



REVIEW

Payday 3 Review

A Turbulent Yet Successful Heist

by *Kenneth Seward Jr.* on Sep 26, 2023 at 10:15 AM

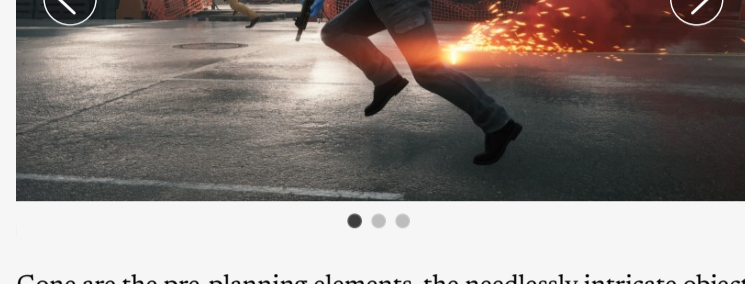
- POST
- TWEET
- EMAIL
- COMMENT

REVIEWED ON PC ALSO ON PlayStation 5, Xbox Series X/S PUBLISHER Deep Silver
 DEVELOPER Starbreeze Studios RELEASE September 21, 2023 RATING Mature

The Payday series has always entertained using a mixture of competing gameplay mechanics. Going from an engaging yet sometimes confusing heist-based simulation to a chaotic Left 4 Dead-inspired shooter, each title presented a wildly shifting mission structure that encouraged cooperative play. Payday 3 doesn't reinvent the wheel, as it offers many of the same core concepts found in the previous games. That said, some smart design choices and its fresh coat of paint help elevate it above this popular series' previous iterations.

At first glance, Payday 3 might seem identical to its predecessors, especially regarding the multi-phased heists. Most start with you gathering information while posing as a "civilian," noting where the guards and cameras are. If the alarms trip or you're caught doing something illegal, a new phase begins, and your objectives change; you'll need to corral hostages while taking an alternative route to securing the loot as the police make their way to your location. Essentially, this is when all the shooting starts.

This gameplay loop will certainly be familiar to fans. What makes Payday 3 stand out, however, is how it circumvents the series' long-held difficulty issues. The previous Payday games struggled with balancing their vague objectives with touchy sim-like mechanics, often causing frustration and confusion for new and seasoned players alike. In older titles, it was bad enough when you didn't know what to do or where to go at a given moment, but having to deal with overzealous NPCs, who are alerted to your presence even when you aren't breaking the law, makes things worse. Thankfully, Payday 3 addresses this problem in several ways, most notably removing the more convoluted aspects of its heists.

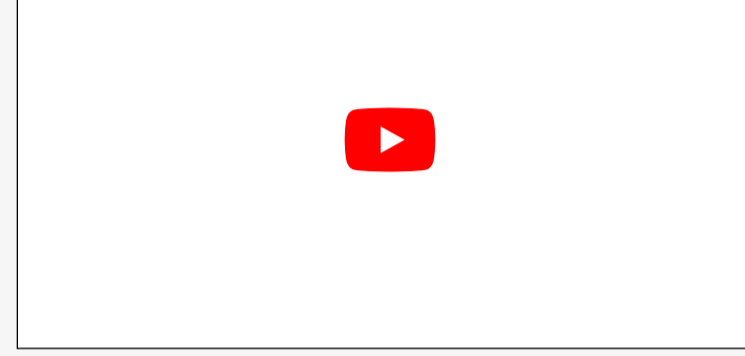


Gone are the pre-planning elements, the needlessly intricate objectives, and cumbersome hostage management systems. In their place are streamlined features that make it easier for players to understand what they need to do and have a clear means of handling a given situation. Instead of needing to yell at bystanders to get them to cooperate, the NPCs now recognize you pointing a gun at them and automatically submit. A few button presses later, and they'll either be tied up, following you, or used as a human shield – a new mechanic that comes in handy during firefights.

