

= Infinity Blade =

Infinity Blade is a fighting game with role @-@ playing elements developed by Chair Entertainment and Epic Games and released through the Apple App Store on December 9 , 2010 . It is the first iOS video game to run on the Unreal Engine . In the game , the unnamed player character fights a series of one @-@ on @-@ one battles in a derelict castle to face the immortal God King . When in battle , players swipe the screen to attack and parry , and tap the screen to dodge and block enemy attacks . Upon victory or defeat , the player restarts the game as the character 's descendant with the same items and experience level .

The game was developed by a team of twelve people , who took two months to make a playable demo and three more to finish the game . Infinity Blade was intended to demonstrate the new iOS version of the Unreal Engine , and to combine the swordplay of Karateka and Prince of Persia with the loneliness of Shadow of the Colossus . The game received four free expansions that added new equipment , endings , and game modes .

Infinity Blade was the fastest @-@ grossing app in the history of iOS upon its release . It made US \$ 1 @. @ 6 million in its first four days , and over US \$ 23 million by the end of 2011 . It was well received by gaming critics . Reviews heavily praised the graphics and compared the mobile game favorably to console games . Critics also praised the swipe @-@ based combat system , but split opinions on the cyclical gameplay as either addictive or repetitive . Chair later released an arcade port and two iOS sequels : Infinity Blade II and Infinity Blade III . Author Brandon Sanderson also wrote two novellas set between the games : Infinity Blade : Awakening and Infinity Blade : Redemption .

= = Gameplay = =

In the primary portion of Infinity Blade , the player @-@ character travels a largely linear path through a ruined castle and fights one @-@ on @-@ one battles with oversized enemies . The path through the castle is a series of discrete locations where the player can pan the camera around the stationary player @-@ character to view a fully three @-@ dimensional area . The player taps locations highlighted onscreen to trigger either a short cutscene as the player @-@ character moves to the next location , or a sword battle with an enemy . During combat , the player controls the character 's sword by swiping a finger across the screen . Players can touch icons at the bottom of the screen to dodge attacks by ducking right or left , or to block attacks with a shield , which has a limited number of uses during a single battle . Players may also parry incoming attacks with an intercepting sword move that , for example , parries an attack from the left with a swipe to the left . Each of these three counters can leave the enemy vulnerable to counterattack for a short period , but incorrect counters result in damage to the player @-@ character , as reflected in the health bar . When players fail in battle en route to the God King , the game resets to the location preceding the previous battle . Enemies can perform attacks that cannot be parried or blocked ? such as a shield bash ? that must be dodged . Players use two special abilities via icons atop the screen : the Super Attack temporarily stuns the opponent , and magic heals or attacks as indicated by drawing a given symbol . Both require time to recharge after use . When attacking , the player can swipe in any direction , and can do specific attack combinations to deal extra damage .

In addition to combat , there is also a mild role @-@ playing component . An experience point system levels up the player @-@ character and their equipment (weapons , armor , shields , helms , and magic rings) . Equipment pieces have special properties and a predetermined amount of experience points required to master them . Mastering a piece of equipment increases its sale value but decreases the player 's experience gain by 20 % . Upon leveling up or mastering a piece of equipment , players gain attribute points that can be allotted towards four character attributes : health , attack , shield power , or magic . Each point can only be allocated once and is a permanent upgrade to the character . Players can purchase new equipment using in @-@ game money from sacks and treasure chests found throughout the castle , defeated enemies , and sales of unused equipment . In @-@ game money can be purchased with real money within the game .

The game follows a cyclical narrative structure in which the player @-@ character and his descendants individually explore a castle in a quest to battle the primary antagonist , the immortal God King . In the game 's introduction , the player @-@ character has just finished this quest , but is slain by the God King . The player then assumes the role of the dead character 's descendant as he starts his own journey at the beginning of the castle . This cycle , called a bloodline , continues after the player finally faces the God King and either dies , wins , or chooses to join the God King instead of fighting . Enemy difficulty increases with each bloodline cycle . Another bloodline ending is unlocked after purchasing the Infinite Blade item : the sword is placed into a pedestal in the castle 's underground dungeons and three doors open . After then defeating each of the three " Deathless " ? immortal beings like the God King ? of increasing difficulty found within , a final fourth door opens and the player faces a mechanized warrior guarding the high @-@ tech chamber where the God King is reborn whenever he is killed . Upon defeating the mechanized warrior , the chamber is revealed to be controlled by an ancestor of the playable character , who chose to serve the God King . After fighting the ancestor , the player @-@ character is told that the Infinity Blade has the ability to prevent immortals like the God King from resurrecting after death . The player is then given the option of either starting the next bloodline as they do when defeated , or resetting the game and starting New Game + mode , which resets all gold and item progression but maintains the character 's experience level , letting the player remaster the items and level up even further .

