

= Wolfenstein : The New Order =

Wolfenstein : The New Order is an action @-@ adventure first @-@ person shooter video game developed by MachineGames and published by Bethesda Softworks . It was released on 20 May 2014 for Microsoft Windows , PlayStation 3 , PlayStation 4 , Xbox 360 , and Xbox One . The game is the seventh main entry in the Wolfenstein series and the sequel to 2009 's Wolfenstein . Set in alternative history 1960s Europe in a world where the Nazis won the Second World War , the single @-@ player story follows war veteran William " B.J. " Blazkowicz and his efforts to stop the Nazis from ruling over the world .

The game is played from a first @-@ person perspective and most of its levels are navigated on foot . The story is arranged in chapters , which players complete in order to progress through the story . A morality choice in the prologue alters the game 's entire storyline ; some characters and small plot points are replaced across timelines . The game features a variety of weapons , most of which can be dual wielded . A cover system is also present .

Development began in 2010 , soon after id Software gave MachineGames the rights for the franchise . The development team envisioned Wolfenstein : The New Order as a first @-@ person action @-@ adventure game , taking inspiration from previous games in the series and particularly focusing on the combat and adventure elements . The game attempts to delve into character development of Blazkowicz , unlike its predecessors ? a choice from the developers to interest players in the story . They also aimed to portray him in a heroic fashion .

At release , Wolfenstein : The New Order received generally positive reviews , with praise particularly directed at the combat and the narrative of the game . Considered a positive change to the series by critics , it was nominated for multiple year @-@ end accolades , including Game of the Year and Best Shooter awards from several gaming publications . A stand @-@ alone expansion set before the events of the game , titled Wolfenstein : The Old Blood , was released in May 2015 .

= = Gameplay = =

Wolfenstein : The New Order is an action @-@ adventure shooter game played from a first @-@ person perspective . To progress through the story , players battle enemies throughout levels . The game utilizes a health system in which players ' health is divided into separate sections that regenerate ; if an entire section is lost , players must use a health pack to replenish the missing health .

Players use melee attacks , firearms and explosives to fight enemies , and may run , jump and occasionally swim to navigate through the locations . Melee attacks can be used to silently take down enemies without being detected . Alternatively , players can ambush enemies , which often results in an intense firefight between the two parties .

In combat , a cover system can be used as assistance against enemies . Players have the ability to lean around , over , and under cover , which can be used as a tactical advantage during shootouts and stealth levels . The game gives players a wide variety of weapon options ? they can be found on the ground , retrieved from dead enemies , or removed from their stationary position and carried around . Weapon ammunition must be manually retrieved from the ground or from dead enemies . Players have access to a weapon inventory , which allows them to carry as many weapons as they find . With some of these weapons , players have the ability to dual wield , giving them an advantage over enemies by dealing twice as much damage . Players can also customize weapons through the use of upgrades ; for example , a rocket launcher can be attached to the side of an assault rifle , and a laser cannon can be transformed into a wire cutting tool .

= = Plot = =

Three years after the destruction of the Black Sun portal , the Nazis have developed advanced technologies , enabling them to turn the tide against the Allies . At dawn on 16 July 1946 , U.S. special forces operative Captain William " B.J. " Blazkowicz (Brian Bloom) , accompanied by pilot

Fergus Reid (Gideon Emery) and Private Probst Wyatt III (A.J. Trauth) , take part in a massive Allied air raid against a fortress and weapons laboratory run by his nemesis , General Wilhelm " Deathshead " Strasse (Dwight Schultz) . The three are captured and brought to a human experimentation laboratory where Deathshead forces Blazkowitz to choose who he will gruesomely kill , Fergus or Wyatt , before leaving Blazkowitz and the survivor to die in the laboratory 's emergency incinerator . They escape the laboratory , but Blazkowitz suffers a critical head injury during the escape , rendering him unconscious and putting him in a coma . He is brought to a psychiatric asylum in Poland , where he remains in a vegetative state for 14 years from which he is unable to awake . He is cared for by the asylum 's head nurse Anya Oliwa (Alicja Bachleda) and her parents , who run the facility under the Nazi regime . Blazkowitz watches as Anya 's parents are regularly forced to hand patients over to Nazi authorities , who deem them Untermenschen for their mental disabilities .

