

# REVIEW

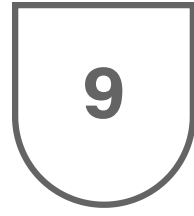
COMING SOON

AD SPACE

Coming Soon



Developed by: **Rebellion**  
 Published by: **Rebellion**  
 Genre(s): **Survival Horror, Third Person Shooter**  
 Platform: **Microsoft, PC, Sony**  
 Cost: **\$49.99**  
 ESRB Rating: **MATURE**  
 Players: **1 (2-4 Online)**  
 Release date: **February 4, 2020**  
 Reviewed on: **PC**



## ZOMBIE ARMY 4: DEAD WAR

WRITTEN BY: **KENNETH SEWARD JR.**

MARCH 25, 2020

11 years after the last Left 4 Dead title and the formula created by Turtle Rock Studios still has legs. The fact that it's been successfully utilized by other studios is proof. Saber Interactive's World War Z borrowed heavily from the L4D series, even down to the special zombie types. That said, WWZ was still **well received**. Much more can be said of Rebellion's Zombie Army 4: Dead War. This third-person shooter not only borrows mechanics from Left 4 Dead, it improves upon them while also adding a few of its own.

Zombie Army 4: Dead War is a continuation of the Zombie Army Trilogy – a group of games that were released as standalone content/expansions to Sniper Elite V2. It's set during an alternate 1940s, after the re-death of Hitler. The resistance had defeated his undead army, sending the Führer to hell. Unfortunately, this didn't end his reign of terror as his army still roamed the earth a year later. Making matters worse is the introduction of a new evil. Something lurking in the shadows, waiting to take Hitler's place.



Like previous games in the series, up to four players can embark on a journey to defeat the zombie horde. They'll solve light puzzles and/or clear objectives while traversing large interconnected environments. Each level is broken into sections and bookended by safe houses filled with ammo, health packs, and workstations. Zombies are nearly always present. Their number fluctuating based on the current objective. Special variations like armored brutes, carrying flame throwers and zombified sharks are peppered in to make things more challenging.

On paper, it sounds like Left 4 Dead gameplay. Zombie Army 4 is more than just dispatching zombies and navigating through environmental puzzles while running towards a safe house though. This is thanks to the campaign's narrative focus and progression-based mechanics. Both of which add interesting changes to a familiar gameplay loop.

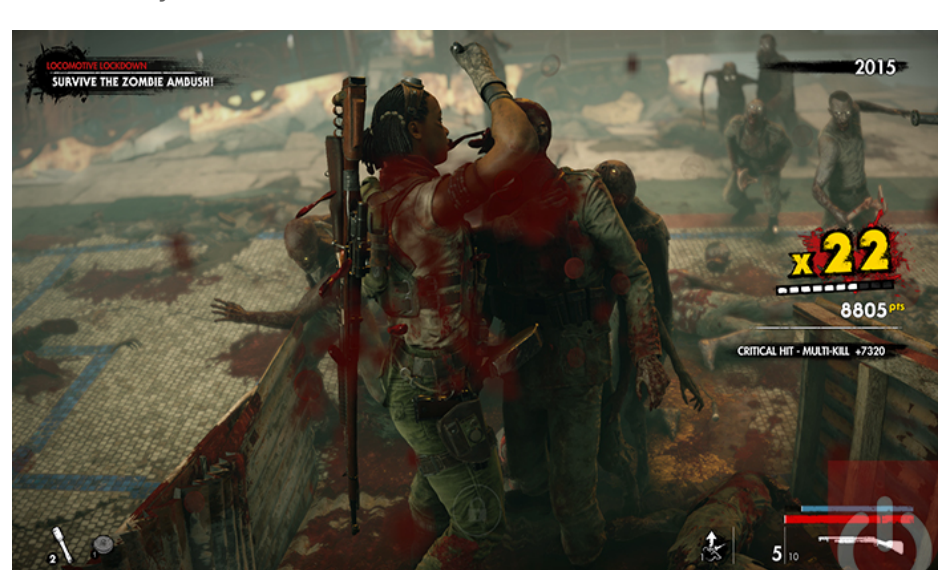
The plot, while not exactly noteworthy, does provide an interesting backdrop for our heroes. It also gives them something to do. There is someone to find, a place to get to, a rift to close. etc. There is a sense of urgency that colors their actions; these characters aren't just trying to survive. Players will still need to overcome obstacles in order to move through each level (like in the L4D series) but having to find gas to power a boat or parts needed to lower a bridge is made more meaningful when there are people in need on the other side.



This added "meaning" helps in making these activities seem less repetitive. Things are varied early on. One minute, players are guarding generators needed to take down a Hellgate – a storm created in hopes of summoning more zombies – and the next, they're forced to contend with a zombie powered tank. They'll eventually start to show up more and more though, just in different ways; guarding a control station as a bridge is lowered isn't much different from guarding a generator. This is especially true for the "kill this number of zombies before progressing" segments.

