

Stellar Blade is a 2024 action-adventure video game developed by Shift Up and published by Sony Interactive Entertainment. Players take command of protagonist Eve as she ventures to save humanity from a relentless war waged by monstrous creatures in a distant future. Throughout her journey, Eve is accompanied by her squad and survivors to take back Earth.

Shift Up, a Korean studio founded by Kim Hyung Tae, first teased the game under the working title *Project Eve* in 2019. By 2021, it was revealed as a PlayStation 5 exclusive to be published by Sony Interactive Entertainment. In 2022, the game was officially titled *Stellar Blade*.

Following a delay from its planned 2023 release, *Stellar Blade* was released for the PlayStation 5 on April 26, 2024. The game received generally positive reviews from critics, with praise being directed at its visuals and combat with criticism being directed at its story.


Gameplay

Stellar Blade is an action-adventure video game set in a post-apocalyptic Earth and played from a third-person perspective.^[1] Combat focuses on grasping the attack patterns of enemies and countering with precise timing. Eve's Beta Gauge is filled by parrying and evading in combat. The Beta Gauge is spent to use skills such as piercing super armor and enemy combo interruption. Eve also has a Burst Gauge filled through successive parries and combos, which can be used to activate buffs and powerful attacks. The game utilizes the PlayStation 5 DualSense controller's haptic feedback to deliver feedback on enemy attacks and weapon accuracy. Exploration features wall scaling and swinging on ropes for environmental traversal, with things to be found including extra costumes. The overworld has NPCs who can provide Eve with side quests, with the option of either taking them on or ignoring them.^[2]

Story

Setting

Humanity is driven from Earth after a losing war against monstrous creatures called Naytibas. To reclaim their lost home, Eve and her squad are deployed from the Colony to fight the Naytiba and to take back Earth. Eventually, Eve meets two survivors named Adam and Lily, and settles into Xion, humanity's last

Stellar Blade	
	
Developer(s)	Shift Up ^[a]
Publisher(s)	Sony Interactive Entertainment
Director(s)	Kim Hyung-tae
Producer(s)	Kim Hyung-tae
Designer(s)	Kim Hyung-tae Lee Chang-min Jang Hee-cheol
Composer(s)	Hwang Joo-eun Oliver Good Keita Inoue
Engine	Unreal Engine 4
Platform(s)	PlayStation 5
Release	April 26, 2024
Genre(s)	Action-adventure
Mode(s)	Single-player

surviving city on Earth. Eve then makes contact with the elder Orcal and establishes relationships with the residents of Xion, in order to further her mission to save humanity and reclaim Earth.^[3]

Synopsis

The Colony sends the 7th Airborne Squad in its latest attempt to liberate Earth from the Naytiba. However, the invasion ends in disaster with Eve being the sole survivor of the landing force, and with her close friend Tachy sacrificing herself to protect her from an unidentified Alpha Naytiba. She is saved by Adam, a scavenger who enlists her aid in recovering a Hyper Cell power source from the ruined megacity of Eidos 7. In return, Adam leads Eve to a nearby Alpha Naytiba for her to slay. After eliminating the Alpha Naytiba, Eve comes across a survivor of the 5th Airborne Squad, Lily, who decides to join Eve as her engineering support. Adam then takes both of them to Xion, the last human city on Earth, and requests their aid in saving Xion. Eve then meets Xion's leader Orcal, who explains that in addition to the Hyper Cell she recovered from Eidos 7, three more Hyper Cells will be needed to restore Xion to its full functionality. Not only will this allow him to revive the tens of thousands of humans kept in stasis within the city, but also to locate other Alpha Naytibas. Orcal further explains that four Alpha Naytiba Cores will be needed to form a Master Core, which will allow access into the Naytibas' Nest where their leader, the Elder Naytiba, resides.

