

# Final Fantasy 7 Remake: Release date, multiple parts and everything else we know

For over a decade, Final Fantasy 7 Remake was an enigma. Now, the game is just a week away from hitting store shelves. What a time to be alive.

The game's announcement at E3 2015 was followed by years of mystery. But we now know a lot about Final Fantasy 7 Remake. Square Enix showed the game off properly for the first time at E3 2019, and we've since been treated to a regular drip of new information and teasing trailers. But we still have plenty of unanswered questions.



If you're catching up from complete ignorance, here's a quick summary:

1. Final Fantasy 7 Remake is a multipart project. The instalments will be released separately.
2. Final Fantasy 7 Remake part one hits the PlayStation 4 on April 10, 2020.
3. It's a PlayStation 4 exclusive for one year.
4. The first part will take place entirely in Midgar, and will take up two Blu-ray discs.
5. The new combat system combines real-time and turn-based elements.
6. The game will be significantly different from the original, including story points and new characters.

If you've never played the original or weren't around at the time of its 1997 release, you may be asking...

## What's the deal with Final Fantasy 7?

Final Fantasy is the most famous RPG franchise ever, and 7 is the most famous Final Fantasy ever. It's sold 11 million units, according to creator Square Enix, making it the highest-selling game in the franchise. For reference, 2016's Final Fantasy 15, which was a huge success, stands at around 8.4 million shipped. Final Fantasy was also a smash hit among critics, holding a 9.2 rating on Metacritic. Our sister site GameSpot gave it a 9.5 upon release, writing that "never before have technology, playability and narrative combined as well as in Final Fantasy 7."

It may seem crazy looking at it now, but Final Fantasy 7 was a technological masterclass in 1997. Cinematic cutscenes were modeled in full-motion video, and the blocky 3D models moved around in prerendered environments that blew minds at the time.



Combine its technical achievements with an illustrious cast of characters (including heroes, like Cloud, Tifa and Vincent, as well as one of gaming's most renowned villains, Sephiroth), a deep battle system and an iconic story, and it's easy to understand why Final Fantasy 7 has had such an enduring legacy.

One note though: If you haven't played the original, do *not* read up on its story. You'll have one of gaming's most famous moments spoiled.

On September 7, 1997, we released the original FINAL FANTASY VII in North America.

To celebrate the anniversary we've remade one of the most iconic pieces of artwork from the original game, and now there are just under 6 months until the launch of #FinalFantasy VII Remake! #FF7R [pic.twitter.com/OLjw4g6kOQ](https://pic.twitter.com/OLjw4g6kOQ)  
— FINAL FANTASY VII REMAKE (@finalfantasyvii) September 7, 2019

## Why do people want a remake?

People clamored for a Final Fantasy 7 remake way before remakes and remasters became cool.

Thirst for a Final Fantasy 7 Remake was unintentionally created by Square Enix itself. The company teamed up with Sony in 2005 to give fans a huge tease: At E3, when Sony was unveiling the first PlayStation 3 details, this "technical demo" was shown:

Those bastards showed us what Final Fantasy's intro would look like on the PlayStation 3 when they had no intention of pulling through. Imagine George Lucas shooting a trailer for a Star Wars: A New Hope remake, flush with 2020-level cinematics and cinematography, but saying that it was only a demo and that no actual release was planned. That's how Final Fantasy buffs felt for 10 years: teased and unloved. Until E3 2015.

## What should I play before Remake?

If you haven't played the original Final Fantasy 7 yet, at this point, it's best to just wait until Remake hits on April 10.

There are, however, a bunch of other Final Fantasy 7 spin-offs out there. These include Crisis Core: Final Fantasy 7, Dirge of Cerberus: Final Fantasy 7, as well as a film, Final Fantasy 7: Advent Children.

You can skip almost all of these. Dirge of Cerberus was a poorly received game set after the original, and follows Vincent, one of the two "secret" characters in Final Fantasy 7. Advent Children is cool, as far as video game movies go, but it's also set after the original game.

