

Need For Speed Hot Pursuit

Criterion has always impressed us with the Burnout series, but it takes high-speed arcade racing shenanigans to a new level in the latest Need For Speed. Two separate but equally entertaining career modes force you to contend with crafty AI in white-knuckle competition. The innovative Autolog feature builds on Burnout Paradise's awesome brand of social updates, ensuring you always know when a friend has a new record you need to best.



11.16 » PS3, Xbox 360, PC

Pac-Man Championship Edition DX

Not all Pac-Man games have to be boring collect-a-thons or silly party games. Back in 2007, Namco tinkered with Pac-Man's original '80s formula to produce an outstanding arcade game that had Pac-Man bouncing back and forth between sides of the maze. With Pac-Man Championship Edition DX, Namco improves on the magic. The addition of sleeping ghosts that chase after Pac-Man and the ability to prolong Pac-Man's powered-up state push DX's action to a frantic level. Few things are as satisfying as eating a row of 50 ghosts.



11.17 (RBA), 11.23 (PSN) » PS3, Xbox 360

Donkey Kong Country Returns

Retro takes the classic side-scrolling formula of the original Donkey Kong Country and turns it on its head with foreground and background play, new enemies, co-op, and even more secrets to explore. Though family friendly in presentation, DKC Returns doesn't skimp on difficulty; you'll let out a sigh of relief at the discovery of each red balloon and checkpoint, as challenging platforming sections keep you at the edge of your seat from start to finish. Donkey Kong's long-awaited return is one of the greatest platformers we've ever played, and a must-play for Wii owners.



11.21 » Wii

Gran Turismo 5

We've been waiting so long for Gran Turismo 5 that it's still hard to believe it actually came out. Thankfully, our patience paid off with some of the most realistic graphics ever experienced in a racing game, especially in cockpit view for premium cars. The tweaked progression means you won't feel the same grind as previous GT games, and the social experience of sharing cars and courses guarantees we'll be spending plenty of time behind the wheel for the foreseeable future.



11.24 » PS3

Best Racing

Ilomilo

Don't let this adorable indie puzzler fool you. Reuniting two cutesy creatures by manipulating a cube-filled world will break your brain in more ways than you can imagine – and that's why we love it. With a unique style, the perfect amount of complexity, and an excellence in design on par with Valve's Portal, this is the most fun we've had with a puzzle game this year.



11.26 » Xbox 360

Best Puzzle

World of Warcraft: Cataclysm

How does Blizzard keep millions of paying subscribers interested in a six-year-old game? Huge expansions like Cataclysm certainly don't hurt. Alongside the introduction of two new races and a ton of content for the raised level cap, Blizzard has completely redesigned the original 1-60 leveling experience. Story-driven quests push you through zones faster than ever before, and the new flexible raiding system invites more casual players to experience all of the content.



12.07 » PC

TOP 10

DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT

1 BORDERLANDS: THE SECRET ARMORY OF GENERAL KNOXX

With regular releases of high quality DLC, Gearbox knows how to take care of its fan base. Both of the team's DLC releases this year made the list, but with General Knoxx DLC being its largest offering, it takes the top slot. An increased level cap, new weapons, and a confrontation with the most powerful creature in Pandora proves there thankfully ain't no rest for the wicked.

2 RED DEAD REDEMPTION: UNDEAD NIGHTMARE

With Undead Nightmare, Rockstar expands on our 2010 game of the year with hours of additional gameplay. This DLC shows that bears aren't the most terrifying creatures in the Old West as you complete a wealth of new missions and subquests while fending off hordes of zombies.

3 BATTLEFIELD: BAD COMPANY 2 – VIETNAM

It took way too long for DICE to deliver new maps for Bad Company 2, but we can't argue with the final product. Returning to the rice paddies and dense jungles of Vietnam is a blast, and the introduction of menacing new weapons like the flame thrower helps differentiate the action from the original game. This is one draft we don't recommend dodging.

4 BORDERLANDS: CLAPTRAP'S NEW ROBOT REVOLUTION

In the fourth DLC pack released by the talented folks at Gearbox, the beloved, chatty Claptrap finally gets some time in the spotlight. This pack offers up plenty of loot for the taking and a load of cute, but deadly Claptraps to take down.

5 BIOSHOCK 2: MINERVA'S DEN

As Subject Sigma, players can deliver a world of hurt to Splicers with improved gunplay as you unravel a gripping tale surrounding The Thinker that dishes out a shocking conclusion.

6 LEFT 4 DEAD 2: THE SACRIFICE

The Sacrifice gives fans of the Left 4 Dead franchise a chance to play as the original group of survivors in a new campaign that gets your heart pumping and ultimately delivers an emotional farewell to a member of the crew.

7 ALAN WAKE: THE WRITER

Alan Wake leaves a number of unanswered questions to the mysteries that unfold during the overall experience. Thankfully, The Writer helps clear up some of the fog. This additional content takes a few steps into surrealism and offers some gameplay twists to help put some of Alan Wake's plot pieces together.

8 MEGA MAN 10: BASS MODE AND SPECIAL STAGES

Mega Man 9 offered DLC in the form of a playable Proto Man, but Mega Man 10 already comes with the Blue Bomber's bro, so Capcom ups the ante by offering the oft-forgotten Bass as a downloadable character. The brooding robot can shoot bursts of rapid plasma fire diagonally and dash, making Mega Man look more like a chump. Even better, three DLC stages bring back the deadly Mega Man Killers from the Game Boy titles.

9 HALO: REACH: NOBLE MAP PACK

You can never have too many Halo multiplayer maps, so Bungie's addition of brand new gorgeous locations (Anchor 9, Tempest, and Breakpoint) is entirely welcome.

10 DRAGON AGE: ORIGINS: DARKSPAWN CHRONICLES

BioWare's additional combat-focused content for Dragon Age: Origins finally gives players the chance to control the Darkspawn. There is no shortage of entertainment when playing the bad guy role as you hack, slash, and ultimately terrorize the city of Denerim.