After recovering the second Hyper Cell, Orcal informs Eve about the location of the second Alpha Core, and becomes devastated upon learning that Tachy was transformed into an Alpha Naytiba, forcing her to kill her and retrieve her core. Once the third Hyper Cell is recovered, the team recovers a recording from a previous Airborne Squad member named Raven who alleges that what they currently believe is humanity is actually a race of advanced human-like androids called Andro-Eidos and that the Naytibas are actually the original human race after they resorted to radical genetic modification. Orcal confirms that long ago their leader, the AI Mother Sphere, created the Andro-Eidos at humanity's behest and both races lived in peace. However, Mother Sphere suddenly ordered the Andro-Eidos to exterminate humanity and rewrote history to fool the Andro-Eidos into believing they are humans. Meanwhile, the surviving humans went into hiding and eventually transformed themselves into the Naytibas as a way to fight back against Mother Sphere and the Andro-Eidos. Despite being shocked at the revelation that she has been killing the descendants of humanity, Eve is still determined to end the war by killing the Elder Naytiba.

Eve learns from Orcal that the third Alpha core is located atop a space elevator, but before breaking in, Adam receives concerning word from Xion and leaves both Lily and Eve. After defeating the Alpha Naytiba Demogorgon, Eve fails to retrieve its Alpha core and is saved by Lily, who relays a signal to the Colony to send the powered exoskeleton Providence to assist her back to Earth. They return to Xion and discover it under attack by the Naytiba. Eve and Lily rush back to the city to defend it, and Eve confronts the same unidentified Alpha Naytiba who attacked her and killed Tachy. After defeating it and retrieving its core, she is shocked to see its true identity as Raven. Raven manages to retreat while Eve attends to Orcal. Orcal admits that he is also an Alpha Naytiba himself, being a fusion of Andro-Eidos and Naytiba technology. With Eve only having three Alpha Cores in her possession, Orcal sacrifices himself by using his own Alpha Core to create the Master Core. He then pleads for Eve to meet the Elder Naytiba before passing away. Eve and Lily head for the Nest, and on the way find a final recording by Raven, who reveals she had grown disillusioned upon discovering that Mother Sphere not only exterminated the original humans but also ruined Earth's surface by jettisoning large parts of the Colony from orbit to prevent the Naytiba from completely overrunning it.

Upon reaching the entrance of the Nest, Eve encounters Raven who tries to stop her from entering, but Eve is able to defeat her and leaves her disabled but alive. Eve and Lily then enter the nest, only to discover Adam's true identity as Raphael Marks, the scientist who created the Mother Sphere, and the Elder Naytiba who created the Naytibas, throwing the world into conflict with Andro-Eidos and Humanity wars. Adam explains that he has come to regret creating the Naytiba, as that meant the sacrifice of their humanity. He also realizes that as androids that lack human DNA, Andro-Eidos cannot be the true successors of humanity due to their inability to evolve. To address this, Adam offers to fuse himself with Eve to become the next step in human evolution, which will both eliminate the threat of the Naytiba and give humanity a chance at a new future. The ending diverges based on Eve's choices and previous actions.

- If Eve refuses to accept Adam's plan, the two are forced to battle each other with Eve ultimately prevailing. Adam dies along with the last hope for humanity, and Mother Sphere welcomes Eve and Lily back to the Colony now that their mission is complete.
- If Eve accepts Adam's plan, the two of them fuse to create an entirely new type of human being. Mother Sphere then overrides Lily's power armor and has it attack Eve, forcing her to defend herself. Eve prevails, with Lily surviving or dying depending on whether Eve has maximum affection with her or not.
 - If Eve hasn't reached maximum affection with Lily, Lily will die. Mother Sphere then arrives and congratulates Eve for eliminating the Elder Naytiba as planned. However, with no further use for her, Mother Sphere sends an army to destroy Eve, and the game ends with her fighting against an endless horde of Andro-Eidos soldiers.
 - If Lily's relationship has reached maximum and the Iberis code has been recovered from Lily's Atelier in Eidos 9, Lily hacks the robot with the Iberis code and ejects herself to safety. Eve manages to completely annihilate the army Mother Sphere sends at her. Lily then delivers the fourth and final Hyper Cell to Xion, fully restoring the city while Eve becomes its new protector.

