= Tomb Raider : Underworld =

Tomb Raider : Underworld is an action @-@ adventure video game , the eighth instalment of the Tomb Raider series , following character Lara Croft . The story continues from the events in Tomb Raider : Legend as a direct sequel , but also addresses unexplained plot elements by association with Tomb Raider : Anniversary . Underworld was released by Eidos Interactive for the Xbox 360 , PlayStation 3 and Microsoft Windows , in North America on 18 November 2008 , Europe on 21 November 2008 and Australia on 5 December 2008 . On 14 June 2012 , Underworld was released on the Mac OS X by Feral Interactive . It is the third game in the series to be developed by Crystal Dynamics and is also the first Tomb Raider game to be released on the PlayStation 3 . Developers implemented new features into the gameplay , such as the dual @-@ target feature and an upgraded inventory system , using an Active Sonar map and a multi @-@ purpose grappling hook . The game also features a hint system and a new melee combat system where Lara has the ability to battle her opponents using kicks and grapple pulls . Downloadable content was also released exclusively for the Xbox 360 , where the player takes control of Lara and her doppelgänger in two new chapters .

Underworld received mostly positive reviews for the PlayStation 3 , Xbox 360 , and PC versions . Critics generally praised the environments , Lara 's motion captured movements , story , puzzles , exploration , graphics and the less linear style of gameplay , although some criticism was directed at its " haywire " camera angles and " dodgy " combat system . The PlayStation 2 and Wii versions received mostly moderate to negative reviews . Most cited them as having medium to poor graphics ; being oversimplified ; " dumbed " down ; and bugged , especially the PlayStation 2 version . On 27 February 2009 , Eidos announced that the game had sold around 2 @.@ 6 million copies worldwide . On 22 May 2009 , Tomb Raider : Underworld was re @-@ released as part of the Xbox Classics and Platinum Range lines for Xbox 360 and PlayStation 3 , respectively . Underworld , along with Legend and Anniversary , was included in the The Tomb Raider Trilogy compilation , which was released in March 2011 for the PlayStation 3 . In the end of 2011 , Tomb Raider : Underworld was offered for free to PlayStation Plus members .

= = Gameplay = =

Tomb Raider : Underworld is a single player , action @-@ adventure video game . The game is presented in third person perspective , where the player takes control of Lara Croft . Lara 's environment reproduces a more " interactive world that reacts and remembers " , such that footprints left in the mud or mud transferred to Lara 's knee from kneeling on the ground is washed away by rain , the bodies of the foes she encounters remain where she killed them , and any destruction to the environment she causes are permanent . According to creative director Eric Lindstrom , this is " to not only reward the player for the effect they 're having on the world , but to give them navigational aids . " The game uses an animation blending system that allows Lara to interact dynamically with her environment , such as pushing foliage aside with one or two hands , depending on if she is carrying a weapon . It also features a " hybrid lighting model that combines dynamic lights with carefully created light maps " and a weather system that changes the environment , for example , " If Lara ? s negotiating a wet ledge she ? s more apt to slip or lose grip , " which makes " the environment [...] her adversary " for a large part of the game .

Lindstrom explained that they integrated the elements of climbing , shooting and puzzle solving . This instalment also features a new melee combat system , requiring Lara in some instances to use " direct combat and evasive manoeuvres to distance herself from her attacker " . Notably , Lara 's bike , among other things , is a key component in solving the puzzles she will encounter in her adventure . Pick @-@ ups have multiple uses as weapons and tools in interaction with the environment , and Lindstrom stated that Lara " can also split up her guns and fire at two different targets simultaneously , " or hold an item with one hand and fire a gun with the other . The grappling hook can be stretched taut and used to pull objects off ledges , illustrating what project lead Rob Pavey said , that " Lara will be able to do anything that you 'd expect her to be able to do , " which

he called " the big theme this year . " Lindstrom describes this as " a philosophy called ' What Could Lara Do ? ' ? WCLD . It 's short @-@ hand for having the player be able to use their own intuition about what someone with her abilities should be able to do in an environment such as this , and consistency across the different mechanics and abilities . If she can throw a grenade , then if she can pick up this pole , why can 't she throw it ? " Crystal Dynamics also made the game non @-@ linear , offering elaborate multi @-@ stage puzzles .

Another new design element was the " adrenaline moments " . Instead of specific button presses , time slows down and gives the player a chance to get out of harm 's way while retaining complete control of Lara .

