

DOOM Eternal



Introduction

DOOM Eternal is a fast-paced first-person shooter developed by Id Software. It is part of the DOOM series and it features a grand single-player campaign and a multiplayer mode.

In DOOM Eternal, you play as the DOOM Slayer, a man tormented by unrelenting bloodlust. You must protect the Earth from demons. Amongst other places, you venture to hell and back to achieve this feat.

Sound and especially music play a great role in this game. On one side, Mick Gordons Metal-Electro fusion soundtrack takes the stage, but the sound effects themselves also really help keep the players hyper-violent power fantasy alive.

Genre:	First-person shooter
Release:	2020
Platforms:	Microsoft Windows, PlayStation 4, Stadia, Xbox One, Nintendo Switch, PlayStation 5, Xbox Series X/S
Developer:	id Software
Publisher:	Bethesda Softworks
Analysis by:	Michael Staub, Dorias Schärer

Music

Here are some music samples from DOOM Eternal, composed by **Mick Gordon**:

[bfg_division.mp3](#)
[gladiator.mp3](#)
[hell_on_earth.mp3](#)

[meathook.mp3](#)
[the_betrayer.mp3](#)
[the_only_thing.mp3](#)

Environment

Here are the different environmental soundscapes that DOOM Eternal uses to immerse the player. (Note that the actual corresponding soundscapes start only after a couple of seconds, and they switch between different locations inside the level)

[Cultist Base](#)
[Mars Core](#)
[Arc Complex](#)
[Doom Hunter Base](#)

[Hell on Earth](#)
[Nekravol](#)
[Sentinel Prime](#)
[Super Gore Nest](#)

[Exultia](#)
[Final Sin](#)
[Taras Nabad](#)
[Urdak](#)

Let's take a closer look at **Super Gore Nest** (that's the bottom middle one). Firstly, there's a faint sound of wind. Extremely distant howling and thunder create a sense of a big open space. Closer, you can hear some otherworldly sounds. These paint a picture of a soundstage that is near the listener: A soundstage that reminds of living and breathing flesh, pulsing. You can hear monsters growling, some closer and some further away.

The sounds of **Urdak** (bottom right) are also quite impressive. Synthesizers are used to give tones of „energy“. Repeating melodies of energetic arcs swing through the air. The atmosphere feels tense, charged with electricity.

The sounds of these environments do not change over time. In DOOM Eternal, there exists no real sense of day- or nighttime: It feels like time has stopped. This also plays into the apocalyptic setting.

A lot of DOOM Eternal's environments use sound to portray this uneasiness that is present through the game. Deep bass roars and shrill wind tones combine into a background sound that is inherently hostile; like everything is dead, except the beast below.

Sound Effects

UI

[menu_sounds.mp4](#)

The **Menu Sounds** in the game are kept to minimal clicks. They fall a bit into the classic Sci-Fi UI trope, but stay pretty neutral in general.

Guns

[shotgun.mp4](#)

The **Shotgun** is the game's starting weapon. Using a weapon mod, you can also shoot sticky bombs with it (that's what's shown in the

beginning. The S=shotguns reload sound does have some higher pitched components, making it feel and sound not as hefty as some of the other weapons, which is fitting since the shotgun is a weapon with relatively low damage.

[assault_rifle.mp4](#)

The **Heavy Cannon** is a full-auto assault rifle. When hip-firing, the sound it creates consists of a higher pitched rattling (presumably from some kind of bullet-feeding chain) and of a loud bass noise. When firing full auto, this bass illustrates the power behind each shot. When scoping in, you can hear a high pitched sound when the gun is done scoping in. This gives feedback to the player when the gun is ready to shoot. Finally, the shots while scoped in are deafeningly loud; so much so that the player doesn't even hear the bang to its full extent. This bang also travels outwards and echoes around the room and back to the player, really showing how loud it is.

[plasma_gun.mp4](#)

The **Plasma Gun** has a bit of a different sound signature than the other guns. The upper and middle frequencies consist of this energetic „laser beam sound“ that quickly sweeps from a high to a low pitch. Of course, once you fire full auto, the individual shots combine into a sort of chain. In the lower frequencies there is a fuzzy bass that gets especially prevalent once you stop shooting. After the Plasma Gun has fired enough shots, it can release a burst of energy. This is a bit less bassy, but after the sound starts high-pitched in the middle of the sound stage, it travels outwards and its pitch gets lower.

[super_shotgun.mp4](#)

The **Super Shotgun** is a fan favourite and its sound design won't disappoint. The shot itself starts with loud bang that continues outwards as a thunderous roar. The shells are then ejected with a low-pitched plop. Finally, a clear mechanical click tells the player when the gun is ready to shoot again. All these sounds combined give the weapon a great feeling and motivate the player to keep on using it.