Development and release

On April 4, 2019, Korean studio Shift Up (founded by *Blade & Soul* illustrator Kim Hyung Tae) announced *Project Eve* for PlayStation 4, Windows, and Xbox One and was to be developed in Unreal Engine 4.^[4] A prototype for new gameplay and art direction was shown in late 2020 without mentioning any of the game's platforms for release.^[5] In the September 2021 PlayStation Showcase, the game was announced to be an exclusive for PlayStation 5 and would be published by Sony Interactive Entertainment.^[6] In a September 2022 PlayStation State of Play, the game's final title was revealed to be *Stellar Blade* with new gameplay shown off and an original release window scheduled for 2023.^[7] The next day, MONACA announced their involvement stating that their members, Oliver Good and Keita Inoue, are participating in the music production of the game,^[8] which has been reiterated multiple times prior to release.^[9] The game uses 3D scanning for some character models with Eve being based on the model Shin Jae-eun.^[10] The Naytiba enemies were designed by Korean movie monster designer, Hee-Cheol Jang who made the monster designs into clay models which were 3D scanned to create the 3D models.^[11] In December 2023, the game was delayed to 2024.^{[12][13]} In a January 2024 State of Play, it

was announced that the game would be released on April 26.^[14] A demo of the game was released on the PlayStation Store worldwide on March 29, 2024;^[15] it was accidentally published early in the United States on March 8, but removed quickly.^[16]

Reception

Reception	
Aggregate scores	
Aggregator	Score
<u>Metacritic</u>	81/100 ^[18]
<u>OpenCritic</u>	84% ^[17]
Review scores	
Publication	Score
<u>4Players</u>	84/100 ^[28]
<u>Destructoid</u>	8/10 ^[20]
<u>Eurogamer</u>	4/5 ^[24]
<u>Game Informer</u>	8.75/10 ^[19]
<u>GameSpot</u>	8/10 ^[21]
<u>IGN</u>	7/10 ^[25]
<u>Jeuxvideo.com</u>	17/20 ^[22]
<u>PCMag</u>	4.5/5 ^[27]
<u>Shacknews</u>	8/10 ^[26]
<u>Video Games Chronicle</u>	4/5 ^[23]

Stellar Blade received "generally favorable" reviews from critics, according to review aggregator website Metacritic.^[29] 84% of 113 critic reviews recommend the game, according to OpenCritic.^[17]

Appearance of Eve

Stellar Blade attracted criticism owing to the perceived sexualization of Eve. According to *Den of Geek*, some critics argued that the game's marketing heavily leaned on the sexual appeal of Eve, with elements like revealing costumes and suggestive character designs being central to the game's promotional strategy.^[30] The game also has received an Adults Only rating in South Korea, attributed to its explicit content including nudity, violence, and a sexualized approach to character design.^[31] *TheGamer* argued that the protagonist, while attractive, is "barely sexy at all", and accused other critics of wanting to "trash the game just because Eve was too sexy".^[32] Kim has defended some of these design choices by explaining that from a third-person perspective, the player's view is predominantly directed at the back of the character, hence the emphasis on making this view appealing.^[33] He further elaborated that the design choices were made to entertain an adult audience.^[34] *IGN Italia* noted that while some criticized Eve's design as oversexualized, others felt there was a double standard among critics, fans, and developers who condemned the game while praising other examples like *Nier Automata* and *Bayonetta*.^{[35][34]}

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Notes

- a. Additional work by [PlayStation Studios XDev](#)

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External links

- Official website (<https://www.stellar-blade.com>)
- *Stellar Blade* (<https://www.playstation.com/games/stellar-blade/>) at PlayStation
- Stellar Blade (<https://twitter.com/StellarBlade>) on Twitter

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