= = = Expansions = = =

Chair Entertainment released four expansions as free updates to the game . The first , released December 20 , 2010 , added a new enemy , equipment , and microtransactions . It also removed an experience level cap . The second update , titled Infinity Blade : The Deathless Kings , was released on March 2 , 2011 and added the dungeons as a second branch to the game 's path . This expansion also added new equipment , enemies , and the second ending where the player @-@ character defeats his ancestor . The third update , Infinity Blade : Arena , was released on May 19 , 2011 . It added the player vs. player " Arena Mode " , a tiered combat game progression where one player fights as the hero and the other as an enemy from the game . The update also included new equipment and a single @-@ player version of Arena Mode called " Survival Mode " . On October 4 , 2011 , a fourth update added a new enemy and new equipment to coincide with the announcement of the forthcoming sequel Infinity Blade II .

= = Development = =

Infinity Blade was created by Chair Entertainment , a subsidiary company of Epic Games . In July 2010 , Chair had both recently finished the Xbox Live Arcade game Shadow Complex and been acquired by Epic . Chair was brainstorming Kinect and Wii games , including an idea similar to Infinity Blade , and Epic was nearing completion of an iOS version of the Unreal Engine 3 graphics engine and in need of a " killer game " to show it off . Epic had previously licensed the engine for use in numerous console and personal computer games . They asked Chair to develop a game for the engine in five months , with a playable demo for the Apple Special Event conference in two months . The team decided within a few days to work on the Infinity Blade concept , codenamed " Project Sword " . In lieu of the normal initial game development where working prototypes test gameplay ideas , Chair spent the first week of development refining the gameplay concept on paper before beginning to code . Many of the core gameplay ideas were developed in their first few hours . Jeremy Mustard , Chair 's co @-@ founder and technical director , estimates that the team cut two @-@ third of that initial design due to lack of time . Refining the complex touch @-@ based interface was complicated due to the Unreal Engine 's incomplete status and the native iOS code library 's lack of support for fast touch @-@ based gameplay . The five @-@ month development was completed by a team of twelve people from Chair , with assistance from Epic . In addition to Jeremy Mustard , the team was composed of Chair co @-@ founder and creative director Donald Mustard ; Simon Hurley as producer ; Joshua Andersen and Scott K. Bowen as programmers ;

Adam Ford as art director ; Orlando Barrowes , Bert Lewis , Mike Low , Scott Stoddard , and Nathan Trewartha as artists and animators ; and Brandon Raul Campos as lead tester .

The game 's swipe @-@ based swordplay was based on Donald Mustard 's desire for an uncommon gameplay based on nuanced sword fighting and parrying . He described the game 's influences as the combat of Karateka and Prince of Persia combined with the " lonely epicness " of Shadow of the Colossus . Chair sought to develop an experience that could be picked up and played for a minute (a single battle) or for half an hour (a bloodline) . They felt that many other developers accustomed to consoles were wrong to make iOS games that required long playing experiences to feel meaningful , and so Chair developed the bloodline concept as a natural breakpoint . They also felt that mobile games like Infinity Blade with constant action elements went too long without giving the player time to relax and resulted in player exhaustion , and so Chair kept their individual battles short with brief cinematic pauses in longer battles . Chair showed their playable demo at the Apple conference on September 1 , 2010 , after weeks of rehearsal , and attracted a lot of attention to the game . It was released on December 9 , 2010 . While Chair itself spent little on marketing , Apple used the game extensively in advertisements for its devices .

The music for the game was composed by Josh Aker , who had written the music for previous Chair games . The soundtrack was intended by Aker to be " intense " during combat , but to vary between " serene " and " otherworldly " outside battle . It is a mixture of live and synthetic instrument performances . Cello and nyckelharpa were the primary instruments used . Aker wanted to have " avant @-@ garde performances " for the recordings . The soundtrack was sold as a digital album , Infinity Blade : Original Soundtrack , through several online music retailers . Chair began to develop the game 's first update before the initial game was released . They intended only to add new monsters and features , but added the ability to purchase gold due to customer requests . Chair did not rebalance the game to incentivize in @-@ app purchases . Work on The Deathless Kings update began immediately afterwards . Chair felt that releasing several large , free updates to the game would increase their overall user base and result in more total sales due to word of mouth .