In 1960 , fourteen years after Blazkowitz ' admission , the Nazis order that the asylum is to be shut down , killing all the patients and executing Anya 's family when they resist . Blazkowitz awakens from his vegetative state as he is about to be executed , killing the extermination squad and escaping the asylum with Anya . Blazkowitz and Anya drive to her grandparents ' farm , where they inform him that the Nazis won the war by forcing the United States to surrender in 1948 , and that the members of the ensuing Resistance were captured . Blazkowitz interrogates a captured officer from the asylum (he was hidden in the trunk of a car) , learning that the top members of the Resistance are imprisoned in Berlin before brutally executing him with a chainsaw . Anya 's grandparents smuggle her and Blazkowitz through a checkpoint in Stettin before they travel to Berlin . During the train ride , Blazkowitz and Anya enter into a romantic relationship . When they arrive , Anya helps Blazkowitz break into the prison , where he rescues the person he spared fourteen years prior (Fergus or Wyatt) and finds that the Resistance movement is a revived Kreisau Circle led by Caroline Becker (Bonita Friedericy) , who was left paralyzed due to her injuries at Isenstadt .

The Resistance execute an attack on a Nazi research facility in London , bombing their base of operations , stealing secret documents and prototype stealth helicopters . The documents reveal the Nazis are relying on reverse @-@ engineered technology derived from an ancient organization known as Da 'at Yichud , which created such inventions as energy weapons , computer AI 's , and super concrete ; however , it is also revealed that someone is tampering with the super concrete 's formula , making it susceptible to mold deterioration . The Resistance discover a match with Da 'at Yichud member Set Roth (Mark Ivanir) , who is imprisoned in a forced labor camp . Blazkowitz agrees to go undercover inside the camp and meets Set , who tells him that the Nazis have been using technology made by him and other Jewish scientists to mass @-@ produce and control robots , and offers to help the Resistance in return for the destruction of the labor camp . Blazkowitz finds a battery for a device that controls the camp robots , and him and Set take control of a robot , which they then use to destroy the camp and rescue prisoners .

Set reveals to the Resistance that the Nazis ' discovery of one of the Da 'at Yichud caches , which included advanced technology centuries ahead of its time , is what allowed Germany to surpass the Allies in military might and ultimately win the war . Set agrees to assist the Resistance by revealing the location of one such cache , but states that the Resistance requires a U @-@ boat to access it . Blazkowitz obtains a U @-@ boat , but discovers that it is the flagship of the Nazis ' submarine fleet , and is equipped with a cannon designed to fire nuclear warheads , which requires codes from the Nazi lunar research facility to operate . Blazkowitz uses the technology found in the Da 'at Yichud cache , namely the Spindly Torque ? a sphere that destroys the super @-@ concrete ? to steal the identity of a Nazi Lunar scientist and infiltrate the Lunar Base . He succeeds at obtaining the codes , but upon returning to earth , he discovers that Deathshead has mounted an assault on the Resistance base , capturing some of the members .

The Resistance use the nuclear codes and the Spindly Torque to mount an assault on Deathshead 's compound . Rescuing the captured resistance prisoners and evacuating them , Blazkowitz makes it to the top of the tower , struggling to Deathshead 's workshop . Inside , Deathshead greets Blazkowitz , revealing to him that he possesses the brain of the soldier that Blazkowitz chose to die

, and puts it in a robot . The robot comes alive and assaults Blazkowicz , who defeats it and puts his friend to rest by destroying the brain . Commandeering a larger robot mecha , Deathshead then attacks Blazkowicz , who gets the upper hand and destroys the robot , dragging Deathshead out of it . He repeatedly stabs Deathshead , who pulls out a grenade , which explodes and mauls Blazkowicz . As a gravely wounded Blazkowicz crawls towards a window , he mentally recites The New Colossus as he watches the Resistance survivors boarding a helicopter , alongside Anya and Set . Seeing that they have reached safety , and bleeding heavily from his injuries , Blazkowicz orders the Resistance to fire the nuclear cannon . After the credits , a helicopter is heard approaching .

