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METAL GEAR SOLID V THE PHANTOM PAIN

TACTICAL ESPIONAGE OPERATIONS

THE COMPLETE OFFICIAL GUIDE

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FOREWORD

「メタルギア」は今から28年前、MSX2というハードで産声を上げた。当時は前方から現れる敵をただひたすら反射神経で倒していく「シューティング・ゲーム」全盛の時代だった。そんな中、僕が創りたかったのは、敵地に「単身潜入する」という新しいコンセプトの頭を使った戦略アクションゲームだった。今でこそ、「メタルギア」は「ステルス・ゲーム」の祖として認知されている。しかし、最初に僕が目指したのはそこではない。当初の企画コンセプトでは「見つからないように進む」という部分をメインに置いていた訳ではないのだ。「単独で敵地に、如何に潜入し、任務を完了し、生還するか?」といった、まさに冒険小説のプロットをそのままゲームで体験したい、自分で戦略を立て、潜入ルート、潜入スタイル、脱出ルートまでを整えて自ら実行するという「潜入シミュレーター」がそもそもの狙いだった。とはいえ、当時のハードではその「自由な潜入」の再現は到底不可能だった。裏ロードどころか、MSX2では画面スクロールさえ出来なかった。そこで敵兵に視界を持たせ、プレイヤーを見つける(視界領域にプレイヤーが入ると)、攻撃してくるといふシンプルなアルゴリズムに入れ替える手法をとった。「ステルス」ゲームが誕生した歴史的瞬間ではあるが、僕がやりたかったのはあくまでも「自由潜入」だったのだ。最初の「メタルギア」はその第一歩に過ぎなかった。「ステルス」という要素はあくまでも「潜入」の一要素でしかない。式で表すなら「自由潜入」≧「ステルス」となる。その後、PS1で3Dポリゴン化された「MGS」は舞台が3D空間となり、音楽も音声も使えるようになり、リアルタイムに映画の演出ができるようになった。「MGS2」ではハードがPS2となり、雨や風などの環境をプラス。潜入の臨場感が格段に増した。「MGS3」では施設外であるジャングルから潜入プロセスを楽しめるようにサバイバルという要素も追加した。「MGS4」では動的に変化する戦場を経ての潜入が可能になった。「MGSPW」ではマザーベースというバックアップ機能の成長要素も付加された。このようにこの28年間、テクノロジーや時代と共に進化してきた「MGS」ではあるが、どれもリニアなゲームであったことに違いはない。今回、オープンワールドを可能とする「FOXエンジン」を開発、ようやくリニアではない、28年前に本来やりたかった「自由潜入」を実現出来たのが、「MGSV」なのだ。自分でマップを睨みながら、どう動くか? どのルートで潜入するか? 時間帯は? 装備は? ミッションの完遂方法は? 目的達成後はどうやってホットゾーンを離脱するのか? そして、自分の基地をどう運営するのか? これら冒険小説や冒険アクション映画での要素と醍醐味が全て網羅されている。まさに「MGSV」は「メタルギア」が始めた「潜入ゲーム」の集大成であるといえる。

また「メタルギア」はストーリーとテーマを語る初めてのリニアなアクションゲームとしても知られている。そのスタイルはシリーズを通して貫いてきた。だが本作は「自由潜入」であるため、ミッション中のカットシーンはなるべく抑える形(カットシーンの全尺はいつもと変わらず多いので心配ご無用)で、新しいストーリーテリングに挑戦している。「自由度」が高いアクションを能動的にプレイしながらも、数々のミッションを完遂していく中で、物語が進行するというもの。これまでの「メタルギア」が映画であったとするなら、本作はTVシリーズに近い印象を受けるだろう。

28年を経て「自由潜入」の完成系、リニアではない「自由潜入」と、その中で、新たなストーリーテリングを完成させることが出来た。

想像に難くないと思うが、本作の深さと複雑さを完全に理解するには全てを網羅するガイドが必要となるだろう。皆が手にしているこの攻略本は、私の友である、Piggybackと、MGSVの開発チームによる数カ月にわたる愛と努力の結晶だ。是非、堪能して貰いたい。



小島秀夫
Metal Gear Solid V 監督



Metal Gear made its first appearance on the MSX2 hardware 28 years ago. That was the era of the “shoot ‘em up”, a genre in which you defeat endless waves of enemies through sharp eye-to-hand reflexes. What I wanted to create at that time, though, was not a “shoot ‘em up” but a new type of intelligent, strategic action game, one in which you would sneak into enemy territory alone.

Nowadays, *Metal Gear* is known as the forerunner to the “stealth” genre. But my original goal was somewhat different. The primary concept was not only to progress in the game undetected; my goal was to design an “infiltration simulator”, in which you penetrate enemy territory alone, constantly having to figure out how to complete your mission and survive – an experience further enhanced by the presence of a plot similar to those of adventure novels.

The problem was that creating a game where each player could freely infiltrate enemy bases was impossible with the technology and hardware available at the time. There was no background loading, and even scrolling the screen was not possible on the MSX2. I therefore introduced the concept of “field of vision” to the game system – a simple algorithm that led enemies to attack as soon as they detect the player. This was a historical moment and the birth of the “stealth” genre.

What I really wanted to accomplish, however, was to offer the player the possibility of “free infiltration”. Stealth is only one aspect of infiltration. In mathematical terms, this might be expressed by the formula: “free infiltration ≧ stealth”. From that perspective, the original *Metal Gear* was simply the first step in a much longer process.

Later, the polygon-based *Metal Gear Solid* on PS1 was the first of the series to offer three-dimensional environments, with a musical score and voice-over. This made it possible to introduce real-time cinematics. *Metal Gear Solid 2* was released on PS2 with effects such as rain and wind, further fleshing out the environments required to enable proper infiltration. In *Metal Gear Solid 3*, the survival aspect was added to the formula, allowing the player to infiltrate different types of terrain, from jungles to buildings. *Metal Gear Solid 4* pushed the boundaries further by applying real-time changes to the battlefield. With *Metal Gear Solid: Peace Walker* we introduced the Mother Base, where you manage your own logistical support.

Throughout these 28 years the series has evolved as new technology has become available, although to date all previous games were linear. And so we developed the FOX Engine for *Metal Gear Solid V*, which made it possible to create an open world. Finally, I could revisit my original concept of “free infiltration” from all those years ago.

The result is a game where you look at your map and wonder: “Which route should I take? How do I reach my objective? At what time of the day? With what equipment? How do I complete this mission? How do I leave the hot zone once I’m done? And how do I run my own base?” *Metal Gear Solid V* is the culmination of all those “infiltration games” that started with the first in the series.

Metal Gear is also credited as one of the first linear action games with an extensive story and exploration of themes, and this has remained a big part of the entire series. But as *Metal Gear Solid V* is a “free infiltration” game, the number of cutscenes in missions has been reduced. Rest assured that the total story length is as before; I simply introduced a new narrative style. In this game, you play with a high degree of flexibility, and the story progresses incrementally as you complete missions. If previous installments were each a movie, *Metal Gear Solid V* is an episodic TV series.

It has taken me 28 years to perfect the formula of combining non-linear infiltration with adventure novel storytelling, and the result is *MGSV*, a game with unprecedented freedom of action and a new narrative approach. As you can imagine, the astonishing depth and complexity of the full experience begs for an extensive guide. The book you hold in your hands is the result of many months of love and labor from our great friends at Piggyback and our team. Enjoy!

Hideo Kojima
Director, *Metal Gear Solid V*

[!] CONTENTS



This chapter is designed to help you develop a good level of proficiency with the core systems encountered during the first dozen or so hours of play; it offers concise and accessible introductions to the features that matter most.



A visual guide to completing all main missions, both on your first attempt and on replays. This chapter has large annotated maps, which highlight essential points of interest and tactical opportunities.



Guidance for all side ops, featuring annotated screenshots and practical advice.

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Detailed coverage of all aspects of Mother Base – both the physical facilities that you can visit at any time, and the virtual space that hosts *MGSV*'s endlessly rich management metagame.

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A comprehensive reference chapter that studies the many concepts that lie beneath the surface of the game, from detailed enemy analysis to systems and mechanics that are entirely hidden.