= = Reception = =

Infinity Blade was noted for its sales at launch , selling more than 270 @,@ 000 copies and making over US \$ 1 @.@ 6 million in its first four days ? the " fastest @-@ grossing app " ever released for iOS at the time . By the end of 2011 , it had made at least US \$ 23 million in revenue . Around fourteen months after the initial release , Chair noted that half of the game 's sales were for the iPhone and half were for the iPad and iPod . After releasing the sequel , Epic Games noted in 2012 that the series was Epic 's most profitable by measure of revenue against person @-@ hours spent in development .

Infinity Blade was reviewed by several major gaming sites in addition to mobile game @-@ focused sites . Critics praised the game 's graphics heavily . IGN reviewer Hilary Goldstein said that it was " an absolute stunner for any handheld device and ushers in a new era of possibility for high @-@ end graphics . " GamePro 's Ryan Rigney called the game " downright gorgeous " and said that the graphics were almost at the level of a Xbox 360 game , which was echoed by John Meyer of Wired , who claimed that it had the best graphics of any iPad game . The reviewer for Edge further praised the art direction , especially with regards to the enemy and armor designs .

The gameplay was generally praised by reviewers , who typically found the combat engaging but were split on the repetitive aspects of the game . 1UP.com 's Matt Clark said that the sword gameplay " just feels right " , while Mark Brown of Eurogamer said that the combat had an excitement factor that pushed players to keep on going for one more battle . Tracy Erickson of Pocket Gamer described the swipe @-@ based combat system as " easy to understand , though tough to master " , and Nick Chester of Destructoid said that although the combat was not very complicated , it was fun to play . The role @-@ playing game elements were praised ? Destructoid 's Chester called them " satisfying " and IGN 's Goldstein said that they added to the game 's difficulty . Brown 's review for Eurogamer , however , said that while good they were not as engaging as the combat , and the Edge review dismissed them as minimal . Reviewers had mixed opinions on

the effectiveness of the bloodline system 's repetition : Destructoid 's Chester described it as addictive and IGN 's Goldstein agreed , but Erickson 's review for Pocket Gamer said that the game had problems with repetition and Wired 's Meyer dismissed it as " repetitive ... as the title suggests " . J. Nicholas Geist , writing for Kill Screen , focused his entire review on the cyclical nature of the game , treating its nature of repetition with small changes between each bloodline as a metaphor for life . Most reviewers found themselves between the two extremes , with Brown of Eurogamer simultaneously describing it as " alarmingly repetitious " but still addictive and 1UP.com 's Clark saying that enjoying the game required getting past the repetition , despite being " stellar " .

= = Sequels and spin @-@ offs = =

On October 28 , 2011 , Epic Games and Adrenaline Amusements released an arcade version of the game , Infinity Blade FX . The game is played on a 46 @-@ inch screen rigged with optical sensors so as to mimic a large iPhone or iPad screen . Each arcade stand contains up to three screens , and players can play against each other or in the single @-@ player game . A sequel to the iOS game , Infinity Blade II , was announced on October 4 , 2011 , during the Apple iPhone 4S keynote presentation . It was released on December 1 , 2011 , and features enhanced graphics , a new storyline , and new fighting styles . A spinoff game , Infinity Blade : Dungeons , was in development for iOS by Epic Games subsidiary Impossible Games , but was cancelled in February 2013 when Impossible Games was shut down . A final game in the trilogy , Infinity Blade III , was released on September 18 , 2013 .

A novella by author Brandon Sanderson was released prior to both Infinity Blade II and III to serve as a story bridge between the games . Infinity Blade : Awakening was released as an e @-@ book on October 4 , 2011 to correspond with the announcement of Infinity Blade II . The story gives the protagonist of the first game a name , Siris , introduces the idea that the God King was one of multiple Deathless in the world , as is Siris , and has Siris and the assassin Isa journey to find the Worker of Secrets in order to kill the resurrected God King and the other Deathless . The second e @-@ book novella , Infinity Blade : Redemption , was released on September 9 , 2013 just prior to the third game . In it , Siris and the God King escape from their imprisonment by the Worker of Secrets , while extensive flashbacks show the rise of the Deathless in a future @-@ Earth analogue . While Siris disrupts the Worker of Secret 's plans , the God King confronts and is killed by the Worker .

A Chinese version of the game for Xbox One and Android will be published by Tencent Games on November 28 , 2015 .