

Lifestyle | Feature

Hogwarts, Humankind, Horizon: 2021's hottest video games



Horizon Forbidden West

Gamers, grab your controllers: 2021 is set to be a big year for video games, with some hugely-awaited titles expected after Microsoft and Playstation launched new next-generation consoles in November. Here are five of the most-anticipated games planned to come out this year—unless the coronavirus pandemic continues to play havoc with release schedules.

Horizon Forbidden West

The follow-up to 2017's Playstation exclusive Horizon Zero Dawn is an action role-playing game set in a post-apocalyptic world where humans duel with giant mechanical creatures. Horizon Forbidden West, set in an American West that has become wild again, tells the latest adventure of young huntress Aloy, who must find the source of a mysterious and deadly plague and uncover a slew of age-old secrets along the way. With breathtaking graphics and a vast open world to explore, Sony hopes the game will put it ahead of its arch-rival Microsoft when the game launches on PlayStation 4 and 5 in the second half of 2021.

Hogwarts Legacy

The return of Harry Potter? Not quite—there's no Harry, Ron or Hermione, but wizards, goblins and supernatural beasts abound in this action-packed dive into J.K. Rowling's universe, courtesy of Avalanche Software. The game, which follows in the path of the Fantastic Beasts films, heads back to the end of the 19th Century, an uncharted time for the Harry Potter series. The wild ride of wizardry, in which gamers can create their own character and soak up the virtual ambiance of an 1800s Hogwarts, will be released this year on Sony and Microsoft consoles.



Humankind



Hogwarts Legacy

Humankind

French studio Amplitude is set to release this Civilization-style strategy game in April for Windows, Apple and Stadia. Players must guide their civilization across six eras from the nomadic age onwards as they compete with historically-based rivals to see if they can triumph through skilful tactics and technology. Depending on the culture they choose, players can aim to win via a range of tactics, including armed combat or trade.

Deathloop

Another French studio, Arkane, is behind this first-person shooter in which players take on the role of Colt, an assassin stuck in a time loop. The game, which takes elements from the studio's Dishonored saga, is due out on PS5 and Windows on May 21, and on Microsoft's new Xbox Series X/S next year.

12 Minutes

Another game stuck in a time loop is this offering from Barcelona's Nomada studio, in which the protagonist is seen in his flat in daily situations with his partner. Spoiler: Murder soon follows—but the player has to repeatedly navigate a 12-minute cycle to solve the ensuing mystery. The game is scheduled to hit shelves some time this year and will be available on Windows and Xbox One/Xbox Series X/S.

Coming soon?

God of War Ragnarok, the latest installment in the smash hit series, turns from its traditional focus on Greek mythology to Norse deities. It is slated for release on Playstations this year, but has already been delayed and is not expected

to hit shelves much before the end of the year. Microsoft had initially planned to release "Halo Infinite", the latest installment starring the hero Master Chief, along with its launch of the Xbox Series X/S in November. But it was postponed for around a year after the graphics in a trailer received a thumbs down on social media. Another long-awaited sequel is The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild 2 developed by Nintendo for its Switch console. The first Breath of the Wild Zelda action-adventure game was a huge success, selling millions of copies and receiving wide acclaim with its open-ended gameplay.

Not yet

What you'll not be seeing in 2021, however, is Grand Theft Auto VI, The Elder Scrolls VI or Final Fantasy XVI—gamers will have a wait a little longer for these much-anticipated sequels. —AFP



God of War Ragnarok



Deathloop



12 Minutes