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WARNING Before playing this game, read the Xbox 360 Instruction Manual and any peripheral manuals for important safety and health information. Keep all manuals for future reference. For replacement manuals, see www.xbox.com/support or call Xbox Customer Support.

Important Health Warning About Playing Video Games

Photosensitive seizures

A very small percentage of people may experience a seizure when exposed to certain visual images, including flashing lights or patterns that may appear in video games. Even people who have no history of seizures or epilepsy may have an undiagnosed condition that can cause these "photosensitive epileptic seizures" while watching video games.

These seizures may have a variety of symptoms, including lightheadedness, altered vision, eye or face twitching, jerking or shaking of arms or legs, disorientation, confusion, or momentary loss of awareness. Seizures may also cause loss of consciousness or convulsions that can lead to injury from falling down or striking nearby objects.

Immediately stop playing and consult a doctor if you experience any of these symptoms. Parents should watch for or ask their children about the above symptoms—children and teenagers are more likely than adults to experience these seizures. The risk of photosensitive epileptic seizures may be reduced by taking the following precautions: Sit farther from the screen; use a smaller screen; play in a well-lit room; do not play when you are drowsy or fatigued.

If you or any of your relatives have a history of seizures or epilepsy, consult a doctor before playing.

PEGI ratings and guidance applicable within PEGI markets only.

What is the PEGI System?

The PEGI age-rating system protects minors from games unsuitable for their particular age group. PLEASE NOTE it is not a guide to gaming difficulty. Comprising two parts, PEGI allows parents and those purchasing games for children to make an informed choice appropriate to the age of the intended player. The first part is an age rating:



The second is icons indicating the type of content in the game. Depending on the game, there may be a number of such icons. The age-rating of the game reflects the intensity of this content. The icons are:



For further information visit <http://www.pegi.info> and pegionline.eu

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By the year 2183, mankind has mastered the ability to travel throughout the galaxy at faster-than-light speeds, bringing them in contact with a host of alien races. Now humanity struggles to find its place in the greater galactic community.

As Commander Shepard of the Systems Alliance Military, aboard the spacecraft Normandy, you represent humanity's first and last line of defense against the strange wonders of a vast and often dangerous galaxy. Your actions and decisions will determine the fate of the human race ... and shape the future of an entire galaxy.

GETTING STARTED

After inserting the Mass Effect™ game disc into your Xbox 360® console, press .

The Main Menu appears. Choose **Start New Career**, and then press .

You enter the Mission Computer database and begin to reconstruct your profile to confirm your identity.

You have two options when initially creating your character:



- Play as the default Commander Shepard and choose a first name.
- Create a custom character, in which you control every detail.



Custom Character Creation




Start by using the Xbox keyboard function to type a first name for Commander Shepard.

Next, choose your custom character's early history: Earthborn, Colonist, or Spacer. This choice represents the first of many that affect how characters will react to you during gameplay.

Use  to move to the Pre-Service History option you want, and then press  to select it.

Use  to move to Psychological Profile. Press  to select Ruthless, War Hero, or Sole Survivor.

Then, press  to select your character class. If you select the default setting, your character is a Soldier.

Classes

There are six base classes, with variable strength in up to three areas for the player and two squad members. Some classes concentrate all their strength in one skill area; others divide it between two areas to balance tactics.

Combat skills deal maximum damage to enemies. **Tech** skills allow decrypting security systems and weakening enemy weapons. **Biotic** skills enable brain impulses to manipulate the physical world.

Soldier – Combat Specialist

The Soldier is a tough warrior, able to deal with a range of combat situations. The Soldier gets improved health, has the widest selection of weapons, and is eventually able to wear heavy armor. Gameplay focus is on getting into the thick of the fight, picking the right weapon for tactical situations, and outlasting opponents.

Engineer – Tech Specialist

The Engineer is a tech specialist, able to quickly and easily manipulate the environment with specific skills. Gameplay focus is on shaping the battlefield during combat, healing the party, and debuffing enemies (disabling weapons and lowering shields).

Adept – Biotic Specialist

The Adept is the ultimate Biotic, able to affect the physical world with the power of the mind. They can use biotics to violently manipulate objects in the environment, including nearby enemy targets. Gameplay focus is on disabling and debuffing enemies while dealing massive amounts of damage.

Infiltrator – Combat/Tech

The Infiltrator is a tech-savvy warrior, able to win battles by quickly disabling and killing enemies. Gameplay focus is on unlocking alternate routes, gaining access to good equipment, and obtaining an advantageous position over enemies in combat.

