

All platforms / capcom.com

Monster Hunter Wilds

What's new? Sprawling ecosystems, dynamic weather, impressive damage mechanics and monsters that are smarter than your average apes. Think of it as a safari where the animals bite back, and your camera is replaced with a giant sword.

Monster Hunter has always been a bit of an odd beast. It's a series that demands patience, rewards persistence, and occasionally makes you want to throw your controller at the nearest wall. But it's also a series that delivers some of the most satisfying monster-bashing action you'll find in gaming. Think of it as a safari where the animals bite back, and your camera is replaced with a giant sword.

Now, let's be honest, Monster Hunter has never been renowned for its Shakespearean narratives. It's always been more about the thrill of the hunt than the intricacies of the plot. But Wilds does attempt to weave a more compelling tale than its predecessors.

What's new is the emphasis on the local tribes and their connection to the land. You'll be interacting with these communities, learning about their customs, and uncovering the secrets of the region's ancient history. It's less "go kill that thing" and more "go kill that thing, but also learn why it's a meanie." Which is a nice change of pace.

Gameplay in Monster Hunter Wilds is where the series truly shines, and this iteration is no exception. Combat is as weighty and satisfying as ever, with each weapon feeling distinct and powerful. Whether you're swinging a Great Sword that could double as a small car, or peppering monsters with bullets from a Light Bowgun, there's a style to suit every hunter. All the weapons in the game are easy to pick up and play, but almost all of them have a layered mechanic that unleashes the true potential and the moveset. Mastering these weapons is honestly as satisfying as slaying the monsters.

What sets Wilds apart is the ease of getting in and finishing a hunt. It doesn't take three working days to kill a monster now, which is intentionally done to welcome new players such as myself but veterans will love it too.

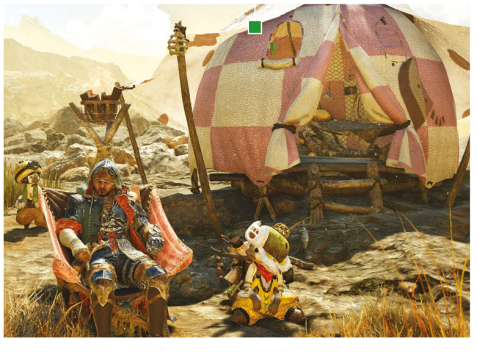
Khumail Thakur

STUFF SAYS Monster and monster weapons, bashing one to make the other is fun! ★★★★★

Better than a motorcycle, this thing flies on dusty roads and glides in forests.

Who doesn't like camping, but here it's like doing it in the Jurassic Park.







Monster are in the menu too?

Monster Hunter has always been a social experience, and Wilds continues that tradition with seamless online multiplayer. Teaming up with friends to take down a particularly tough monster is one of the most rewarding experiences in gaming. Coordinating attacks, switching weapons, and celebrating a hard-earned victory is what it's all about.

However, understanding how to get the multiplayer to work is the toughest monster battle you'll face! The menu systems are still very cluttered and archaic. It makes FromSoftware's games' UI look good. Once you figure out the multiplayer and how to connect with friends, then it's easy and on a technical level, the multiplayer is flawless with good connectivity to the server throughout my playtime.

Visually, Monster Hunter Wilds is a stunner. The environments are lush and detailed, with indigenous flora and fauna for each biome, adding a touch of realism that's truly impressive. From the shimmering sands of the desert to the snow-capped ruins, every location feels alive and mysterious. The monsters themselves are a sight to behold, with intricate details.



All new platforms / ea.com

Split Fiction

It's a proper head-scratcher at times, but in the most gloriously engaging way. Forget your solo sagas; this is all about the beautiful ballet of teamwork, it's co-op game through and through.

It Takes Two was a masterclass in this, a whimsical whirlwind of inventive mechanics and heartwarming (and sometimes cheesy) storytelling. Split Fiction does exactly that but better!

The narrative in Split Fiction is as wonderfully bonkers as you'd expect from this lot. You take on the roles of two seemingly disparate authors, Mio and Zoe. It is about two writers who get invited by a corporation to get their books published but things go south because publishing your book means getting into a simulator that extracts your ideas, and that doesn't start smoothly for Mio and Zoe. From there, both Zoe and Mio's ideas collide creating the premise for one of the most fun videogame you'll play this year.

Both characters are opposites to each other. One likes techno music and the other likes acoustic, one is pessimistic and the other is optimistic and so on. And just like It Takes Two, trust and bond building is often the running theme of the story. It's definitely cheesy but it never forces your interest to keep you playing, it's actually the imaginative, and often changing, gameplay that really pulls you into the game.

Sometimes, the gameplay switches more than 3 times in a single level, going from a third-person shooter to a Metroid-like platformer to a bullet hell. One minute you're coordinating a daring escape across an Ogre-infested village, the next you're shooting laser guns in the future. It's a proper rollercoaster of cooperative chaos, and we absolutely lapped it up.

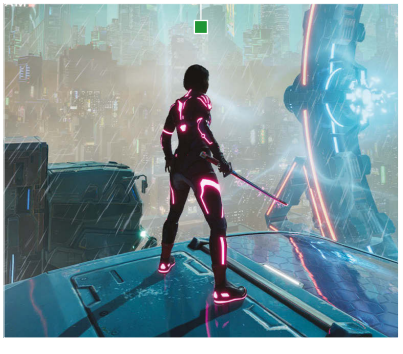
The puzzles are ingeniously designed, requiring constant communication and a genuine understanding of what your partner is experiencing. There's a real sense of accomplishment when you finally crack a particularly tricky conundrum, a feeling amplified by the fact that you did it together.