UPDATE NOTICE

We have taken every step to ensure that the contents of this guide are correct at time of press. However, subsequent updates to *Metal Gear Solid V* may contain adjustments, gameplay balancing and even feature additions that cannot be anticipated at time of writing.

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In this **spoiler-heavy** chapter, we offer a list of secrets, Easter eggs and fun facts, as well as an extensive analysis of the entire *Metal Gear* series to date.

QUICKSTART

You will find a brief "Quickstart" section overleaf. This explains how you can use the guide in an optimal way.

[!] QUICKSTART

Metal Gear Solid V is a nonlinear adventure in which the stealth action that defines the series has been transplanted into giant, multifaceted sandbox environments. Trust us when we say that this game is astonishingly vast. Its main storyline alone may take over 40 hours to complete; in addition, there are countless side ops, the engrossing Mother Base management metagame, and a great many other optional tasks and activities to discover and enjoy.

If you have never played a similarly open-ended game before, or if you have only played episodes of the series that were more straightforward, you might find the amount of freedom that *Metal Gear Solid V* offers a little daunting. This is why we have prepared a chapter specifically to help you get to grips with the pacing of the game and its various systems: the **Primer**, which begins overleaf.

We do recommend that you take the time to read the Primer chapter, irrespective of whether you are a newcomer to the series or an expert *Metal Gear* player. You can then advance through the guide, as illustrated by the accompanying diagram. Use this to identify which chapters of the book will be most relevant to you at the various stages of your progress through the game.

[!] DYNAMIC DIFFICULTY

Metal Gear Solid V employs a dynamic difficulty system, where your individual actions and play style can lead to subtle but functionally significant changes in the challenges you face. Favor headshots, and enemies will more regularly wear helmets; infiltrate via undefended routes whenever possible, and guards may lay minefields at critical points on base perimeters. Use of gas and smoke begets the provisioning of gas masks; twilight incursions will cause commanders to equip sentries with night-vision goggles; lethal force could lead you to encounter foes clad in body armor. In short, the A.I. opponents that you face continually adapt and evolve in response to your actions.

This feature has influenced the format of our Walkthrough chapter. While we still provide many of the staples of a conventional walkthrough, we eschew a proscriptive “go there, do that” approach in favor of flexible map-based observations and strategies. On your first journey through a mission, we offer the tools you’ll need to follow the story and complete feasible objectives without too much difficulty. Later, you can return to the same pages for assistance with securing a high grade, and to complete optional Mission Tasks that might have been too hard (or even impossible) during your earlier attempt. We do not provide micromanaged step-by-step solutions for the simple reason that we cannot: *MGSV*’s adaptive difficulty features and endlessly variable A.I. behavior makes it an impossible task. What we can and *do* offer, though, is all the intel and analysis you need to make your own informed decisions.

[!] SEARCH & NAVIGATION TOOLS

Index

If you are keen to play with a minimum of assistance, you can use our comprehensive Index at the back of this book to jump to a topic of interest whenever you need a hint or specific piece of information.

Vertical Tab

The vertical tab on the right-hand margin of each double-page spread is a navigational tool designed to help you find your way around the guide. The top section lists the individual chapters, while the lower section highlights the major sections of the chapter you are reading. You can also use the Contents section at the start of the guide to find your topics of interest.

EXTRAS CHAPTER PAGE 322

A spoiler-heavy chapter that offers a list of secrets, Easter eggs and fun facts, as well as an extensive analysis of the entire *Metal Gear* series to date.

6 WALKTHROUGH CHAPTER PAGE 46

Armed with your new knowledge and experience, you can return to these pages for assistance in securing high scores and completing all remaining Mission Tasks.

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- QUICKSTART
- PRIMER
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1 PRIMER CHAPTER PAGE 8

Approachable "lessons" that cover pillar gameplay elements to help you acquire a solid competence with systems encountered early in the game – an essential read for all players, even those who have mastered previous episodes.

2 WALKTHROUGH CHAPTER PAGE 46

Designed to guide you in your first playthrough, with large annotated maps highlighting essential points of interest and tactical opportunities.

3 SIDE OPS CHAPTER PAGE 202

Guidance for all side ops, offering annotated screenshots and practical advice to enable you to complete them without difficulty.

MOTHER BASE CHAPTER PAGE 244

Studies all aspects of Mother Base in great detail – both the physical facilities that you can visit at any time, and the virtual space that hosts *MGSV*'s rewarding management metagame.

5 REFERENCE & ANALYSIS CHAPTER PAGE 286

The game's most complex systems disassembled and clearly explained, enabling you to better understand everything that happens while you are deployed in the field.

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OGS

PRIMER

Once you progress beyond the scene-setting, breathless action of its prologue, which also acts as a tutorial for primary functions and controls, *Metal Gear Solid V* opens up in a spectacular fashion, offering an unprecedented level of freedom. You are given license not only to roam at will and act on whim whenever you encounter something of interest, but also to complete missions in the order (and, more importantly, manner) that you see fit.

With a wealth of new systems, management features and customization options introduced at regular intervals, the richness and density of the full *MGSV* experience is astonishing – potentially overwhelming, even, unless you acquire good habits and learn how to use the many abilities at your disposal from an early stage.

This chapter is designed to help readers acquire a solid competence with the core systems encountered during the first dozen or so hours of play, offering concise and accessible introductions to the features that matter most – and many of those that are less critical, but are fun to experiment with. Separated into approachable “lessons” that cover pillar gameplay elements, you are free to dip into the chapter on demand, as circumstances lead you to reach for this guide. If you really want the best possible start, though, you can instead read it in its entirety to gain every possible advantage during the early missions.



BASICS: COMMANDS

The following tables describe all commands as performed with the game's default "Action Type" settings active. You can change this if you wish by visiting the Options menu: Options → Select Control Type → Control Settings.

Throughout this guide, we use the same button icons as those employed in the game. To avoid confusion and convoluted lists of buttons and keys, we reference console button commands only. If you are playing on PC and you don't already own one, we can't understate the difference that a good twin-stick pad will make, enabling you to play *Metal Gear Solid V* as its creators intended. PlayStation 4, Xbox One or Xbox 360 controllers are all excellent choices. Note that the shoulder buttons are inverted by default on PlayStation 3 controllers compared to PlayStation 4 controllers. **L2** and **R2** on PlayStation 4 controllers correspond to **L1** and **R1** respectively on PlayStation 3 controllers. We prioritize PlayStation 4 button icons throughout this guide, so keep this in mind if you play on PlayStation 3.

Default Key Commands

PS4/PS3	XBOX ONE/ XBOX 360	GAMEPLAY	MENUS
L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Move Big Boss (press lightly for a slower, quieter pace, firmly for maximum but noisier speed) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Navigate through menus and iDroid map
R	R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Camera control Aim weapon Select gear (when changing currently equipped weapon or item) Select option (for Buddy commands and interactions, or when interrogating a restrained or compliant opponent) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While on the iDroid, you can use this stick to look around in first-person view without closing the interface – useful if there is a danger that an adversary might discover you
+	+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tap to equip Primary Weapon; press again to cycle between the two available options Hold to see available Primary Weapons (and equip one with R) Change zoom level while looking through the binoculars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Navigate through menus
+	+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tap to equip Secondary Weapon; tap again to cycle through the two choices Hold to see available Secondary Weapons (and equip one with R) Change zoom level while looking through the binoculars 	
+	+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tap to equip the current selected Item Hold to see all available Items (and equip one with R) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Navigate through menus Change view or map orientation on iDroid map
+	+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tap to equip Support Weapon Hold to see all available Support Weapons (and equip one with R) Activate flashlight (while aiming weapon) 	
X	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change Stance (tap to crouch or stand back up from crouched position, hold to crawl or to stand back up from prone position) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm selection Place/Remove marker on iDroid map
○	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reload weapon (tap) Pick up weapon or body/person (hold) Place carried body/person on ground (hold) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go back
□	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quick dive Change between Primary and Secondary Weapon (while aiming) Attach/Detach weapon suppressor in equipment menus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -
△	Y	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Context-sensitive actions Extract target with the Fulton Recovery Device (hold) Play dead/Stealth Mode (while prone) Attach/Detach weapon flashlight in equipment menus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toggle Map/Nav mode on iDroid map
L1 (PS4) L2 (PS3)	LB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold to interact with Buddy or knock to lure enemy (select with R, confirm with R3/RT) Interrogate (while restraining or holding up a soldier) Activate intel radio (also available while using binoculars and focusing on specific points of interest) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change tab on iDroid menus
L2 (PS4) L1 (PS3)	LT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aim weapon Place/Remove marker and request tactical support while using binoculars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zoom in on iDroid map
R1 (PS4) R2 (PS3)	RB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold to use binoculars While aiming weapon: press to switch in and out of first-person view and look through weapon scopes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change tab on iDroid menus
R2 (PS4) R1 (PS3)	RT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fire weapon (while aiming) CQC (tap to punch; hold to grab enemy) Throw carried body 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zoom out on iDroid map
L3	LT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sprint (tap while moving with L) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Center iDroid map on Big Boss
R3	RT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quickly cycle through zoom levels while looking through binoculars or scopes Toggle shoulder view Hold to zoom in while in third-person view 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust zoom level on iDroid map
 SELECT		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Display Pause menu 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resume gameplay (while in Pause menu) Display Help in iDroid menus
 OPTIONS / START		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Display iDroid menu 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resume gameplay (while in iDroid menu)

