

= Ratchet & Clank : Going Commando =

Ratchet & Clank : Going Commando (known as Ratchet & Clank 2 : Locked and Loaded in Europe and Australia , and Ratchet & Clank 2 in Japan) is a 2003 3D platform video game developed by Insomniac Games and published by Sony Computer Entertainment for the PlayStation 2 . Ratchet & Clank : Going Commando is the second game in the Ratchet & Clank series , following Ratchet & Clank and preceding Ratchet & Clank : Up Your Arsenal .

The game begins with an interview of Ratchet and Clank that is seen by Megacorp CEO Abercrombie Fizzwidget . Fizzwidget contacts Ratchet and Clank and explains that a top secret experiment was stolen from Megacorp . Ratchet and Clank are given the task of tracking down the experiment but run into difficulties as they journey across the galaxy .

The gameplay of Going Commando is similar to that of the original Ratchet & Clank . The player controlled protagonists are seen in a third @-@ person perspective ; the player uses various weapons and gadgets to defeat enemies and solve puzzles , while exploring planets , completing platforming sections and minigames , and progressing through the story . The game features many improvements over the original game , such as the aesthetics , and introduces many new gameplay aspects , such as weapon upgrading .

Ratchet & Clank : Going Commando was released roughly a year after its predecessor , and received critical acclaim , with some calling it one of the best PlayStation 2 games ever made . Critics noted the game 's improved graphics , engaging gameplay , longer story , and overall sound as being major improvements over the original , but criticized the game for its high difficulty level , and certain minigames .

= = Gameplay = =

The player controls Ratchet from a third @-@ person perspective , and uses weapons to defeat enemies . The player can also use gadgets to explore new areas . The player travels to planets in the " Bogon " Galaxy and completes main objectives and optional side quests . " Bolts " , the game world 's currency , are primarily obtained by defeating enemies and breaking crates located throughout the game 's levels . Going Commando also includes four types of " maxi @-@ games " , or minigames . These games include arena battles , spherical world battles , hover bike races , and space races / battles . After completing the game , the player may also enter " challenge mode " which is more difficult but the player starts with the weapons and health that they had when they finished the game the first time , additional weapon upgrades are also unlocked .

Going Commando introduces eighteen new weapons , such as the Blitz Gun , Seeker and Lava Gun . Each weapon has a " growth bar " , which increases when the weapon is used to defeat enemies . The weapon is upgraded once the bar is filled , increasing its power and changing the design of it . Certain devices from the original Ratchet & Clank make a return , such as the Swingshot , while others are new to Going Commando . The player can use a save file from the original Ratchet & Clank to get " retro " weapons from the first game for free .

As with weapons , Ratchet gains experience with each enemy destroyed . When Ratchet 's experience bar fills , he gains a new level of " nanotech " . This awards him with additional health bubbles , up to a maximum of 80 . Ratchet 's health can also be increased by finding nanotech upgrades . The game introduces armor vendors , which are able to provide up to four additional levels of protection .

= = Plot = =

After defeating Drek in the previous game , Ratchet and Clank become celebrities , though their lives remain otherwise uneventful . After giving an interview for the holovision show Behind the Hero , Ratchet and Clank are suddenly teleported to the Bogon galaxy by Abercrombie Fizzwidget , the founder and CEO of Megacorp , the galaxy 's largest maker of consumer goods and electronics , who offers them a job recovering a stolen biological experiment . Upon completing an extensive

training regime , the duo is sent to a flying laboratory on planet Aranos where the experiment was last seen . Before they can retrieve it , however , a masked thief appears and swipes it for himself . Escaping unharmed , Ratchet returns to his ship and contacts Fizzwidget , who provides him with coordinates to track the experiment .

The duo proceed to pursue the thief across several planets , eventually confronting him on planet Siberius . The thief escapes , but Ratchet manages to reclaim the experiment . Fizzwidget arranges a meeting to take custody , but " accidentally " maroons the duo in the desert afterwards . The thief arrives and reveals his true identity as Angela Cross , a former Megacorp scientist . Claiming that the experiment is a threat to the entire galaxy , she gives them the location of a testing facility on planet Dobbo where it was created .

Following her lead , the duo infiltrate the facility and discover a video recording of the experiment on a violent rampage . Angela then contacts them with news that Megacorp is hosting an event on planet Boldan to promote the experiment as the " Protopet " , with Fizzwidget in attendance . Convinced that Fizzwidget is unaware of the Protopet 's flaws , Ratchet goes to warn him , only to discover that the whole thing was a trap set by private mercenaries on Megacorp 's payroll . Captured , they are then sent to a remote prison over Aranos , but manage to reunite and escape . Tracking the mercenaries to their hideout on planet Snivelak , they rescue a captive Angela and set out to confront Fizzwidget at Megacorp headquarters .