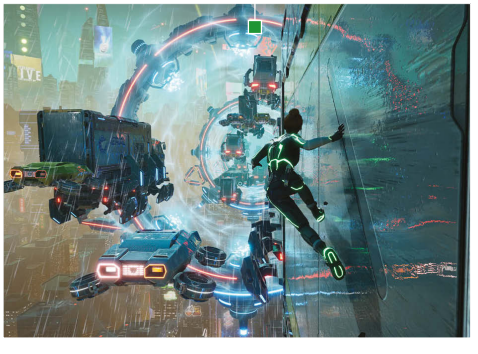
Khumail Thakur

STUFF SAYS This is the best game you'll play (with your buddy) in 2025 ★★★★★

If Cyber ninjas are good with a glowing sword, how do they sneak around?

Not the prince of wall running here, just one adjusting to Mumbai traffic







Simplicity can be hella fun

The core gameplay is jump, double jump, dash, grappling and wall running similar to It Takes Two. Over those, it's laced with a colossal amount of varied gameplay mechanics thanks to clever level design.

In one mission Mio and Zoe turn into a cyber ninja to cut enemies in her (Mio's) futuristic world, and in another mission, Mio becomes a giant monkey to navigate the magical world written by Zoe. All levels involve each player controlling different aspects of the gameplay mechanic and coordinating with the other player to finish the platforming, shooting, puzzle-solving and more. It's pretty clear the game's pulling from a bunch of cool stuff like Donkey Kong, Sailor Moon, Assassin's Creed, Harry Potter, and even Fall Guys. You can spot those influences all over the place – the gameplay, level designs, and even the chats between characters. It's a proper genre-bender.

While the constant need for communication might not appeal to the more introverted among us, for those who relish the joy of tackling a challenge alongside a friend, Split Fiction is an absolute must-play. It's funny, it's clever and it's surprisingly challenging.



All platforms / ubisoft.com

Assassin's Creed Shadows

Remember Assassin's Creed Syndicate? Jacob and Evie Frye, the twins who became assassins in that game serve as the foundation of what Shadows is attempting with Naoe and Yasuke.

This isn't the first time Assassin's Creed has had two playable characters, but Shadows does it better. Yasuke and Naoe are opposites, making every mission feel fresh, even if you play it twice! It's a refreshing take, even with the classic Ubisoft open-world fatigue kicking in after a while.

Naoe is your textbook assassin, hidden blade and hood included, parkouring across 16th-century Japan's rooftops. Yasuke is a Samurai, a 6-foot-tall tank who relies on brute strength and his katana. Your approach to missions changes depending on who you pick, and that's what makes Shadows so compelling.

Yasuke's story is straightforward, while Naoe's is a tragic revenge tale—a bit predictable, but it works. This time, the story tries to fill in the gaps with side missions that add depth, something the series needed. Ubisoft also gets creative with cutscenes and boss fights, adding a soundtrack to the swordplay. It can be cheesy, but it works!

Yasuke uses heavy weapons like the Long Katana and Kanabo, smashing through enemies and walls. Naoe is acrobatic, using a Katana, Kusarigama, and Tanto, with a focus on stealth and a new prone feature. You can switch between the two, but not during missions or in enemy zones. The game has dialogue options that affect interactions and outcomes, adding replay value. Charging in with Yasuke is different from sneaking with Naoe, offering a shocking change in combat approach.

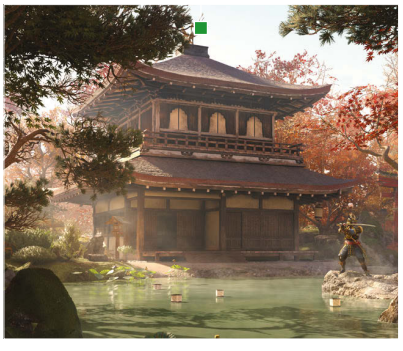
Shadows balances the open-world brutality of Odyssey and Valhalla with the stealth of Mirage. The story leans into politics, but the parallel personal stories make it less drab. If you're an Assassin's Creed fan, this is a fresh take with two protagonists, two gameplay styles, and improved open-world exploration.

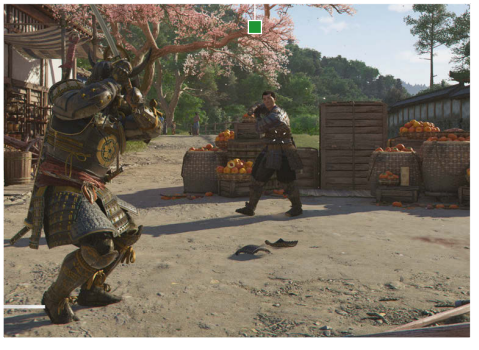
Khumail Thakur

STUFF SAYS Compelling in story and gameplay, two things that will drive your interest ★★★★☆

Time traveling is overrated, you should just spend time in AC games.

Not the vegetable vendor I was looking for, but a quick fight is in stock!







Got a base to stand on

Base building in Shadows is oddly therapeutic. Seeing your base change with the weather and day/night cycle brings a cosy feeling. Many side missions bring new aesthetic additions for you to add to your base, and these side missions are also necessary to get resources for building useful structures for better scout network, weapon upgrades and more. As for levelling up, to unlock a new skill tier you must gain a Knowledge Rank which you get by visiting Shrines, completing meditation points, competing in Horseback archery and more.

Ubisoft is known to have some of the best worlds in video game history and Shadows gets the same treatment. It's stunning and the recreation of 16th century Japan is without a doubt their best work. Palaces, cities, villages, monuments, jungles, bamboo forests, crop fields, everything in this game looks like it's handcrafted with care and love and it shows. You can also paint animals in a traditional Japanese painting style called Sumi-e.

This is the most stable AC game we've played on our PC. The game looks very beautiful, especially as seasons start to change and morph the landscape.