

The game is a non-stop action romp that submerges you in a dynamic world full of mystery and gritty realistic storytelling. But rather than go on about what this game is, let's look over what it isn't.

### **First, this is not a child's RPG.**



[The Witcher](#) earns its Mature rating with lovely blood spatter, overtly suggestive themes and the option to jump into bed--and sometimes cavern floor--James Bond-style with many of the lovely ladies Geralt encounters on his journey. The world a Witcher lives in is a brutal one, and you'll often do things or come across people doing things that turn your stomach, but that's what sets this game apart and makes it great.

### **The Witcher Isn't a Morality Tale.**

There are no clear-cut choices in the branching discussions you have with various characters in the game. Your choices are neither right nor wrong as you are faced with ambiguous situations affecting your course of action. An excellent example of this is the tutorial sequence, where you have the option to aid a Sorceress with battling a mage or face a giant monster called a Frightener. Each option will give you a completely different outcome to the tale, and it is up to you to decide where Geralt goes.

Choice is important even behind the scenes, thanks to an extensive branching talent system, and the choices you make when doling out your limited talent points across a wide variety of skills affect what Geralt will become. There were a few skills I consciously ignored--how bad ass can a Witcher be if he runs about picking daisies?--but later realized were required for story progression, making me rethink my talent point choices.

### **Thirdly, The Witcher Isn't Ugly.**



This game is damn pretty as it incorporates a resounding musical score and scenery so beautiful it will make your eyes bleed. The over-the-shoulder camera bounces behind you wherever you go, making you feel like you're in a Braveheart-esque action-adventure film. You'll be so immersed in the game that there will be moments when you'll forget you're not watching a movie and realize you have to interact with the action.

The character models are some of the best I've seen, each with their own personality and charm--and when their charm fails them, they have some pretty nasty scars. Even the user interface is streamlined and beautiful; your screen real estate is maximized so that you can see as much of the environment as possible.

### **The Witcher Isn't Some Boring Old RPG.**



The combat system is one of the most innovative out there, with fighting centered around timed movies featuring multiple stances depending on who Geralt is fighting--as well as multiple styles of swordplay and magic Signs. You can train your abilities in each stance in order to master a style, or improve generally across the board.

### **The Witcher Isn't a Game For the Impatient.**

#### ***Pros and Cons***

##### **PROS:**

- Amazing, vibrant graphics featured in a realistic world.
- Fascinating and flawed characters.
- Your morally ambiguous choices and situations directly affect the storyline.
- Battle system is dynamic, with tons of options.

##### **CONS:**

- Atrocious load times are the one glaring error in an otherwise amazing game.

I recommend playing the game with a novel handy, or better yet, your favorite handheld console. The load times are atrocious, and you will spend upwards of five minutes or more loading between screens, and this includes opening a door and stepping into a room. Because of the loading issues, ambushed combat can be a pain, since your opponents have already begun to take their whacks before you have even loaded into the fight.

As far as I can tell, this is the only downside to this game, but in an action-RPG it's a pretty glaring fault. I wouldn't go so far as to say it makes the game unplayable, but the loading issues definitely keep this from being the perfect game it could have been.

I would love to see this title moved to a console, where the controls could be streamlined and hopefully the load times reduced. As it stands, [The Witcher](#) is an extremely fun game with the nasty habit of succumbing to narcolepsy at the most inappropriate moments.

