

pre screen

# Doom:

## Evil Unleashed

The sequel to the ultra-gory *Wolfenstein 3D* is here at last. And it looks set to take the PC by storm. **Edge** takes the plunge...



256 colours, full texture mapping – and the passages in *Doom* move so fast they'll take your breath away. The sound's not half bad either. This is certainly a major step on from *Wolfenstein 3D*

Format: **PC**  
 Publisher: **Id Software**  
 Developer: **In-house**  
 Release date: **Out now**  
 Origin: **US**

**C**reators of the seminal *Wolfenstein 3D*, Id Software are no strangers to adjectives like 'stunning', 'superb' and 'classic'. The programmers are probably blasé to the host of similar accolades that have already been bestowed upon the company's latest offering.

To describe *Doom* as a first-person-perspective action adventure would be like calling *Blade Runner* 'a film about robots'. It has, quite simply, set a new standard for PC games. Just a few weeks out in the States, and it has attracted a devoted following the Dalai Lama would envy. Bulletin boards are awash with information, cheats and

speculation.

The fervour with which PC gamers have received *Doom* can be attributed to three achievements, any one of which would have guaranteed its success. First and foremost, it's a masterpiece of technical innovation. The 3D environment is the most realistic ever seen, thanks to 256-colour fully texture-mapped walls, floors and ceilings that move at a rate of up to 35 frames per second on a 486/33. Id claim that 'advanced graphic development techniques' allow game art to be generated five times faster than previously, and the effect is undeniably remarkable.

The consistency and detail of the graphics knocks even *Wolfenstein* into a rather unexceptional cocked hat. Walls are no longer at rigid 90 degree angles and of a consistent thickness; they can even be animated or transparent. Light sourcing is fully implemented, as hallways diminish into darkness, shadows obscure objects and neon lights flicker atmospherically. The slickness with

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Death scene: you see red, your vision blurs, you sink to the floor (top). Hideous offscreen snarls warn you of the impending danger...



The Nuclear Plant, where you can expect to meet hordes of shotgun-wielding guards. But this game's all about secret passages and weapons, and there are plenty here

which all this is executed has simply to be seen to be believed.

As if this wasn't enough, the second barnstorming feature of *Doom* is its inclusion of multiplayer action. Two adventurers can be linked by a modem or serial connection, and up to four players can participate over a local network. Each player fights, co-operatively or competitively, in the same arena as the others. Id confidently predicts that *Doom* will be 'the number one cause of decreased productivity in businesses around the world', and from our own experiences, we can only agree with them.

The blood-spattered icing on the cake, through, that has cemented its fanatical following, is its excessively violent and at times quite horrific scenario. Using a variety of vicious weapons – fists and shotguns give way to missile launchers and chainsaws – hellish creatures from another

dimension are dispatched in the most graphically uncompromising fashion. This no-holds-barred approach to action lends it an unprecedented visceral power that most players have found irresistibly gripping.

*Doom* is further proof that virtuoso programming skills and playability will always be much more arresting than any amount of CD-ROM hokum. A sequel, using the same engine, story and characters but based on Earth, will emerge at the end of this year. Great things are expected. **E**

### Credits

**Programmer:** John Carmack

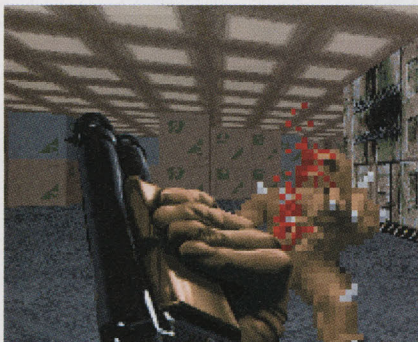
**Programmer:** John Romero

**Programmer:** Dave Taylor

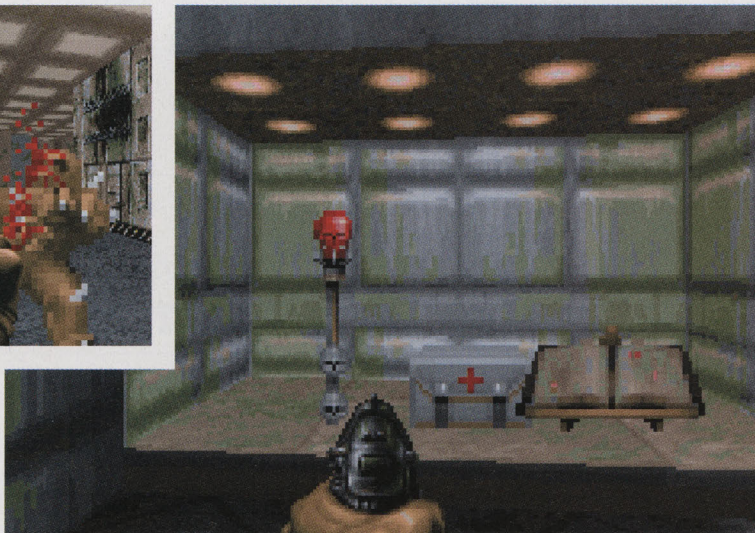
**Artist:** Adrian Carmack

**Artist:** Kevin Cloud

**Designer:** Sandy Peterson



A fire-throwing alien explodes bloodily, yet another victim of your pump-action shotgun prowess (above). Much needed supplies and medical packs lurk on each level (right)



And as a bit of light relief, here's a new version of the prequel, *Wolfenstein 3D*, on the SNES (of all places). Next to the horrors of *Doom*, *Wolfenstein* is a front seat at a Johnny Mathis concert (or something like that...)