D-Horse and Vehicle Controls

PS4/PS3	XBOX ONE/ XBOX 360	D-HORSE	VEHICLES	PS4/PS3	XBOX ONE/ XBOX 360	D-HORSE	VEHICLES
L	L	Move D-Horse	Steer vehicle	○	X	Gallop at full speed	-
R	R	Camera control	Camera control/Aim vehicle-mounted gun (if available)	△	Y	Mount/Dismount D-Horse	Enter/Exit vehicle
+	+	-	Select primary vehicle-mounted gun (if available)	L1 (PS4) L2 (PS3)	LB	Hold to interact with D-Horse (select option with R)	Fire vehicle-mounted gun (if available)
+	+	-	Select secondary vehicle-mounted gun (if available)	L2 (PS4) L1 (PS3)	LT	-	Brake/Reverse
+	+	-	Turn headlights on/off	R1 (PS4) R2 (PS3)	RB	-	Change view
X	A	Hide/Return upright	Hide/Return upright	R2 (PS4) R1 (PS3)	RT	-	Accelerate
○	B	Dash	-	R3	LT	Change hiding position	-

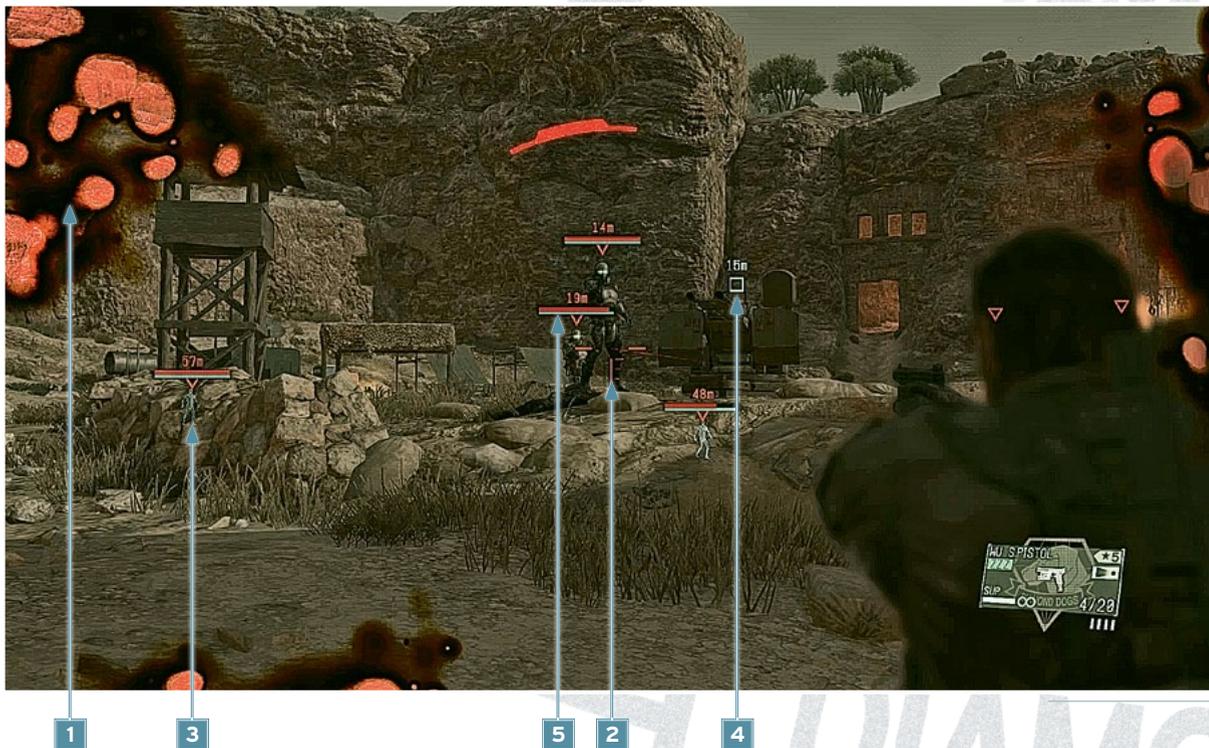
Moves List

	MOVE	BUTTON COMMAND	NOTES
MOVEMENT	Walk/run/sneak/crawl	L	Tilt slightly to creep (quiet), more firmly to move faster (noisy).
	Sprint	L3 /	While moving, press L3 / once to break into a sprint. You can interrupt a sprint by releasing the stick, changing stance, or performing a quick dive.
	Change stance	X / A	From a standing position, tap once to crouch or hold to lie down. While crouching, tap once to stand or hold to lie down. While prone, tap once to crouch, hold to stand up.
	Roll	L2 / (hold) + L3 / (hold) + L	While prone and aiming, hold L3 / and tilt L left or right to roll sideways.
	Quick dive	/ X	Dive forward, which can be used to escape the gaze of suspicious enemies (immediately placing you in a less visible prone position) or to quickly move behind cover.
	Climb	A / Y	Tap to climb or vault over appropriate objects (walls, fences, ladders) when the onscreen prompt appears.
	Move camera	R	Moving the camera around freely is very useful to observe the environment.
	Context-sensitive actions	/ B (hold)	When in close proximity to multiple interactive objects (weapons and bodies to pick up, for instance), adjust the camera until the icon corresponding to the action you require is displayed.
STEALTH	Use binoculars	R1 / RB (hold)	While looking through the binoculars, look around with and press or to change the zoom level. Activate intel radio with / when looking at points of interest. Use / to place and remove geographical markers and request tactical support.
	Mark enemies and objects	R3 /	While looking through the binoculars, you can mark a target by focusing on it for a second or two (zooming in if required); you can also mark it simply by keeping it at the center of the screen at close range.
	Play dead/Stealth Mode	A / Y	While prone and not moving, this makes it even harder for enemies to identify Big Boss.
	Press against surface/ Take cover	L	Face a surface and tilt L in its direction to press against it and take cover.
	Jump-out shot	L2 / (hold) + R2 /	While pressed against a surface, use the standard command to jump out and shoot as required. Release the buttons to switch back to cover.
	Pick up/drop body	/ B (hold)	While standing close to a body, hold this button to pick it up. This is used to remove a body from the view of potential patrols, or to move a person to a specific location. While carrying, hold the button again to place them on the ground.
	Throw body	R2 /	While carrying a body, press R2 / to throw it forward.
	Use support weapon	L2 / (hold) + R2 /	The commands are broadly the same as for shooting.
	Knock to lure enemies	/ (hold) + R +	If you hold / , you can activate the Knock function to lure nearby soldiers to your current position.
	Use Fulton Recovery Device	A / Y (hold)	Standing next to an extractable target (such as a tranquilized soldier), hold the button to send the individual or object back to Mother Base with a Fulton balloon; note the percentage that indicates the likelihood of success. Heavy items such as vehicles can only be extracted after developing the necessary Fulton upgrades. Also note that balloons can alert nearby guards. When more than one extraction target is found in close proximity, hold the button as you move around to automatically Fulton them one after the other.
ADVANCED TRAVERSAL	Jump	L + A / Y	Only possible when the context-sensitive icon appears onscreen. Used to hop between adjacent surfaces separated by a manageable gap.
	Grip edges	A / Y	Tap when close to gaps or ledges when the appropriate icon appears to hang over the edge.
	Shimmy	L	While hanging, you can shimmy left or right.
	Drop down	X / A	While hanging, tap to drop down from a ledge.
	Grab ledges	A / Y	While falling, tap to grab ledges or ladders within grasp.
	Climb up	A / Y	While hanging, tap to climb back up.
COMBAT	Aim weapon	L2 / (hold)	Once in aiming stance, you can adjust the crosshair with R and move around as usual with L. This also applies to thrown items such as magazines and grenades.
	Toggle aim mode	R1 / RB	While aiming a weapon, tap to switch in and out of first-person view. Also used to switch to a weapon's scope view, if applicable.
	Fire/Throw projectile	R2 /	While aiming a weapon or projectile, press to use it.
	Flashlight		While aiming a weapon mounted with a flashlight (L3 / held), press to turn it on or off. Flashlights can blind enemies, but they also make you more visible.
	Shoulder view	R3 /	While aiming a weapon, press R3 / to move the camera position to the opposite shoulder.
	Change magnification	R3 /	While wielding a weapon with a scope via the first-person view, press R3 / to change the magnification level.
	Reload weapon	/ B	Tap to reload manually. You will also reload automatically whenever you empty a clip.
CQC (CLOSE QUARTERS COMBAT)	Stun	L + R2 /	Move towards an opponent and tap R2 / to throw them to the ground or against a wall and stun them.
	Punch	R2 / (repeatedly)	While close to an enemy, press R2 / repeatedly to perform a combo and stun them.
	Hold up	L2 /	Aim your weapon at a soldier's back while in close proximity to hold them up. Once they have raised their hands, you can stop aiming at them.
	Restrain	R2 / (hold)	Grab and restrain an opponent at very close range by holding R2 / . You can then move around as required with the button held, albeit at a much slower pace, and even use your victim as a human shield in combat.
	Interrogate	/ (hold)	While holding up or restraining an opponent, hold / then select an option (left side of screen) with R and R3 / .
	Choke	R2 / (repeatedly)	While restraining an opponent, rapidly tap R2 / repeatedly to choke your victim and stun them.
EQUIPMENT & BUDDIES	Slit throat	A / Y	While restraining an opponent, press A / Y to slit their throat.
	Collect items/equipment	/ B (hold)	Hold the button to pick up a collectible. You will automatically pick up ammo for weapons in your inventory whenever you move close to a supply of the appropriate variety (such as a weapon dropped by an enemy, or an ammo box).