= = Development = =

After developer MachineGames was founded , the employees all began brainstorming ideas , and pitching them to publishers . In June 2009 , MachineGames owner ZeniMax Media acquired id Software and all of its property , including Doom , Quake and Wolfenstein . Bethesda Softworks , who had previously declined a pitch from MachineGames , suggested that they develop a new game from a franchise acquired by ZeniMax . MachineGames inquired about developing a new game in the Wolfenstein series ; the studio visited id Software , who approved of MachineGames ' request for a new Wolfenstein game . By November 2010 , paperwork was signed , allowing MachineGames to develop Wolfenstein : The New Order . Preliminary development lasted approximately three years .

The existence of Wolfenstein : The New Order was first acknowledged by Bethesda Softworks on 7 May 2013 , through the release of an announcement trailer . Prior to this , Bethesda teased the upcoming project by releasing three images with the caption " 1960 " . Though originally due for release in late 2013 , the game was delayed to 2014 in order for the developers to further " polish " the game . In February 2014 , it was announced that The New Order would launch on 20 May 2014 in North America , on 22 May 2014 in Australia , and on 23 May 2014 in Europe . The Australian and European release dates were later pushed forward , resulting in a worldwide launch on 20 May 2014 . All pre @-@ orders of the game granted the purchaser an access code to the Doom beta , developed by id Software . For the German release of The New Order , all Nazi symbols and references were removed ; it is a criminal offence to display Nazi imagery on toys in Germany . Following the game 's release , MachineGames began developing Wolfenstein : The Old Blood , a standalone expansion pack set before the events of The New Order . It was released in May 2015 .

= = = Gameplay design = = =

The initial inspiration for Wolfenstein : The New Order came from previous games in the franchise . Senior gameplay designer Andreas Öjersfors said that it was the " super intense immersive combat " that defined the previous games , so MachineGames ensured that this elements was included in The New Order . The development team refer to the game as a " first @-@ person action adventure " , naming this one of the unique defining points of the game . " It is the David vs Goliath theme , " Öjersfors explained . " B.J. against a global empire of Nazis . " Öjersfors also acknowledged that many aspects of the game 's narrative are simply exaggerated elements of the Nazi Party : " The larger than life leaders , strange technology , strange experiments . " The team viewed the game as a " dark @-@ roasted blend of drama , mystery , humor . " Creative director Jens Matthies explained that they " take perhaps the most iconic first @-@ person shooter franchise in history and push it into a strange new world . "

Wolfenstein : The New Order is the second game to use id Software 's id Tech 5 engine , after Rage (2011) . The game utilizes the engine to add a large amount of detail to the game world . The team often found it difficult to develop the game with 1080p resolution at 60 frames per second , particularly on complex environments , but " we always made it work somehow " , said Matthies . He has also said that the main advantages of the engine is the speed and the detailing , while its biggest disadvantage is dynamic lighting ; " on the other hand the static light rendering is really

awesome , so you have full radiosity and can do really spectacular @-@ looking things using that , " he added . Senior concept artist Axel Torvenius said that one of the main inspirations for the art design of the game was movies from the 1960s , calling out the James Bond movies . The design for the Nazis in the game was influenced by the aesthetics of the Nazis at the end of the Second World War ; " it 's blended with the style of the 1960s and the fashion ideals of how to express yourself visually , " Öjersfors explained . This viewpoint is also influenced by the element of exaggeration , which is common throughout the game 's design and has been acknowledged by the team as a development inspiration . Character models can be covered in up to a 256k texture ; however , this is not used often in the game on individual characters , due to the difficulty of seeing it from a distance .

