

## An Underrated Game



*(Fallout Wastelanders and the new Steel Dawn trailer poster from [fallout.bethesda.net](http://fallout.bethesda.net))*

Title: Fallout 76

Medium: Video Game

ESRB Rating: Mature

Publisher: Bethesda

Genre: Open-world Survival

Release date: November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Platforms available: PC, Xbox,  
PlayStation

Current Price: \$40 (unless you have  
an Xbox game pass, then it's free)

Official Rating: 2 and ½ stars out of 5  
(Microsoft store)

My Rating: 4 stars out of 5

---

Paige Terry  
terryp@etsu.edu  
O'Donnell  
3130-940  
11/28/2020



*I cannot stress how much I enjoy this game despite all its many glitches. Pictured above is me proudly standing gazing at the nuke I dropped, and my lovely C.A.M.P placed in my favorite part of the whole map, the Forest. I am almost level 200, and I have played over 500 hours of the game. I don't regret a second of it. The game has an amazing community and is gorgeous.*

Fallout 76 is a Bethesda game and is set in a world after nuclear fallout. It is one of several games in the Fallout franchise. It is the sixth main game installment. The Fallout series has had a long run, as the games began in 1997. Additionally, it is considered the prequel even though it is the newest installment. Fallout lovers have considered Fallout 76 to be the worst Fallout game in the series. I disagree with this statement. The game is just different than the other "traditional" Fallout games. Fallout 76, or as I will be referring to it as 76, has gotten a bad rap. The Fallout games previously have had a particular structure. Fallout 4, Fallout: New Vegas, and Fallout 3 are all open-world, survival, storytelling games. 76 is not this way. It is an online cooperative multiplayer and it is not really about the story.



*(Bethesda Studios)*

76 is different because it is an open-world survival game without much story. An open-world game is one where you can go wherever, whenever, and do whatever. You are not restricted to follow the story and aren't stuck in one area. You are free to wander about. Honestly, open-world games are not normally something I enjoy; however, I LOVE this game. It has amazing environments that look almost real. You can spend so many hours walking to all corners of the map and taking in the beautiful scenery the game has to offer without interruption of a story. Critics then complain there is no reason to play 76 if there is no over-arching story. Most Fallout fans don't want to wander the map and attempt to survive. The Fallout community especially complained when it first came out, and they spent \$80 to wander around a map for no reason. The game has made some improvements since its release in 2018, but it took Bethesda two years to implement these changes. The changes they have made are to settle some of the disgruntled people. However, Bethesda didn't make 76 exactly the previous game, so people are still upset.

### *Survival*

A survival game is one where the object of the game is to survive. In 76, you must try to survive and not fall victim to the MANY ways there are to die. These ways include, but are not limited to radiation, AI enemies, other players, etc. All of these things can kill you and cause you to lose progress. When you die, you drop all “junk” items, which are vital to your camp and your survival. You use junk to craft things, such as armor, weapons, defenses, and more. If you die and lose all the items, that you have spent possibly hours acquiring, it is aggravating. The survival aspect of the game is my favorite part of the game. I like to build/create camps. I like to make things that aid in my survival, as well as a good defense to defend my camp from any invaders.

### *Community*

I also enjoy the store/selling aspect of the game. In the game, you are allowed to have a “vendor” which is a machine that sells items that you no longer need to other players. I enjoy this aspect because I enjoy giving back to the community. I put my prices at WAY lower than recommended (for some stuff like food, water, and common junk items I give-away). This way lower level players can have some pretty good weapons. The community I have experienced thus far in the game is fantastic. And I have played almost 500 hours of the game. Therefore, I have played alongside many players and know how great it is. Many higher-level players helped me out immensely and were very generous when I began playing the game. I feel as though it is important to pass that idea along to newbie players as well.

### *Scenery*

Paige Terry  
terryp@etsu.edu  
O'Donnell  
3130-940  
11/28/2020

Another thing I love about this game is the scenery. In this game, there is a function called "Photomode" in which you can take pictures of the beautiful landscape and buildings.



