**PS5 Digital – My 1st Impressions**

**By Gehennakat**

I’ve been gaming since 1981. I started with an Atari 2600 and I’ve had just about every iteration of every console/handheld ever created since. So, when it came time to decide on the newest console generation, I went with the PS5 Digital Edition. Don’t get me wrong I love my Xboxes, but the last one I got just collected dust. It’s all about personal preferences and I just lean more towards Sony and their exclusives.

I was one of the lucky few Sony reached out to for their lottery where I got to pre-order my PS5 back in September with guaranteed delivery on launch day. Just log in under my PSN at certain date/time and wait in the queue. Honestly, I don’t know why they haven’t continued this process for all their existing users, but I’m just a lowly gamer, what do I know?

Like stated earlier, I went with preordering 2 controllers and the digital version of the console. Mainly because I haven’t bought physical media in a while and have a Blu-ray player so I decided to save myself the extra $100 so I could get a few more games. I also wanted to minimize on any possible hardware issues with a first gen of this console. I figured opting out of the optical drive would possibly minimize any potential overheating issues.

Now I’m not going to get into specs too much, I’m just going to give you my overall impressions as a gamer and techie.

The verdict, for me is, this is probably one of the best consoles I’ve ever owned. I’m not saying it’s perfect, trust me, there’s lots of room for improvement (and it’s only a few months old). I will say any reservations I had I about the quality of the system, games, or UI have been laid to rest. That being said …

Is it ugly? Sweet baby Jesus it’s hideous. It looks like an art nouveau experiment crossed with an air purifier. It’s also massive, but I think that design was on purpose. The way the case is now, you always have a few inches on space on all sides for air flow. The main body is buried under all that flair. It’s almost like they knew gamers would cram it in the tightest spaces they could find so they planned for it. The other thing I noticed, and was a big disappointment about the physical console, was the lack of an optical out port. Obviously not a deal breaker, but for some audiophiles it might be. It is definitely one of the quietest consoles I’ve ever owned, as I’ve never even heard the fan kick on, and if it has it wasn’t loud enough for me to hear it.

Ok, the good stuff. The new OS is amazing, but that is offset (just a touch) by the fact it takes almost a quarter of your storage space. That being said, there’s none of the clunkiness from the previous PSN, like on the PS3. Where you’d navigate to the PS Store just to have it do nothing, it now moves fluidly. As of this writing, all of my previous digital downloaded PS3 titles have all worked on the PS5, including MP online. My friends and I have still been playing Remnant, Avengers, Borderlands 3, even Killing Floor 2 with no matchmaking issues. Do keep in mind though, the load times are drastically reduced for you, but you will still need to wait until all players are loaded even if yours is done quickly.

My favorite improvement with the new hardware and architecture is the ability to finally utilize my bandwidth. I have a GB connection in my house and would speed test to laughably low levels on PS4 Pro. A full game install would take hours for something like Call of Duty, or The Last of Us 2, but now is literally done (for my connection) within 10-15 minutes. That’s the entire install too. Also, it appears to download straight to the drive instead of the cumbersome process where it would download, then copy, then install.

The UI has been reorganized and will take some getting used to but is pretty intuitive after a few minutes. It’s pretty easy to switch between PS4 games and PS5 games, and accessing media vs. games is handle by a single tab. Save files, settings, and media are easy to get to and reorganize. I’m able to stream 1080p, at 60 fps with no issues via the share button.

I’m sure plenty of other people have said it, but the new DualSense controller is amazing. It’s my favorite part of this new console. I’ve been holding controllers for almost 40 years (that means old) and this thing really impressed me. I love the heft of it, the design, and especially the ergonomics. I’ve logged some pretty long sessions so far and have no signs of hand fatigue yet. Now when it was announced, I wasn’t too excited of the idea of a built-in mic in the controller … until my headset died and had to use it. The speaker managed to pick me up clearly while not drowning me out due to the background noise from the game itself. It’s not surround sound, but will work in a pinch when you have an unforeseen accident, or need to just charge your headset. The integration of the vibration and triggers is fantastic. When you play the PS5 version of shooters, especially Borderlands or CoD, the trigger action actually simulates the gun you’re firing. How hard you have to pull the trigger and how it feels between a revolver and an uzi as the round goes off actually feels like a real weapon. The vibration effect in Miles Morales is utilized in his Spider Sense, certain portions of the controller will vibrate from the direction a potential threat is coming from.

All in all, my experience with digital version of the PS5 has been overwhelmingly positive. There have been system crashes, but those seem to have been limited to Miles Morales when it first launched (seems fine now), and over 80% go to Cyberpunk 2077, and well … it’s Cyberpunk, not the PS5 in that regard. I won’t get into the best games for the PS5, so far, as that is another article in itself. Happy hunting everyone and follow your games!

* Gehennakat