

= Red Dead Redemption =

Red Dead Redemption is an open world , western action @-@ adventure video game developed by Rockstar San Diego and published by Rockstar Games . It was released for the PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360 consoles in May 2010 . It is the second title in the Red Dead franchise , after 2004 's Red Dead Revolver . The game , set during the decline of the American Frontier in the year 1911 , follows John Marston , a former outlaw whose wife and son are taken hostage by the government in ransom for his services as a hired gun . Having no other choice , Marston sets out to bring the three members of his former gang to justice .

Red Dead Redemption is played from a third @-@ person perspective in an open world environment , allowing the player to interact with the game world at their leisure . The player can travel the virtual world , a fictionalized version of the Western United States and Mexico , primarily by horseback and on foot . Gunfights emphasize a gunslinger gameplay mechanic called " Dead Eye " that allows players to mark multiple shooting targets on enemies in slow motion . The game makes use of a morality system , by which the player 's actions in the game affect their character 's levels of honor and fame and how other characters respond to the player . An online multiplayer mode is included with the game , allowing up to 16 players to engage in both co @-@ operative and competitive gameplay in a recreation of the single @-@ player setting .

Upon its release , Red Dead Redemption was acclaimed by many reviewers , with praise directed at the game 's visuals , dynamically @-@ generated music , voice acting , gameplay , and story . Widely acclaimed by various video game publications , the game has shipped over 14 million copies . It won year @-@ end accolades , including Game of the Year awards from several gaming publications . It is widely considered one of the greatest video games of all time . After the game 's release , several downloadable content additions were released ; Red Dead Redemption : Undead Nightmare , later released as a standalone game , added a new single @-@ player experience in which Marston searches for a cure for an infectious zombie plague that has swept across the Old West . A Game of the Year Edition containing all additional content was released in October 2011 .

= = Gameplay = =

Red Dead Redemption is a third @-@ person , open world , western , action @-@ adventure game , in which players control John Marston . Players interact with the environment and engage in combat with enemies , using various firearms . Different breeds of horses are the main forms of transportation , each with different attributes . These horses must be tamed in order to use them . Marston can utilize trains to get from place to place quickly , but he can also stop the train by threatening or killing the passengers or driver . The game 's undeveloped land makes up the largest portion of the game world , featuring various rugged and vast landscapes with occasional travelers , bandits , and wildlife . Urban settlements range from isolated farmhouses to crowded towns . Besides the American West , the player can also traverse a fictional Mexican state bordering the United States .

In addition to following the main storyline , the player character will witness and can take part in random events they encounter as they explore the game world . These include public hangings , ambushes , pleas for assistance , encounters with strangers , ride @-@ by shootings , and dangerous animal attacks . For example , if a group of people ride into town firing guns in the air , Marston can kill them , and will receive a bonus of honor and fame for protecting the town . The player character can also take part in optional side activities , most of which give the player money . These side activities include dueling , in which the player character must be a faster draw than their opponent ; bounty hunting , where Marston can hunt down bounties on wanted posters ; herb collecting , which involves gathering exotic plants from around the game map for town medics ; gambling , where people can be found playing games such as poker and Five Finger Fillet ; and hunting , in which the player can kill wild animals and skin their hides .

Red Dead Redemption makes use of a morality system where players have the ability to gain positive or negative honor . Honor can be gained by making morally positive choices , such as

taking in an outlaw alive , or saving a woman from a kidnapping . The player character 's overall honor standard is lowered for committing crimes or other negative choices . This works in conjunction with another system , fame , which affects how people react based on Marston 's honor status . If Marston has little honor , non @-@ player characters feel insecure around him . If he has a high amount of honor , other characters will usually greet him and feel safe around him . He will also receive discounts in some stores , more pay for jobs and other bonuses . A very low honor rating can result in a town 's establishments closing their doors when Marston arrives . To combat this he can disguise himself by wearing a bandana when performing criminal acts ; alternatively , a very negative or criminal reputation warrants the player a large amount of respect and steep discounts from bandits and fencers at criminal hideouts , such as Thieves ' Landing .