That said, Crisis Core: Final Fantasy 7 was fantastic. It's a prequel that spotlights Zack Fair, a mentor to Final Fantasy 7 protagonist Cloud. Playing it won't spoil much of Final Fantasy 7's story, so it's absolutely worth doing. The downside? It's only available on PSP, so you'll need to have one of those lying around.



## Why was the game delayed?

The original release date for Final Fantasy 7 Remake was March 3, 2020. In January, though, Square Enix announced it wouldn't be able to hit that date. Instead, the game will go on sale April 10. Square Enix pulled a similar move back in 2016 with Final Fantasy XV.

"In order to ensure we deliver a game that is in-line with our vision, and the quality that our fans who have been waiting for deserve, we have decided to move the release date to April 10, 2020," wrote producer Yoshinori Kitase.

"We are making this tough decision in order to give ourselves a few extra weeks to apply final polish to the game and to deliver you with the best possible experience. I, on behalf of the whole team, want to apologize to everyone, as I know this means waiting for the game just a little bit longer."

After 15 years of waiting, it seems a bit cruel doesn't it? But, as Nintendo's Shigeru Miyamoto says, "a delayed game is eventually good, but a rushed game is forever bad."

A message from the #FinalFantasy VII Remake development team. #FF7R  
pic.twitter.com/NFYIQmytSa  
— FINAL FANTASY VII REMAKE (@finalfantasyvii) January 14, 2020

## The times, they are a-changin'

Final Fantasy 7 Remake will be drastically different from the original. That's immediately evident in the combat: While Final Fantasy 7 was completely turn-based, Remake is a real-time action game with turn-based elements.

Pressing the Square button will make Cloud swing his Buster Sword, and there will be similar real-time commands for dodging and blocking. As you battle enemies, your Action Time Bar (ATB) builds up. Once full, you can slow the action down to Tactical Mode, essentially bullet time, from which you can cast magic, use items or unleash Limit Breaks.

However, it was also noted that players who prefer faster-paced combat can eschew this by assigning shortcuts to these actions on a menu at the bottom-left on the screen, which makes the action more Kingdom Hearts-esque. (Tetsuya Nomura, the man behind Kingdom Hearts, directs Remake.)

"One of the first things we discussed about the project was how far we were going to push it in the direction of action," producer Kitase said to CNET in a February interview. "There was a lot of debate about that. We worked out a spectrum [where] the original Final Fantasy 7 is at one end, a pure menu-based system, and Kingdom Hearts is the other end of the spectrum. We felt we had to fit somewhere in that gap between those two games."

You'll be able to control more than just Cloud, too. With a press of a button you can switch to controlling other party members. This is where strategy will come in, as it was noted by Square Enix that certain characters are better to control to fight certain enemies, like Barrett against long-distance foes.

Check an extensive demo of the combat below.

The action is from the first segment of the game, where Cloud and Barrett attempt to destroy a Mako reactor. The combat looks similar to how it did in the reveal trailer all those years ago, but menus have been updated and character designs tweaked. (Cloud has been hitting the gym, apparently.)

Someone took the "Cloud's arms look weird and scrawny" criticism from the first trailer at heart!  
pic.twitter.com/ftRohMqo3k  
— Ismael Bergara (@Calavera145) May 9, 2019

Take a much closer look at Aerith, Cloud and Barret as they appear in #FinalFantasy VII Remake...

More to come in June. #FF7R pic.twitter.com/zDQYV0XT7J  
— FINAL FANTASY (@FinalFantasy) May 11, 2019

One other minor change is the game's summons. The summons themselves are similar, it's just that, because the section of the game that takes place in Midgar is being expanded into an entire game itself, summons have been introduced earlier in the story. Among the one's we've seen so far are Shiva and Ifrit, who respectively represent the ice and fire elements, as well as the Leviathan and Chocobo summons.