= = Plot = =

Tomb Raider : Underworld begins with Lara Croft 's mansion exploding and being engulfed in flames . The game then rewinds back in time to a week before the explosion , just after the events of Tomb Raider : Legend . Lara is searching for Avalon , hoping it will lead her to an explanation for the disappearance of her long lost mother . Underneath the Mediterranean Sea , Lara discovers an ancient temple designating itself as " Niflheim " , one of the many Norse underworlds . Deep within , she recovers one of Thor 's gauntlets , after a lengthy battle with Amanda Evert 's mercenaries and an encounter with an imprisoned Jacqueline Natla , on Amanda 's ship . Natla tells Lara that the Norse underworld , Helheim and Avalon are one and the same and that she will need to find Thor 's Hammer to open the Underworld and find her mother . Lara soon discovers that she will have to find Thor 's other gauntlet and his belt if she wants to find and wield the hammer . Natla provides Lara with a starting point for her search in this quest ? coastal Thailand . In Thailand , Lara doesn 't locate the next gauntlet , but she finds evidence that her father had found it there and removed it before he died . She also discovers a message that reveals that her father and Natla had been working together at some point and that the relationship had not ended well . Lara is able to deduce where her father hid the missing gauntlet .

Back at the Croft Manor , Lara finds her father 's secret office buried beneath her home . Upon his desk , Lara discovers the gauntlet as well as a tape @-@ recorded message , warning her that Helhiem contains a powerful weapon . Suddenly , an explosion occurs and Lara 's home becomes engulfed in flames , leading back to the opening events of the game . Zip tries to shoot Lara and claims that " Lara " detonated the bomb . When Lara returns to the burning office to recover the security footage , she encounters her doppelgänger who kills Alister Fletcher . After his emotional death , Lara resolves to continue with her quest . In Mexico , Lara finds both Thor 's Belt and some ancient pictographs linking the weapon in Helheim to Jörmungandr , a mythical Norse sea @-@ serpent , brought about by the seventh age . Her next stop are ruins on Jan Mayen Island that correlate to Valhalla . It is here that Lara finally recovers Thor 's Hammer . In the meantime , Zip has managed to track Amanda down to a sister @-@ ship of the one Lara sank earlier . Armed with Mjolnir , Lara boards the vessel and interrogates Natla once again . Natla provides Lara with the coordinates of Helheim , but points out that Lara does not know the Ritual of Odin , which is needed to open its gates , so Lara reluctantly strikes a bargain with Natla and frees her from her cell .

They rendezvous in the outer chambers of the Helheim complex , deep below the Arctic Sea . With the ritual performed , Lara is able to use Mjolnir to open the gates of Helheim . Along the way , Lara discovers the horrifying truth of her mother 's fate ? she has been turned into a thrall , thus Lara forcibly shoots her . Natla reveals the true extent of her manipulation of Lara , also revealing that she was the one who killed Lara 's father . Natla goes , leaving the doppelgänger to kill Lara , but Lara is saved by Amanda . It is revealed that the Midgard Serpent was a Norse metaphor for the many tectonic divisions that encircle the world , beneath the seas . The doomsday device was built upon the most unstable junction of these lines and its activation would cause massive volcanic activity across the whole planet and the destruction of most of humanity . Lara successfully destabilises the device and strikes Natla with Mjolnir , sending her down into the pool of deadly eitr below . Lara and Amanda escape together using the dais , like the one that brought Lara 's mother to Helheim , teleporting back to the temple in Nepal (from Tomb Raider : Legend) .

= = Development = =

In November 2007 , Eidos was reported to have filed for a trademark on the phrase , Tomb Raider Underworld , and soon after reserved the Tomb Raider Underworld domain name . In December 2007 , Eidos filed for a second trademark for Tomb Raider Underworld , reserving the right to provide " computer games that may be accessed network @-@ wide by network users . " In the January 2008 issue of the magazine Play , details from the " first @-@ ever demo " of the game were revealed . SCi , which owned Eidos at the time , officially announced Tomb Raider : Underworld on 10 January 2008 , and confirmed that all platform versions of the game would be released simultaneously in November 2008 .

Play 's assertions that the game is the " first true next gen Lara with one big physics smorgasbord that looks altogether photo @-@ real " led to speculation that Tomb Raider : Underworld might be using a new game engine for its next @-@ generation graphics rather than the system used by Tomb Raider : Legend and Tomb Raider : Anniversary . Later , the Senior Producer and External Designer separately confirmed that Underworld uses an all @-@ new engine that was built especially for it . This new engine is also used in the game Deus Ex : Human Revolution .

Tomb Raider : Underworld was developed by Crystal Dynamics and published by Eidos Interactive as the final Tomb Raider title to be published under the Eidos Interactive label prior to its purchase by Square Enix . Different versions of the game were developed by Crystal Dynamics , Buzz Monkey Software , Nixxes Software and Santa Cruz Games , all published by Eidos Interactive . Crystal Dynamics developed the Xbox 360 version and collaborated with Nixxes Software for the PC and PlayStation 3 versions . Santa Cruz Games developed the Nintendo DS version , while the Wii and PlayStation 2 versions were developed by Buzz Monkey Software . The Mac version was developed by Crystal Dynamics and released by Feral Interactive .

