NBA 2K24 Review



Reviewed on PlayStation 5

Also on Xbox Series X/S, PlayStation 4, Xbox One, Switch, PC

Publisher 2K Games

Developer Visual Concepts

Release September 8, 2023

Rating Everyone

NBA 2K24 should have been the perfect platform to celebrate Kobe Bryant's career and his ever-lasting influence on the game of basketball. Instead, his legacy gets overshadowed by omnipresent microtransactions and stale game modes. As a result, NBA 2K24 feels like a dull, lopsided blowout as opposed to a memorable, adrenaline-inducing affair like the ones the Black Mamba often blessed us with throughout his career.

Unlike its more innovative predecessor, NBA 2K24 only introduces a handful of new elements, the most notable of which is ProPlay technology. Though the newly integrated feature does make each layup, dunk, and jump shot more realistic than ever, this aesthetic upgrade isn't enough to redeem what is essentially just a fresh coat of paint over a dated and unimaginative foundation. The lack of novel features became especially evident once I went through most of the recycled game modes offered within. Fortunately, NBA 2K24 still has a couple of enjoyable modes you can spend most of your time with, including my favorite, Mamba Moments.







Like NBA 2K23's Jordan Challenges, the latest commemorative offering lets you relive seven of Kobe's most iconic games. However, Mamba Moments doesn't take you back to the Laker legend's humble career beginnings. Instead, the first challenge you play through happens amid his electrifying career during the 2001 playoffs, five years after he was drafted. Though this opening challenge is undoubtedly an iconic event in Kobe's career, I was disappointed by the omission of some of his most memorable, legacy-defining milestones. The exclusion of Kobe's 81-point outburst in 2006 against the Toronto Raptors is particularly baffling; this near-record-breaking occasion would have been a treat to recreate.

MyNBA Eras, the novel addition from NBA 2K23 that lets you relive specific periods in the league, returns, this time with a new supplementary offering in tow called MyNBA Lite. Though welcome, I was puzzled by the addition of this streamlined Eras mode as its inclusion is unnecessary and redundant. However, playing through different periods, from the Magic vs. Bird Era of the 1980s to the Modern Era of the 2020s, remains an entertaining experience as each one brings its own set of rules, teams, and players that ensure no two playthroughs are the same.

Yet no matter how enjoyable MyNBA Eras and Mamba Moments are, the high points I experienced with these modes were dwarfed by the dismay I felt upon entering NBA 2K24's MyCareer. If you're looking forward to going through a new rags-to-riches story in the latest single-player offering, then prepare to be disappointed as Visual Concepts has completely discarded any semblance of a coherent plot – a decision that confounds me since the single-player mode's dramatic underdog narrative has always been one of the elements I enjoyed most in past entries.

In addition, the road to becoming the NBA GOAT also becomes exponentially more problematic if you haven't amassed a mountain of Virtual Currency. As this is your primary method of progressing your player, you'll need to purchase copious amounts to rank up quickly since the quantity you earn after each MyCareer game isn't sufficient to grow meaningfully.

Like always, NBA 2K24's heavy emphasis on in-game currency and microtransactions isn't limited to MyCareer, as this necessity becomes even more pronounced in the ever-popular MyTeam mode. Like in past installments, you can always grind out new rare player cards instead of purchasing them outright. However, the time it takes to earn these upgrades often doesn't make any of it worth it in the long run.

Following the innovative and pleasantly surprising NBA 2K23, I expected Visual Concepts to build upon its success and introduce even more improvements with its latest entry in the long-running basketball series. But instead of mirroring the Black Mamba's gradual rise to permanent relevancy, NBA 2K24 sadly feels like a stop-gap – a quick hit to temporarily satisfy diehard fans. If this continues, the series could veer closer to a forgettable imitation of Kobe's signature move: a fadeaway into obscurity.


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