

= Ghost in the Shell ( video game ) =

Ghost in the Shell is a cyberpunk @-@ themed third @-@ person shooter video game developed by Exact and Production I.G for the PlayStation . A part of the larger Ghost in the Shell media franchise , it utilizes the same English voice cast as the feature film of the same name , although the two do not share a story continuity . The game was first released in July 1997 , along with soundtrack albums , an artbook and a guidebook .

The game 's story and art design were written and illustrated by Masamune Shirow , the author of the original manga . Ghost in the Shell 's plot revolves around a recruit of Public Security Section 9 as he investigates and combats the Human Liberation Front . The player controls a Fuchikoma , a robotic fighting vehicle capable of traversing walls and ceilings .

The game received mainly positive reviews . It was praised for its graphics , animation , music and unusual wall @-@ climbing mechanics , as well as living up to the name of the series . However , it received criticism for its tedious and repetitive gameplay and low difficulty . Fifteen years after its release , Game Informer listed Ghost in the Shell as one of the best manga and anime @-@ based games .

= = Gameplay = =

The player controls a spider @-@ shaped think tank robot , known as Fuchikoma , that is able to jump , thrust forward , strafe to the side , climb walls , and hang upside @-@ down from ceilings . The camera auto @-@ adjusts its position when scaling walls and ceilings for easy maneuvering , and automatically switches between first and third @-@ person perspectives depending on the environment , although the player can stay in first @-@ person view at will .

The Fuchikoma is equipped with twin machine guns and guided missiles . Both weapons have unlimited ammunition , however up to six missiles can be launched at once after a charge time . Grenades can be found throughout missions and a maximum of three can be carried at a time . Enemies vary from humanoid robots to helicopters and sport an array of firearms and explosives . Some stages of the game are governed by a time limit . Seventeen cutscenes can be unlocked throughout the missions and depending on the player 's score in training mode . Once unlocked , the cutscenes can be reviewed on the options menu .

The training mode contains six stages to learn the basic game elements . The first five stages introduce the player to targets in various settings and using the controls effectively , with the sixth being a battle against another Fuchikoma . The twelve missions that compose the story take place in different environments , including a warehouse complex , a sewer , the city highways , and the enemy base inside of a skyscraper . The missions display a variety of gameplay objectives : the first mission is a raid ; the third level is an Explosive Ordnance Disposal mission that involves the elimination of bombs attached to red barrels ; the fourth level is a sea chase on a boat ; the fifth level is a game of hide @-@ and @-@ seek with the player having to locate a boss wearing thermoptical camouflage ; and the game 's final boss fight ends with a free fall battle down the skyscraper under a timer .

= = Plot = =

The plot follows the members of Public Security Section 9 , mainly consisting of Major Motoko Kusanagi , Chief Aramaki , Batou , Togusa , Ishikawa , Saito , and a nameless male , the Rookie , controlled by the player . The game 's story is told using mission briefings and animated cutscenes .

After the terrorist organization known as the Human Liberation Front claims responsibility for blowing up the Megatech Body Corporation building , Section 9 is sent to resolve the situation . Section 9 is able to trace the terrorists ' communications and find their location in the bay area ; however , it is a trap . Chief Aramaki later announces that the leader of the Human Liberation Front is a mercenary known as Zebra 27 . Ishikawa then reports that the Energy Ministry is interested in files relating to Zebra ; Aramaki orders further investigation .

The Rookie 's skill is put to the test , leading chase missions and surviving an ambush . Eventually , the Human Liberation Front 's secret base is discovered in Aeropolis II tower by following the enemy supply line , along with the terrorists ' intentions of using a nuclear reactor . Ishikawa informs Aramaki that an official of the Energy Ministry named Sawamura has been in contact with Zebra and is connected to Megatech Body Corporation . While conducting the raid on the enemy 's base , the reactor begins to overload . In order to shut it down , squad leader Motoko Kusanagi attempts to remove the protective barrier from an access point nearby , as the rest of the team search for the other building 's control room . After disarming the reactor , Kusanagi locates the leader on top of the tower . Batou and Togusa encounter obstacles that prevent them from moving to the top , leaving the Rookie as the only available member . Once he reaches the top , he engages the leader in combat and defeats him in a free fall battle off of the tower .

After the mission , it is revealed that Sawamura planned to collect bribes from Megatech in exchange for covering up a defect in the nuclear reactor , which was going to explode , and presenting it as a terrorist attack ; however , Zebra seized the reactor to take it over and wanted to extort money from Sawamura . Kusanagi declares the entire experience a training exercise for the Rookie and acknowledges his cleverness , but criticizes his overdependence on the Fuchikoma .

= = Development = =

The concept for the Fuchikoma came from one climactic scene of the film : the battle between Motoko Kusanagi and the big spider @-@ like tank in the museum of paleontology . Based on this tank design , mecha creators Sh?ji Kawamori and Atsushi Takeuchi made a smaller version , designed for one person , that would be used by the police . Thus , the player becomes the pilot of one of these combat machines .

The game was in development for one and a half years , and involved the work of several divisions , being Kenji Sawaguchi and Tetsuji Yamamoto the total director and producer respectively . The programming was done by Exact , known for the Jumping Flash ! series . Ghost in the Shell was designed and targeted to a mature audience ; developers did not make Motoko playable to prevent the game appearing to be a character @-@ based game for children . The original manga 's creator Masamune Shirow was the main designer of the characters and mecha for the game .