Lara 's costume was redesigned and she no longer wears her trademark turquoise sleeveless top and khaki shorts , but instead , a dark brown halter top and black shorts . Additionally , her hair is no longer braided , but worn in a ponytail . According to Play , Lara " moves as good as she looks [and] no longer moves like a video game character " due to her being fully motion captured . Olympic gymnast and NCAA Women 's Gymnastics champion Heidi Moneymaker was the model used for motion capturing . Keeley Hawes provided the voice of Lara in this instalment , as she did in Anniversary and Legend . Gymnast Alison Carroll was selected as the new official Lara Croft model to promote the game , replacing Karima Adebibe .

The first official video , entitled " Beneath the Surface " , was released on 17 July 2008 , and featured interviews with members of the development team and showed screenshots , artwork , and several clips of gameplay footage . A teaser trailer was released on 19 July 2008 , and the first gameplay trailer was released on 15 August 2008 .

= = Music = =

Troels Brun Folmann composed the main theme of the game , and was the music supervisor for Underworld while Colin O 'Malley was scoring the bulk of the music . Underworld 's music is purely orchestral in style . There are pieces that do not loop , meaning they will only play one time and will be triggered on specific events . The score is made more of musical fragments , similar to the first five games of the Tomb Raider series , and there is less constant music than in Legend .

In addition to gameplay music , Underworld 's theatrical trailer also uses orchestral music . The featured piece is the 3rd movement : Lacrimosa , from Mozart 's Requiem in D minor .

= = Release = =

Tomb Raider : Underworld was first released in North America on 18 November 2008 , then on 21 November in Europe , and 5 December in Australia . The PlayStation 2 version was subsequently released on 23 January 2009 in Europe and 5 March in North America . On 14 June 2012 ,

Underworld was released on the Macintosh by Feral Interactive .

= = = Retail editions = = =

 Exclusive to EB Games in Australia and New Zealand was the Tomb Raider : Underworld Ultimate Fan Pack , which was available on Xbox 360 , PlayStation 3 and PC . The pack contained the retail version of the game , a Lara Croft calendar , a Lara Croft figurine , a Tomb Raider T @-@ shirt , a trucker cap and a messenger bag .
 Exclusive to Game in the United Kingdom was the limited edition of Tomb Raider : Underworld , which was available on Xbox 360 , PlayStation 3 and PC . The edition included a bonus disc , which contained behind @-@ the @-@ scenes documentary , promotional artwork , an exclusive soundtrack , videos and trailers . In the United States , GameStop offered customers an exclusive The Art of Tomb Raider : Underworld artbook , when the game was pre @-@ ordered .

= = = Downloadable content = = =

 After an agreement with Microsoft , Eidos released two new chapters of Tomb Raider : Underworld as exclusive downloadable content on the Xbox Live Marketplace : Beneath the Ashes on 24 February 2009 and Lara 's Shadow on 10 March 2009 . According to an MTV Multiplayer blog post , an Eidos spokesperson has stated that there are no plans to release the content for PlayStation 3 or Microsoft Windows . Following a negative reaction from fans , Eidos released a statement explaining that they were approached by Microsoft , and to confirm " there are no plans for additional downloadable content for PS3 " .
 It was also announced that two new outfits , made by Quebec fashion designers , would be available for free download on the Xbox Live Marketplace . The outfits were chosen by jury and public vote on the Festival Arcadia 's Virtually Fashionable on 8 November 2008 , and released on 10 March 2009 . On 15 December 2008 , Eidos announced the release of two classic outfits from past Tomb Raider games (" Classic " and " Legend ") , which would be released for free exclusively on the Xbox Live Marketplace . On 30 December 2008 , two additional wetsuits for Lara were also released for free on the Xbox Live Marketplace .

= = = = Beneath the Ashes = = = =

 As in the main game , the player controls Lara during Beneath the Ashes . The story of Beneath the Ashes opens with Lara searching her father 's hidden study beneath Croft Manor for an artifact with the power to create and control thralls . The appearance of a thrall leads Lara further beneath Croft Manor than seen in the main game . Upon finding the artifact , Lara uses the phrase carved into it , " Okh Eshivar " , to gain control over a thrall . The doppelgänger suddenly appears and charges towards Lara . Lara orders the thrall to " kill " , but the doppelgänger easily destroys it . Lara says " Okh Eshivar " just as the doppelgänger reaches her , forcing the doppelgänger to stand still and await Lara 's orders . After an inaudible exchange between them , Lara tells the doppelgänger to " make sure Natla suffers " . Beneath the Ashes ends as the doppelgänger runs off , apparently to complete this task .