	Quick change		Quickly equip items and weapons by tapping in the corresponding direction. corresponds to Primary Weapons, to Secondary Weapons, to Support Weapons, and to Items. Tapping multiple times in a direction will make you cycle through all available items in that category, or equip/unequip if you have only one.
	Manual change	(hold)	Hold in any of the four main compass directions to see all available items in the corresponding equipment category (see previous entry) and select one with R. For applicable Primary and Secondary Weapons, you can attach/detach suppressors and flashlights by pressing / and A / Y respectively.
	Interact with Buddy	/ (hold)	Hold the button to see a list of possible interactions with your current Buddy. Select one by pressing R in the required direction, then press R3 / .
Supply drop	iDroid	From the Missions tab of your iDroid, you can order supply drops to refill your stocks of ammo and suppressors, or change your current equipment while in the field. This is an essential function: neglect it at your peril.	

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[!] BASICS: ONSCREEN DISPLAY

The following annotated screenshots show typical gameplay screens.



- 1 Health Display:** Whenever Big Boss is hurt, blood stains and distortion mark the outer edges of the screen. These visual indicators grow in size and are accompanied by a palette shift towards red as you sustain further injuries. Taking one too many hits will cause Big Boss to die, necessitating a return to the last recorded checkpoint. If you find cover and remain still without taking further damage, though, the marks will slowly recede in accordance with Big Boss's recovery. Severe injuries sometimes require you to perform emergency medical procedures by pressing **△/○** when the prompt appears at the bottom of the screen.
- 2 Crosshair:** When you aim your weapon by holding **L2/T**, a white crosshair appears. The inner portion of the crosshairs represents the weapon's spread – in other words, the area where bullets can potentially be fired when you pull the trigger. The spread is limited if you stand still, leading to heightened accuracy, but it expands while you are on the move, as depicted by the increase in the size of the crosshairs.
- 3 Marked Target:** Enemies that you identify with your binoculars are marked with a red triangle. In the event that a hostile catches a glimpse of Big Boss and moves to investigate, their triangle will blink until they return to their position or patrol. This system has multiple benefits, as you can continue to monitor marked enemies even through walls, both via the icon above their head and the intermittently refreshed outline of their bodies. All targets remain marked even if you die and restart from a checkpoint, so thoroughly cataloging all enemies in any area that you infiltrate is generally of paramount importance. Prisoners that you have to extract are also marked with a triangle icon, but these are green instead of red, making them easy to distinguish. Mission objectives that you mark are highlighted with a yellow circle.
- 4 Object Marker:** White icons are used to represent extractable items such as vehicles or turrets. These appear when you are in their immediate vicinity, or if you identify them from afar with your binoculars.
- 5 Boss Health Display:** Boss enemies have two bars above their heads. The red one corresponds to their health, and is depleted by lethal weapons (represented with a red icon: **DMG**). The blue one corresponds to their stamina, and is depleted by non-lethal weapons (represented with a blue icon: **ZZZ & STN**). You must fully deplete either gauge to defeat these opponents.

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6 Alert Icon: Whenever an enemy has identified you, an exclamation mark appears on the screen and time slows down for a few seconds, providing a chance to silence the guard in question before they can open fire or raise the alarm. This is called Reflex Mode. Try to make this window of opportunity count by holding **L2/D** and aligning a clean headshot, or by stunning the hostile with CQC (close quarters combat) moves if you have time to close the gap.

7 Suspicion Indicator: Outside of active combat, a distinctive white circular arc appears whenever an enemy hears or catches a glimpse of Big Boss, but has yet to identify him as an intruder. Whenever this happens, your immediate reaction should usually be to move calmly out of your opponent's field of vision, often crouching or crawling to reduce the possibility of detection. The white arc remains visible while the enemy still has you in sight, or until their concerns are assuaged by a long, hard look, or after walking over to investigate. The most intense section of the arc indicates the position of a hostile in relation to Big Boss. If it's at the top, the suspicious enemy is in front of him. If it's at the bottom, they are behind him, and so forth. It's a simple and intuitive system that you'll grasp very quickly. A similar display format is used to show where incoming projectiles are arriving from when you are under fire, except that the arcs are red instead of white.

8 Weapon/Item Window: Shows the currently selected weapon or item. Quickly equip one by tapping **○** in the corresponding direction, or hold **○** in any direction to see all available items of that category (and select one with **Ⓢ**). **Ⓢ** corresponds to Primary Weapons, **Ⓢ** to Secondary Weapons, **Ⓢ** to Support Weapons, and **Ⓢ** to Items.

9 Context-Sensitive Action: Whenever you can perform a context-sensitive action, a corresponding icon will appear on the screen. This could be a fence that you can vault, a body you can pick up, a ladder that you can climb, an individual that you can Fulton extract, a turret that you can man, and so forth. Press or hold the displayed button to perform the illustrated action.

[!] LESSON #01: GAME STRUCTURE

Unlike most of its predecessors, *Metal Gear Solid V* is a nonlinear adventure in which the stealth action that defines the series has been transplanted into giant, multifaceted sandbox environments. The *Metal Gear* games have always tacitly encouraged (and often rewarded) experimentation and “gaming” of their systems, with an onus on repeat play and perfecting tricks and techniques, but the depth, variety and level of freedom offered by this latest and greatest installment is truly astonishing. This statement is not lazy hyperbole: the authors of this guide, with thousands of hours of cumulative play time, would assert that it’s a simple fact.

It is also a game that reveals its layers gradually, ever evolving as your understanding grows. Every time that you suspect that you have a command of what it does and how to beat it, something new arrives. This continues for dozens of hours. It’s daunting, it’s exhilarating, it’s endlessly fun.