= = = Combat = = =

Gunfights are a major gameplay mechanic in Red Dead Redemption . The player can take cover , target a specific person or animal , blindfire , and free aim . Individual body parts can also be targeted , in order to take targets down non @-@ lethally . When the player shoots an enemy , the game engine uniquely creates the AI reactions and movements depending on where they were hit . The player character can choose from period @-@ accurate weapons including revolvers , pistols , lever or bolt @-@ action rifles , shotguns , sniper rifles , knives , explosives , lassos , mounted Gatling guns , and cannons . Duels utilize a gunslinger gameplay mechanic known as Dead Eye . Dead Eye is a targeting system that is used in a bullet time @-@ like manner , allowing the player to slow down time to place a precise shot or paint in multiple shots . When the targeting sequence ends , Marston automatically fires to all marked locations in extremely quick succession .

Adopted from the Grand Theft Auto series , Red Dead Redemption has a modified wanted system . When the player commits a crime such as killing people near witnesses , some will run to the nearest police station . The player can bribe them or kill them before they reach the station . If a crime is committed near a police officer , the wanted meter immediately appears along with a bounty count which increases with each crime committed . If Marston 's bounty becomes high enough he will be pursued by either the U.S. Marshals or by the Mexican Army depending on his locations . To evade law enforcement in pursuit , John Marston must escape a circular zone until the wanted meter disappears . Alternatively , the player character can kill all lawmen in a town to have the wanted meter disappear . Despite the chase being aborted , a bounty is placed upon John which will cause bounty hunters to come after him in the wilderness . It is impossible to surrender to these bounty hunters by putting away Marston 's weapon and standing still as they will kill him regardless . Only law enforcement in towns and a posse will accept surrenders . The law will continue to chase Marston unless he pays his bounty at a telegraph station or presents a pardon letter . When arrested , Marston pays off his bounty and is then released . If the player does not have enough money to pay back the bounty , the law will assign bounty hunting activities .

= = = Multiplayer = = =

Red Dead Redemption includes online multiplayer with a maximum of 16 players per session . Every multiplayer game , both free @-@ for @-@ all and team based , will begin with a Mexican standoff . Survivors of the standoff will be able to move to any part of the battlefield in preparation for respawning enemies . Crates in the environment contain extra weapons , ammo , and other powerups . Players can level up and complete weapon challenges which earn them rewards such as new character models , golden weapon skins , new titles , and new breeds of animal mounts . Additional multiplayer modes were added via downloadable content (DLC) . Stronghold is an attack or defend scenario , with teams switching roles as the round ends . It is included in the Liars and Cheats pack . The Undead Nightmare pack included two new games modes : Undead overrun mode , and Land Grab . It also included eight new zombie characters .

The free @-@ for @-@ all and team versions of Shootout mode both follow a traditional deathmatch scenario where players or teams must accumulate the most kills . Many capture the flag

variants are also available . Hold Your Own is a traditional mode where each team has to defend their bag of gold to from the enemy team whilst capturing the other . Grab The Bag has both teams attacking one bag placed in a section of the map . Gold Rush is a free @-@ for @-@ all variant , trying to grab and keep as many bags as possible . The multiplayer portion Red Dead Redemption also features open world gameplay . All players in the server can form or join a group of other players , known as a posse , of up to eight players and take part in activities such as hunting or attacking computer @-@ controlled gang hideouts or another player 's posse .

= = Synopsis = =

= = = Setting = = =

Red Dead Redemption spans two fictitious United States counties and a fictitious Mexican state : New Austin , West Elizabeth , and Nuevo Paraiso . New Austin and West Elizabeth are adjacent to each other and share a southern border with Mexico . Nuevo Paraiso is a Mexican state , separated from U.S. territory by the San Luis river . The game takes place primarily in the year 1911 , featuring the final decade of the American Frontier and the cowboy and outlaw archetypes that shaped it . The landscape of the Wild West is beginning to fade and modern technologies like automobiles , machine guns , and oil drilling projects are beginning to appear .