Vanguard – Biotic/Combat

The Vanguard is a powerful combatant, able to combine the offensive powers of the Adept and the Soldier. They have access to various weapons and armor, as well as biotic powers. Gameplay focus is on taking down enemies with quick and brutal force.

Sentinel – Biotic/Tech

The Sentinel is the most flexible class, able to combine tech and biotics to manipulate the environment, disable and attack enemies, or defend the party. Gameplay focus is on protecting the party using kinetic barriers and healing it with advanced medical training.

Facial Customization

Use the Facial Customization screen to create a unique face for your character. You can customize the entire face or focus on a specific area, such as eyes or nose. Use the sliders in each section to adjust a range of facial details. Select **Finalize** to accept the face you created.



PLAYING THE GAME

Conversation

The cinematic, choice-based dialogue in Mass Effect lets you fine-tune your character and story using the conversation wheel at the bottom of your screen.

Choices on the wheel's left let you explore a conversation in-depth, while choices on the right tend to move the conversation to completion.

The top of the wheel typically corresponds to the Paragon path, where your character makes selfless, cooperative decisions. The bottom of the wheel generally correspond to the Renegade path, where your character is more aggressive and hostile.

When you spend Talent points on Charm and Intimidate talents, new options appear on the wheel's left that may help conversation outcomes later. Charm options appear in blue text. Intimidate options appear in red. (Go to "Talents" on page 24 to learn more.)

Use **L** to point to your response, and then press **A** to play it in a cinematic style. As soon as the conversation wheel appears, you can select your response. Your character speaks the line at the dramatically appropriate time. Press **X** to interrupt or skip a line of dialogue.



Non-combat HUD

As you progress through the game, you gain XP (experience points) by exploring new areas and engaging other characters in conversation.

When you can interact with something or someone in the world, the blue focus symbol forms a circle inside it. Press **A** to interact.



- 1 Selection Bar
- 2 Focus Symbol

The screen briefly displays your XP. The Squad screen of the Mission Computer also shows the XP gained. (Go to "Squad Data" on page 19 to learn more.)



- New Mission Computer entry
- XP gained
- Total XP
- Mini-map

Mission Computer

Press **START** to bring up the Mission Computer display. Use **L** to point to an area on the display, and then press **A** to select it. When an area receives an update it flashes on the display.

The Mission Computer lets you access game details for:

- **Equipment** – View currently equipped weapons, armor, and other items, along with options for equipping new items.
- **Options** – Set gameplay, controller, graphics, sound, and other options from here. Many of these options will affect gameplay difficulty and your visual experience; be sure to look at all the choices.
- **Map** – View your current location and points of interest.
- **Save** – Saves your game in its current state and location.
- **Squad** – View stats for you and your squad members.
- **Load** – Loads your saved and automatically saved games from here.
- **Journal** – View current and recent tasks.
- **Codex** – Learn all about the Mass Effect universe.



Combat

Mass Effect's combat system allows for precise control and considered decision-making.

To draw your weapon, press **X**. To holster your weapon, press **B**.

To switch the weapon of any squad member, press and hold **LB** to browse available weapons. Use **L** to point to your choice, and then press **A** to select. Release **LB** to return to the game.

To use special abilities for each squad member, press and hold **RB**.

To choose an ability, use **L** to highlight it, and then press **A** to select. Each squad member can have a single ability activated when in this view.

(Go to "Combat Details" on page 12 to learn more.)

Advancing Levels

Level up

You and your squad can advance levels by accumulating XP, which you gain by overcoming enemies, using certain skills, and completing missions.

There is a single pool of XP for your entire squad. All squad actions feed into it, and all squad members level up at the same time, including those back on the Normandy and not part of the active squad.

Level-up benefits

When your character advances to a new level, you:

1. Gain health. You can increase this amount through talents.
2. Gain Talent points. You can spend these points at any time to increase your rank.

Auto level and undo Talent points

Press **Y** on the Squad screen to automatically distribute Talent points.

After spending Talent points, you can press **X** to undo your choices.

GALAXY MAP

The Galaxy Map is located in the center of the Normandy's command deck. To access it, ascend the deck, and select the holographic galaxy image. There are four levels to the map, each with varying degrees of detail for galactic navigation.

Press **A** to travel to any selected location. Press **X** to zoom out from your current view. Press **B** to exit the Galaxy Map.

Galaxy Level

Shows a top-down view of the galaxy and star clusters connected by mass relays.