I traveled around in the map in the game and took these pictures myself. Each I took is from a different section of the game. There are six biomes. They are Forest, Ash Heap, Mire, Cranberry Bog, Toxic Valley, and Savage Divide. The picture on the top left is of the forest section at sunset, the picture of the white house is from the Savage Divide (that building is a giant mall complex), the third is also from the forest, but in a storm, the image on the furthest left in the second row is the Mire, the next is the Ash Heap, and the bottom right picture is Cranberry Bog. The Forest is my favorite of the five different biomes. Each biome has its own challenges and creatures. For example, in the Ash Heap, there are a lot of fires and an enemy called mole miners. And in the Forest are the "easier" enemies and nukes can't be launched there because it is a "safe zone". Each biome is beautiful in its own way, and there aren't two sections that have similar looks to them.

Paige Terry  
terryp@etsu.edu  
O'Donnell  
3130-940  
11/28/2020

The setting of this game is West Virginia. So, there are many hills and trees. Since there has been Nuclear Fallout, there are not many buildings left standing. So, you get to just enjoy the nature the game offers. The graphics are so amazing that it is like you are actually in West Virginia taking a hike in the Appalachian Mountains. There is also a lot of “old school” charm to the game. This is because humanity was stunted in the 1950s when they dropped the Nuclear bomb. So, there is music from the 40s and 50s in the game’s soundtrack and not a lot of technology. It is a charming atmosphere.

### ***Base Game***

Another large complaint of lovers of Fallout about 76 is the fact there were no human NPCs (non-playable characters) and no companions. The other games in the franchise were single-player only. 76 is an online game. There are no NPCs to promote multiplayer. AI companions are unnecessary when you have real other companions to play with. The game has many timed team quests that show up on the map that give you XP (which is important for leveling up) and other in-game items when you complete them. These quests do have a little story, but not a huge overarching story that most Fallout fans are craving. The storyline following the quest is just enough to make sense to do a task, and that is the extent of it. No more, no less. They do change around the quests every month or so, but for the most part, it is the same thing repeatedly. Which does become redundant after a while. They have since added a few to the game (not very many though). However, they still haven’t added companions.

### ***Wastelanders***

Bethesda has begun making some changes to remedy the error and address the angry fan's concern of not having a story in the game. They have, as of this year (March 2020), added back some NPC humans and some fleshed-out storylines through a



story called “Wastelanders”. The story you go through varies and depends upon which team you decide to align yourself with. There are two teams. The Foundation, which is a team focused on kindness, community, and what is good for everyone. The other team is the Raiders. The Raiders are about chaos. They are only for themselves; all others be damned. Oddly enough, against my “sweet” personality, I chose to be a Raider. I chose this path because I looked up a guide, and I liked their storyline better. They are a bunch of misfits, all with interesting backstories and the misunderstood and sympathy cards to play to you. I much prefer an underdog story with some chaos and adventure to a smart, goody goody, boring story. However, I have heard from other players in the community that the Foundation storyline can be interesting as well. *(Pictured is the Raider base called Crater in the Toxic Valley. It is a space station, destroyed by nuclear fallout.)*

### ***Steel Dawn***

Steel Dawn is the new storyline that Bethesda recently announced. The story was supposed to begin to be released in early December 2020 and would be released in chunks until January 2021. However, Bethesda accidentally leaked the game to Xbox players early. Another debacle by Bethesda. Therefore, Bethesda released it to everyone (PlayStation, PC, and Xbox), and the update came out early on November 24<sup>th</sup> instead. This is because they believed it was

Paige Terry  
terryp@etsu.edu  
O'Donnell  
3130-940  
11/28/2020

only fair to so and it wasn't just available to Xbox players. In the update, Steel Dawn brings in the involvement of the Brotherhood of Steel, a fan favorite and highly debated faction. This was big news because when the game was released in 2018, Bethesda announced that the Brotherhood would not appear in this game. However, this upset fans so much that the developers decided to have a change of heart. Even with the Brotherhood's addition, there is still much debate. This is because even though the Brotherhood has a big fan base, there are many who don't like the Brotherhood. So, they wish that Bethesda would have left them out. The Brotherhood is a military faction, and their code is "what is a good thing for most people is good for all". This is different from the current and only faction in 76 called the Enclave. Their code is "do what is best for all people. Even if what is best is chaos and death." Bethesda has yet to give away much of the story beforehand, but they did announce, "Along with the new quests, the Steel Dawn Update will bring new NPCs, new locations, and new gear to the game. It will also add features, like C.A.M.P. Shelters, a host of rewards, including weapons, armor, and C.A.M.P. Plans, the return of the Holiday Scorched Seasonal Event, and a variety of additional gameplay improvements" (fallout.bethesda.net). I can attest that they made good on these claims. The new shelter feature is especially interesting, even if I am not sure what I will do with the new space it gives me in my C.A.M.P. As for the story, I don't really care for the Brotherhood. Though the Brotherhood is a favorite faction, honestly, I wasn't impressed by them. I made it through what is out of the story and thought many of the characters were too pretentious to be likable. However, maybe my opinion will change with the upcoming chapters. They just weren't relatable to me and were only doing what was best for themselves. They were not caring for the