Wolfenstein : The New Order only features a single @-@ player mode . The team felt that dividing focus and resources across both a single @-@ player and an online multiplayer mode would be less efficient . When questioned about the lack of an online multiplayer mode , Öjersfors explained that the decision was simple . " If we could take every bit of energy and sweat the studio has and pour all that into the single @-@ player campaign , it gives us the resources to make something very , very cool , compared to if we would also have to divert some of our resources to making multiplayer . " Executive producer Jerk Gustafsson attributed the choice to the style of game the team is familiar with , stating that MachineGames is " a single @-@ player studio " .

= = = Characters and setting = = =

The team attempted to develop characters that offer a unique experience to the game . " The overarching goal for us was about building an ensemble of genuinely interesting characters we wanted to interact with , " said Matthies . They also strived to connect the thoughts and actions of all characters to the human experience , allowing players to know " why a person is doing what they are doing " . Matthies feels that all characters , particularly the allies , contain some dimension of his own personality . " They 're an expression of something that is part of me that I think is interesting to explore , " he said .

The game 's playable character , William " B.J. " Blazkowicz , has been previously featured as the playable protagonist of all Wolfenstein games . When developing the character of Blazkowicz for The New Order , MachineGames considered his appearances in previous games in the series . When doing this , they realised that the character had never really developed at all throughout the games ; " He 's just the guy that you play , " said Pete Hines , Vice President of PR and Marketing for Bethesda . The team discovered that they were interested in exploring his story , which is what they later invested in . One particular scenario that the team envisioned is putting Blazkowicz in situations where he is uncomfortable . Matthies said , " that 's really interesting to me . I love taking things and making them real . " Throughout the game , Blazkowicz communicates some of his inner thoughts through short monologues , many of which reveal that he has been traumatized by some of his experiences . " We always loved the idea of a prototypical action hero exterior juxtaposed with a rich and vulnerable interior psychology , " said Matthies . One of the largest priorities for the team when developing the character of Blazkowicz was to " reveal whatever needs to be revealed to [Blazkowicz] and the player " simultaneously ; Matthies felt that , despite the simplicity of this concept , it is rarely used in games . Prior to developing The New Order , the team had primarily worked on games that involved antihero protagonists . However , id Software wished Blazkowicz to be portrayed differently in the game . Matthies said , " It 's really important to [id] that BJ is a hero , and not an anti @-@ hero . " The team attempted to develop Blazkowicz into a character that players could relate to , as they felt that players are generally unable to relate to video game protagonists . " The goal is not to have a protagonist that 's so neutral that you can project yourself into them ; the goal is to have a protagonist that is so relatable that you become them , " said Matthies . They also tried to make players become " emotionally in sync " with Blazkowicz , using the morality choice in the game 's prologue to do so .

Wilhelm " Deathshead " Strasse , the game 's main antagonist , has been previously featured as an antagonist of Return to Castle Wolfenstein (2001) and main antagonist of Wolfenstein (2009) .

For *The New Order*, the team achieved closure on his story ; to do so in an effective way , they wanted to find an interesting angle to portray him : his personality is full of enthusiasm , and he appreciates life after his near @-@ death experience in the previous game . When developing the Nazis , Matthies states that the team " didn 't want to cartoon @-@ ify them " , instead opting to treat them seriously . Gideon Emery , who portrayed Fergus Reid , auditioned for his role in the game . He described Fergus as " a tough as nails soldier , who gives [Blazkowicz] both support and a pretty hard time in the process " . Matthies felt that Fergus is a type of father figure to Blazkowicz , and that he " only gives negative reinforcement " . Conversely , he saw Wyatt as a " sort of son surrogate " , as Blazkowicz is tasked as being his protector and mentor , and that he gives " positive reinforcement " . Max Hass , a seemingly brain @-@ damaged member of the Resistance , was inspired by the character of Garp from John Irving 's novel *The World According to Garp* . Alex Solowitz portrayed Max in the game . " Max was the most challenging character to cast , which seems counter @-@ intuitive because he 's a pretty simple guy on paper , but it took a tremendous actor to pull that off and a long time to find him , " Matthies said .

A large aspect of the game is the alternative history in which it is set , where the Nazis won the Second World War . The team saw this aspect as an opportunity to create everything at a very large scale , with very little limitations ; " so many things that we can create , and work with , and expand on . So , I never really felt that we were limited , " said Öjefors .

