

= Metroid : Zero Mission =

Metroid : Zero Mission is an action @-@ adventure video game developed by Nintendo R & D1 for the Game Boy Advance handheld console . It was published by Nintendo in North America in February 2004 , in Australia in March 2004 , in Europe in April 2004 , and in Japan in May 2004 . It is an enhanced remake of the original Metroid game , designed to retell that entry 's story with Super Metroid @-@ like gameplay . Like the other titles in the series , it features space @-@ faring bounty hunter Samus Aran as the player @-@ controlled main character .

Samus Aran travels to Zebes after learning that Space Pirates are experimenting with Metroids in an attempt to duplicate them and use them for their own gain . Samus finds and destroys Mother Brain , the mechanical life @-@ form that controls the Space Pirates ' base . However , while she escapes the planet in her gunship , she is attacked by Space Pirates , causing the ship to crash back onto Zebes , near the Space Pirate Mothership . Samus decides to explore the ship and encounters Mecha Ridley , who she defeats . Finding a shuttle , she uses it to escape the planet as the Metroids and the Space Pirates ' research are destroyed in an explosion .

Reviews were generally positive towards the game . Praise focused on the new content , while criticism targeted the game 's short length . Metroid : Zero Mission received several honors , including a 46th @-@ place ranking in a list of the Top 200 Games compiled by Nintendo Power . It was also chosen as the 9th Best Game Boy Advance Game by IGN . The game has sold over 439 @,@ 000 units in the United States and 69 @,@ 000 in Japan as of February 2005 . The Wii U 's Virtual Console version was released in Japan on June 19 , 2014 ; in Europe on March 12 , 2015 ; and in North America on January 14 , 2016 .

= = Gameplay = =

Metroid : Zero Mission takes place on Planet Zebes , a large , open @-@ ended world with areas connected by doors and elevators . The player controls Samus Aran as she travels through the planet 's caverns and environments , hunting Space Pirates . Along the way , the player collects power @-@ ups that enhance Samus 's armor and weaponry , as well as grant her special abilities . These abilities allow Samus to access areas that were previously inaccessible , so that the game can be played linearly or non @-@ linearly . For example , the player may come across underground caverns that bypass certain sections , a method termed sequence breaking . To save their progress , players can enter either Save Rooms or Samus 's ship on Crateria . As a remake of Metroid , Metroid : Zero Mission 's layout bears a resemblance to the original , and various powerups and items make reappearances from previous games in the series , with similar uses , effects , and appearances . However , the game adds new items , areas , and mini @-@ bosses , as well as a completely new area named Chozodia .

Zero Mission is the first game in the Metroid series to include a sequence in which the player controls Samus without her Power Suit . In this portion of the game , Samus is more vulnerable to damage , must crawl through ducts on her hands and knees without the help of her Morph Ball mode , and has a weak pistol that briefly stuns enemies as her only weapon . However , Samus retains all energy tanks she acquired previously .

Completion of the game unlocks an emulated version of the original Metroid game . Zero Mission also allow players to unlock the Metroid Fusion picture gallery by linking between Zero Mission and Fusion cartridges via the Game Boy Advance Game Link Cable .

= = Plot = =

Space Pirates attack a Galactic Federation @-@ owned space research vessel and seize samples of Metroid creatures . Dangerous floating organisms , Metroids can latch on to any organism and drain its life energy to kill it . The Space Pirates plan to replicate Metroids by exposing them to beta rays and then using them as biological weapons to destroy all living beings that oppose them . While searching for the stolen Metroids , the Galactic Federation locates the Space Pirates ' base of

operations on the planet Zebes . The Federation assaults the planet , but the Pirates resist , forcing the Federation to retreat . As a last resort , the Federation decides to send a lone bounty hunter to penetrate the Pirates ' base and destroy Mother Brain , the mechanical life @-@ form that controls the Space Pirates ' fortress and its defenses . Considered the greatest of all bounty hunters , Samus Aran is chosen for the mission .

Samus lands on the surface of Zebes and explores the planet , traveling through the planet 's caverns . She eventually comes across Kraid , an ally of the Space Pirates , and Ridley , the Space Pirates ' commander , and defeats them both . Along the way , Samus finds and destroys Mother Brain . However , while Samus leaves the planet in her gunship , it is attacked by Space Pirates , causing it to crash back onto Zebes , near the Space Pirate Mothership . Exploring the Mothership , Samus eventually reaches the Mecha Ridley , a mechanized form of Ridley . After defeating it , Samus escapes the planet using one of the Space Pirate 's shuttles , while the Mothership self @-@ destructs .

= = Development = =

Metroid : Zero Mission was directed by Yoshio Sakamoto , a Nintendo veteran who has been involved with the Metroid series since it first appeared on the Nintendo Entertainment System , and has played a role in every Metroid game except for Metroid II . Official positions that he held include director of Super Metroid for the Super Nintendo Entertainment System and Metroid Fusion for the Game Boy Advance , producer of Metroid Prime for the Nintendo GameCube , and supervisor of Metroid Prime 2 : Echoes . Sakamoto is the only member from the Metroid development team to also work on Metroid : Zero Mission . Metroid : Zero Mission was the last game developed by Nintendo R & D1 before the team was disbanded due to Nintendo restructuring .

While working on the concept for the next Metroid game after Metroid Fusion was released in 2002 , one of the developers for Metroid Fusion suggested that Super Metroid be ported to the Game Boy Advance ; however , Sakamoto decided to port Metroid instead . The development team decided to return to the roots of Metroid gameplay by creating a game based on the original . Sakamoto , noting that Metroid Fusion 's gameplay was drastically different from previous Metroid games , wanted to " show people who had never played a Metroid game prior to Metroid Fusion , the roots of the Metroid franchise , that this is what Metroid is , this is the style of gameplay that Metroid sprang from [...] at the same time , retell the story of Samus ' original mission " .

