

## Video Game Review: 'Naruto Shippuden: Ultimate Ninja Storm Generations'

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on March 21, 2012 - 10:52am

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CHICAGO – The manga series Naruto has been around for over a decade in several different forms of media and entertainment. The story about a young fighter who aspires to be the greatest ninja in his village, Naruto is part of a manga cartoon series, an animated show, a series of films, three novels, a trading card game, inspiration for art and music, and several video games.



The latest video game release, "Naruto Shippuden: Ultimate Ninja Storm Generations," is the newest in the fighting game series and brings a ton of exciting action to the gamer that already loves Naruto and for the player who has never heard of him before. The game features characters from the previous releases "Naruto: Ultimate Ninja Storm" and "Naruto Shippuden: Ultimate Ninja Storm 2," and the game was developed by CyberConnect2 (the same company that just brought us "Asura's Wrath").

Designed as a fighting game with an overarching narrative that leads you up to each battle you will partake in, "Ultimate Ninja Storm Generations" has some of the most fun I have ever had in a battle-type game. Designed as a 3D fighting game in which the camera can turn a whole 360 degrees and fighters can use large space for battle strategy, the fights are fast paced and gorgeous to look at. With 72 different character options in the game, each fight is exciting to battle through and seemingly new every single time you fight.



Naruto Shippuden: Ultimate Ninja Storm Generations  
Photo credit: Namco Bandai Games

"Naruto Shippuden: Ultimate Ninja Storm Generations" is designed with three major game modes: story mode, a plain fighting mode (free battle), and an online battle mode. The story mode is set up as a series of fights you must build through that are connected by cut scenes and narration explaining the reason why you are battling your enemy. When beginning story mode, you select which character's story you wish to play through, and as you complete each story mode, you open up more character stories that you can jump into.

When you begin, you have the option of three scenario's: The Tale of Naruto Uzumaki, The Tale of Young Naruto Uzumaki, and The Tale of Sasuke Uchiha. Each of the scenario's plays through in the same method (story told through animated cut scenes and narrating), but each of

the stories brings up different bosses and slightly different fighting styles. While it is nice to have the variation of these stories and the way the game is designed to tell story in order to warrant the battle, I will say the variation of the fighting could have been greater. There are only a small series of special attack moves for each character, and they are all controlled basically with one attack button. The strategy of the fights come more from your spacing, timing, and strategy tactics rather than the skill of attack combos. Combos still come in handy, but they do not deal out significant blows like you would see in a Tekken or Street Fighter game.