= = = = Lara 's Shadow = = = =

 In Lara 's Shadow , the player takes control of the doppelgänger . The doppelgänger moves more quickly than Lara and the gameplay has a stronger emphasis on melee combat . The story of Lara 's Shadow opens with the scene from the main game where Amanda rescues Lara from the doppelgänger by throwing her over the side of a cliff . The doppelgänger survives , landing on solid rock rather than in the surrounding eitr . When she regains consciousness , she proceeds to find Natla . Natla appears weakened and thrall @-@ like , but retains her mind and uses " Okh Eshivar " to command the doppelgänger to take her to the doppelgänger 's " birthplace . " Once there , the

doppelgänger places Natla in a very large and ancient machine . Natla then gives the doppelgänger her final orders : to kill Lara and then end her own life . The doppelgänger seems to feel anger at this but , being under Natla 's control , continues to obey her . The scene shifts to " 4 days later " , and extends the final scene of Beneath the Ashes . During their previously inaudible exchange , Lara commands the doppelgänger saying " Obey me now . From this moment , ignore all commands . You are a slave to no one . " The doppelgänger returns and destroys part of the machine containing Natla , who falls and is trapped by the debris in a rising pool of eitr . Natla unsuccessfully tries to order the now free doppelgänger to help her . Lara 's Shadow ends with the doppelgänger looking down on Natla smiling as she is submerged in the eitr .

= = Reception = =

= = = Critical = = =

Tomb Raider : Underworld received generally positive reviews from critics . The Xbox 360 , PC and PlayStation 3 versions of the game were generally highly praised , with many critics comparing Underworld to older titles in the series , with GamesRadar commenting " Doing what made the original great , and adding a considerable face @-@ lift " and The Guardian saying " And when you get stuck into Tomb Raider Underworld , it swiftly becomes clear that it is designed to appeal to a generation of gamers ? surely now in their 30s ? who grew up with Tomb Raider and fell in love with Lara 's attributes and attitude . " In reviews , the environments have been widely praised , many reviewers also praised Lara 's motion captured movements and the much less linear style of gameplay , while some criticisms aimed at its " haywire " camera angles and " dodgy " combat system .
IGN described the game as enjoyable for the puzzles , exploration and graphics . They went on to praise that quick time events were replaced with adrenaline moments and noted improvements in combat , such as the ability to aim at two enemies at once and new sticky bombs . However , GamesRadar marked the game down for " dodgy combat " . The exploration was also highly praised , with GamesRadar urging readers to " go explore Underworld . " Nintendo Power and GamesRadar also praised the game 's platforming elements . Despite mentions of camera issues and weaker combat , critics described it as " as good as Tomb Raider has ever been " and " the Tomb Raider we 've been waiting for ! "
However , the Wii and PlayStation 2 versions received mostly mixed to negative reviews . IGN commented the Wii version " is not a bad game " but went on to say " The whole thing has been oversimplified and dumbed down . The Wii puzzles are a joke , the combat is almost nonexistent , and the game is pretty short . " GameSpot added " Tomb Raider Underworld can be an enjoyable adventure , but it ? s marred by bugs , camera issues , and ill @-@ conceived Wii extras . " While the PlayStation 2 version was called " an embarrassment to the franchise " by IGN . They went on to say that the version was such a poor conversion that it shouldn 't have even been released , saying " Full of bugs , linear play that discourages exploration and non @-@ existent combat , Tomb Raider Underworld feels as though it 's part of the series in name and main character only . "
Prior to the game 's release , Eidos attempted to prevent any reviews rating the game at less than 8 out of 10 from appearing , with an Eidos spokesman stating " [t] he brand manager in the US that 's handling all of Tomb Raider has asked that we just manage the scores before the game is out , really , just to ensure that we don 't put people off buying the game , basically . Tomb Raider : Underworld received a BAFTA nomination in 2009 . For Underworld 's story , Eric Lindstrom and Toby Gard received a nomination for the WGAW ? s Videogame Writing Award .

= = = Sales = = =

On 9 January 2009 , Eidos announced that Tomb Raider : Underworld sales failed to meet expectations , selling 1 @.@ 5 million copies worldwide as of 31 December 2008 . However , on 27

February 2009 , Eidos announced that the game had sold around 2 @.@ 6 million copies worldwide . Also , on 8 May 2009 , Ian Livingstone , President of Eidos Interactive , said " Underworld has met our target expectations " . In May 2009 , Tomb Raider : Underworld was released as part of both the Xbox Classics and PS3 Platinum Range . In December 2011 , Tomb Raider : Underworld was given away for free to subscribers of the PlayStation Plus service .