[chain_gun.mp4](#)

The **Chain Gun** is a heavy, belt-fed gatling gun. As you start firing, the individual shots start to shift their pitch upwards, until the gun has

reached its peak speed. When switching into turret mode, a high click, combined with a mechanical thud confirm that the gun is again ready to fire. In turret mode, there is also a noise that becomes higher pitched over time, indicating the gun heating up. The player is able to use this sound to know when to stop firing so that the gun doesn't overheat.

[rocket_launcher.mp4](#)

The **Rocket Launcher** has an extremely sharp, high-pitched noise when firing, like metal hitting against metal. While rechambering the next round, pistons can be heard pushing the next rocket into the chamber. The rocket's explosion itself is a distorted bassy thud.

[crucible.mp4](#)

The **Crucible** is one of the most powerful weapons in the game, and its sound design really reinforces this fact. Even when you're just holding it, it emits a deep bass and buzzing sound.

[ballista.mp4](#)

The **Ballista** emits a guitar-riff-like sound when you fire it. In its secondary mode, an electrical buzz tells you when it's fully charged

Roundup

All of the weapons in DOOM Eternal use sound as a way of describing their power; each and every weapon feels strong and unwieldy. Of course, all of this goes into the power-fantasy that is prevalent in DOOM. Each gun uses a deafening bass to convey the power it possesses and to some extent the power of the DOOM Slayer himself.

In my opinion, the weapons' sounds are designed really well. They inform the player if the gun is ready to fire and are easily distinguishable. Most of the sounds try to simulate the physicality of their respective weapons and that seems to have been the main goal when they were designed.

Movement

[walk.mp4](#)

The **Walking Sound** is rather bassy, this being a simulation of DOOM Slayers heavy boots and bodyweight. You can also hear a rattle coming from his suit.

[jump.mp4](#)

The **Jumping Noise** is also a simulation and shows the player that DOOM Slayer isn't lightly

clothed but wears a heavy suit that makes noises when moving around.

[double_jump.mp4](#)

The **Double Jump** gives the player an audio response when triggering it. On one part, you can hear a high pitched beep, on the other you hear a bass thump. This is also a hint that the DOOM Slayer uses some kind of air burst to propel himself into the air, which would certainly trigger a booming sound.

[dash.mp4](#)

The **Dash** is similar to the double jump: A high pitched noise combined with a soft but bassy boom. Also, there is a feedback sound when the dash can be used again.

Other Actions/Equipment

[flame_belch.mp4](#)

Flame Belch is surprisingly loud (especially when you press it by mistake). A loud bass boom with a shrill hiss at the end.

[ice_grenade.mp4](#)

The **Ice Grenade** also incorporates some sort of ice-cracking sound in the higher frequencies.

[no_target.mp4](#)

If you try to execute an action, but have **No Target**, the game gives you feedback. An unpleasant sound in a crooked tone, resembling an alarm gets played.

[refresh.mp4](#)

On **Equipment Refresh**, the player hears a sound that goes from low to high pitch, confirming that the equipment is ready to be used again.

[head_pop.mp4](#)

The **Head Pop** sound is one of my favourites. While certainly being comical in a way, it rewards the player with a satisfying popping sound if he manages to kill a low-level demon with a headshot.

Enemies

Here are some samples of enemy sounds.

[doom_eternal_-_arachnotron_sounds_sfx-_p_.mp3](#) [doom_eternal_-_cacodemon_sounds_sfx-_p_.mp3](#)
[doom_eternal_-_archvile_sounds_sfx-_p_.mp3](#) [doom_eternal_-_carcass_sounds_sfx-_p_.mp3](#)
[doom_eternal_-_baron_of_hell_sounds_sfx-_p_.mp3](#) [doom_eternal_-_maykr_drone_sounds-_p_.mp3](#)

What is clear is the effort that went into making these. Each single enemy has a whole library of different sounds it cycles through. It also reacts to its circumstances (for example if it is hit). Every enemy sounds real. Every sound is layered, each scream consists of high screeches and guttural growls. This ends up making each enemy scary and creepy. Most of the time, you will be hearing a combination of screams from each enemy, but only when you face a single one in a more quiet setting does it really become spine-chilling.

Summary

Surely, sound design has come a long way. With Mick Gordon leading the way for the music, Id Software's team has done an exceptional job in giving this sequel of a cult classic a fantastic sound. Every single sound points towards and reinforces what this game is about: Power, violence, bloodlust. Of course, the game is in a way self-ironic about its hyperviolent presentation and this is reflected in the sound as well; it can be a bit over the top. But for a game like DOOM Eternal, it's exactly fitting.

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