



Expect to spend 20 to 30 hours exploring all that Arkham City has to offer.

GOLD AWARD
PlayStation
The Official Magazine

Batman Arkham City

More fun than any prison should be

Info

Format PS3
Pub Warner Bros. Interactive Ent.
Dev Rocksteady Studios
Price \$59.99
ESRB Teen
It's like kicking ass and taking names. Lots of names.

From our perch atop an abandoned building, we survey the broken streets of the walled-in super prison known as Arkham City. Inside, thugs roam freely, beating on political prisoners wrongfully detained for protesting the compound's existence. Murderers and thieves flock to join the ranks of the Joker or Penguin, both engaged in a war for territorial control. Tyger guards—the mercenaries in charge of Arkham City's security—turn a blind eye as long as no one tries to break out. Like the supervillains of the Batman myths, we find ourselves

trapped within Arkham City's towering walls, unable to escape its captivating chaos. From its jaw-dropping opening sequence to its equally shocking ending, *Batman: Arkham City's* campaign bursts with heart-pounding action and provocative storylines. Professor Hugo Strange—the prison's new warden—abducts Bruce Wayne for campaigning to shut Arkham down. Strange knows Wayne is Batman and even feeds him hints about "Protocol 10," a sinister plot that seemingly threatens Gotham's existence. Wayne escapes captivity but not before

Strange plants the seeds of insecurity in the Caped Crusader's head: Would villains such as the Joker even exist if it weren't for Batman? Can Wayne hope to put an end to the corruption within Arkham City? The Dark Knight's self doubt makes him more relatable as a character, which in turn made us more deeply invested in his quest for justice. The city itself is meticulously detailed. Search lights point menacingly in every direction. Graffiti marks each dilapidated building. The colorful backdrop of Gotham's distant city lights serves as a constant reminder of the decay stagnating before us. The simple act of exploring the expansive compound's grisly open-world interior is an exhilarating experience, though never overwhelming. Getting around from building to building is easy thanks to the Grapnel gun, but we had even more fun



Controlling Catwoman and employing her cat-tastic gadgets is an entirely new (and fun) experience.



Tons of challenge maps exist for those adept at creative stealth takedowns and beating criminals senseless.

Charge gun from the shadows to force an enemy's gun to fire, frightening nearby guards. We also manipulated everything in our environment to pick thugs off one by one: Floor grates, breakable walls, and ceiling perches were all viable tools for instilling fear in the hearts of our foes.

Caped Crusades

Arkham City is full of people in need, but the game's vast selection of optional quests gave us an opportunity to help. Completing side-missions scored us experience points (useful for improving our gadgets and fighting techniques) in addition to tantalizing backstory for some of Batman's lesser-known adversaries. They also imbued the experience with a real sense of urgency, as failure to execute objectives in a timely manner often led to very real consequences. The Riddler *burned a man alive* after we failed to solve his riddle. If only we had acted faster, the man might not have met his gruesome fate. Lives are constantly at risk behind Arkham's gates, and this time, Batman can't save everyone.

Rocksteady Studios had high expectations to live up to following the success of *Arkham Asylum*, and we weren't disappointed. *Arkham City* should be celebrated as a shining achievement for the action-adventure genre for its masterful execution.

The Dark Knight is no longer a beacon of hope exclusive to Gotham's citizens; he now represents the standard to which action games should be held.



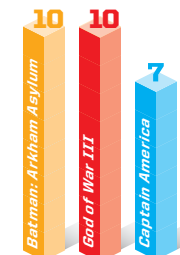
RYAN TALJONICK



manipulating Batman's new glide controls. Performing dive bombs allowed us to build more height mid-glide and soar for minutes at a time.

Breaking Batman

Much to our surprise (considering the top-notch quality of *Arkham Asylum's* fighting mechanics), the already excellent combat has been significantly improved. When 30 goons surrounded us in Penguin's den, our fists started flying. Two thugs attempted a cheap shot us from behind, but we countered



ScorePole
When it comes to action-adventure games, *Batman: Arkham City* raises the bar.

both simultaneously, smashing their skulls together. When we suddenly got boxed in, we quickly sprayed explosive gel on the ground and detonated it, disorienting baddies without ever breaking our combo chain.

After incapacitating the ill-tempered criminals, a burly thug attacked from seemingly out of nowhere, but we were able to stun him before initiating a beatdown—a series of rapid attacks powerful enough to fell even the biggest brute. There was an appropriate solution for every type of enemy we encountered. We even disarmed foes wielding blades or guns with special counters and combos. Timing our actions with the cadence of each battle created a rhythmic dance-like fighting experience that never got stale.

Sometimes, though, we opted for a stealthier approach to combat. We used our Remote Electrical

Catwoman Five things to know about our fave feline thief

- Optional DLC** Catwoman's missions must be activated using the voucher packaged with new copies of the game.
- Separate Story** Batman and Catwoman will cross paths, but Selina's missions are a separate experience.
- Acrobatic Antics** The Cat's movement and attack styles are far more acrobatic than Bruce Wayne's.
- Ceiling Crawl** Catwoman can reach areas that Batman can't thanks to her ability to cling upside-down on meshed ceilings.
- Cat Jokes** Only Catwoman can pick up pink Riddler trophies. Be sure to explore each location thoroughly.

What we did in... Batman: Arkham City

