

## Dead by Daylight



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| <b>Genre:</b>        | <b>Action Survival Horror Game</b> |
| <b>Release date:</b> | <b>14 June 2016</b>                |
| <b>Studio:</b>       | <b>Behaviour Interactive Inc.</b>  |
| <b>Analyse by:</b>   | <b>Andi Wille und Sara Hug</b>     |

[gameplay.mp4](#) Let`s play by Andi

## Game Description

Dead by Daylight is an asymmetric multiplayer horror game in which a group of four survivors have to escape from a vicious killer by completing multiple tasks in a spectacle orchestrated by an extradimensional and all-powerful entity. Survivors cannot fight back and have to rely on stealth and efficient movement to get around the Killer. Both sides are aided by a variety of equippable perks and items that add and change their abilities and allow players to choose from a wide variety of playstyles.

## Sound Description

Dead by Daylight's soundscape has two primary purposes - on one hand it is a vital source of gameplay information for both killers and survivors, while on the other hand it aids in creating a tense horror atmosphere throughout the game. To marry these two purposes, most sound effects in the game are short, snappy and sharp, conveying a consistent sense of urgency or discomfort. The game features little to no dialogue, limited to an occasional voice line by specific killers, with the voice over being focussed on nonverbal sounds such as grunts or screams of pain.

## Immersion

Both the environmental soundscape and the player sounds remain consistent with the game's overall horror theming, with even non-diegetic sounds closely resembling classic horror movie stingers. This is also reflected in the UI, where most interactions are accompanied by growling, squelching sounds that often linger briefly beyond the interaction. During gameplay, interactions with different materials also affect the soundscape - for example, a killer's attack missing and hitting a wooden wall sounds notably different to the attack hitting an old metal container. The game sound is consistent and coherent with what is happening on screen.

## Feedback

Dead by Daylight makes great use of sound to convey important in-game information. This reflects in the corresponding soundbytes, which are usually very clear-cut and leave little room for interpretation. Beyond interaction feedback, the game also informs the player about their game state through sound - for example, an injured survivor's movement is accompanied by frequent grunts of pain and breathing through clenched teeth, while a player affected by the Doctor's madness ability hears a constant static buzzing. Sound is also used to inform survivors about a nearby killer, with a frantic heartbeat that gets both faster and louder the closer in proximity they are to the killer.

## Drawing Focus

When certain important events occur in game such as the completion of a generator or the death of a survivor, the corresponding sound briefly drowns out most other game sounds for all players to emphasize this pivotal shift in the match dynamics. If the triggering event is based on a specific location, the sound is also directional, which aids the killer in locating survivors and vice versa.

## Player Actions

Each action a player can take is accompanied by a clearly identifiable sound, from basic movement to more specific actions such as rummaging through a chest, healing another player or - for killers - using a specific ability. Though the sounds do provide feedback to the acting player, they are most importantly used to convey information to other players - experienced survivors will be able to recognize a killer's specific abilities just by their sounds, while a killer might use the sound of a healing close-by survivor to pinpoint their exact location. Movement produces different sounds depending on the speed at which the player moves, ranging from nearly inaudible crouching to loud sprinting, and also changes based on the material a player is traversing.

## UI

As previously mentioned, the UI's sound design keeps within the game's overall horror aesthetic through a mixture of longer, drawn-out growls and squelches as well as abrupt, snappy sounds. Sometimes, the UI also utilizes discordant musical stingers, but these are reserved for very important events such as an online game being found.

## Environment

Dead by Daylight's maps span a variety of locales both in- and outdoors, featuring various different weather conditions and environs ranging from medieval dungeons to modern laboratories. While each of these locations does have a unique soundscape, it tends to fade into the background as a match unfolds to give the information-laden sounds produced by the players enough breathing room. In addition to background ambience and, if present, weather effects, most maps also feature some unique elements that produce more clearly identifiable sounds, such as an unlockable large garage door or a creature locked away behind thick iron bars that growls at nearby players.

## Review

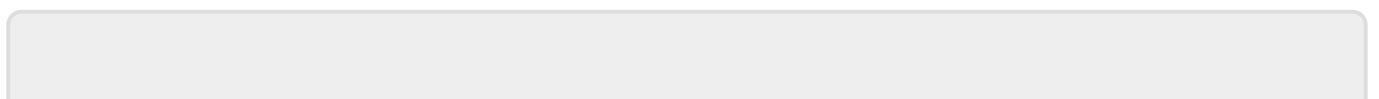
Dead by Daylight's sound design is purposefully uncomfortable, unsettling and loud, greatly adding to the game's horror atmosphere and constantly reinforcing the urgency of the player's situation. This consistent theme also aids with increasing immersion, as the soundscape forms a very cohesive whole. The quality of individual sound effects is very high, with congruous production and mixing and a high attention to detail, even taking different environmental conditions into consideration. In contrast, voice-over quality varies greatly from character to character - where certain survivors' screams of pain are gut-wrenching, others suffer from less-than-stellar delivery and often lack authenticity.

While care was given to allow sounds enough room to breathe, some particularly high-intensity moments can become very overwhelming if too many different soundbytes overlap. Overall however, Dead by Daylight delivers a very consistently high-quality sound experience that plays a vital role in establishing the game's tense atmosphere and reinforcing its high-intensity gameplay.

## Comparison to Phasmophobia

While both Phasmophobia and Dead by Daylight are multiplayer horror games that feature groups of cooperating players pitted against an all-powerful foe, the genres of horror they feature differ greatly, which is reflected in their sound design. The arcade-y, action-packed gameplay of Dead by Daylight is supplemented by a constant stream of sound whose main purpose is to carry information, while Phasmophobia places a much heavier emphasis on building an immersive, grounded soundscape to accompany its much slower, investigative gameplay. It places a heavy emphasis on keeping its sound diegetic, with even the UI sound design reflecting this philosophy. Dead by Daylight meanwhile features a variety of audio cues that are not located "in-world" and are often only audible to the triggering player.

One comparison that can be drawn between the two games is the way they use sound to aid players in finding specific locations, interactables and other players. For example, the ghost in Phasmophobia can sometimes be located by the sounds of moving objects or distant wailing, while in Dead by Daylight an attentive killer can find injured players by following the direction of their pained grunts.



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