= = = Plot = = =

The game begins in 1911 , where John Marston (Rob Wiethoff) , a former outlaw , is taken from his family by the Bureau of Investigation . They state Marston will be granted amnesty if he brings the remaining members of his old gang to justice . Marston agrees and sets off to track down Bill Williamson (Steve J. Palmer) , who now runs his own gang . Marston confronts Williamson at his stronghold , Fort Mercer , only to be shot and left for dead . A local rancher , Bonnie MacFarlane (Kimberly Irion) , finds him critically wounded and takes him to her ranch for recovery . Several days later , Marston begins repaying the MacFarlanes for their help in the form of odd @-@ jobs around the ranch . During this time he works with a U.S. Marshal , Leigh Johnson (Anthony De Longis) and his deputies , the dim @-@ witted Jonah and sarcastic Eli ; Nigel West Dickens (Don Creech) , a con artist selling patent medicines ; Seth Briars (Kevin Glikmann) , a treasure hunter and grave robber who prefers the company of the dead to that of the living ; and an unreliable alcoholic arms dealer known only as Irish (K. Harrison Sweeney) . Marston performs various tasks and favours in exchange for their help with organizing an attack on Fort Mercer . Marston and his group then breach the fort and defeat Williamson 's gang only to find that Williamson had already fled to Mexico to seek help from Javier Escuella (Antonio Jaramillo) , another member of Marston 's former gang .

In Mexico , Marston initially sides with Mexican Army Colonel Agustín Allende (Gary Carlos Cervantes) and his right @-@ hand man Captain Vincente de Santa (Hector Luis Bustamante) , to help put down a rebellion in return for Allende delivering Escuella and Williamson to him . However , Allende betrays Marston , who is then forced to side with the rebels . With the initial help of elderly gunslinger Landon Ricketts (Ross Hagen) , Marston , along with rebel leader Abraham Reyes (Josh Segarra) , and Luisa (Francesca Galeas) , one of Reyes ' many lovers , eventually turns the tide in favour of the rebels , killing de Santa and launching an assault on the El Presidio fortress , where they find Escuella , who attempts to bargain for his life by revealing that Williamson has been under Allende 's protection . Escuella manages to escape , with Marston giving chase , who is then given the option to either kill or capture Escuella alive and turn him over to the Bureau . Either way , agents Edgar Ross (Jim Bentley) and Archer Fordham (David Wilson Barnes) , who meet with Marston at the USA / Mexico border , refuse to let Marston return to his family , stating that after killing Williamson , he must meet with them again in Blackwater and assist in hunting down Dutch van der Linde (Benjamin Byron Davis) , the leader of Marston 's former gang . Marston and Reyes

then take the fight to Allende , where Luisa is killed during the attack . As Allende 's palace is stormed by the rebels , both he and Williamson flee , who are then apprehended and executed after being chased a short distance . Reyes then takes charge of the local government and plans to advance on the capital , while Marston leaves to meet with the Bureau in Blackwater .

Once there , Marston learns that Dutch has been forming his own gang with sympathisers from the local Indian reservation , and joins Ross , Fordham and a group of U.S. soldiers in an attack on Dutch 's hideout . During the assault , Marston chases Dutch up to a cliff overlooking the river and mountains . Dutch ultimately chooses to commit suicide , backing off the cliff and falling to his death , but not before warning Marston that the Bureau will ' just find another monster ' to justify their pay . Marston is then released from his deal with Ross and goes back to his ranch where his wife Abigail (Sophie Marzocchi) and his son Jack (Josh Blaylock) are waiting . Marston devotes his time afterward tending to the ranch , having sworn to keep himself and his family away from the outlaw lifestyle forever . He is then suddenly forced to repel a surprise attack from a combined force of soldiers , lawmen and government agents led by Ross . Marston is able to fend off several waves of attackers and get his family to safety but stays behind to hold back the rest . Despite a valiant last stand , he dies after being shot numerous times by Ross and his men . He is then buried by his grieving family on the hill overlooking the ranch .

The game then moves three years ahead to 1914 , where Marston 's son Jack stands over the graves of both his father and his now deceased mother . He leaves home to search for Ross , who retired the year before , and eventually finds the former agent hunting on a riverbank in Mexico . The two duel , with Jack emerging the victor . The fate of John Marston 's companions are later summarized : Marshal Leigh Johnson retired from Armadillo to be replaced by Jonah , and then moved as far as possible from the town ; Abraham Reyes , though promising to lead Mexico into an age of freedom , was consumed by power and became a tyrant ; Bonnie MacFarlane eventually married ; Irish shot himself dead in an outhouse when his gun accidentally discharged ; Seth Briars eventually found the treasure he was looking for and became rich ; and finally , Landon Ricketts died quietly in his sleep .