We would suggest that players of all ability levels approach *MGSV* with the following five simple guidelines in mind:

1. You will not completely master missions on your first attempt, or probably on your second or third, so don’t even try. This doesn’t mean that you won’t be amply rewarded for whatever measure of success you attain. Later, *much* later, you can return, replay and truly ace each challenge in turn, but this is something that you earn with hours upon hours of absorbing experience, advancement and experimentation.
2. **There is no wrong way to play.** Stealth, speed and efficiency are good. Stealth, speed and efficiency are best. But cutting loose with heavy weapons, gadgets and creatively explosive mayhem can be enjoyable, cathartic and instructive.
3. On your first playthrough, trust your whims. Be creative. When things go awry, don’t return to the most recent checkpoint: just *roll with it*. This is a game where tribulations can be just as spectacular and satisfying as the triumphs.
4. “If it makes sense, try it – it’s probably possible” is a mantra that defines everything that makes *MGSV* great. This guide will be with you every step of the way when you need advice, useful tips or exhaustive analysis of underlying systems. But don’t ever be reticent to try something unusual – and then celebrate, self-commiserate or even laugh uproariously at the results.
5. Point 4 is so very critical, it bears repeating.

After the linear opening prologue and cinematics that set the scene, the first “true” mission places Big Boss in the Afghanistan sandbox on a long, multi-objective venture. Even the best players will burn at least an hour on this, but often much more. After that, you are offered a formal introduction to Mother Base: the offshore platform that Big Boss, his close cohorts and his Diamond Dogs troops will call home for the rest of the story. Mother Base is an entire game in its own right, with options to expand its facilities, conduct R&D to create new and innovative equipment, and later send Big Boss’s troops on virtual missions – and more besides, all feeding back into the main game in one way or another. To head back to Afghanistan, the primary theater of operations for the first fifteen or so hours of the main storyline, you use a helicopter hub called the Aerial Command Center – ACC. From here, you can select missions, side ops, access Mother Base features, and deploy wherever you please. This ACC is a port of call you will return to regularly.

For the rest, you generally move between locales on horseback. This is where you will learn the ropes in the early missions – but it’s up to you, and you alone, to decide in which order, when and exactly *how* you complete them.

Between main missions and side ops, the often short but enjoyable and rewarding secondary activities, you can freely explore almost every inch of the map, travelling its vast expanses and scouring its numerous points of interest for resources and collectibles. You will encounter outposts, military facilities, power stations, prisons, palaces, and many other unique settings, each with their own distinctive layout, defenses, and rewards. As the story progresses, you can also head back to Mother Base at any time to visit key characters or trigger important cutscenes – or simply to explore, take showers, and boost morale among the soldiers stationed there with the very presence of the living legend that is Big Boss.

One thing you have to realize about *Metal Gear Solid V* is that it is astonishingly vast – more sizable than you might even expect based on the evidence of its first hours. Completing the main storyline alone will probably take anything between 40 and 60 hours, to which you can add the time it takes to complete all side ops, develop Mother Base to its full potential, and to enjoy all of the other optional tasks and endeavors. With so much to behold and manifold features and systems to learn, it might take a good 10 to 15 hours before you can get a sense of the game’s true scope and sheer generosity of unique events and possibilities.

If you have never played a similarly open-ended game before, or if you have only played episodes of the series that were more straightforward, you can be forgiven for feeling a little overwhelmed during the early stages of *Metal Gear Solid V*. The amount of freedom that it offers can be daunting, no doubt about it. What we can tell you right now is that all the ingredients that made the *Metal Gear* series so popular and famous are all present in *The Phantom Pain* – but with countless new elements that complement, and never complicate, all of the great things that we know and love.





Missions

Most main missions in *Metal Gear Solid V* are long and demanding assignments, featuring at least one mandatory objective (extracting a prisoner, for example, or destroying a convoy), though often more, and usually a handful of optional objectives. All designated goals are referred to as Mission Tasks [01], and you can view these on the Missions tab of the iDroid interface.

While any objective that you complete is ticked off in real time, only the mandatory requirements appear by default. The others only become visible during a mission once you have fulfilled them on a first playthrough, but they are always revealed after the mission ends. Our Walkthrough chapter offers advice for all Mission Tasks, of course, but we understand that some readers may wish for a minimal level of assistance while playing them for the first time. If this describes you, a few words of wisdom: there are many instances where you simply cannot complete certain objectives on a debut playthrough, and others where the optional tasks will make the mission far more difficult or extend its duration to a significant degree.

Discovering the more accessible optional objectives on your own initiative usually entails exploring every building and structure, neutralizing the majority of guards to do so. If you opt for pure stealth, you can even interrogate enemy soldiers, many of whom will reveal information on the position of weapons, prisoners or officers that may be of direct or indirect use for the completion of Mission Tasks. We detail the interrogation process in our section dedicated to stealth (see page 20).

To begin a mission, you must either select it from the Missions menu while on board the ACC (and then, where applicable, select a suitably nearby landing zone), or travel to a mission start point by means of feet, hooves or wheels to initiate proceedings while free roaming in the area. To formally complete the mission in question, all you have to do then is fulfil its mandatory objectives. Taking care of additional Mission Tasks will lead to further rewards and bonuses to your final rating, but this is by no means necessary.

Your mission score is determined by your performance in multiple categories. The exact formula behind each score is quite complex, but

all you need to know for now is that *MGSV*'s mission rating system is often at its most generous when rewarding speed, stealth and mercy. In time, and with repeat play, you will learn the lay of the land and gain the ability to ghost through mission areas rapidly without a single detection, merely incapacitating opponents as you encounter them – if you even disturb them at all. On a first playthrough, though, just be content to enjoy yourself without feeling any pressure to attain a high rating. Your final mission score is translated into a grade, ranging from the worst possible E to the best possible S (the exact hierarchy being: E-D-C-B-A-S).

Side Ops

Side ops are secondary activities that are usually much shorter and less complicated than main missions. They typically feature a single objective, such as eliminating an armored unit or extracting a person of note. Though these assignments can be completed quickly, there are over 150 of them in total – so fulfilling all of these commissions is no trivial feat.

Other than one side op flagged as “Important” that is a mandatory step required to advance the main storyline, all other side ops are entirely optional. It is up to you to decide if you attempt to complete them at all, and if so, when. As a rule, all side ops are unlocked at a time when you can successfully complete them in terms of difficulty, so there’s nothing that should stop you from doing so whenever you decide to.

The key factor to take into account with side ops is not so much their difficulty, but the sheer distances that you must travel between them. Indeed, you will soon realize that the game’s play area is vast, and moving from one point to another can take quite a while. We have a section entirely dedicated to the topic of travel and navigation (see page 32), but for now all you need to know is that it usually makes sense to fulfill side ops whenever you are close to them. We strongly suggest that you make a habit of checking which side ops you have access to in-between missions, completing all those that are local or can be found *en route* to your next destination. As a fringe benefit, this will encourage free roaming at regular intervals, with all the plunder and essential practice that this entails.

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Free Exploration

02



Outside of missions, you are free to roam around and explore the game's map as you please – and you should, because it's packed with surprises and secrets. While it's possible to just race through the game, speeding towards the conclusion of the main storyline, doing so will deny you the chance to fully observe and explore the intricately constructed environments. A great deal of the fun in *MGSV* comes from the sheer range of possibilities the game offers, from tactics (optional routes through areas, back entrances, alternative strategies), to bonuses (hidden locations or objects, entirely optional battles) and Easter eggs.

Whenever you travel over the map, you will generally find points of interest on your way (including occasional enemy patrols, snipers and vehicles moving between bases, so it pays to be vigilant). Even the tiniest outpost in the game comes with at least a few collectibles and resources that you can retrieve, and a handful of soldiers that you can extract to Mother Base [02]. Performing impromptu raids or reconnoitering the places that you find (or revisit) can provide valuable resources and operational experience – for example, destroying anti-air radar vehicles unlocks new landing zones for your chopper, and blowing up communication devices prevents your enemies from calling reinforcements. This will both fuel the growth of Mother Base, and provide valuable insights and tactics that you can employ when you return during missions or side ops.