Thanks to your handler, there's no need for planning (beyond learning a location's layout via repetition). She often gives suggestions to help you navigate Payday 3's labyrinthine maps. If that isn't enough, on normal difficulty, you can pull up clues pointing you toward that pesky wall safe or bank manager's computer.

When it comes to Payday 3's mission objectives, there are still plenty of things to do for players looking to take a stealthy approach. While casing a joint, you're given optional tasks ranging from stealing key cards to gain access to a room housing a building's security systems to using UV lights to identify the real version of a priceless painting. All but one of the heists have multi-layered steps that must be completed to get away clean. The difference here is that the objectives are simplified; instead of building a piece of equipment using parts scattered about a map, you pick up the bag carrying the item and drop it in the required location.

Pulling off a tough job under a hail of gunfire is exhilarating. Even more so when the crime goes unnoticed, and a crew absconds with the loot without firing a shot – a feat that can be accomplished more readily in Payday 3 thanks to these essential gameplay tweaks. Not only that, but almost everything else about Payday has also been improved. From the leveling and vendor systems – used to obtain new weapons, mods, gear, skills, and cosmetics – to the voiceovers and visuals. Even the bots have improved; they won't complete objectives but will drop supplies and enemies in a quick fashion.



There are some rough edges to contend with. The various Cop/SWAT variants aren't always the smartest, the game has its share of bugs, and there aren't as many options for weapons early on. You get a decent long-ranged rifle early on (that you can eventually upgrade with a scope), but for a real bolt-action sniper rifle, you must wait until you hit level 43. Considering that after more than 10 hours of play and several successful heists, I could only reach level 24, reaching that prized rifle could take some time to accomplish. Still, none of these issues should prevent fans and newcomers from checking out Payday 3 once the early server issues are fully addressed; several updates have landed since launch, allowing folks to rejoin the action regularly.

Payday 3's eight heists are as challenging as they are entertaining; the inevitable shootouts with the cops are frantic and fun, and the redefined objectives will make onboarding newer players easier than ever. At long last, Payday has become the *Ocean's Eleven/Point Break* hybrid its fans have always wanted it to be.

8

About Game Informer's review system

Products In This Article

	Payday 3 Platforms: PlayStation 5, Xbox Series X/S, PC Release Date: September 21, 2023	PURCHASE MORE INFO
--	--	---

POPULAR CONTENT

- NEWS**
Tales Of The Shire Is A Cozy Lord Of The Rings Game Coming Next Year
- TIPS**
Things To Remember And Know Before Starting Cyberpunk 2077: Phantom Liberty
- NEWS**
Gliding Through NYC In Marvel's Spider-Man 2 New Gameplay Today
- NEWS**
Update: Resident Evil Village Hits iPhone 15 Pro Next Month
- NEWS**
Baldur's Gate 3 Patch 3 Delayed To Tomorrow, But Lets You Change Your Appearance
- NEWS**
Ubisoft Announces The Division 2: Clancy's The Division Appoints New Series Producer

COMMENTS

Game Informer Comment Policy

We encourage you to put your two cents in on the topic at hand, but all we ask is that you do so in a polite manner. Please read our [Comment Policy](#) before commenting.

[Got It](#)

What do you think?
0 Responses

Upvote

Funny

Love

Hope

Angry

Sad

0 Comments [Login](#)

Start the discussion...

LOG IN WITH OR SIGN UP WITH DISCORD

Name

♡ Share [Best](#) [Newest](#) [Oldest](#)

Be the first to comment.

Subscribe
Privacy
Do Not Sell My Data

Having trouble viewing comments?
 Try clearing your browser cache, disabling ad blockers, and verifying that cookies are allowed

[VERIFY COOKIE PREFERENCES](#)

Stay Informed

For regular updates on the biggest news and reviews in gaming delivered to your inbox every week:

SUBSCRIBE NOW!