Paige Terry  
terryp@etsu.edu  
O'Donnell  
3130-940  
11/28/2020

people around them, even though they definitely had the resources to do so. I still am team Raider all the way.

### ***Personal Complaints***

Many Fallout lovers complain that the game gets stale after a while. I will agree with this statement. Once you play for a certain number of hours, you now have the best weapons and armor you will ever have. You have an overabundance of food, water, and supplies. You have gained the best perks, and no enemy is no longer a challenge. There are three things you can do when this happens. You can quit playing, only play when they release a new event going forward, or create another character and start over at level one again. Bethesda has been bad about dripping new elements of 76 to the public. This means you cannot sit and play the game all in one sitting and that the game is constantly evolving. The game has changed a lot from how it began. It began as a simple game with not much to do, to a game with some story. As I have stated previously, many of the quests change monthly. Thus, giving players new things to do. However, the quests are short and can be completed quickly. This makes the game progress slowly, like a novel. You read the novel in a week and must wait a long time for the next one. This annoys some players because they believe when you complete the game, it should be over. I disagree with this argument. It allows me to pace myself because I cannot play something all the time. I have other things to do.

My biggest complaint about 76 is the fact it has many bugs. Bugs are small issues with the games and how it runs. For example, sometimes you will get stuck in objects and are unable to get out of them, or sometimes the game just crashes, and the server shuts down frequently. This makes you lose progress sometimes, just as dying would. These are frequent and persistent

Paige Terry  
terryp@etsu.edu  
O'Donnell  
3130-940  
11/28/2020

issues, and it is really annoying to have to deal with them regularly. However, this is a common complaint with any Bethesda game. They are notorious for having issues in their games and in general.

Another complaint I have with 76 is the paid service called Fallout 1<sup>st</sup>. It is absurdly expensive, and it doesn't offer very much. When you pay the \$100 for the subscription, you then have access to a private server. As well as a scrap box, a survival tent (which is basically like your camp, but you can move it for free), and you get free "atoms." Atoms are points to buy things at the store like special paints for your armor and special furniture. I believe this is completely ridiculous. It costs an absurd amount and shouldn't. Honestly, if you want the points, just spend \$100 in points. But if you just play and rank yourself up, you don't even have to do that. The game gives you the prizes you would be paying for if you work for them, and it is not that hard to do so. You'll get all the furniture you want. There is no reason to have an expensive subscription. You can move your camp for not too many caps (in-game money), and a private server defeats the purpose of the game. I say don't bother with the subscription. The "scrapbox" is nice because it has unlimited space for materials for building and crafting. However, it is not worth it just for the box.

There is one more complaint, this being with the addition of Steel Dawn. With this update, Bethesda has gotten rid of some of the survival aspects of the game. They have taken out starvation and dehydration. This means that all food and drink unless it has a special ability such as increased carry weight, is now useless to have. So, the farming aspect has been removed. It also means a couple of diseases that used to be big issues are no longer a problem. I believe that takes away a large portion of the game and takes away some of the parts I really used to enjoy.

Paige Terry  
terryp@etsu.edu  
O'Donnell  
3130-940  
11/28/2020

### *Conclusion*

I absolutely adore Fallout 76. I was not a big fan of the other games (or really any other Bethesda game for that matter). However, 76 is my favorite. I have sunk over almost 500 hours into the game and have greatly enjoyed the community and scenery it has to offer. The game isn't perfect, and it does have its bugs. However, that doesn't detract from my enjoyment. I highly recommend this game to anyone who enjoys a good survival game.