The best part of this is that free roaming is a highly enjoyable activity in and of itself. With no grade to aspire to, no pressure beyond your personal objectives, you can let your creative or destructive tendencies run wild and just see what happens. It's also a great way to try out new equipment developed by the R&D team back at Mother Base.

Mother Base

03



Mother Base is Big Boss's headquarters and home to his Diamond Dogs forces and support staff [03]. You will often return to this hub after important missions, and will find that there are story cutscenes to view and side ops to participate in as you make progress in the main storyline.

Though you are free to explore its physical dimensions, marveling at the scale and sights as you add new facilities, Mother Base is primarily a *virtual* space that you interact with via *MGSV*'s endlessly rich management metagame. You can summon the administrative commands for Mother Base by selecting the appropriate tab on the main iDroid menu. Not all options are fully available during the early hours of the game, and many feature subsets are unlocked when you hit specific progress milestones.

Mother Base management broadly consists of several interdependent systems:

- **Staff Management:** Every time you extract an enemy soldier from the field with a Fulton balloon, he is transferred to Mother Base where he joins your Diamond Dogs forces. This new recruit is then automatically assigned to the unit that best suits their individual skills (R&D, Support, et al.), though you can manually transfer or fire staff at will. The more recruits you have in each team, the better these divisions will perform – which leads to considerable (and varied) benefits in both the management simulation and main game.
- **Combat Deployment:** You can send your best soldiers (those assigned to the Combat Unit) on virtual missions. The successful completion of these commissions grants you valuable rewards, such as the primary GMP currency, processed materials, medicinal plants, and new recruits that you can put to work immediately.
- **Development:** The funds and resources you obtain in the field and from Combat Deployment missions can be used to develop new weapons and equipment, not to mention upgrades for those you already own. New technology often makes a world of difference during main missions and side ops, but innovations and improvements come at a cost – your ability to research and manufacture new equipment is “gated” by the relative scarcity of the required resources (particularly GMP). It definitely pays to choose projects wisely in the early stages of the story to avoid shortages in currency and key materials.
- **Base Facilities:** By accruing sufficient funds and resources, you can gradually build new platforms for your Mother Base, expanding maximum staff limits and, therefore, the productivity and potential of the Diamond Dogs operation as a whole. Some new facilities even unlock side ops that take place directly on the platforms in question.
- **Customization:** As you make progress, you will unlock a Customization menu that enables you to equip each individual weapon with specific attachments, such as suppressors, flashlights, extended ammo clips, and so forth. Again, these can have a profound impact on the battlefield, enriching your range of tactical options in any given scenario.

You can find a more complete presentation of the various Mother Base systems later in this chapter (see page 40), but we would advise that you work towards expanding the facility (and its individual departments) whenever you have moments to spare. In essence, your achievements on the field (particularly resources obtained and soldiers recruited) fuel the growth of Mother Base. This in turn enables you to create powerful new weapons and upgrades that can make a significant difference, enabling you to become more efficient, score higher, and ultimately reap even better rewards, which you can then reinvest in Mother Base – a virtuous circle.

This interdependence between the various systems has one fascinating side effect: you can effectively use it to manually adjust the difficulty of main missions to suit your personal preference. In short, a Mother Base working at full capacity means that Big Boss should be equipped and prepared for most eventualities. Conversely, neglecting the metagame can make missions and side ops *much*, much harder.

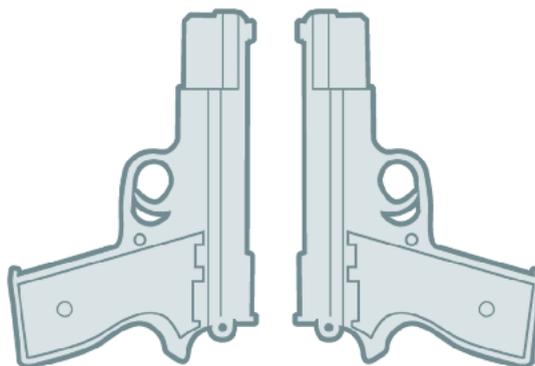
Mission Difficulty

Unlike previous games in the series, *Metal Gear Solid V* does not feature a user-defined global difficulty setting: you don't have to choose between Easy, Normal, Extreme, and so forth.

Some might find the early missions a little tough (though those who played the *Ground Zeroes* episode will be able draw on their prior experience), but the overall difficulty of *MGSV* should be perfectly adjusted for most people. Failure in a mission (with either Big Boss dying or a mandatory objective failed) necessitates a return to the most recent checkpoint where you can try again, improving your performance and learning through trial and error. Returning to a checkpoint has a negative impact on your mission score, but this is not something you need worry about during a first playthrough.

After a few missions, the difficulty gradually ramps up, reflecting the fact that you gain access to more advanced weapons, equipment and the support of new Buddies. This is why it is essential for you to be active and enthusiastic in your Mother Base management duties. Every piece of gear that you unlock can be taken into action either from the Sortie Prep screen, or delivered direct to Big Boss in the field by requesting supply drops. If you neglect Mother Base, you may fall behind the game's natural difficulty curve, increasing the challenge for every mission.

Another key aspect to take into account is that the game's difficulty is adjusted dynamically based on your play style. Hearteningly, this reactive system is never cheap or cruel, but manifests itself most obviously in entirely plausible and understandable adaptations in enemy equipment and tactics. If you always rely on the same strategy, events will occur to invite new approaches. For instance, if you are a headshot expert, tranquilizing all guards that you encounter and therefore easily infiltrating enemy



facilities, you will soon notice that your opponents are provisioned with helmets, making headshots more difficult – even impractical at anything beyond close to near-medium range. If you always complete missions at night to facilitate easier infiltrations, enemies will take note of this and begin to make use of night vision goggles, partially negating your advantage. Those who constantly resort to lethal force will also find that their bloodlust is not without consequence, either: if you favor the use of powerful weapons such as shotguns or explosives, soldiers will be equipped in full body armor, making them far more resilient [04].

The important thing to remember is that the game constantly invites you to try new approaches and diversify your play style. This means that no one will experience each mission quite like you, and that any attempt to offer one perfect solution for each challenge is an impossible task. Success in *Metal Gear Solid V* is all about observation and adaptation – which is why our extensive Walkthrough chapter does not attempt to offer step-by-step solutions for you to follow blindly, but focuses more on advice, vital intelligence and tactics designed to inform and improve mission-critical decisions that are ultimately yours alone to make.

If you struggle with one particular mission or situation and do not want to resort to our Walkthrough immediately, don't forget that the game offers a few "wild cards" – features that give you an instant edge to help you to conquer a demanding task or survive a set-piece combat encounter. The most notable are the stealth-enhancing Chicken Hat and fire support raids, which we discuss later in the chapter (see page 39).



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LESSON #02: MISSION PREPARATIONS

Before you actually embark on missions, there are three critical preparatory steps that you need to focus on to improve your chance of success: the loadout you choose to start the mission with, the time of the day that you deploy, and pointers gleaned from the tactical intel you have at your disposal.

Starting Setup



Whenever you launch a mission from the Aerial Command Center (ACC), a dedicated Sortie Prep screen enables you to decide what you will take with you to the battlefield [01]. You can prepare up to three loadouts, which you can then have delivered to you via supply drops if you need to change during a mission. The decisions you make here are critical, as the assets you bring along heavily influence your capabilities. How will you silence enemies from afar if you do not have a sniper rifle? How will you destroy armored vehicles if you neglect to take any form of explosives?