= = Development = =

Rockstar San Diego began to develop Red Dead Redemption in 2005 . Development was conducted by a team of more than 800 people , including Rockstar San Diego 's core team and staff from parent company Rockstar Games 's studios around the world . The game runs on the proprietary Rockstar Advanced Game Engine (RAGE) , which was improved for the game to improve its draw distance rendering capabilities . The Euphoria and Bullet software handle additional animation and rendering tasks . Having exhausted the use of previous hardware on previous projects , Rockstar felt inspired after realising the potential power of the PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360 . Analyst estimations place the game 's combined development and marketing budget between US \$ 80 million and US \$ 100 million , which would make it one of the most expensive video games ever made .

The open world was created to represent iconic features of the American frontier . Key members of the game world product team took research trips to Washington and the Library of Congress in their extensive research on the American frontier . They also captured a multitude of photographs , and analyzed various classic Western films . The team considered creating the open world one of the most technically demanding aspect of the game 's production , in terms of filling the world with enough content to interest players . The team chose 1911 as the game 's setting as they felt that exploring the transformation from " the old West " into a modern world was intriguing . The team viewed Red Dead Redemption as a spiritual successor to Red Dead Revolver , and designed it to improve upon the gameplay mechanics . They sought to maintain the shooting mechanic and expand on other game features , attempting to achieve realism with every feature of the game . In particular , the team faced a challenge in creating realistic movement for the horse , resulting in the engagement of a stunt horse to simulate movement for the designers .

After an audition process , Rob Wiethoff was selected to portray John Marston . The cast 's

performances were mostly recorded using motion capture technology , with additional dialogue and sound effects recorded in a studio . Red Dead Redemption also features an original score , which was composed by Bill Elm and Woody Jackson , collaborating with each other over fifteen months . Rockstar also consulted musicians who played traditional Western instruments , such as harmonica player Tommy Morgan .

Though a technology demonstration was shown in 2005 , Red Dead Redemption was first formally announced by Rockstar Games on February 3 , 2009 . They released its debut trailer on December 1 , 2009 , introducing the game 's protagonist . The game missed its original projected April 2010 release date , pushed back to May 18 , 2010 to allow for further polishing . To spur pre @-@ order game sales , Rockstar collaborated with several retail outlets to provide pre @-@ order bonuses . These included exclusive in @-@ game outfits , weapons and horses , as well as the game 's official soundtrack .

= = = Additional content = = =

Post @-@ release content was added to Red Dead Redemption as downloadable content (DLC) packs . Outlaws to the End , released on June 22 , 2010 , added six new cooperative side missions for the game 's multiplayer . The Legends and Killers pack was released on August 10 , 2010 ; it added eight multiplayer characters from Red Dead Revolver , nine map locations , and a Tomahawk weapon . The Liars and Cheats pack was released on September 21 , 2010 ; it added competitive multiplayer modes and mini @-@ games , additional characters from the single @-@ player game and the Explosive Rifle weapon . The Hunting and Trading pack was released on October 12 , 2010 ; it added a jackalope to the game 's world , and some additional outfits . Undead Nightmare , released on October 26 , 2010 , added a new single @-@ player campaign with ghost towns and cemeteries full of zombies ; in the game 's story , players continue to assume control of Marston as he searches for a cure to the zombie outbreak . The Myths and Mavericks pack , released for free on September 13 , 2011 , added additional characters from the single @-@ player campaign .

A Game of the Year Edition containing all downloadable content was released for both PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360 , on 11 October 2011 in North America and on 14 October 2011 internationally . Additionally , Microsoft added the game to its backwards compatibility list for Xbox One platforms in July 2016 .

= = Reception = =

Red Dead Redemption was released to critical acclaim . Metacritic , which assigns a normalized rating in the 0 ? 100 range , calculated an average score of 95 out of 100 , indicating " universal acclaim " , based on 73 reviews for the PlayStation 3 version and 96 reviews for the Xbox 360 version . Commercially , the game has also been very successful . By August 2011 , the game had shipped over 11 million copies , 2 million of which were retail units of Undead Nightmare . As of August 2015 , Red Dead Redemption has shipped over 14 million units .

Many critics praised the landscape , environment and graphics of Red Dead Redemption . Erik Brudvig of IGN lauded the environmental details , noting the player can even scare a flock of birds from the bushes as they ride past . He also noted that the game 's dynamic events , weather and ambient sounds provide a rich experience for players . He summarized by stating " you can also expect a fantastic game that offers the Western experience we 've all been waiting for . " Game Informer called the scenery " breathtaking " , and the cinematic cutscenes " vastly improved " over Grand Theft Auto IV , and named it the " best @-@ looking Rockstar game to date " .

