

There are two great reasons to upgrade to *The Last of Us Part II Remastered*



Yeah, I know, it seems way too early for a remaster of *The Last of Us Part II*. The game originally launched on the PS4 in 2020 and has already received an update for those playing on the PS5. It's not like Ellie, Joel, and Abby need much of an update for modern audiences. But while the slightly enhanced graphics – which include native 4K support and improved frame rates – are nice, they're not really the reason to play *The Last of Us Part II Remastered*. Instead, it's all of the *other* stuff that turns this into an excellent special edition of the game.

Some of the additions are relatively small. There's a guitar mode where you can, well, play guitar as much as you want. Using the PlayStation controller's touchpad to swipe guitar strings was one of the highlights of the original release, and it's nice to be able to mess around with it freely. I'm sure we'll see some of people rocking out soon. You can also unlock

outfits to wear while playing the main game, which is silly but fun. I'm 10 hours deep into a New Game Plus run, and Ellie has been wearing a *Death Stranding* T-shirt the entire time (even though that game couldn't exist in *TLOU*'s timeline).

And since this is my second time through the game, I've also really been enjoying messing with the gameplay modifiers to make it a little less stressful this time around. That means unlocking things like infinite ammo, one-hit kills, and – my personal favorite – having time slow down while you're aiming. It's helping me relive the story without the frustration. (For those going in the opposite direction, looking for more challenge, there's also a permadeath option and a speed run mode where you can track your best times racing through the story as fast as possible.)

All of this makes this edition the best option for replaying *The Last of Us Part II* – or experiencing it for the first time – just like the PS5 remake of its predecessor from last year. It looks great and gives you a huge range of tools to customize your experience. But the two parts that have stuck out for me actually exist outside of the main game – and they've given me a greater appreciation for what *The Last of Us Part II* actually is.

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