

## *Halo Reach* Review

**Game Name:** *Halo Reach*

**Game Platform:** Xbox 360

**Game Overview:**

*Halo Reach* is the fifth console FPS installment in the Halo series. Its story focuses on the Noble Six team of SPARTAN's who fight to keep their home planet, Reach, from falling to the invading Covenant. The gameplay of *Halo Reach* brings to the table everything to be expected out of an FPS of the Halo series and more, including a single-player/ co-op campaign, online matchmaking, and in-depth player avatar customization.

**What did this game do that was different from its predecessors?**

The unique thing about this game in comparison to its predecessors was that it was much more story and character-driven, providing a unique experience in terms of feeling. The actual gameplay in terms of combat style was closer to its most distant predecessor *Halo: Combat Evolved* rather than its more recent predecessors *Halo 3* or *Halo 3: ODST*. The addition of different armor power-ups that the player could choose was something unique for this series as well as the space combat mission. The game also provided a new means of customizing the player avatar with individual pieces of armor, gendered player models, and a variety of voice over choices.

**Favorite part about the game (and why).**

The best part about the game in terms of gameplay is its return to the *Halo: Combat Evolved* style of fighting, which was simple and straightforward. The addition of the power-ups worked very well as a natural evolution of the original gameplay style while giving the player a new kind of strategic choice besides weapon preference. The other very positive aspect about this game was the combination of the character-driven story and the character customization. Both of these elements together really helped to draw the player in to the story by making them a unique character that was a real part of the story. It helped to get the game off of the usual, stereotypical FPS habit of letting story get completely forgotten behind shiny explosions.

**Least favorite part about the game (and why).**

I really only have two small complaints about the game, besides just wishing for *more*. One of the annoying parts about the game is that there is almost constantly chatter going on over the radio. It's nearly impossible for me to listen to the chatter, know what characters are talking, follow what they are talking about, *and* concentrate on fighting all at once. The other complaint is that the purchasable armor and voice overs in the character customization system are really expensive, meaning it would take a *lot* of playing the game in order to amass the points needed to get the customizations I really want, which is kind of annoying and disheartening.

**How would you change the game to make it better?**

In accordance with the gaming hierarchy of needs, I would have kept the radio chatter for when the player was in quiet moments of just moving from one place to another and not fighting because it's true that players have a hard time listening to story and fighting at the same time. Also, I would have probably lowered the point prices on some of the armor and voice over options somewhat just to make them seem like more attainable goals.