maxed freaks,” or those uncanny, unavoidable *Evony* ads. Others have noted how DLSS 5 seems to mangle the intended art direction by dampening shadows in favor of a homogenized look.

Some game developers have leapt on the “artistic intent” angle, too. *Thomas Was Alone* developer Mike Bithell added that the technology seems designed “for when you absolutely, positively, don’t want any art direction in your gaming experience.” And Gunfire Games Senior Concept Artist Jeff Talbot said that “in every shot the art direction was taken away for the senseless addition of ‘details.’ Each DLSS 5 shot looked worse and had less character than the original. This is just a garbage AI Filter.”

New Blood Interactive founder and CEO Dave Oshry added that DLSS 5’s “AI dogshit is actually depressing” and lamented that future generations “won’t even know this looks ‘bad’ or ‘wrong’ because to them it’ll be normal.”

Damage control

By way of damage control, Nvidia took to the comments (which are filled with thousands of negative takes) on its YouTube

reveal trailer to stress that DLSS 5 “is not a filter” and that “game developers have full, detailed artistic control over DLSS 5’s effects to ensure they maintain their game’s unique aesthetic.” That includes the ability to tweak intensity and color grading or turn the masking off entirely in “places where the effect shouldn’t be applied.”

DLSS 5 OFF // DLSS 5 ON

[image or embed]

– Tuba Zef (@tubazef.com) March 16, 2026 at 3:59 PM

Bethesda, one of the many major publishers Nvidia named as an early DLSS 5 partner, piped in on social media to say that these videos are “a very early look, and our art teams will be further adjusting the lighting and final effect to look the way we think works best for each game. This will all be under our artists’ control, and totally optional for players.”

From a public image perspective, though, the damage may already be done. DLSS 5 has quickly become a meme format in its own right, with Internet commenters using “DLSS 5 On” as visual shorthand for “overly cleaned up” or “mangled beyond recognition.” We’re not sure how you come back from that kind of instant infamy, but Nvidia will have until the fall to find out.

<https://arstechnica.com/gaming/2026/03/gamers-react-with-overwhelming-disgust-to-dlss-5s-generative-ai-glow-ups/>