


**GAME REVIEW**

**TOM CLANCY'S**  
**THE DIVISION™**
**NOT WHAT WE EXPECTED**

SHAHRUKH IKHTEAR

Platform: PC, PS4, Xbox One

Developer: Ubisoft Massive

Publisher: Ubisoft

Let's get this out of the way. The Division won't give you a brilliant narrative coupled with immersive world interaction. It will not sate the needs of those looking for a realistic shooter experience. However, what it CAN give you is endless hours of fun and exciting moment to moment gameplay.

I emphasize on the word "CAN" because it really depends on if you fit the playerbase that The Division caters to. Simply put, The Division is an MMO; a loot shooter, to be more specific. It is online only and you must be connected to the internet at all times to play even if you plan on going solo. The game shines truly when you can appreciate getting new gear, levelling up, teaming up with other players to take on bigger challenges, and exploration.

Like every MMO, The Division will be slow to ramp up. In the beginning, you will be outfitted with barebones gear. Not too powerful but just enough to get the job done. This might prove to be a

deterrent for players looking to jump in quickly to the real meat of the game. However, if you persevere through the early stages, what you will experience is something that you will remember for a long time.

The game is set in New York, where a deadly virus outbreak has brought civilization to its knees. The city is a warzone with various factions vying for power. You are a Division agent, activated to restore order. The premise fits in very well with the entire game and does provide a coherent sense of purpose by giving each enemy faction a definite motive behind their actions. The plight of the neutral, innocent people is also brought to light through effective usage of NPCs. Although it can sometimes feel as if the game tries to venture too deep in highlighting this.

The character creation is something that is basic yet effective. You cannot change every detail of your face. Instead you are limited to choosing several presets, and then you can change the hairstyle, hair colour, eye colour, accessories etc.

The game is set in an open world which is strictly PvE and you can only see other agents if you team up with them to explore or if you opt for matchmaking in

the main quests. The quests are mundane, in nature, and the only motivation you will get for completing them are the XP and loot you will gain.

The Dark Zone is where most of the game's fun is to be had. It is a zone where PvE and PvP come together. Anyone can kill anyone. There are no rules as to who you can shoot. You can even choose to betray your own squad members. This freedom leads to intense moment to moment gameplay. The DZ has given me some of the most tension filled times I have ever had in a video game. The best gear can be found from the Dark Zone but it's not as clear cut as finding the loot and gaining it. All DZ loot is contaminated and you must extract it via a chopper. Once you reach an extraction zone, you have to call in a chopper which takes about one and a half minutes to arrive. During this time, anyone may try to attack you and steal your loot so there is a lot of fear going around while you're waiting. You might wonder in an environment like this, it might turn into players shooting each other all the time. But, if you shoot a neutral agent, you instantly become tagged as a rogue and if you die in that state, you lose more Dark Zone currency than you would if you died a normal agent. This keeps annoying people from going on

rampages. Also, higher level people killing lower level ones will not yield any effective loot at all. So there is a good safeguard against power creep.

Now on to the gameplay; The Division mixes RPG elements with traditional cover based third person shooting. There are abilities in the game like being able to deploy turrets that automatically find targets and fire at them, or setting off a healing grenade near a wounded ally, or setting off an area scan which reveals all enemies nearby. The gunplay is really tight and enjoyable. Enemy variations keep the action from getting too stale as you'll have to adapt to certain situations. Say for example you might prefer sniping from a distance, but when the enemy brings out rushers who run at you with baseball bats, you HAVE to rethink your strategy.

Like I said before the game is NOT realistic. Enemies are more like bullet sponges akin to traditional MMORPGs. This may frustrate some people but it can be remedied by getting the best gear for your level.

All in all, The Division is an enjoyable experience ONLY if you are open to the nuances of MMO games. If you are looking for something else here, you are bound to be disappointed.