

## Video Game Review: ‘Monopoly Streets’ Expands on Classic Board Game

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on November 19, 2010 - 4:40pm

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CHICAGO – The classic board game “Monopoly” has never really gone away and yet there have been definite peaks in its popularity. I’m old enough to remember when they first introduced versions of the game that used different locations and thematic variations on the typical board, reigniting the game by appealing to a number of new fan based with versions based on “The Simpsons,” “Star Wars,” sports teams, major cities, and much more. In the fall of 2010, there’s been a definite effort to bring “Monopoly” back again with commercials touting phone apps related to the game, a new physical version, and the EA game “Monopoly Streets,” one of the more pleasant diversions of the season.

Why the return of one of the most beloved games of all time? It’s the 75th anniversary of Boardwalk, Park Place, and Reading Railroad and Hasbro is using the occassion to reignite passion for this timeless toy. The video game offers players the first chance to experience the game with a 3D representation. Instead of the classic board (although that variation is also available), players can speed through the world of Monopoly, building houses and hotels that actually appear to rise off the typically-flat playing surface.



Monopoly Streets  
Photo credit: EA





Monopoly Streets  
Photo credit: EA

The core of “Monopoly Streets” is simple enough but the title offers a surprising amount of variety considering its inspiration. Many video game versions of board-based titles merely make the player long for the physical experience of dice and pieces, often missing what works about the original. Such is not the case with “Monopoly Streets.” It’s not a perfect translation — there are some graphic and gameplay choices that feel a bit unrefined — but it will be a remarkably addictive title for those of you that have loved the game for decades now.

As for the aforementioned variety, the player will likely start with a game of the new 3D version with up to three other players (AI or human) that can vary in predetermined difficulty. With impressive graphics and generally sleek game presentation, the foundation of this street is strong. But it’s not long before you’ll likely experiment with the different variations on the standard game including one in which the player has an extra die to speed up play, one in which all properties are randomly handed out at the beginning, and one in which every sale takes place via auction. You can even create your own house rules, save them, and use them the next time the family picks up their controllers. The variety of gameplay in “Monopoly Streets” in terms of rules of play is possibly unmatched when it comes to titles like this one.

By playing games of Monopoly, the player earns points that can be used to unlock new boards or tokens. The extra boards are oddly unsatisfying and weird with “Cheese Board,” “Ice Board,” and “Jungle Board” being just a few options. How amazing would it be to have some of the pop culture-based boards included in “Monopoly Streets”? What about locations from “The Simpsons” or “Harry Potter” or “Star Wars”? I realize licensing might be an issue there but EA should pay whatever it takes and make such thematic boards a part of future DLC.

Finally, “Monopoly Streets” offers online play so you can take your trading and auctioning skills around the world. It won’t be long before you’ve exhausted the variety of “Monopoly Streets” but people don’t come to a game like this expecting depth (and, to be fair, this one offers way more of it than most similar titles). It’s a simple question you need to answer — do you like the game Monopoly? If so, I find it nearly impossible to believe that you won’t like “Monopoly Streets.” It does the classic board game proud.

*‘Monopoly Streets’ was developed by Hasbro and released by EA. It is rated E (Everyone). The version reviewed was for the PS3, but the title is also available for the XBox 360, PC, Nintendo Wii, and Nintendo DS. It was released on October 26th, 2010.*



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