Hades II just keeps getting better

Hades II just received its second major update as part of its early access development, which was a great excuse for me to jump back in. Since its initial release, I've logged more than 30 hours and actually held myself back from playing much more — I don't want to get tired of the game before it hits 1.0 — but with the new update, I wanted to see what's new and try to beat the new final boss on my very first run.

Sadly, I haven't even been able to see what the boss is yet. I *did* make it to the update's new region, but I got destroyed by a dangerous miniboss. Still, I've still been really impressed with what Supergiant Games has added since May to make what's already a very good game even better.



Image: Supergiant Games

The big additions are impressive. *Hades II* initially launched

with six regions — four for an Underworld route and two for a "surface" route — and with each major update, Supergiant has added a new region with new enemies, characters, and music to round out that surface route.

The first major update, which came out in October, added the game's first new region, Mount Olympus, and it feels as epic as Mount Olympus should. It has grand architecture, fearsome enemies, and a fiery boss fight against Prometheus, all backed by an incredible orchestral soundtrack. (I've spent more time than I'd like to admit listening to this song on loop.)

That update also added the game's sixth and final weapon — a witch-y, *Hades*-style interpretation of a mech suit. Seriously: your primary attack is punching baddies with giant fists while your special attack shoots projectiles that home in on nearby targets. You also have cool wings.

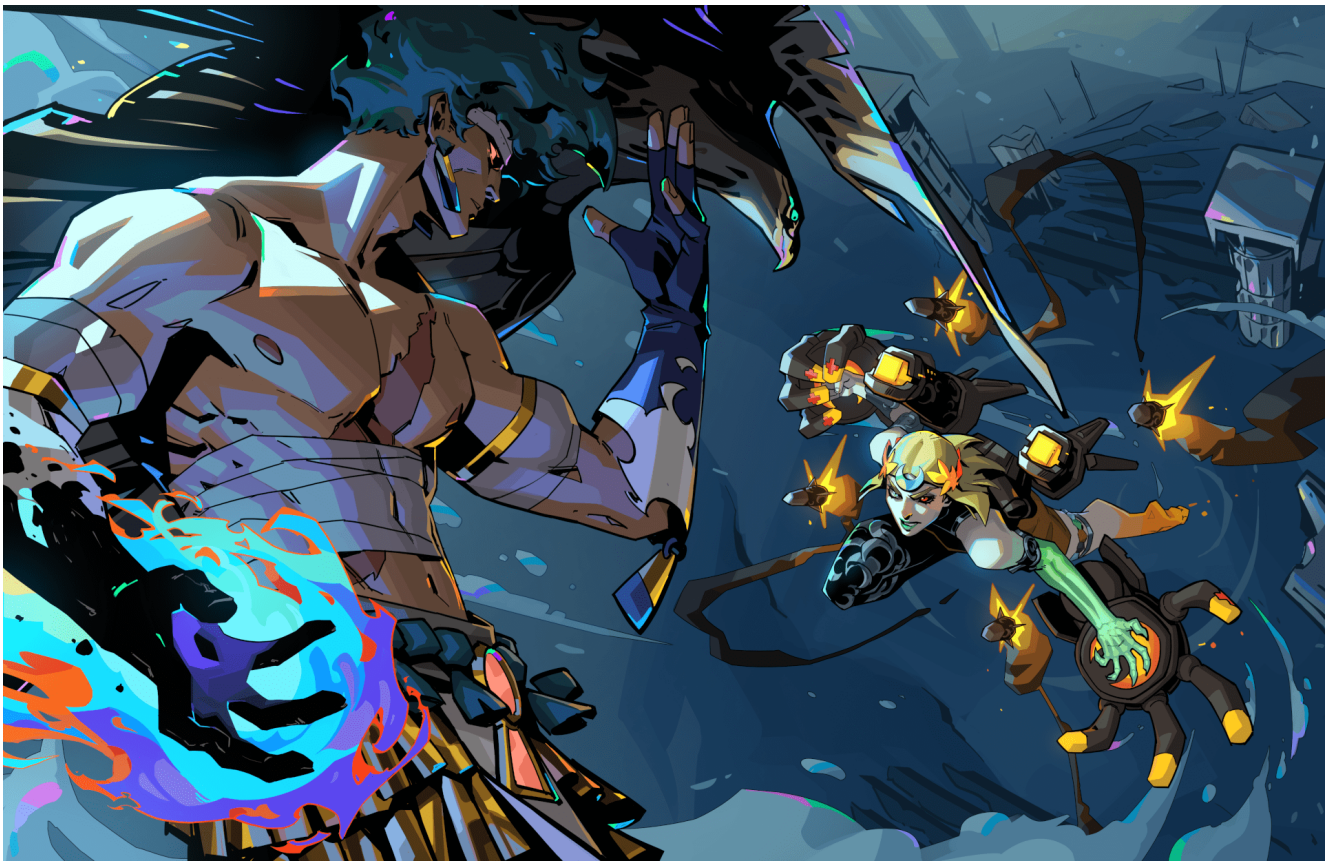


Image: Supergiant Games

In the second major update, there's a new region and boss, too, but I've also noticed a lot of smaller details that feel

just as impactful. For example, the Altar of Ashes, a place where you pick from various passive effects in the form of arcana cards that can help your runs, got a visual redesign to add intricately-illustrated custom cards. (One of them features Theseus and the Minotaur, who you may remember as bosses from the first *Hades*, in thongs, lol.) I also spotted a charming new portrait for Melinoë, the game's protagonist, that added some levity to a character that's usually pretty serious.

And throughout the major updates and many smaller patches, Supergiant has rebalanced and changed all sorts of mechanics and details in ways that I can honestly barely begin to keep track of. The studio isn't afraid to take the hatchet to things that need to go, too; with this most recent patch, Supergiant scrapped an entire mechanic tied to gathering.

Overall, the changes have made the game feel better to play over time — and browsing patch notes, Supergiant uses an emoji to indicate which changes are inspired by community feedback, which I think is a good way to acknowledge how players are contributing to the game, which is one of the main benefits of this type of early access release. (I should also acknowledge that *Hades II* has the advantage of building from the already-great foundation of the first *Hades.*)

Hades II might not launch in 1.0 for a long time. Supergiant hasn't committed to a timeframe for that, and it's still working on a third major update that's set to release "some months from now." Because of the success of Supergiant's other games, like *Bastion* and *Transistor*, the studio probably doesn't need to rush.

But given how it's treated *Hades II's* early access so far, I'm fine if Supergiant takes its time. Even though *Hades II* isn't finished, I have no qualms about recommending the game to anyone that's interested. And jumping in now lets you experience just how much an already-great game can improve

over time.

https://www.theverge.com/games/617730/hades-2-getting-better-early-access