= = Music production = =

Wolfenstein : The New Order makes use of an original score that reflects the alternative universe depicted in the game . " We wanted to identify with different sounds that were kind of iconic , 1960s sounds , and then do our own twist on them to make a sound authentic enough that it felt realistic , " said Hines . In total , eight original songs were included in the game , and an additional three famous songs were reworked from their original version into German , for use in marketing ; the reworked songs cannot appear anywhere in the game , because the owners wish never to associate their work with any Nazi imagery . To promote the original songs , Bethesda created the fictional Neumond Recording Company , along with backstories for some of the fictional bands that play the original songs .

The team placed a high importance on the game 's music . During the game 's development , composer Mick Gordon traveled to Sweden to meet with the team , and spotted the game over three days , partly collaborating with both Fredrik Thordendal and Richard Devine . Gordon expressed the difference in composing the soundtrack for *Wolfenstein : The New Order* compared to other games ; " usually you sign onto a project and then you 're given a list of 150 battle cues to do , " he said .

When searching for a genre in which the soundtrack would be based upon , the team initially sought inspiration from the music of Richard Wagner , who was posthumously admired by Nazi Party leader Adolf Hitler . After studying Wagner 's work , the team discovered that it didn 't necessarily fit with the game 's tone . The team then searched for a style of music that would suit the Nazis , ultimately selecting distortion . " There 's lots of analogue distortion types , there 's all sorts of different pedals and valves and things that are really breaking up , " said Gordon . The team also took inspiration from 1960s music , using analogue equipment such as tape machines and reel @-@ to @-@ reel machines . Gordon has said that the soundtrack is " a tribute to all things guitar " . In collaboration with each other , the team of musicians composed over six hours of music which scores the game . Matthies said " A lot of the score features odd time signatures yet it 's all very groovy . "

= = Reception = =

= = Critical response = =

Wolfenstein : The New Order was released to mostly positive reviews . Metacritic calculated an

average score of 81 out of 100 based on 23 reviews for the Windows version , and 79 out of 100 based on 18 reviews for the Xbox One version and 73 reviews for the PlayStation 4 version . GameRankings assigned it an average review score of 84 % based on 12 reviews for the Windows version , 82 % based on 17 reviews for the Xbox One version , and 81 % based on 48 reviews for the PlayStation 4 version . Reviewers liked the game 's concept , narrative and combat mechanics .

The combat mechanics of the game received praise . Daniel Hinds of GameSpot felt that the intensity and variety of the combat in the game has granted the series " a breath of fresh air " , and believes that it managed to fulfill his nostalgic expectations from the series . Metro 's David Jenkins said that the combat in the game is the " real deal " , naming it one of the best recent single @-@ player shooter games , while Ryan Taljonick of GamesRadar called it " satisfying " . Simon Miller of VideoGamer.com lauded the game 's shooting and stealth mechanics , naming the former as " solid " . Similarly , GameSpot 's Hinds noted that the stealth was " simple but effective " , and named it one of the best things about the game . Steve Boxer of The Guardian also called out the stealth , calling it " decent " .

Colin Moriarty of IGN considered the narrative and characters one of the best features , stating that it 's where the game " really shines " . Metro 's Jenkins also praised the story , stating that the mix of tones is " bizarre but obviously intentional " . Matt Sakuragawa @-@ Gilman of Computer and Video Games called the narrative " intelligently written , brilliantly voiced and highly polished " . Kotaku 's Mike Fahey felt somewhat divided about the story , initially finding the attempts at emotion too obvious , but ultimately feeling satisfied , calling it " spectacular " . He also praised the characterization of Blazkowicz in the game . GamesRadar 's Taljonick also felt mixed about the game 's characters , finding Blazkowicz interesting , but feeling as though the supporting characters were quite undeveloped , leaving players to forget about them during gameplay . Conversely , Matt Bertz of Game Informer noted that the attempts to give Blazkowicz more depth feel odd in reflection to his brutal actions during other parts of the game . VideoGamer.com 's Miller also felt negatively about the narrative , calling it " awful " . Joystiq 's Ludwig Kietzmann commented on the drastic changes in the narrative 's pacing , feeling that it " dragged down " whenever the player is forced to search for ammunition ; Steven O 'Donnell of Good Game believed otherwise , feeling like he was " gearing up and patching up " after each fight .