Cluster Level

Shows the star systems you can explore and lists the planetary bodies you can travel to in each system, including planets, asteroid fields, and artificial structures, like space stations.



System Level

Shows a detailed view of a selected star system, with data on the star and the planetary bodies you can explore.



Planetary Level

Shows detailed features of the planetary body or object you are orbiting, including data and applicable plot elements.



COMBAT DETAILS



Elements of the HUD (heads-up display) include:

- 1 **Target Reticle** – Targets objects in your environment. Enemies are highlighted in red, friendly objects in blue. Combat hazards are highlighted in orange.
- 2 **Party Status Bar** – Shows real-time status for squad health and shields. Also shows your squad's movement status.
- 3 **Radar** – Shows enemies that are in target range. Also shows map pins from the in-game map.
- 4 **Selection Bar** – Displays name of highlighted object and results of pressing **A**.

The combat system offers fine-tuned control of movements, decisions, and camera position. Core features include:

Targeting: Use **R** to move the targeting reticle. Abilities and weapons fire go to the center of your reticle.

Target Assist: A Target Assist icon highlights the enemy nearest the reticle. Pull **LT** to zoom the reticle view, increasing the accuracy of weapons you are already trained on. (You can train on a weapon by spending Talent points on that weapon.)

Accuracy: Sustained weapons fire reduces accuracy over time. However, the more training you have on a weapon, the longer your accuracy remains.

Accuracy is reduced through:

- **Kickback** – Weapons fire produces a kickback effect that reduces targeting accuracy.
- **Fatigue** – Sprinting eventually causes exhaustion. (Press **A** to sprint or to storm an enemy.)



Power Wheel: To access and use abilities, press and hold **RB** to bring up the Power Wheel.


Use **L** to browse the abilities for every squad member. Select an ability, and then press **A** to cue it up as an action.





You can also press **X** to map the ability. Tap **RB** when you want to fire it off.

Use **R** to point somewhere in the world and direct the action. Each squad member can have a single action declared.

Release **RB** to fire the action and use the ability.

Squad Orders

Use  to issue squad orders in the field:

- Press  to send your squad to the location you targeted.
- Press  to order them to take cover.
- Press  to order them to attack a specific enemy.
- Press  to order them to rally to your position, then follow you.

Weapons

Pistols

Pistols are highly accurate, have little recoil, and are easy to use when moving. They are effective at a variety of ranges, but inflict limited damage. Soldier, Engineer, Adept, Vanguard, and Infiltrator classes can train with pistols.



Shotguns

Shotguns have a slow rate of fire and high recoil, but inflict massive damage to multiple targets when fired at close range. Soldier and Vanguard classes can train with shotguns.



Assault rifles

Assault rifles are the standard armament of most Soldiers, offering a good balance between firepower, range, and accuracy. Only the Soldier class can train with assault rifles.





Sniper rifles

Sniper rifles have a long range, are highly accurate, and inflict significant damage. They have a limited rate of fire, however, and are practically useless at close range. Only Soldier and Infiltrator classes can train with sniper rifles.



Grenades

Disk-shaped Alliance grenades can glide long distances and also latch onto targets or flat surfaces to be remotely detonated. Only you, as Commander Shepard, can use grenades.

Press  to throw a grenade, and then press  again to detonate. A grenade will automatically explode after 10 seconds if you don't detonate it.



EQUIPMENT

Equipment types include:

- Armor
- Assault rifles
- Bio-amps
- Grenades
- Omni-tools
- Pistols
- Shotguns
- Sniper rifles

Armor

Light armor

Light armor offers a basic level of protection from enemy attacks and minimizes the movement penalties that affect weapon accuracy. All classes can wear light armor.

Medium armor

Medium armor offers an increased level of protection, but also increases the movement penalties that affect weapon accuracy. Soldiers can wear medium armor from the start, while Vanguard and Infiltrator classes can train to wear it.

Heavy armor

Heavy armor offers the highest level of protection from enemy fire, but also has the highest movement penalties affecting weapon accuracy. Only specially trained frontline Soldiers can wear it. No class can wear heavy armor at the start, but the Soldier class can train to wear it.



Upgrades

Upgrades enhance and customize equipment, letting you increase damage, boost shields, and more. You can only upgrade the following equipment types: armor, weapons, ammo, and grenades.

Each equipment piece has very specific upgrade slots. For example, the ammo slot on a weapon can only be upgraded with an ammo upgrade.

