

Reliving the Terror: Why The Last of Us Part I Gameplay Still Holds Up

A Second Look at a Modern Classic

When Naughty Dog released *The Last of Us* in 2013, it changed how many of us thought about storytelling in video games. The game's blend of survival horror, stealth, and emotional weight set a new bar. Now, with the release of *The Last of Us Part I* for the PlayStation 5 and PC, a whole new generation of players gets to experience that story. But beyond the graphical overhaul and faster load times, the question many are asking is simple: does the gameplay still feel fresh? After spending a good number of hours with this version, I can say it absolutely does. In fact, revisiting this world made me appreciate just how well the core systems have aged. Let's get into what makes the *the last of us part i* gameplay so compelling even a decade later.

The original game was never about fast reflexes or complex combos. It was about tension, resource scarcity, and making hard choices in the heat of the moment. Those principles are still the backbone of *Part I*. The combat feels heavier now, thanks to improved haptic feedback on the DualSense controller, but the underlying rhythm is unchanged. You scavenge for tape and scissors to craft a shiv, you hide in tall grass and listen to the infected shuffle past, and you hold your breath when a Clicker cocks its head. That unscripted panic is where the game lives. The *the last of us part i* gameplay retains that signature push and pull between violence and caution.

What Changed Under the Hood

If you played the 2014 remaster, you might wonder what is actually different here. The visual upgrades are the most obvious. Character models are more detailed, lighting is more natural, and the environments feel richer. But the gameplay itself received some subtle tweaks that make a big difference over a full playthrough. The AI is smarter now, both for allies and enemies. Human enemies communicate more realistically, flanking your position and reacting to sounds with greater accuracy. Infected enemies are more erratic, making melee encounters feel less predictable. This isn't a full reimagining, but it is a polish that tightens the experience without losing the original feel.

Another change is the inclusion of accessibility options that were not present before. You can now adjust difficulty on the fly, enable high-contrast mode, and remap controls. These features open the game to more players, but they also let veterans tweak the experience. Want to play on a harder difficulty but reduce enemy health? You can do that. Want to turn off listen mode

for a more immersive survival feel? That is an option too. These additions do not cheapen the game; they simply let you tailor the [the last of us part i gameplay](#) to your taste.

The Weight of Every Bullet

One of the most praised aspects of the original was how it made you feel the scarcity of resources. That feeling is amplified in Part I because of the improved audio and haptic feedback. When you fire a revolver, you feel the kick through the controller. When you run out of ammo, the empty click is more pronounced. These small details reinforce the tension. You start thinking twice before engaging a group of hunters, knowing that a single shotgun shell might be the difference between life and death a few rooms later. This scarcity is not artificial; it is woven into the level design. You will often find yourself low on health kits and with only a few arrows left, forced to improvise with bricks and bottles. That improvisation is where the game shines.

Stealth is another area where the improvements stand out. The original game had a functional stealth system, but Part I makes it feel more fluid. Joel moves more naturally through cover, and the transition between crouch walking and sprinting is smoother. The enemy detection cones are more forgiving in a good way; you feel clever when you slip past a patrol, not lucky. The game also adds a few new animation sets for takedowns, which keeps the stealth kills feeling fresh even after multiple playthroughs. That said, stealth is never mandatory. You can go in guns blazing, but the game punishes that approach heavily. Ammo is scarce, and loud noises attract more enemies. This balance forces you to weigh risk versus reward constantly, which is the hallmark of good survival gameplay.

The Infected and the Hunters

The enemy variety in The Last of Us Part I is not huge, but each type demands a different response. Runners are fast and aggressive, forcing you to keep moving. Clickers are blind but hear everything, so you must move slowly and avoid breaking glass. Bloaters are tough and can spew spores, which creates a dangerous area denial effect. Human enemies are the most unpredictable because they use tactics. They will call out your position, throw molotovs, and try to flush you out of cover. Facing a mix of infected and humans in the same encounter is where the game feels most chaotic and exciting. The AI improvements make these fights feel less scripted. Enemies react to your specific actions, not just to a trigger zone. This makes each encounter feel like a unique puzzle.

The game also includes a permadeath mode and a speedrun mode for those who want a challenge. Permadeath forces you to restart the entire game if you die, which changes how you approach every encounter. Speedrun mode adds a timer and allows you to practice segments. These modes are not for everyone, but they show that Naughty Dog respects the skill of

players who want to master the systems. They also add replay value beyond the story. After finishing the campaign, I found myself going back to the optional combat encounters just to try different strategies. The gameplay loop is satisfying enough to stand on its own, even outside the narrative context.

Performance and Technical Notes

On PS5, the game runs at a smooth 60 frames per second in performance mode, or 30 with higher visual fidelity in quality mode. The load times are essentially nonexistent, which keeps you immersed. On PC, the port had a rocky start with stuttering issues, but patches have smoothed most of that out. If you have a capable rig, the game looks stunning at 4K with maxed settings. The DualSense controller support on PC adds haptic feedback and adaptive triggers, which is a nice touch. The PC version also supports ultrawide monitors and unlocked frame rates, making it the definitive way to play for those with the hardware. Regardless of platform, the core experience remains the same. The technical improvements serve the gameplay, not the other way around.

Should You Buy It Again?

This is the question every fan asks. If you already own the 2014 remaster, is the upgrade worth full price? For me, yes, but with caveats. If you care about visual fidelity and want the best looking version of the game, Part I delivers. If you are new to the series, this is the version to get. If you are a PC player who never owned a PlayStation, this is your first chance to play the game properly. But if you are perfectly happy with the Remastered version and do not mind the older graphics and slower load times, you might not feel the need to upgrade. The gameplay changes are meaningful but not revolutionary. They are refinements, not reinventions.

That said, the game is still a masterpiece of pacing and atmosphere. The way it balances quiet exploration with sudden bursts of violence is unmatched. The relationship between Joel and Ellie develops through gameplay as much as through cutscenes. When you fail to protect her in a shootout, you feel it. When you guide her through a dark basement, you feel the weight of responsibility. That emotional connection is what makes the the last of us part i gameplay so memorable. It is not just about shooting and scavenging. It is about surviving with someone who depends on you.

Final Thoughts

The Last of Us Part I is not a new game, but it does not need to be. It is a careful restoration of a classic that respects the original vision while making it accessible to modern audiences. The gameplay feels as tense and rewarding as it did in 2013, and in some ways even more so. The improved AI, haptic feedback, and accessibility options make it a more polished experience. If

you are looking for a game that prioritizes atmosphere, resource management, and emotional storytelling over flashy action, this is still one of the best choices you can make. Whether you are revisiting the world or stepping into it for the first time, the journey through this post-apocalyptic America is one worth taking.