

Walking Dead: The Game - Staying Power that Rivals the Undead

So how long do zombies live anyway? Do they last for days, weeks, months, or even years? The living dead are the embodiment of persistence, infinitely patient and relentless in their ambling. And there is something particularly weighty about them, with their presence reminding us of our own eventual fate. They tend to leave a lasting imprint, long after they are gone. In much the same way, the five part episodic *Walking Dead* game, available on nearly every platform conceivable, carries this same weightiness and leaves a lasting impression.

The Walking Dead is a technically easy to play game, almost brain dead in its simplicity (sorry!). The focus is not on twitchy player actions, and is in this way it is the polar opposite of games like *Temple Run* or *Fruit Ninja*. Instead the game brilliantly builds tension and drama to critical decisions points that drive the characters and plot forward. The decisions are difficult, and make you question your own ethics and morality. In the end these decisions really do matter, and while each player will share a common story, the choices you make carry with them a lasting impact on the characters and plot.

Like the television show and comic, it is the investment in emotionally deep and complex characters that keep us coming back for more. The player can't help but become attached to the Lee, Clementine, Ken, and the rest of the cast, which in turn makes those decision points all the more critical. The first episode is free, so for *Walking Dead* fans this is a no excuses must play. The events in the story parallel those in the show, and as with the comic and show, *Telltale* games has managed to capture and exploit the tension and drama of a post-zombie-apocalypse world with realistic precision. The writing and voice acting is absolutely top notch, and the graphics are purposely simplified to give it a living comic feel. And unlike typical game releases that last at best a few months before hitting the discount bin, *The Walking Dead*, originally released between April and November 2012, will be played for years to come. Ports to new platforms are almost a certainty, and like the zombies themselves, this game will live on, and on, and on.

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