To upgrade equipment, access the Mission Computer, and then select **Equipment**. Choose the piece to upgrade from the lower right selection belt, and then press **X** to view the Upgrade screen.

To upgrade ammo, select the applicable weapon, and then press **O** to view the ammo upgrade. Press **A** to confirm your upgrade and exit.

SQUAD DATA

Bio-amps

Biotics can strengthen their power in specific disciplines by using amps (amplifiers). These specially designed devices often come in the form of small electronic attachments that are worn on a Biotic's ear or the back of their head.

Omni-tools

Omni-tools are multipurpose diagnostic and manufacturing tools used for a variety of battlefield tasks, such as hacking, decryption, or repair.

RESOURCES

Containers

Containers are found on every planet and often hold valuable equipment and resources. Containers look like metal footlockers or cargo crates. You cannot place items in them.

Omni-gel

Technological materials that can be salvaged from the environment are called omni-gel. Use it with the omni-tool to do electrical or decryption work. You can also use omni-gel to repair the Mako, your vehicle.

Credits

Credits are the primary monetary unit in the Mass Effect universe.

Medi-gel

Medi-gel (medical gel) heals various wounds and ailments. You acquire it through looting or NPCs (non-player characters). You can also purchase an increase in your medi-gel capacity in some shops. Press **Y** to deploy First Aid.

Squad Member Information



Select **Squad** on the Mission Computer to display information available on each squad member. The information includes:

- 1 Name
- 2 Class
- 3 Appearance
- 4 Paragon and Renegade meters (Shepard only)
- 5 XP and level
- 6 Health
- 7 Unlocked talent
- 8 Locked talent
- 9 Talent description
- 10 Unspent Talent points

Current level

As you gain experience, your current level reflects your advancement.

Whenever you gain enough experience to advance to a new level, you are granted Talent points that you can spend to purchase higher ranks or additional talents.

Health

Lists your current and maximum health levels. Health represents your ability to take damage in combat. When your health hits zero, you die. Your maximum health increases as you advance during gameplay.

Experience points

Lists your current XP (experience points) and the total needed to advance to the next level.

Paragon and Renegade meters

These meters track your choices throughout gameplay.

The Paragon meter increases when your choices are noble, cooperative, or self-sacrificing. Paragons achieve their goals by doing the right thing in the right way.

The Renegade meter increases when your choices are aggressive, selfish, or ruthless. Renegades achieve their goals by any means necessary.

Talents

Assigning points to talents lets you improve combat, tech, and bionics, as well as activate special abilities under each talent.

You and your squad can upgrade talents in the same way. (Go to “Talents” on page 24 to learn more.)

Squad Selection

Use the Squad Selection screen to recruit a balanced squad based on the combat, tech, and bionics talents of each potential squad member.

Press **L** or **R** to move among available squad members. Press **X** to remove or add a squad member. Press **Y** at any time to review your squad. Press **A** to accept assembled squad.

You can only choose squad members in two circumstances:

- When you first encounter a new potential squad member.
- When leaving the Normandy, where you can return to change squad members.

Choose your squad with care: when you leave the Normandy, you may not have an opportunity to change them until you can return.

How to Navigate to an Uncharted World

Missions throughout the Attican Traverse take you to uncharted worlds with mysterious anomalies. To discover the nature of these anomalies, you must travel to, land on, and explore these planets.

From the Galaxy Map, select **Cluster Navigation**, **System Navigation**, and then **Planetary Landings**.

After landing on a planet, explore its terrain in your Mako, which comes equipped with powerful sensors that detect alien enemies, technological anomalies, and resources.

Use your Mission Computer map on an uncharted world to discover what is nearby. Press **A** to set a destination at your current cursor location, which then displays as an arrow on the in-game radar.

How to Leave an Uncharted World

When you're ready to leave an uncharted world:

1. Press **START** to call up the Mission Computer, and then select **Map**.
2. Press **X** to return to the Normandy.



VEHICLE

Mako

The Mako is an infantry fighting vehicle (IFV), or rover. It carries you and your squad into battle, where it provides fire support and cover.

To get you and your squad into the Mako, select it, and then press **A**.

Move **L** to drive the Mako, and move **R** to rotate the view. Press **A** to jump-jet over rough terrain or dodge enemy fire.

Press **LT** to zoom the gun camera, **RB** to fire the cannon, and **RT** to fire the machine gun.

To leave the Mako, find safe, stable ground, and then press **B**. Be aware of the hazard level outside before departing, as you may only survive for a limited time in some hostile atmospheres.