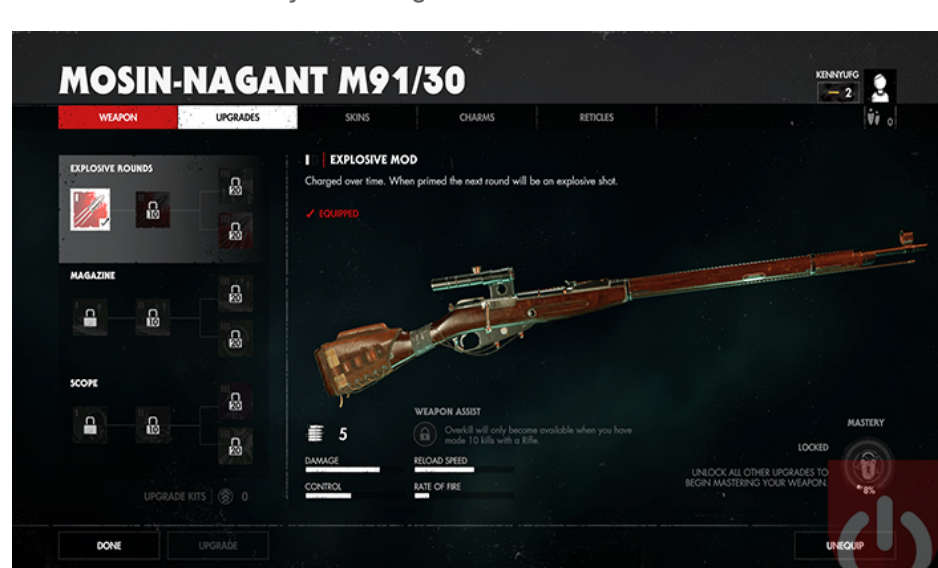
Thankfully, none of these moments felt tedious enough to stop playing. Yes, there is some recycling. But most of Zombie Army's obstacles still entertain thanks to their challenging nature. Fighting through a group of zombies is made more difficult when forced to wade through waist deep water. And again, knowing that your actions might save a group of NPC's adds to the drama.

One of them is the combo meter, which tallies the number of zombies killed in quick succession. On the surface it offers a means to a higher score/level clear rating. It also has practical, moment to moment uses. If a player knocks off ten zombies in a row, for instance, they'll unlock the ability to execute a foe. Doing so will reward them with more ammo and health, like Doom's Gory Kill mechanic.



The combo system offers players points and extra abilities. It also makes it easier to level up. This in turn, unlocks new perks, all of which can be upgraded by performing well in different areas. Getting through a level without using a health pack might unlock new health-based benefits while using an auto headshot perk over and over will increase its effectiveness. There's also upgrade kits that are used to empower weapons. They can be found hidden in each level or by leveling up and/or reaching high scores.

Essentially, the combo system helps players progress. And progression is tied to their performance on a moment to moment bases, their overall level clear rating, and player experience level. Zombie Army 4 provides and incentive for frequent encounters with the undead. It then rewards players based on how well they do during said encounters.



Battling Hitler's horde is an exciting endeavor because of the challenging objectives, narrative elements, and clever progression systems that feed into one another. None of this would matter if the basic gameplay wasn't fun. As a spin-off of the Sniper series, Zombie Army 4 offers solid gunplay. The weapons sound and behave realistically; a well-placed shot will tear off a limb or knock a zombie over the railing of a nearby platform. Up close and personal with a shotgun. Or take down an enemy with a sniper rifle, exposing their skull via a slow-mo X-Ray kill. Either way, fans are sure to enjoy the visceral nature of combat.

They'll also enjoy traversing the game's varied environments. Full of collectibles, narrative nods, and area-based traps – that can be used to dispatch whole groups of enemies at a time – each map encourages exploration. The story and foreboding vibe thematically connect them to one another; all hell has broken loose and nowhere in Europe is safe. If it isn't the ruins of civilization or copious amounts of blood, then it's the presence of slow-moving zombies that act as a reminder. Going into that building might seem safe given their current numbers. Stay in their too long and you might find yourself surrounded on your way back.



Zombie Army 4: Dead War is one of 2020's best shooters. It takes a familiar formula and tweaks it just enough to feel fresh, offers multiple modes of play – including a horde mode that's a riot with the right group – and solid gameplay mechanics. There are some repetitive elements here and there. But for the most part, it's an entertaining romp through a zombie infested shooter. My only real issue has been the lack of other players. I'm not sure if it's because the game is on Epic's store front (it'll eventually land on Steam) but I couldn't find many people to play with online. Hopefully, that won't be the case for long.

<b>Gameplay:</b>	<b>9</b>
Zombie Army 4 is a blast to play, solo or otherwise.	
<b>Graphics:</b>	<b>9</b>
Everything from the zombies to the detailed environments look great.	
<b>Sound:</b>	<b>8</b>
The sound effects, music and voice work are well done.	
<b>Replay Value:</b>	<b>9</b>
Fans will definitely want to revisit the game after the credits roll. Either to find missing collectibles, take on a weekly challenge, or just to blast more zombies with friends.	
<b>Final Score:</b>	<b>9</b>

FIND US ONLINE [f](#) [t](#) [v](#)