At Production I.G , Hiroyuki Kitakubo directed the animation scenes , wrote the screenplay and did the storyboards ; Toshihiro Kawamoto was animation supervisor and a character designer . The scenes are noticeably different when compared to the film namesake directed by Mamoru Oshii , because the game is colored using a full digital technique . The scenes are a combination of cel animation and backgrounds that were rendered in three dimensions to ensure smooth transitions for the camera movement . Adobe Photoshop was used to add the finishing details to the scenes .

The Japanese voicing of the game was done by a different cast than the film 's : Motoko Kusanagi was played by Hiromi Tsuru , Batou by Shinji Ogawa , Chief Aramaki by Soichi Ito , Ishikawa by Kiyoshi Kobayashi , Togusa by Hirotaka Suzuoki , Saito by Nobuyuki Hiyama , and the Fuchikoma were voiced by Katsue Miwa . The English localization was dubbed by the same cast used for the original movie , although the game does not specify the respective roles in the credits . Motoko was voiced by Mimi Woods , Batou by Richard Epcar , Aramaki by William Frederick , and Togusa by Christopher Joyce ; the roles of Bob Papenbrook , Wendee Lee , Jimmy Krakor and Julie Maddalena are not reliably known .

= = Release and promotion = =

The game was originally released in Japan by Sony Computer Entertainment on July 17 , 1997 . The following day , a launch party was held at the Yebisu Garden Hall : the Megatech Body Night . The event featured the game 's music artists Takkyu Ishino , Joey Beltram and Mijk van Dijk performing live , and a Fuchikoma robot appeared . All who bought tickets received a papercraft kit of the Fuchikoma and ten posters of the game were raffled . A Japanese demo disc was also released with the first mission playable .

The first edition of Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine was published in October 1997 and featured the game on its cover . The game was released in North America by THQ on October 31 , 1997 , and in Europe by Sony Computer Entertainment on July 1 , 1998 . THQ 's producer Don Nauert said that aside from dubbing and changing the button configuration , the English localization of the game was not modified nor censored .

== Soundtrack ==

The soundtrack albums for the game were titled Ghost in the Shell : Megatech Body , named after the cybernetic body manufacturer in the Ghost in the Shell series . The albums were produced by Takkyu Ishino and feature techno tracks by other composers including Mijk van Dijk . Two versions of the albums were released by Sony Music Entertainment Japan on July 17 , 1997 : Megatech Body CD . , a standard single disc ; and Megatech Body CD . , Ltd . , a limited two @-@ disc edition . Megatech Vinyl . Ltd. was a limited two LP record set scheduled to be released .

== Track listing ==

== Related media ==

Kodansha released three books and one video about the game . Ghost in the Shell Official Art Book was published on July 4 , 1997 ; the artbook contains concept designs , scenes and commentary . Two guidebooks were published : Ghost in the Shell : Basic File on July 17 , 1997 , and Ghost in the Shell : Master File on August 29 , 1997 . The video , Making of Game Ghost in the Shell All of Digital Animation , features interviews with the animation staff ; it was released on VHS on April 22 , 1998 . A LaserDisc was also released in 1998 that included interviews on side A and the in @-@ game cutscenes on side B.

== Reception ==

Ghost in the Shell gained an aggregate rating of 78 @.@ 50 % at GameRankings , which would be a mostly positive metascore . AllGame praised the graphics , sound and gameplay ; the review stated , " Even with plenty of eye candy and strong audio , a game is nothing without actually being fun to play and as you 've probably guessed , Ghost in the Shell supplies the fun , whether you 're familiar with the license or not . " GameSpot rated the game as good , eulogizing the controls as " simple ... most people will take to them like a fish to water " and praising the animation sequences . GameFan reviewers cited the game 's unique wall @-@ scaling mechanics and noted how it lives up to the name of the Ghost in the Shell series . IGN said that the game was great , faithful to its manga counterpart , stating that " the techno music , including tracks from artists like Derrick May and Hardfloor , is superb , " but adding that " the levels aren 't incredibly difficult , and don 't really encourage replay . " Super GamePower reviewed the game short after the movie was released in Brazil , stating that the opening animation was better than the drawing of the film . In Russia , Velikij Drakon lauded the orientation system , the game graphics and the overall design , highlighting the unlockable animation scenes . NowGamer praised the gameplay mechanics but criticized the option to unlock , stating , " The tremendous feeling of agility you get from Ghost In The Shell and the slick weapons is where the fun comes from . But it ? s a tough game and playing for more scenes of new footage will not be compelling enough for a country in which anime is a cult industry and not a national fixation . "

GamePro did not find the game worthy of its name , although the cutscenes were praised , stating , " The cinemas at the opening of the game and between each level are stunning ; however , the game graphics , particularly buildings and enemies , are lackluster at best . The sound effects are bland , and there are no weapon power @-@ ups to be found . Put that all together and you get a very generic game . " Next Generation criticized the game for being tedious , but recognized that it is

still an enjoyable game . Computer and Video Games offered similar criticism , declaring that " it was too repetitive to become anything more than a good game . " Edge criticized the gameplay features such as camera control and boss difficulty . Electronic Gaming Monthly reviewers criticized the game for its easy bosses and its repetitive and short gameplay value . Famitsu liked the battles but complained about the Fuchikoma attaching to walls when not intended .

The Herald @-@ News praised the game for being original and worth playing , unlike other movie adaptations . In 2013 , Game Informer listed Ghost in the Shell as one of the best anime and manga @-@ based games released in English , and the best of the franchise 's titles ; the other seven games in the list were released more than six years after Ghost in the Shell .