To their surprise , " Fizzwidget " turns out to be none other than disgraced hero Captain Qwark . In a bid to restore his reputation , Qwark intends to unleash the Protopet upon the galaxy , so he can use a device created by Angela to defeat the creatures and make himself famous again . When he demonstrates the device , however , it malfunctions and transforms the original Protopet into a gigantic beast that devours him . While Angela goes to rescue the real Fizzwidget , Ratchet subdues the Protopet and saves Qwark 's life . With Clank 's help , Angela fixes the device and broadcasts a signal through Megacorp 's TV transponders , neutralizing the Protopets and restoring peace to the Bogon galaxy . In the game 's epilogue , Ratchet , Clank , Angela , and a female Infobot that Clank had met at several points in the game hang out at Clank 's apartment , where Angela informs Ratchet that Qwark has been assigned to work as a test subject for Megacorp as punishment for his crimes .

= = Development and release = =

Going Commando was approved for development five months before the first game 's release , after highly positive reviews from the original 's playtesters . In August 2002 , Insomniac Games started designing the visual concepts for Going Commando , while still fixing bugs in the original game . Brian Hastings , Insomniac 's Vice President of Programming , said in a 2003 interview that the first step in the game 's design was to " try to come up with a few ' Big Ideas ' " . These are the things we think will really grab people 's attention and give the game that Wow @-@ Factor . In the case of Ratchet & Clank : Going Commando the big ideas were RPG elements (like weapon upgrades and health upgrades) , spherical planets and space combat . " Hastings said that the inspiration for the game 's spherical worlds came in part from the cover of the 1943 novel *The Little Prince* . Designing the spherical worlds required changing about 50 @, @ 000 lines of the game 's code , to account for the different handling of gravity . Development took a total of ten months , during which time Insomniac 's design team doubled from 40 to 80 members .

One common criticism of the original Ratchet & Clank was the design and personality of Ratchet . Ted Price , the game 's producer , said that to fix this they made Ratchet " less cocky , he is much more friendly to Clank , and he 's able to handle himself better in stressful situations without being impetuous , which is what he was in Ratchet 1 . " The character of Captain Qwark was a late addition to the game .

Going Commando was released in North America on November 11 , 2003 , Europe on November 21 , 2003 , and Japan on December 11 , 2003 . In 2004 , Sony added Going Commando to their Greatest Hits series of games for the PlayStation 2 , and it was similarly added to the Platinum Range used in the PAL region on August 13 , 2004 , and to the Japanese list of The Best games on

July 8 , 2004 .

= = Reception = =

Going Commando received critical acclaim . 1UP.com said that " Everything that Ratchet & Clank did , Going Commando does better , and the tweaks and additions just push it further over the top . " Game Informer 's Andy McNamara said that the game has " the best and most compelling content [Insomniac] has put out to date . "

The game 's arena combat and racing levels were praised by Andrew Reiner of Game Informer , and Benjamin Turner of GameSpy similarly said that " it 's surprising how fun it can be to play interstellar gladiator . " GamePro praised the game 's pacing , saying that the first game felt like it didn 't " really show its true colors until about halfway through " , but that Going Commando had the same feeling by the end of the second level . GameSpot mentioned that the " great sense of humor " of the original game is also noticeable in Ratchet & Clank : Going Commando , a statement echoed by GameZone when they said that the game 's cut @-@ scenes " represent some of the most thought @-@ out and gut @-@ wrenchingly funny sequences ever witnessed in a platforming game . "

Going Commando 's graphics were praised by reviewers , who specifically mentioned Ratchet 's improved character design . Game Informer said that " the graphical details will leave you speechless ... " GameSpot considered the reuse of graphics for the menus and mission screens to be " a little lazy " , but praised the graphics and sound effects of the game 's weapons . GameSpy mentioned that " Going Commando is easily the most graphically impressive platformer on the market " . GameZone reported that the game 's sound was well @-@ done , including the music , weapon effects , and dialogue .

Criticism of the game was aimed at its level of difficulty , which is higher than that of its predecessor ; 1UP.com mentioned that this was most noticeable near the end of the game , where " there are levels that consist of nothing but wave after wave of difficult enemies thrown at you to deplete your ammo , and then more waves of enemies after that . " GameSpy , however , praised this aspect of the game , saying that it made Going Commando more interesting than the original . Some reviewers also felt that the game 's space combat was poorly done in comparison to the rest of the game , and that the " Giant Clank " levels were " brainless and boring " .

The game was awarded 11th place on IGN 's 2007 list of " The Top 25 PS2 Games of All Time " . IGN also awarded both Going Commando and Final Fantasy X @-@ 2 their Game of the Month award for November 2003 in their first " Game of the Month " feature to cover two games .

While the first Ratchet and Clank suffered , in my opinion , because of its immensely generic homogenization of character and because of its relative ease , Ratchet and Clank Going Commando tries to solve these problems in typical Insomniac fashion . Ratchet too annoying ? Let him grow up and take charge . Game too easy ? Increase the quantity and kinds of weapons for Ratchet and for the enemies . But Insomniac didn 't just fix problems . It looked at every detail of the first game and from the ground up improved everything wholesale . It upgraded everything , and then it added new stuff . [...] Throughout its core fabric , Going Commando is improved in every way .