

Xbox's July event: Halo Infinite finally has some first-party company

reader comments

33 with 26 posters participating, including story author

Share this story

- Master Chief is back, alongside the man who saved his life.
- Demo's title screen.
- Say hello to the grappling hook, a new Halo ability mapped to the LB button with a slight cooldown timer.
- We also get a map interface, a first for a Halo game.
- Sweeping views.
- Flying into danger.
- Yep, that's the titular "Halo."
- Standard weaponry.
- New weaponry.
- Standard wheels.
- Hoppin' wheels.
- Before gameplay began, we saw a more cinematic sequence in 30fps. Unclear if this was real-time or pre-rendered.
- But it did include Cortana narrating Chief's return, which is always nice.
- Chief and his new ally study an ominous message.
Microsoft / 343 Industries
- A new villain.

As the not-quite-E3 season of video game trailers comes to a close, Microsoft unveiled its biggest show of first-party force for its upcoming Xbox Series X console on Thursday. Hype

began building for this event as soon as Microsoft confirmed plans to reveal *Halo Infinite* campaign gameplay, but the story was just as much about which new and familiar game series did (and didn't) show up alongside Master Chief.

The event wasted no time getting to all things *Halo*, complete with a voiceover from the popular character Cortana narrating the reconstructing of the Master Chief armor set: "Liquid crystal cannot rise on its own." Shortly after, we see Chief in a spaceship, piloted by the man who discovered Chief in last year's cinematic trailer, as they argue about what to do next. "You'd still be out there if it wasn't for me," the man says. "I thought I was going home."

"There won't be a home if we don't stop the Banished," Chief replies. This detail is the first potential confirmation that a 4chan leak from last night was actually accurate, and the second indication came shortly after, once the reveal switched to live gameplay—and Chief is seen brandishing a grappling hook, which he uses to hook to a foe from a distance, zip directly into its face, and smack it with his fist. We also get a first glimpse ever at a *Halo* game with a built-in map, complete with marked mission locations—proving out years of rumors that *Halo Infinite* is likely an open-world adventure in the Halo-verse.

[embedded content]

Halo Infinite trailer

But otherwise, the demo sequence, which ran at an apparent 60fps, is everything you might hope for from a mainline *Halo* game: crafty AI that divides and conquers and an assortment of powerful weapons to beat them with (including at least one new UNSC rifle and one new alien-branded laser launcher). The demo concluded with the announcement of a release window of "Holiday 2020," but nothing more specific than that just yet. (We were already warned that this event would *not* include release date info for the Xbox Series X.)

And if you'd like to know more about *Halo Infinite*, you're in luck: I'll be attending a special reveal event for the game behind closed virtual doors later today and will report back on my findings as soon as I'm able.

Every game shown will come to Game Pass

Xbox chief Phil Spencer confirmed that *Halo Infinite*, and every other game shown during the event, will debut as part of the paid Xbox Game Pass subscription service. Nearly all of the games shown are listed with Windows 10 versions, as well.

This includes:

- No release window yet. Notice that it doesn't mention base Xbox One consoles!
- This kind of reflection tech is an indication of what we might expect from games that do *not* come to Xbox One base consoles.
- That there's a lot of ray tracing.

Forza Motorsport: No release window for this one, and Spencer described this as a "work-in-progress," suggesting that the popular Xbox-exclusive racing series won't launch alongside Xbox Series X this year. Instead, we were treated to a sizzle reel that Spencer insisted was made entirely of in-engine footage, and it was rich with glossy real-time reflection effects and polygon-rich racing cars on the former racetracks of the "Motorsport" fork, as opposed to the open-nature driving of *Forza Horizon*. And, wouldn't you know it, this one does not appear to be slated to launch on base Xbox One consoles!

Fable: Confirming one of the worst-kept rumors in all of British gaming history, Microsoft finally took the wraps off of the simply named "*Fable*," developed by the team at

Playground Games (best known for the *Forza Horizon* series). This reveal came in the form of a silly pre-rendered video in which a pixie flies around with hopeful, optimistic music and narration—before being swallowed by a frog. No gameplay was shown, so the reveal simply appears to be a statement of intent for the series' return since Peter Molyneux's Lionhead Games shut down so many years ago.

State of Decay 3: This non-gameplay sequence saw a woman hunting a deer in a snowy landscape, only to discover the deer in question is infected with some sort of zombie-like overgrowth.

Enlarge / *Everwild* is Rare's next adventure series.

Everwild: Rare's previously teased game received a cinematic sizzle reveal of cartoony, fantasy-hero characters doing

apparently mystical stuff, like conducting a seance to bring a deer-like creature back to life.

Tell Me Why: Dontnod Entertainment, the team behind *Life Is Strange*, revealed a new narrative-driven story set in a small woodland town about a brother and a sister. The game will launch first on Xbox consoles and Windows 10, its first chapter will arrive on August 27, and it's clearly designed for current-gen machines.

Ori and the Will of the Wisps: We got confirmation that this previously released game will jump to 120fps refresh rates on Xbox Series X.

Enlarge / Obsidian's next brand-new franchise, *Avowed*, sure looks like a first-person open-world RPG to us.

Avowed: Obsidian Entertainment teased its first Xbox-exclusive RPG after revealing previously announced fare, and the brief footage vaguely leans into obvious *Skylrim*-like inspirations.

Psychonauts 2: A trippy music-filled sequence (with Jack Black singing a new original song) showed the long-in-development game running at a crisp 60fps refresh, suggesting this is its Xbox Series X build. Sadly, however, this tease didn't include any hint of a release date update.

[embedded content]

STALKER 2 sizzle trailer

STALKER 2, Warhammer 40,000: Darktide: Brief sizzle reels for each of these first-person follow-ups revolved around pre-rendered cut scenes, so it remains to be seen what's to come for each.

Tetris Effect: Connected: This appears to be a "2.0" update to 2017's stunning *Tetris Effect*, and it will remain an Xbox and Windows 10 exclusive for an undetermined period of time before coming to other platforms as a free update to the existing game. It adds the one thing I wanted in the original game: multiplayer, whether played locally or online. If you've never played this game in VR and have Game Pass Ultimate, rest assured, its Windows 10 version will include VR support.

Enlarge / *The Gunk*.

The Gunk: *Splatoon* meets *No Man's Sky* in this third-person adventure, which has you using a suction gun to clear evil goo and traverse a fantastically colored alien world.

Microsoft's last attempt at an Xbox Series X gameplay reveal in May fell a bit flat, since it focused primarily on indie developers; its few "major" third-party entries consisted mostly of pre-rendered footage and unclear gameplay. Sony was keen to capitalize on this disappointment with a stunning June presentation of PlayStation 5 exclusives and reveals.

Listing image by Microsoft / 343 Industries

<https://arstechnica.com/?p=1693897>