PlayStation 5 vs Xbox Series X

The next generation of consoles has drastically changed how we will view gaming going forward! There are many changes for both console giants and how they chose to implement solutions to similar problems. Spec wise, these consoles are very similar. That means this console war will be won or lost based on the following factors. Hardware compatibility, game exclusives, and finally availability of the consoles. Lets take a deep dive into each one of these and see who we think will be the console leader going into 2021.

We will first do a comparison of the console specs to show the few differences.

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|  | PlayStation 5 | Xbox Series X |
| CPU | 8-core 3.5 GHz AMD Zen 2 | 8-core, 3.8 GHz AMD Zen 2 |
| GPU | 10.3 teraflop AMD RDNA 2 | 12.0 teraflop AMD RDNA 2 |
| RAM | 16 GB GDDR6 | 16 GB GDDR6 |
| Storage | 825 GB custom SSD  (Has internal expansion for increased storage but is not yet supported) | 1 TB custom NVMe SSD  (Has custom 1TB expansion chip made by Seagate, retails for about $220 USD or $300 CAD) |
| Resolution | Up to 8K | Up to 8K |
| Frame Rate | Up to 120 fps | Up to 120 fps |
| Optical Drive | 4K UHD Blu-ray | 4K UHD Blu-ray |
| Console Dimensions | 15.74” x 3.97” x 8.79” | 11.85” x 6.03” x 6.03” |

As we can see, the specs are almost identical between the two consoles. Lets talk about the three visible differences between the devices. Both tech giants decided to partner with AMD for their CPUs and GPUs. They seem to be the exact same models for both processors, yet the Xbox variants are set to a slightly higher clock speed. The Xbox CPU is set to 3.8 GHz whereas the PlayStation CPU is set to 3.5 GHz. The Xbox GPU is at 12 teraflops while the PlayStation is at 10.3 teraflops.

The only other major difference is the storage memory. PlayStation’s console has an 825GB SSD which leaves you 667GB of game storage after the operating system and other essential storage is accounted for. The Xbox has a full terabyte of storage which leaves you with 802GB of game storage after accounting for operating system storage. While talking about storage we can mention the upgradable storage built into each system. The PS5 has a spot on the motherboard for the user to add their own NVMe SSD. This is currently not enabled and will be discussed by the PlayStation developers sometime this year. The Xbox on the other hand has already got an expansion device available for public consumption. They partnered with Seagate to create a 1TB external memory stick similar to what we used to see in the PlayStation 2 consoles. This comes at a hefty price of $220 USD or $300 CAD. Both consoles still allow you to plug in an external hard drive as extra storage, but it will not run at the same speeds/performance as the built-in drives.

Now lets talk about the most important thing about video game consoles, the games themselves! The major exclusives for the PS5 include Spiderman Miles Morales, Horizon: Forbidden West, Ratchet & Clank: Rift Apart, and Returnal. There are many more games that are timed exclusives for the PS5, but we are only going to discuss games that are dedicated exclusives.

Spiderman has always been a PlayStation exclusive since Sony owns the rights to the franchise. The game has seen great reviews for its cinematic story and amazing graphics. The game sits at about a 4.6/5-star rating on Google reviews.

Horizon: Forbidden West is the continuation to the Horizon series and will be released later on this year. Horizon: Zero Dawn helped pull users to PlayStation with its compelling action role-playing story. Zero Dawn has a 4.8/5-start rating on Google reviews and I assume the next installment will do just as well.

Ratchet & Clank has been an on-going series dating back to the PlayStation 2. Rift Apart will be the seventeenth game in the Ratchet & Clank series which will also be released later on this year. Ratchet & Clank is an action platformer series that has third-person shooter elements. The games in the series all have 4.0/5-star and higher ratings on Google reviews.

Returnal is a third-person shooter, science fiction, and psychological horror game. This game requires you to restart your journey with every death. You discover the world changes with you every time you restart. This forces you to adapt and change your play style to fit the ever-changing world in front of you. This game is expected to release in March of this year.

The major exclusives for the Xbox Series X include Halo Infinite, Fable, Forza Motorsport, S.T.A.L.K.E.R. 2, The Medium, and Scorn.

Halo Infinite is the next installment in the classic Halo series. This game was supposed to be released with the launch of the new Series X, yet it was delayed until later this year because the developers said more time was needed.

Fable is a franchise that has not had a full-fledged game since 2010 with Fable III. Fable is an action role-playing game with settings in city-states and country wildernesses. Each game chose a different time period and story to follow. The new Fable is a very anticipate game because of the previous installments. Unfortunately, this game does not have a disclosed released date yet.

Both companies have decided that backward compatibility is an important feature, but they both went about it in different ways.

PlayStation made it clear they wanted all their PS4 games to be completely playable on the PS5. Unfortunately, all the previous generation games are not getting any love. The original PlayStation, PS2, and PS3 games will not be playable on the new console.

Xbox on the other hand decided to make backward compatibility for as much as possible. All the original Xbox One games will be playable on the new Series X. They also have a large list of backward compatibility for Xbox 360 and original Xbox games. Their backward compatibility extends beyond the games themself and to the hardware. All Xbox one controllers are completely usable with the Series X. No more need to buy a new set of controllers with this new console if you are upgrading from any version of the Xbox One.