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## Nintendo Wii games console - FIRST LOOK

Next generation games console from Nintendo

by Stuart Miles published on 26 October 2006

Not due in the UK until December, Pocket-lint was allowed an early sneak peak at Nintendo's next generation console offering - the Nintendo Wii. But does it stand a chance against the power of the PlayStation 3 or the online gaming capabilities of the Xbox 360? We get gaming to find out.

Small, white and shiny, like Nintendo's other gaming console the Nintendo DS Lite, the Wii isn't about being the biggest on the block.

Compared to the Xbox 360 and the PlayStation 3 this is the child of the pack. The front disk bay is dominated by a glowing blue light and the unit has been designed to stand upright rather than flat on your TV stand - think hard back book rather than desktop computer.

Rather than your regular controller, Nintendo, always looking to innovate, has created two that are used simultaneously; the Wii Remote and a second controller Nintendo is calling the "Nunchuk".

The Wii Remote, which resembles a television remote control, is the main controller and both it and the Nunchuk controller include a three-axis motion sensor.

The Wii Remote controller also includes a speaker, rumble feature and expansion port, and can be used as a pointer within 5 meters of the screen. The Wii Remote controller has a power switch, d-pad, A, B, Minus, Home, 1 and 2 buttons. The Nunchuk controller includes an analogue control stick and C and Z buttons.

As you can imagine the addition of motion sensors brings a hold new sphere of how you



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interact with the console and so all the launch titles have been specifically designed to use this to its full ability.

Take the bundled Wii Sports for example, whether it's playing tennis, doing a spot of bowling (ten-pin not grass) or golf you've got to get physical and start swinging to succeed.

In practice, we found the amount of exercise varies depending on what you are playing. We actually found the tennis game hard to control perhaps in fear of smashing up our nearby surroundings, however playing things like Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess or Trauma Center: Under the Knife it virtually becomes second nature.

The argument that gaming is for couch potatoes is well and truly over.

The remotes are connected via Bluetooth meaning you'll get a 10 metre radius with which to work in, however you must be in visual shooting distance of the sensor that attaches to your television that picks up where you are in the room to relay your actions on to the screen.

It's a clever bit of kit and fairly accurate and doesn't rely, as with Real World Golf, for you to have to wear gloves and be attached to a series of wires.

What is attached to the Wii Remote is a second controller used in some, but not all games. We got to use it with Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess and in this game it is used for movement while the Remote is used to swashbuckle.

Again it does take some getting used to and those with poor eye-to-hand coordination aren't going to fair well as you've not got you use both hands independently to succeed. The downside is that there is going to be no spare hand for a beer anymore.

With 20 games slated for launch all with motion

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## At a glance

### What is it?

Next gen console from nintendo

### Good

Small, cute, interactive, cheap, innovative

### Bad

Graphics, lack of home entertainment features

### Verdict

Although the graphics aren't up to what gamers will be expecting for a next generation console, the gameplay and its interactivity will have you jumping around the living room with joy

**Price** £179.99

## Your score

??/10

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sensor elements the concept isn't a half hearted affair and in our play with Zelda, Trauma Center: Under the Knife, Wii Sports and Excite Truck it's clear that the addition of the controller will certainly make for some good gaming fun - especially when it comes to swashbuckling.

Graphics are, it has to be said, disappointing compared to those we've seen on the Xbox 360 and the PlayStation 3. If the Wii was a mobile phone it would be classed more 2.5G rather than 3G, however Nintendo state that it's gameplay rather than graphics that are its main focus.

And on the games we played, gameplay certainly does win out. Wii Sports, although a touch slow is a great game for showing what the new console can do. Likely to appeal to kids of all ages (including Grandma) the tennis game is surely to get you breaking a sweat.

Then there is Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess, which as with most Nintendo console launches is likely to draw in the crowds and ensure that the console sells well from day one.

We were given access to play a two-level demo of the game designed to show how the gamers will interact and gamers will be pleased to know that they won't be disappointed. Here the remote is used mainly as a sword with plenty of fencing manoeuvres coming in handy.

Showing its versatility even further, Excite Truck, another launch title, involves you turning the controller on its side to hold as if it were a handlebar and again makes it incredibly easy to control what is going on in front of you on the screen.

The final game we played was Trauma Center: Under the Knife, which like its DS counterpart is a sort of electronic version of Operation, where using your skill with the Wii Remote you have to perform operations on people within a given time.

## VERDICT

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these, a PlayStation 3 or an Xbox 360? If its graphics, traditional gameplay and home entertainment then its got to be the Xbox 360 or PS3 as, with their support for the competing next generation DVD formats and certainly more powerful graphics chips and processors, they win hands down.

However Nintendo, as it proved with the Nintendo DS, is far better at creating games that are interactive, unusual and creative.

Take Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess for example, with the promise of 80 hours of gameplay, Nintendo has still managed to sneak in a fishing game that sees you using the Wii Remote as a fishing rod.

When the Wii launches in December is it likely to be a huge success as it's not only affordable but will also offer wireless connectivity and the chance to play Nintendo games of yesteryear.

Although the graphics aren't up to what gamers will be expecting for a next generation of console, the gameplay and its interactivity will have you jumping around the living room for joy.