- **Primary Weapons:** You can carry only two Primary Weapons at a time. These include most firearms that must be wielded with both hands. As a rule, you can choose one weapon that Big Boss will carry on his hip (from the assault rifle, shotgun and grenade launcher categories), and another one that he will carry on his back (from the sniper rifle, machine gun and rocket launcher categories). Primary Weapons are assigned to
- **Secondary Weapons:** You can carry only one Secondary Weapon at a time, plus a choice of prosthetic arm. The weapon is chosen from the handgun and submachine gun categories, and it invariably pays to take something with a tranquilizer or stun effect. Secondary Weapons and prosthetic arms are assigned to
- **Support Weapons:** These include all sorts of explosives (C4, grenades and so forth) as well as diversionary items such as empty magazines and decoys. You can carry a maximum of eight unique Support Weapons at a time. Support Weapons are assigned to
- **Items:** These are gadgets with varied applications, from night vision goggles to cardboard boxes. You can carry a maximum of eight unique items at a time. Items are assigned to
- **Buddy:** Early on in the adventure, the only Buddy at your disposal is D-Horse, who you will ride to travel long distances. Over time, however, you will recruit more Buddies, each with their own unique skills and tactical applications. As you complete missions with a given Buddy, your relationship with them improves, as reflected by the gauge on the Sortie Prep screen. As the gauge is filled, you will unlock access to new skills unique to the Buddy in question. Deciding which Buddy you take on a mission is no casual choice, as their skills heavily determine how you can approach your assignment. If an assignment involves lots of travelling or the pursuit of moving targets, for example, D-Horse is a natural choice.

If a mission involves extracting prisoners from a well-defended base, however, two other Buddies you will recruit later in the story are naturally gifted at detecting people that Big Boss might overlook without their assistance. If you need to change a Buddy while in the field, use the Buddy Support entry in the iDroid's Missions tab.

- **Vehicle:** Once you have taken the requisite steps to develop your Fulton Recovery Device, you have the option to extract vehicles – which then become available for subsequent missions. You can deploy an off-road vehicle if you have to cover long distances, for example, or a tank if you plan to wreak havoc in an enemy base.

The complete setup that you choose varies from one mission to another based on a multitude of factors, including which weapons you currently have access to, what type of mission you are about to undertake, and the strategy and play style you plan to adopt. Over time, however, you will most likely identify one flexible build that should work in most situations, with only minor adjustments required for tasks of a very specific nature.

As far as weapons are concerned, though, use of silenced models is absolutely essential in all stealth scenarios. It's no good diligently crawling with care in the shadows, only to bring the enemy swarming to your position with the telltale report of an automatic rifle. As a broad rule of thumb, your Secondary Weapon should generally be a handgun with tranquilizer ammo and a suppressor, which is ideal for stealthy infiltrations – and, moreover, non-lethal takedowns of gifted individuals who can be Fulton extracted to Mother Base as new recruits. As for Primary Weapons, packing a shotgun or grenade launcher (for emergencies) and a sniper rifle with suppressor for ranged engagements is always a solid choice, though an assault rifle with a suppressor and a rocket launcher can prove an equally versatile and effective combination.



Drop Time

Once you have selected your loadout at the Aerial Command Center, you are given one final option: you can choose at what time you want to be delivered to the mission area. There are three choices. The first option, ASAP, has Big Boss travel to the drop zone at the current in-game time. The other two are precisely 06:00 or 18:00 – in other words, at daybreak or nightfall. Note that you can move forward in time manually during an operation by using the Phantom Cigar item: see page 36.

Your choice of deployment time has a direct impact on how your mission will play out for a variety of reasons. This table offers a brief description of the pros and cons of conducting missions at day or night.

Daytime & Night Time: Operational Considerations

DAY	NIGHT
	
<p>Reconnaissance: Marking all enemies defending a base is easier during the day thanks to the direct sunlight.</p>	<p>Reconnaissance: Reconnoitering premises and marking enemies tends to be harder in the evening, as only those close to sources of light are clearly visible. Night vision goggles can prove very useful here, but your enemies can use them too.</p>
<p>Visibility: Visibility is very high during the day, making it easier for you to monitor enemy movements and aim precise shots. The same applies to enemies, however: they can spot you from longer distances, and track you down more effectively during searches. For pure stealth infiltrations, it is in your interests to crouch-walk and crawl in the shadows, which will slow you down but make you much harder to spot.</p>	<p>Visibility: Visibility is much lower at night, making it harder to spot enemies and to make headshots, even at relatively close range. Flashlights can also cause significant visual impairment when shined directly in Big Boss's face. Conversely, enemies find it much harder to detect you, which can greatly simplify infiltrations, enabling you to crawl in the open as long as no one is patrolling too close. If you wield a gun equipped with a flashlight, you can use it to blind enemies at close range, but this also makes you more likely to be detected by other adversaries.</p>
<p>Orienteering: Daytime light helps navigation significantly, making it easier to recognize landmarks and find your way, especially in larger and more complicated locales.</p>	<p>Orienteering: In the darkness, it can be harder to find your bearings, but the fact that enemies struggle to see you gives you more time to observe your immediate area and plan your movements.</p>
<p>Enemy Presence: During the day, enemies tend to be more numerous and are at their maximum level of awareness. You cannot expect them to break their routine other than when they suspect your presence.</p>	<p>Enemy Presence: At night, bases tend to be slightly less well guarded, especially as certain enemies will occasionally take naps. Unless you wake these oblivious soldiers up by causing a commotion, this effectively removes them from the equation.</p>

Reconnaissance

Once you arrive at the landing zone, you are ready to approach the corresponding mission area. Before you run, ride or drive headlong towards the closest waypoint marker, though, you should really get into the habit of reconnoitering the area, ideally from high ground or any vantage point that offers an unobstructed view: a nearby hill, a watch tower, a cliff, or anything similar [02].



From your vantage point, lie down to reduce the chance of detection, and take out your binoculars by holding **R1/RB**. You can then look around with **R3**, and change the zoom level with either **R3/RT** or **R3/LT**. Any opponent, vehicle or turret that you focus on at an appropriate zoom level will be automatically marked [03]. Note that you cannot mark a target through walls or other obstacles. Even if you can spot an enemy's cap or foot, you'll usually need to wait until a significant part of their body is visible before you can fully mark him.

There are numerous benefits to systematically marking enemies in advance of any infiltration:



- Marked enemies are denoted by a red icon above their head, which remains visible even through walls and obstacles, making it much easier to monitor them. The number that appears above the icon indicates the distance in meters that separates you from the target. Furthermore, enemies who move to investigate suspicious activity are highlighted by a blinking marker. You have no such advance warning with unmarked adversaries.
- Marked soldiers are also signposted with an intermittent glow that outlines their entire body. This makes it much easier to follow their every step at close range, even through walls, or to align headshots when visibility is low or restricted (because you are prone to long grass or in darkness, for example). Another perk of this visual effect is that, with a little practice, you will learn to recognize the direction that a concealed enemy is facing.
- Marked opponents retain their marked status even if events take a disastrous turn and you are returned to a previous checkpoint, making subsequent attempts significantly easier. Knowing the position of guards from the outset makes things much faster and easier.

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LESSON #03: STEALTH & INFILTRATION

It can't be emphasized enough: stealth is the key to success in *Metal Gear Solid V*, even more so than it was in all previous installments. Try to muscle your way through even the game's early missions and you'll soon be staring blankly at the "Mission Failed" screen, wondering what exactly you did wrong. The answer to that question, in most cases, is simple and forthright: you were careless, you were spotted, and now you are dead. Guards can exhibit remarkably clever behaviors, taking cover and cooperating efficiently with their colleagues during open conflict, making stealth more advisable than violence in almost every mission.

Certainly, there will be times when direct aggression is unavoidable – especially as it is hard to avoid detection while you scale the steepest precipices of the *MGSV* learning curve – but it is nevertheless vital that you learn the art of sneaking. As you make progress, you'll realize how complex the game is, and that the tactical options available to you are incredibly varied. By taking the time to understand and practice the fundamentals of stealth at an early stage, you'll undoubtedly enjoy greater success in the long run.

Movement Speed & Stances

How you move and the stance you adopt is of paramount importance. Though there will be occasions when it's safe for you to sprint in plain sight without a care in the world, you'll usually find that it's best to adopt either the crouch-walk or crawl stance whenever there are enemies within a 100m radius – and more if there are snipers operating in the area. Here is a description of the various stances, from the fastest and most visible to the slowest and stealthiest:

■ **Sprinting:** Sprinting is achieved by tilting  in any direction, then clicking the stick button (/). This is the fastest way to move around by foot, and you will come to use it a lot when moving through unpopulated areas. However this is also a stance that makes you highly visible and easily detectable by all nearby enemies, even those that can seem far away. During missions, it is a stance best left for unavoidable combat situations, emergency escapes, or when you're absolutely sure that the coast is clear. Essentially, if you know there is – or might be – even a single enemy in the vicinity, do not sprint at any time. Another application of sprinting is during Reflex Mode, when you are spotted by a guard at very close range: this can enable you to charge towards your opponent while the slow-motion effect is still active and neutralize him with CQC before he can raise the alarm or open fire. This can even be achieved directly from a prone position: there is no need to manually stand up first.

