

= Mass Effect 2 : Arrival =

Mass Effect 2 : Arrival is a downloadable content pack developed by BioWare and published by Electronic Arts for the action role @-@ playing video game Mass Effect 2 . It was released on March 29 , 2011 for Microsoft Windows , PlayStation 3 , and Xbox 360 . The pack introduces a new mission where the player assumes the role of Commander Shepard , an elite human soldier who must stop an imminent invasion of a highly advanced machine race of synthetic @-@ organic starships . The pack also includes three in @-@ game upgrades and three new achievements that are awarded for completing specific tasks .

Mass Effect 2 : Arrival was formally confirmed to be in development on March 14 , 2011 and acts as a bridge for Mass Effect 3 . The pack received generally mixed reviews from critics , with an aggregate score of 65 % for the Xbox 360 at GameRankings . Reviewers mainly criticized its weak story and strong emphasis on linear combat sequences , though some found the atmospheric environments praiseworthy .

= = Gameplay = =

Mass Effect 2 is an action role @-@ playing game where the player assumes the role of Commander Shepard . Shepard 's gender , appearance , history and combat @-@ training are determined by the player before the game begins . The game features a variety of missions that the player must complete to progress . During the missions , Shepard is usually assisted by two AI squad members that the player can indirectly control through orders . Combat takes place in real @-@ time , but the player can pause the game at any time to calmly target enemies and select different powers for the squad members to use . Unlike most of the missions , Arrival introduces a new assignment that involves Shepard to fight solo almost the entire time , even though there is a short section where the player is assisted by a character . The mission also contains three in @-@ game upgrades that the player can research to enhance aspects of the game 's weapons and armor , as well as three new achievements . The first achievement requires the player to complete the first part of the mission without being detected by enemies ; the second achievement involves the player to survive all the waves in a specific battle ; and the third one is unlocked by completing Arrival . Upon completing the mission , the player is awarded with experience points . If a sufficient amount of experience is obtained , the player can upgrade powers of the entire squad .

= = Plot = =

Mass Effect 2 : Arrival is set within the Milky Way galaxy during the 22nd century , where interstellar travel is possible through the use of mass transit devices called Mass Relays . Commander Shepard is sent on a mission to rescue Dr. Amanda Kenson , an allied agent who claimed to have found evidence of an imminent invasion of Reapers , a highly advanced machine race of synthetic @-@ organic starships encountered in the first Mass Effect game . Shepard successfully rescues Kenson , who explains that she discovered a Reaper artifact which gave her visions of the imminent invasion . Shepard asks to see the proof and is taken to the artifact , which is located inside a complex on the surface of a large asteroid . Upon arriving at the artifact , Shepard has a vision of the Reaper fleet approaching a Relay . Just as Shepard starts to get up from the experience , Kenson detains and imprisons him / her in a medical lab . It is then revealed that despite her stated precautions , Kenson and her entire team became indoctrinated from having spent too much time studying the artifact .

Shepard eventually manages to escape the medical lab and reach the control room , where he / she sets the asteroid on course to hit the Relay from where the Reapers will soon be coming . In retaliation , Kenson plans to destroy the asteroid by overloading the reactor core of the facility , but Shepard ultimately stops her . Shepard then contacts his / her starship and escapes shortly before the asteroid hits the Relay , resulting in the destruction of an entire system . Shepard is later met by Admiral Steven Hackett , their superior officer , who explains that he / she has to go to Earth and face the consequences , setting the stage for Mass Effect 3 .

= = Development and release = =

Mass Effect 2 : Arrival was developed by BioWare and published by Electronic Arts . During development of Mass Effect 2 , Bioware stated that downloadable content was becoming a fundamental part of the company 's overall philosophy . The pack was accidentally revealed on February 21 , 2011 by the addition of three new achievements in a patch for the PlayStation 3 version of Mass Effect 2 . BioWare later stated that the addition of the achievements was intentional , but assumed they would be " invisible " . On March 14 , 2011 , the pack was formally confirmed to be in development via a brand new screenshot . BioWare explained that its purpose is to act as a bridge for Mass Effect 3 . Although the base where most of the pack 's events take place is located on an asteroid , early plans suggested that it would be set on an ocean planet . The base would be underwater and Shepard would reach the main level by submarine . Each section of the base would be in different " containers " , and would have a similar sense to James Cameron 's 1989 film The Abyss . The pack was released on March 29 , 2011 for Microsoft Windows , PlayStation 3 , and Xbox 360 . The soundtrack was composed by Sonic Mayhem duo Sascha Dikiciyan and Cris Velasco , the same composers that penned the music from Mass Effect 2 's earlier downloadable content Kasumi - Stolen Memory .

= = Reception = =

Mass Effect 2 : Arrival received generally mixed reviews from critics . GameSpot Senior Editor Kevin VanOrd called Arrival " a disappointing conclusion to a beloved series ' second chapter . " He stated that the pack lacks elements of choice and character development , which are core features of the Mass Effect series . He nonetheless found the atmospheric environments still praiseworthy , especially the final battleground , which " seems to break the laws of physics but nonetheless gives the shooting excellent visual context . " Kristine Steimer of IGN enjoyed the challenge of fighting alone , as it " never bordered on frustrating " , but also admitted the pack fundamentally consisted of linear combat sequences .

Game Revolution 's Eduardo Reboucas mainly criticized the story . He felt that " characters don 't offer a lot of explanation and the little that is given seems more like a hastily put @-@ together excuse to shoot up some fools and push some buttons on the way . " He also pointed out that none of the conversation paths influence the game , and " [give] no sense of closure or importance . " Despite the criticism , he praised BioWare 's talent for the pack 's great atmosphere , stating " you 'll never be bored by the visuals in The Arrival . "

Dan Whitehead of Eurogamer highlighted positively the first part of the mission . He remarked the game " [does] a decent job of allowing you to feel like you 're being stealthy as you negotiate your way past guards , usually by looking around for not @-@ very @-@ hidden alternate routes . " He however criticized the final two thirds for being very linear and repetitive , and also reacted negatively to the game 's insistence on having to fight solo almost the entire time . He explained that Mass Effect 2 is a squad game , where players " [use] fluid team strategy to cope with different situations " , but fighting solo means that players " have to deal with every encounter in the exact same way . " Brad Gallaway , reviewer of GameCritics , concluded that the relatively short mission and included extras were not enough to justify the pack 's \$ 7 USD price tag . Mass Effect 2 : Arrival was nominated for Best DLC (downloadable content) at the 2011 Spike Video Game Awards , but lost to Portal 2 : Peer Review .