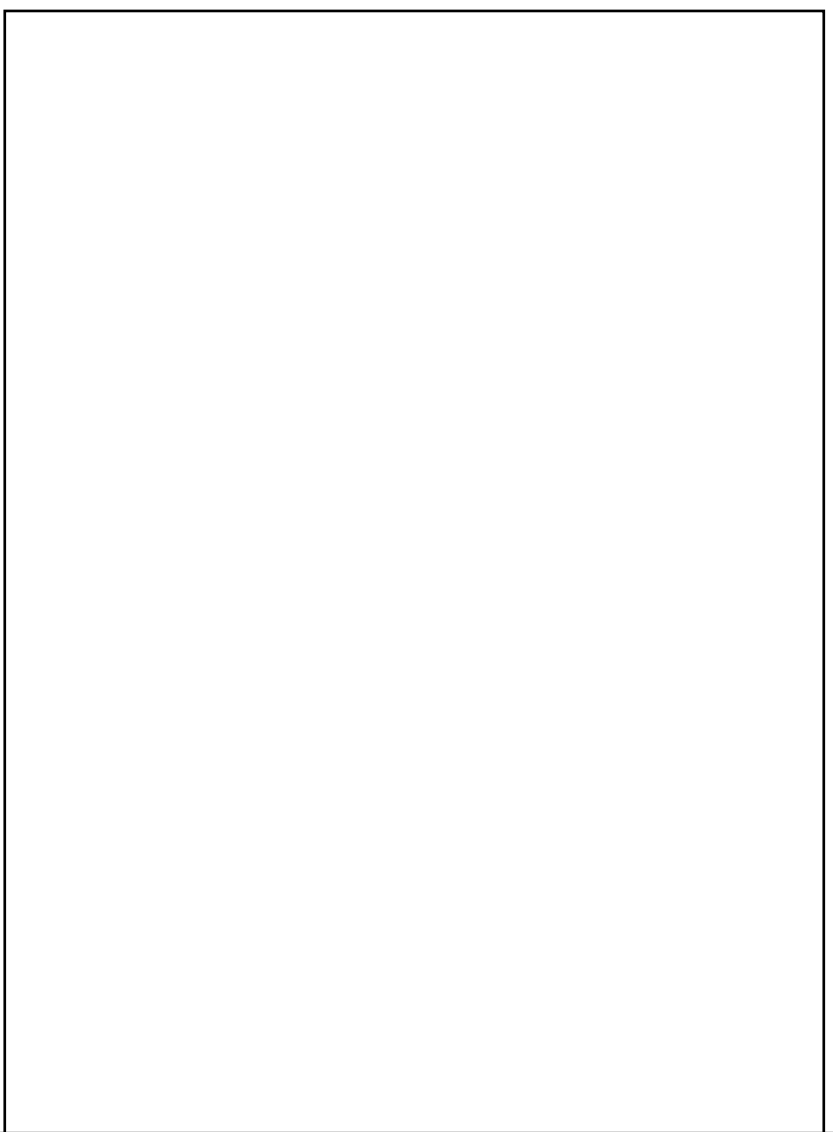


Naruto Shippuden: Ultimate Ninja Storm Generations  
*Photo credit: Namco Bandai Games*

While the variation in special attacks is somewhat limited, the game also adds in a substitution meter, used for having a partner jump in to add to a combo or briefly stop an enemy hit count, and an Awakening Mode, which is a moment of quick power up when you are nearly defeated. Both of these additions allow for a bit of cool strategy as far as fights go, keeping the variation in strategy. Calling in a teammate during fights is not new to fighting games, but the meter for the substitution is not normally seen. This creates new strategy as you are not able to consistently call on in your teammates whenever you want...you have to be patient and fight smart. The major flaw with this system is the time to wait for the substitution bar tends to slow down a fight a little bit. While these are nice to include in the game on principle, slowing the pace of a game that is meant to be high speed is somewhat counterproductive. It would also be nice to have a battle mode with teams of three or more (much like in Marvel vs. Capcom) rather than just having one character that can drop in for a quick attack, but you can't ever control.

The maps are visually stunning to fight in, while I would complain that they could have been a bit more creative. They look gorgeous, sure, but I would have liked to see some obstacles added to the maps. For instance, if you fight in a map with water, the water is only a few inches deep and you can walk easily across it. Some variation in the map style, like the inability to cross the water or maybe some objects like rocks or trees in the way during battle, would have kept the game fresh through more of the fights.

The game does have a lot of unlockable items, videos, and more that you can either buy or you are awarded for playing through the story modes. The new items keep the game fun and create a ton of playback value. If a player wants to unlock every part of this game, they will be playing through all of the story modes, and probably multiple times. Much of the unlockables come from Ryo, the currency within the game you are awarded for winning fights. The better the win, the more Ryo, so make sure you hone your skills and max out your Ryo potential.







Naruto Shippuden: Ultimate Ninja Storm Generations  
Photo credit: Namco Bandai Games

Previous Naruto fighting games also included a role-playing element to the game. This has been scrapped in “Ultimate Ninja Storms Generations,” creating an all-around fighting game sewn together by animated cut scenes and narrated storylines. While I didn’t mind this so much, as the fighting is the reason to buy the game in the first place, it should be noted for Naruto fans. The story mode will still tell the tales of your favorite young ninja, but you will only be listening to the stories, not playing through them.

While you may or may not be upset with the like of a role playing mode, you will not be upset with the fighting in this game, which is even more fun in online battle. The online battle includes ranked and unranked matches, as well as four-player and eight-player tournament battles. The tournaments are really fun to go through as defeating multiple enemies in the tournament style can prove your skill in the game, and players fighting online often have different strategies than what is consistently used over and over by the AI opponents in story mode. The online battles also include an endless mode and a card battle mode. The card battle mode incorporates the Naruto card game into the game. Players assign the trading cards to their characters and the cards battle before the fight takes place. The winning card in the card battle gives the character it was assigned to enhanced abilities that were listed on the playing card. It is clearly a marketing strategy the producers use to get players to buy more in the store, but it is fun for the die-hard Naruto fan nonetheless.

“Naruto Shippuden: Ultimate Ninja Storm Generations” may just be a simple fighting game surrounded by a narrated story, but it is extremely successful at that. The battles are gorgeous and thrilling to play through, the format of the fights (360 degrees of fighting on large scale maps) allows for different types of strategy than the usual fighting game, and the large amount of unlockables and characters provides a game that you will want to come back to again and again. Whether a huge Naruto fan or just a casual fighting game player, you will find plenty of enjoyment from the battles inside the world of “Ultimate Ninja Storm Generations.”

*“Naruto Shippuden: Ultimate Ninja Storm Generations” was developed by CyberConnect 2 and published by Namco Bandai Games. It was released on March 13, 2012 and is rated T for Teen. The version played for this review was on the Xbox 360, but the game is also available on the PS3.*



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