

GAMER'S MANIFESTO

VIDEO GAME NEWS AND REVIEWS

Latest 'Transformers' game starts big and keeps on going

By Pablo Alcalá

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Transformers: Fall of Cybertron starts off big.

In the opening scene, you fight as Bumblebee alongside Optimus Prime against the evil Megatron and other Decepticons in an epic battle that threatens to end the game before it starts.

In just five minutes, this game had me hooked with its awesome graphics, intuitive controls and sound effects worthy of a summer blockbuster movie. Best of all, Optimus Prime continues to be voiced by Peter Cullen, recognizable to anyone who watched the legendary 1980s cartoon or saw the recent films.

Megatron, Grimlock, Starscream, Ratchet and other characters also are expertly voiced by a top-notch cast.

That first battle with Bumblebee ends in a cliffhanger, and the game cuts back to six days earlier, where you find Optimus Prime and the Autobots attempting to escape the doomed planet aboard their Ark spacecraft.

Of course, those pesky Decepticons try to thwart you at every turn. Luckily, you awake a sleeping giant Autobot called Metroplex. By tapping the right bumper, you can direct his weapons against anything the enemy can throw at you.

In the struggle to launch the Ark, you play as different Autobots including Jazz and Grimlock, who transforms into a dinosaur. In later chapters, you play as Decepticons including Starscream and Megatron.

Weapons, ammo and health packs can be picked up on the battlefield and also conveniently bought and upgraded.

Gamers who have played third-person shooters running the Unreal Engine on which *Transformers* is built will feel right at home with the controls and camera angles. This is no duck-and-cover game, though. Player movements are quick, and upgrades are available to add a bit of turbo to your robot legs. The sound effects are always turned up to 11, the environment moves around you at times and the action never stops.



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Optimus Prime and Metroplex prepare for battle in *Transformers: Fall of Cybertron*, which has awesome graphics.

Sadly, co-op has been left out of the campaign, but there is Escalation mode, which is similar to Horde in *Gears of War 2* or Firefight in *Halo: Reach*. There is also a multiplayer mode in which you can create your own Transformer in slayer, capture the flag and other standard fare.

I have yet to play a third-person shooter with a multiplayer that can hold my attention, but considering this game's predecessor was popular online, I'm sure this will have a similar following.

With few exceptions, license games are generally disappointing, so *Transformers: Fall of Cybertron* is a welcome surprise that tells a good, if slightly off-canon, story.

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VIDEO GAME REVIEW

'Transformers: Fall of Cybertron'

About: Play through the final days of the home planet of the Autobots and Decepticons.

Players: Single, multiplayer

Pros: The graphics and gameplay are stellar, as are the sound effects and voice cast.

Cons: There is no co-op gameplay option, but there are some online multiplayer modes.

Availability and price: \$59.99 on Xbox 360, PS3 and PC

ESRB rating: T

Manifesto's rating: 8.5/10 (Xbox 360)

Metacritic rating: 8/10 (Xbox 360)

NEW RELEASES

The following games are among those scheduled for release next week, according to Gamestop.com.

Oct. 16: *James Bond: 007 Legends* (Xbox 360 and PS3, rated T), *Rocksmith Guitar and Bass* (Xbox 360, PS3 and PC; rated T), *Doom 3 BFG Edition* (Xbox 360, PS3 and PC; rated M), *Dance Central 3* (Xbox 360, rated T), *Zumba Fitness Core* (Xbox 360 and Wii, rated E10+), *Mugen Souls* (PS3, rated T), *inFAMOUS Collection* (PS3, rated T), *Ratchet & Clank Collection* (PS3, rated E), *God of War Saga* (PS3, rated M), *Wheel of Fortune* (Xbox 360 and PS3, rated E), *Jeopardy* (Xbox 360 and PS3, rated E), *Paws & Claws Pampered Pets* (DS, rated E), *Rollercoaster Tycoon* (3DS, rated E), *Silent Hill: Book of Memories* (PS Vita, rated M).