The game 's use of an alternative history concept , with the Axis victory in World War II , was commended by many reviewers . IGN 's Moriarty and GameSpot 's Hinds called it " interesting " , with the former naming it one of the standout points of the game . Jason Hill of The Sydney Morning Herald called the concept " absorbing " , while Owen Anslow of The Mirror called it " intriguing " . Destructoid 's Chris Carter felt that the development team " went all the way " and spent a lot of time on the game 's concept .

The graphical design of the game received commentary from reviewers . GameSpot 's Hinds praised the visual design , noting that it accurately captured the time period , while effectively depicting the alternative storyline in which the game is set . Taljonick of GamesRadar stated that the game 's level design contributes to his enjoyment of the shooting sequences . He also praised the size of the levels , enjoying the possibility of participating in a large gunfight " with some sort of plan " . Kotaku 's Fahey praised the level design for similar reasons , admiring the degree of detail in the game . Digital Spy 's Liam Martin shared mixed commentary on the design , noting that the character models are animated well , but the game is " hardly a shining example of next @-@ gen graphical potential " . ABC 's Alex Walker criticized the game 's graphical design , commenting that the developers " focus [ed] their attention " on other aspects of the game .

Most critics and commentators shared the opinion that The New Order was better than they were expecting from a Wolfenstein game . Jon Blyth of Official Xbox Magazine called the game an " unexpected gem " , while ABC 's Walker said that he " never expected [to] enjoy [the game] so much " . The Sydney Morning Herald 's Hill said that the game ensures that the series is " a relevant force again " , while Destructoid 's Carter felt that the game " does wonders for essentially rebooting the franchise without rendering all the previous stories moot " . Edge agreed , calling the developers " brave " .

=== Sales ===

Within a week of its release , Wolfenstein : The New Order became the second @-@ best selling game of 2014 in the United Kingdom , behind Titanfall . The game also topped the weekly UK charts in its first week , totaling a quarter of all games sold in the region and accounting for 36 % of revenue . According to MCV , it was the 22nd best @-@ selling game of 2014 in the UK . In the United States , the game was the fourth and seventh best @-@ selling game of May and June 2014 , respectively . The game was also ranked the fifth and fourteenth best @-@ selling digital PlayStation 4 game of May and June 2014 , respectively . In its first week in Japan , the PlayStation 3 and PlayStation 4 versions of the game were placed on the charts at 15th and 8th , respectively , collectively selling over 11 @,@ 000 units . By June 2014 , the game had sold almost 400 @,@ 000 physical units in Europe , equating to over ? 21 million .

=== Awards ===

Wolfenstein : The New Order received multiple nominations and awards from gaming publications . The game won Game of the Year from Classic Game Room , received nominations from the Golden Joystick Awards , Good Game Game Informer , and IGN Australia , and received runner @-@ up from Polygon . It was also placed on various lists of the best games of 2014 : USA Today placed it at 9th , Eurogamer at 10th , and Ars Technica at 6th . The game also received nominations for Best Shooter from The Escapist , The Game Awards , Game Informer , GameTrailers , Hardcore Gamer and IGN . It received nominations signifying excellence in storytelling from The Game Awards , the Golden Joystick Awards , IGN Australia and the SXSW Gaming Awards . It achieved runner @-@ up for Biggest Surprise awards from both Giant Bomb and the readers of Kotaku . It was also nominated for Best PC Game by IGN Australia , receiving runner @-@ up by Kotaku readers . The game was also nominated for Best Multiplatform from Hardcore Gamer , Best Console Game from IGN Australia , and Best PlayStation 3 Game , Best Xbox 360 Game , and Best Xbox One Game from IGN .