## **New era, new story**

In another significant structural change from the original, Final Fantasy 7 Remake is to be segmented in *at least* two instalments. In 2015, Kitase said the game would be broken into "multiple" instalments, each of which will be the size of Final Fantasy 13. It appears those parts might be even bigger than that: Part one, releasing April 10, 2020, will span two Blu-ray discs.

There's no word on when the second part will launch, and Square Enix says they're still considering how many instalments the story will be told over. There's some speculation, based on comments from Square Enix CEO Yosuke Matsuda, that subsequent parts could be released on both PlayStation 4 and 5.

It sounds like the team is recreating the *hell* out of this game, as Director Tetsuya Nomura and Kitase, in the few interviews they've done, make reference to its immense scale. Another clear theme: The duo aren't interested in a straight remake. The changes they're making aren't just to the combat, or to the vastness of the world, but to the story as well.

"I don't want the remake to end as something solely nostalgic. I want to get the fans of the original version excited," Kitase said to Dengaki, translated by Gematsu. "We'll be making adjustments to the story with this thought in mind."



Nomura added to this, enigmatically saying, "I hope that [fans of the original] can be surprised once again."

The most recent trailer, dropped Feb. 1, shows a few of these changes. We see Cloud and company battling Jenova -- something that happened in the original only *after* the gang left Midgar. Either this encounter is completely new or it's been moved here from a later section.

More importantly, the trailer introduces Roche, a new nemesis. Few details are known about him, but a new rival does make sense. If part one can't end with a Sephiroth battle, someone else needs to fill those final-battle shoes.

The trailer also features scenes from the (in)famous segment of Final Fantasy 7 that involves Cloud dressing as a woman to infiltrate the licentious Don Corneo's mansion. This was a memorable part of the original, but some fans questioned if it would or should be included here. We'll find out in April how well Square Enix walked this tight rope.

## When will part two come out?

We don't know, and probably won't know until at least a few months after part one is released in April. Huge RPGs take a long time to develop in general, and Square Enix is known in particular for taking its time to polish and refine games -- hence the aforementioned delay.

But if it's any solace, director Tetsuya Nomura has said the team is already working on part two. Since the company will be reusing the engine and a lot of the design assets from part one, in theory it shouldn't take as long to develop.

In theory. Part two being released for the PlayStation 5 would complicate things though, as it would mean the team developing for a whole new architecture and reworking the engine Final Fantasy 7 Remake runs on.

## What about Xbox One?

No announcement of Final Fantasy 7 Remake the Xbox One or Series X has been made, but a release on one of those seems likely. Why? Artwork for the game, unveiled in Dec., shows a sticker stating the game to be a "Timed exclusive until 3/3/21." Since March 3, 2020 was the game's original release date, it seems Sony has a one-year dibs on the game.

Speculation for an Xbox One edition of the game was sparked in July last year when Xbox Germany advertised a March 3, 2020 release date for an Xbox One version of Final Fantasy 7 Remake.

"As previously announced, Final Fantasy 7 Remake will be released for the PlayStation 4 on March 3, 2020," the Square Enix representative would say in a statement. "We have no plans for other platforms." (As mentioned, that release date has since been pushed back.)

A member of Xbox Germany's marketing team tweeted: "We did an internal mistake in the Social Team. We took the video off immediately. Sorry, no announcement on our side. Big apologies for this."

So it appears Xbox Germany did jump the gun -- but also that Final Fantasy 7 Remake on a console other than the PlayStation 4 seems inevitable.

## **Give me some sweet box art!**

OK! In September, Square Enix revealed via tweet Final Fantasy 7 Remake's box art. In December, it updated the art with the aforementioned exclusivity sticker. It's dashing, and a throwback to the 1997 original's. Check it out below.



It's Cloud, facing away from us, hoisting his Buster Sword over one shoulder as he readies himself to take on Shinra, as represented by the looming Shinra headquarters building. It'll be familiar to anyone who owned the original game.



Keep in mind, it's the box art for part one of the game. Final Fantasy 7 Remake Part 2, and whatever additional Parts the company releases, will have different covers. Hopefully, we won't have to wait 14 years to see them.

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