

## [Prototype] Review

Contributed by Kevin Kaminsky  
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If you've ever wanted video games to have a summer blockbuster [Prototype] could be right up your ally. With over the top fighting, out of this world powers, plus an army of unbelievable enemies to fight [Prototype] is more than an average sandbox game. It's the culmination of a descent story, good AI and great gameplay. However is [Prototype] good enough to spend a good chunk of the summer in the house playing?

Having a good story is key to getting a game off the ground. While it's not the most important thing for a video game, it is a deciding factor while you're considering completing the game. You begin to make a mental list of the objective, characters and location. Is the main characters objective important enough to see to the games end? Do you care enough about the other characters to finish the story or do you dislike the enemies enough to see them receive their needed punishment? Is the location of the game presented well enough to care about, or is it just generic land with a few bumps along the way?

These are all questions you need to answer within a short amount of time when playing a game. This is why the opening of [Prototype] is so impressive. Within the first few minutes of the game the main character jumps out as an individual that displays compassion for the situation, the others around, and the city where he lives. [Prototype] is a rare game that gives you purpose in the first few minutes. However, you're quick striped of all your abilities that helped you decide to stick around.

This is one of those techniques that's very common in action games. You start with a snippet of the game where you're all powerful. Full of upgrades and power, ready to take on anything the world has to throw at you only to have those powers ripped out within the first few minutes. Normally when this does happen, you're left with a husk of your former self and the knowledge that you'll have a lot of work ahead of you. Fortunately this isn't the case in [Prototype] with the game's fast, quick and easy leveling you don't need to complain. The main character, Alex Mercer is able to go from a creature that has a few powers to an unstoppable force with the power to destroy just about anything in his path. This is done through a pretty well thought out upgrading system. As you attack enemies you collect tokens which act as currency and since these tokens drop in a pretty regular fashion, it's easy to upgrade Alex quickly. Also if an upgrade is needed for a mission or it would help you to complete the mission, you're prompted to purchase the upgrade before the mission starts. It helps save you from a lot of frustration.

The only draw back to the game's upgrade system is that most of the upgrades go unnoticed or unneeded for most of the game. While every upgrade is used, some upgrades are only needed in a few tailor made situations. After which, the upgrade is just left to the side for the remainder of the game, unless you find a set of powers you feel comfortable with using for a long period of time. Yet while this is a problem it should also illustrate the fact that the game has a ton of upgrades.

As I mentioned before, a story is extremely important in a game the size of [Prototype]. In [Prototype] you play as Alex Mercer, a man with a severe case of amnesia and a ton of new powers. In the simplest of terms, you must go and discover his past and find out how and why a virus has hit New York City. This virus mutates the citizens of the city so finding out what caused the problem is easier said than done. To complete this task Alex must grab and absorb the infected and uninfected members of the city but, don't think this is a run, grab and eat type of quest. Only a select few know the history of the Virus; Alex and the current military occupation of New York City. It's a great way to tell the story for those that want to get the background of this story and it allows those not interested to skip it all together. If you are interested in the story you'll be presented a series of cut scenes that don't always connect or give you a solid idea of whats going on, but to help you understand the full story you can go back to watch these the cut scenes in some sort of order. As you build whats known as the web of memories, you can start to watch the story of [Prototype] unfold.

The story of [Prototype] is really a take it or leave it situation. It does little to excite anyone who isn't a fan of Science Fiction and if you are a sci-fi fan you might be a little more willing to try and piece this story together. While the web of memories is a great idea, in theory it's a little messy in practice.

Game mechanics and technique are as important as a games story, but it would all be nothing with out good game-play. Luckily this is where [Prototype] shines. With controls that are easy to pick up along the way and easy to use special powers, [Prototype] is one of the easiest games you'll play while performing complex special moves. This game uses a control scheme that becomes second nature quickly and with the well done graphics you'll be in awe of [Prototype] from start to finish.

The complexity of [Prototype]'s controls is its biggest champion in the games early stages, but it becomes an obstacle later in the game. As the enemies and objectives increase the controls feel less responsive. Yet the controls work the same way from the beginning of the game to the end. So while the controls are great, they become a little bumpy in later parts of the game.

[Prototype]

is more than just an average third person action game. It's also more than a normal sandbox title. There might be a few cliches used in [Prototype] but it's still unlike most current games. From story to action [Prototype] tries to stand out and while it still uses some techniques that might show horn it into other categories, [Prototype] does everything it can to break the sandbox mold. The only problem is [Prototype] is a basic Sandbox title with a decent story. It is however, one of the most replayable games you'll find on the store shelves. With the impressive decision to keep the leveling and upgrading quick and easy, you'll never have a problem playing through the game twice or even three times to completion. Which is why [Prototype] should be considered a great summer video game blockbuster and a 9 out of 10 doesn't hurt either.