

Perfect Dark finally gets the full-featured PC port it deserves

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It's hard to go back to the N64 original after seeing the smooth visual and control improvement of this PC port.

For decades now, PC players who wanted to check out Rare's seminal 2000 shooter masterpiece *Perfect Dark* were stuck with the compromises inherent in emulating an aging title designed for very different hardware. Now, over 23 years after its release, *Perfect Dark* has gotten the full PC port it so richly deserves, complete with graphics and control updates that make the experience much more enjoyable for a modern audience.

The "work-in-progress" port from GitHub user fgsfdsfsgs is described as "mostly functional," with "minor graphics- and gameplay-related issues, and possibly occasional crashes." But those are a small price to pay for a version of the game that comes complete with full mouse-and-keyboard controls for the first time, alongside a 60 fps frame rate, support for modern widescreen monitor resolutions, and even the ability to load custom levels.

After some quick testing, we can say this is easily the best way to play *Perfect Dark* today. The mouse-and-keyboard controls in particular make this version of the game stand out from the quality 2010 Xbox 360 port. And while the character models and level designs can feel a bit repetitive and blocky from a modern viewpoint, the added resolution and upscaling represent a big improvement over the muddiness of the N64

original (despite the improvements enabled by the then-massive 4MB RAM expansion pack).

Enlarge / Love that muzzle flash.

The new port is an outgrowth of a months-long decompilation project that was completed just over a year ago. At the time, project lead Ryan Dwyer noted a handful of decompiled functions weren't a perfect byte-for-byte match for the original N64 code but ended up "functionally the same" as the source material.

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As with previous N64 decompilation projects like *Super Mario 64* and *Ocarina of Time*, the reverse-engineered PC code doesn't include any copyrighted image visual or audio files. Players will have to provide their own valid ROM file containing those assets for the port to work.

Elsewhere in the world of N64 decompilation, a project seeking to recreate the code of Rare's *Banjo-Kazooie* has been sitting a few percentage points from completion for months with no apparent progress. An effort to decompile *GoldenEye 007* has similarly stalled short of the finish line. Parallel efforts to decompile *Mario Kart 64* and *Majora's Mask* have been making

steadier progress in recent weeks, though both are still a while away from completion.

If you're looking for other classic console games that have gained new life through unofficial PC ports lately, may we suggest checking out the unofficial projects for *Jak and Daxter* and *WipeOut*.

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