The music , sound and voice acting in the game was also widely praised and spoken about . It won the Best Original Music and Best Voice Acting awards from GameSpot . When talking about the sound design of Red Dead Redemption , Game Informer said " From pitch @-@ perfect gunshots to the daunting rumble of prairie thunderstorms , the remarkable attention to audio detail brings the world to life " .

Critics and reviewers spoke about the successful use of the game engine , and made similarities of

the controls and physics to the Grand Theft Auto series . Game Informer said that Rockstar " [transposed] the Grand Theft Auto gameplay template onto a Wild West setting " . Good Game reviewer Stephanie " Hex " Bendixsen said that " [Rockstar] really looked at what people liked and didn 't like in their game design from [Grand Theft Auto IV] , and included it here " . Eurogamer 's Simon Parkin felt Red Dead Redemption successfully " re @-@ clothes " the Grand Theft Auto framework in an " exciting , distinct and expertly realised scenario " .

The multiplayer aspect of Red Dead Redemption received mixed commentary from critics . GamePro 's Will Herring praised the variety of multiplayer modes and the open gameplay , but noted that it put more responsibility on the players for keeping the game interesting . Justin Calvert of GameSpot also gave high marks for the game 's variety of multiplayer modes , but felt that there was a lack in customization options for players . In a more critical view of multiplayer , Scott Sharkey of 1UP.com noted that games can suffer from griefing due to the open nature of multiplayer gameplay . He also criticized the leveling and unlocking aspects , noting that " The first few minutes spent as a toothless miner riding a balky mule can be pretty humiliating " . G4TV 's Jake Gaskill echoed this sentiment . He noted that the game often respawns players in a similar location to their death , which allows the killing player to repeatedly grief the other player . Rockstar has since added a feature which allows for players being grieved to transport to another area upon respawn .

= = = Awards = = =

Since its release , the game has received a large number of awards . It won several Game of the Year awards from media outlets such as GameSpy , GameSpot , Good Game , Computer and Video Games , and Machinima , among others . The game 's music also received awards for its original score from GameSpot , Machinima.com , and Spike TV . José González also received an award from Spike for his original song " Far Away " . The graphics received honors at the Korean Games Conference , and from the television program Good Game . Red Dead Redemption : Undead Nightmare also received Best Downloadable content awards from Spike TV , G4 TV and Game Revolution . At the 2010 Spike Video Game Awards , Red Dead Redemption won the Game of the Year , Best Song in a Game (" Far Away " by José González) , Best Original Score and Best DLC (Undead Nightmare) awards . Red Dead Redemption was not nominated for any of the jury based awards at the BAFTA Video Game Awards due to Rockstar 's refusal to submit the title for consideration ; BAFTA cannot enter games without permission from the developers and publishers .

= = Legacy = =

Critics concurred that Red Dead Redemption was one of the best games of the seventh generation era of video game consoles . Dan Whitehead of Eurogamer wrote that he hoped the eighth generation of consoles would offer " similarly powerful experiences " . IGN ranked the game third on its 2011 list of the top modern video games , and seventh on its 2014 list of the best games of the generation . GamesRadar listed Red Dead Redemption at second on its list of the best games of all time , in February 2013 , and sixth on its list of the best video game stories , in July 2013 . In September 2013 , the game was ranked the thirteenth best PlayStation 3 game , and the seventh best Xbox 360 game , by IGN . In November 2013 , the game was ranked at fourth and eighth place on Eurogamer and Hardcore Gamer 's list of the best games of the generation , respectively . In January 2014 , Computer and Video Games ranked the game at number fifteen on its list of the best games of the generation . In June 2014 , the game placed at number five on IGN 's list of the " Games of a Generation : Your Top 100 " as voted by readers of the site . In August 2014 , the game placed seventh on Good Game 's Top 100 list . In July 2015 , the game placed 10th on USgamer 's The 15 Best Games Since 2000 list .

In March 2013 , Karl Slatoff , chief operating officer of Take @-@ Two Interactive , revealed that the company has an " extensive pipeline of unannounced titles in development " and mentioned that the Red Dead franchise was important to the company . Concept art for a future game in the series was reportedly leaked online in April 2016 .