The Vehicle HUD displays health and shield levels for squad members, and weapons and equipment status for the Mako.

Mako Controller Mapping



How to repair the Mako

You can spend omni-gel to repair the Mako in the field by pressing **Y**. Before doing so, however, you must stop the Mako, remain in it, and cease weapons fire.

TALENTS

A talent is an area of expertise that can improve as you progress in the game. As you gain experience, you acquire Talent points that you can spend to improve aspects of your character.

The talents available to you and your squad are determined by the class selected in Character Creation. At activation phases, marked with icons on the talent, you unlock new abilities or other talents on the Squad screen.

Combat Talents



Pistols – Improves accuracy and damage when wielding pistols. Activates the Marksman ability that lets you fire more quickly and accurately for a short time.

Shotgun – Improves accuracy and damage when wielding shotguns. Activates the Carnage ability that lets you fire a huge blast from your shotgun that damages enemies.

Assault Rifles – Improves accuracy and damage when wielding assault rifles. Activates the Overkill ability that lets you fire your weapon in longer, more accurate bursts.

Sniper Rifles – Improves accuracy and damage when wielding sniper rifles. Activates the Assassination ability that increases the damage of your next sniper shot.

Armor – Improves the amount of damage your armor can absorb and may allow you to equip heavier armor, depending on your class. Activates the Shield Boost ability that restores your shields in combat.

Assault Training – Increases melee and weapons damage. Activates the Adrenaline Burst ability that resets the cooldown times on all your talents so that they can be used immediately.

Fitness – Boosts your health, upping the maximum damage you can take before dying. Activates the Immunity ability that increases your damage protection for a short period of time.

Spectre Training – Increases health, accuracy, and the effectiveness of all attacks and powers. Grants the Unity ability that lets you revive your squad members if they are injured in combat.

Tech Talents



Damping – Increases the explosion radius of your tech mines. It activates the Damping Field, which suppresses enemies' tech and biotic abilities in combat.

Decryption – Lets you spend omni-gel to override security systems to open doors or containers. Ultimately, it activates Sabotage, which quickly disables enemy weapons in combat.

Hacking – Increases the recharge speed of your tech proximity mines. Ultimately, it activates AI (artificial intelligence) Hacking abilities, which let you control the AI of robotic enemies so they attack everyone around them, including each other.

Electronics – Increases shield strength and lets you bypass the security systems of some locked objects. It also activates use of Overload, which damages or disables enemy shields in combat.

Biotic Talents



Throw – Generates a biotic field that throws objects within range.

Lift – Generates a biotic field that lifts objects into the air.

Warp – Generates a biotic field that slowly tears apart any object it hits, doing damage and temporarily reducing armor effectiveness.

Singularity – Generates a biotic field that causes objects to fly and violently smash into each other.

Barrier – Generates a biotic field that absorbs weapons fire.

Stasis – Generates a biotic field that surrounds and isolates any object it touches, preventing enemies from moving or attacking, but also blocking you from dealing them damage.

Additional Talents

Charm – Increases Charm options in conversation, and decreases the credits needed when purchasing items in stores.

Intimidate – Increases Intimidate options in conversation, and increases credits gained when selling items in stores.

Class Talents

Certain talents are inherent to each character class:

Soldier – Improves health and health regeneration.

Engineer – Reduces recharge time of tech abilities and increases tech resistance.

Adept – Reduces recharge time of biotic abilities and increases biotic resistance.

Infiltrator – Increases damage delivered by tech mines and reduces overheating of sniper rifles and pistols.

Sentinel – Reduces recharge time of tech and biotic abilities, increases damage and accuracy of pistols, and grants Marksman ability.

Vanguard – Increases biotic resistance and damage of shotguns and pistols.




CREDITS

Talent Upgrade

You and your squad members have a list of talents representing each character's capabilities, strengths, and training. By spending Talent points on these, certain aspects of the character become stronger and eventually open up new attacks, buffs, proficiencies, and skills.

Talent Points

Use your Talent points to purchase higher ranks.

Press  to go to the Mission Computer, and then choose **Squad**. Use  to select a talent, and then press  to spend a Talent point to increase your rank by one.

Specialization

Specialization boosts class-specific talents. After completing an optional Systems Alliance Military assignment, choose a specialization for your character, increasing the maximum Talent points you can spend on class-specific talents.

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Do you want to explore the farthest regions of the Mass Effect universe? Do you seek out fellow Spectre agents? Do you need a place to discuss your ideas about the state of the galaxy? Then join the official BioWare® Mass Effect community!

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