One of the biggest challenges that the developers faced was in adding enough elements to Metroid : Zero Mission to make it feel new , while keeping the spirit of the original Metroid . Because both games were made for the Game Boy Advance , Metroid : Zero Mission uses a rebuilt version of the game engine used for Metroid Fusion so that it did not need to be built from scratch . This marked the first time two Metroid installments have been released for the same video game console . Metroid Fusion had offered connectivity with Metroid Prime on the Nintendo GameCube , but Metroid : Zero Mission did not offer such a feature . Sakamoto explained that the developers wanted to make the game connect to Metroid Prime 2 : Echoes on the GameCube , but the fact that both their release dates were far apart and not enough development time to implement connectivity features prevented them from doing so . However , they managed to include the ability for Metroid Fusion to connect with Metroid : Zero Mission .

In addition to borrowing the plot from Metroid , Metroid : Zero Mission introduces new cinematics to push the story forward . Sakamoto believed in the importance of having a story to complement a game . He found it particularly difficult to convey the game 's plot accurately in a way that the player can understand , because of the sparse use of dialogue in the Metroid series . The story for Metroid : Zero Mission was rewritten to explore Samus Aran 's backstory more than in the original Metroid . Cinematics are used to show Samus ' memories to move the story forward and to keep the plot open for interpretation . Sakamoto claimed that this was intended to expand the original story while retaining some mystery . The game is the first Metroid game to let the player choose a difficulty level at the start of the game ; each of three levels varies in the amount of damage caused by enemies . The battle with Mother Brain marked the end of the original Metroid ; however , Metroid : Zero

Mission offers players extra levels to play after the battle .

== Release ==

Nintendo first revealed Metroid : Zero Mission at the E3 convention in 2003 , and its North American release date of February 9 , 2004 was announced later that year . In other territories , Zero Mission was released in Australia on March 19 , 2004 , in Europe on April 8 , and in Japan on May 27 . The Wii U 's Virtual Console version of Zero Mission was released in Japan on June 19 , 2014 . This was followed by the release in Europe on March 12 , 2015 , and in North America on January 14 , 2016 .

== Reception ==

Metroid : Zero Mission was given " generally favorable reviews " , according to Metacritic . The game was praised by a number of reviews , several which called it one of the best games available for the Game Boy Advance . X @-@ Play and GamePro enjoyed the game ; X @-@ Play said the game was " perfect for blasting space pirates on the go " , and GamePro was " constantly surprised " with what the game offered . GameZone found it " hard to imagine a Game Boy Advance game that could match the style and addictive action of ' Metroid Fusion ' " , but admitted that Metroid : Zero Mission surpasses the game quite easily . Agreeing with GameZone , Nintendo World Report called the game a masterpiece and the perfect example of how a Metroid game should be done : " The designers carefully mix all the best elements from the other games and layer them on top of the already brilliant level design and concepts of the original Metroid . " Eurogamer appreciated every minute of the game , affirming that Metroid : Zero Mission should be considered one of the best games available for the Game Boy Advance .

A number of reviews were pleased with the new content added to Metroid : Zero Mission . Game Informer appreciated the new material , and believed that fans of the Metroid series would " absolutely adore " Metroid : Zero Mission , which they considered one of the greatest video games in the history of gaming . 1UP.com considered Metroid : Zero Mission to be one of the " most ambitious , comprehensive and successful " remakes for a game such as Metroid , noting that " [Metroid : Zero Mission] expands on its source material with refined control , gameplay ideas retrofitted from its sequels , new plot hooks for subsequent chapters of the saga , and some jaw @-@ droppingly cool innovations which add new layers of complexity to the series . "

Criticism of the game stemmed from its short length . Regarded as a " weak one @-@ shot experience " , IGN felt that players would enjoy the game only after they had completed it and played it again Eurogamer stated simply : " We can 't help but wish that it had been longer . " Even though GamesRadar liked the game 's quality , they said that Nintendo should have " [made] the experience last longer . " GameSpot was disappointed with the " short @-@ lived experience " , but blamed the game 's captivating quality that compelled them to complete the game in a few sittings . Calling Metroid : Zero Mission stale , GameSpy asserted that players less familiar with Metroid games would get more enjoyment out of it because of its similarities to previous Metroid games .

Metroid : Zero Mission was ranked the best @-@ selling Game Boy Advance game in the United States in its debut month of February 2004 , selling 151 @,@ 807 units , and it was the 3rd best @-@ selling game across all video game systems in that month . In May 2004 , the game 's sales dropped to 7th among Game Boy Advance games , with 31 @,@ 619 copies sold and \$ 938 @,@ 681 in revenue . By February 2005 , the game had sold over 439 @,@ 000 units in the United States and 69 @,@ 000 in Japan . The game was ranked the 46th @-@ best game for any Nintendo system in Nintendo Power 's Top 200 Games list . In their March 2010 issue , the magazine also ranked Metroid : Zero Mission as the eighth @-@ best game to be released on a Nintendo console in the 2000 decade , in their " Best of the Decade " feature . Metroid : Zero Mission was voted IGN 's Game Boy Advance Game of the Month for February 2004 , and the website 's staff picked the game as both the Best Game Boy Adventure Game of 2004 , and the 9th Best Game Boy Advance Game . Electronic Gaming Monthly also picked it as the Best Handheld

Game of 2004 . Official Nintendo Magazine ranked the game 94th in a list of the best Nintendo games . Nintendo Power also ranked it the best Game Boy Advance game of all @-@ time in its August 2011 issue .