■ **Running:** Running is achieved by tilting  in any direction. This is slower than sprinting, but it makes you a little less blindingly obvious to enemies who might glance your way. Running is a pace that you can use in enemy facilities when you *think* you are in the clear (for example, after marking or tranquilizing all enemies in a base), but cannot be entirely sure. If you have any doubt or if you see a white arc appear on your screen (indicating that a guard in the corresponding direction has noticed something suspicious), immediately crouch by pressing / or quick dive with / to move to the crawl stance. You can then carefully move into concealment before they recognize you.

■ **Walking:** Slower movement speeds are achieved by tilting  slightly in any direction, using the analogue range of the stick to

adjust your pace. This stance makes you less noisy than running, and is ideal for sneaking, but no less visible, so it is generally far better to crouch-walk.

■ **Crouch-walking:** From a standing position, tap / once to crouch, then tilt  to crouch-walk. Tap the button again to stand back up, or hold it to lie down. Crouch-walking is a good compromise that you will come to favor in most infiltration situations: it is fast enough to facilitate steady motion, yet sufficiently stealthy to escape the gaze of a reasonably distant guard . Unless you are surprised by an enemy at close range, guards that notice you while you crouch-walk will usually become suspicious (which is indicated by a white circle indicator on your screen) but won't immediately raise the alarm . The moment you see this visual suspicion indicator, lie down or quick dive instantly and crawl away to safety. Crouch-walking is also the most appropriate stance when you quietly approach enemies from behind to hold them up with a weapon or restrain them with the CQC grab . However, don't forget to slow down as you near your quarry – full speed crouch-walking is rather noisy.



■ **Crawling:** From a standing or crouching position, hold ⊗/▲ to lie down, then tilt Ⓕ to crawl. Press the button again to return to a crouching position, or hold it to stand upright. Crawling is the slowest but safest stance in the game. It makes you effectively invisible to all but the closest guards at night, and must be used extensively while infiltrating bases during daylight hours, especially when you can make use of grass or foliage to remain unseen [04]. For optimum stealth, tilt Ⓕ lightly while prone to crawl at the slowest pace, or even stay still and press ▲/▼ to play dead.



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! THE GOLDEN RULE

If you are going to remember one thing only regarding stealth, it should be this: you should be crouching, but ideally crawling, at practically all times while infiltrating enemy positions. Though this may seem too slow or even counter-intuitive at first for players accustomed to fast-paced shooters, it really is the only way to remain stealthy (and therefore alive) in *Metal Gear Solid V*. If you see guards, or know that there are or might be guards around you, your reaction should be swift: crawl. Crawling makes you almost invisible to enemy eyes, especially at night, and is the only convenient way to

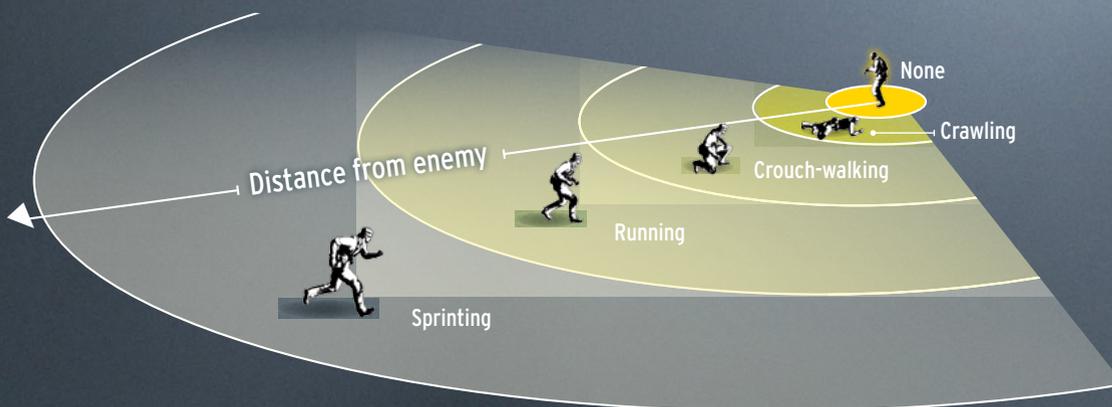
complete mission objectives without constantly fighting for your life while claxons wail.

Your choice of stance and movement speed should always be determined by the proximity of enemies. The farther from you they are, the faster you can move. As a general guideline, trust your senses and let your ears be your guide as much as your eyes. If you consciously notice the sound of Big Boss rapidly pattering across a wooden floor, then a nearby enemy probably will too. Slow it down – and, above all, *be patient*.

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! SAFE STANCES RELATIVE TO ENEMY PROXIMITY

This diagram illustrates which stances can be safely used relative to the distance between you and an enemy. The closer you get, the more slowly you have to move to remain undetected.



Useful Stealth Moves

There are many moves, abilities, gadgets and tricks that can be employed to improve your capacity to avoid detection. This is not an exhaustive list, but a presentation of staples that you should try to master early in the story.



Quick Dive: You can perform a quick dive to go prone instantly by pressing **Ⓢ/ⓧ** [05]. This deft tumble can be used to evade the gaze of suspicious enemies, to reach cover swiftly while under enemy fire, or to avoid attacks in boss fights.



Cover/Wall Press: Face any surface and tilt **Ⓛ** in its direction to push Big Boss's body against it. This makes it more difficult for enemies to spot you, while providing a good view of the area beyond – a welcome boon during infiltrations. While pressed against a surface, Big Boss will lock to it as you move unless you pull away. With low walls and the like, you can peek over the edge at any time by holding **ⓇⓅ/Ⓣ** [06]. To move along a surface without changing the direction that Big Boss is facing, incline **Ⓛ** gently. This can be used to retreat slightly if an enemy might spot him at the very corner of a wall, for example.



Stepping Over Obstacles/Vaulting: You can step or vault over any low obstacle in your path by pressing **Ⓛ/Ⓨ** [07]. This is particularly useful when pressed against a surface that you want to quickly climb over while nearby guards are facing away from you. If you hold the button while approaching such an obstacle, Big Boss will step or leap over it without pausing.



Ledges & Climbing: Press **Ⓛ/Ⓨ** to hang from a ledge [08], which can enable you to allow a patrolling guard to pass without incident. While hanging, shimmy left and right with **Ⓛ**; press **ⓧ/Ⓛ** to drop down, or **Ⓛ/Ⓨ** to haul yourself back up if there is a suitable surface above. The same button can be used to grab a ledge or hand-hold within reach if Big Boss is falling. Note that you can quickly slide down ladders by holding **ⓧ/Ⓛ**.



Gadgets: In addition to your binoculars, you will soon have a variety of gadgets at your disposal, from night vision goggles that make it easier to observe enemies in the dark, to cardboard boxes that can be used to hide in plain sight [09].



Locked Doors: You will regularly encounter locked doors, as indicated by a white padlock icon [10]. To open these, simply press **Ⓛ/Ⓨ**, though be aware that the unlocking process takes several seconds, which might put you at risk of detection. An alternative method is to entice a guard to open a locked door by creating a minor disturbance (a noise, for example) that causes them to pass through it to investigate.

! OBSERVATION & DIRECTIONAL MIC

Observation of the enemy is a key aspect of effective sneaking. It won't matter in the slightest how quiet you are if you inadvertently stumble directly into the path of a patrolling soldier. Take time to observe the enemy's patterns of movement from behind cover, especially if you have marked them beforehand. The directional microphone function of the binoculars can be a

lifesaver whenever you have no way to know if an enemy is inside a building: if there's someone there, you might be able to hear them. Careful observation should enable you to figure out when to move and when to stay put. Whether you wish to use this information to bring opponents down silently, or merely sneak past when their back is turned, is entirely up to you.

Using the Environment

The environment is an essential factor to take into account during infiltrations.



Day/Night Cycle: The day/night cycle plays a critical role in the game. Guard positions and patrols can vary depending on the time of the day [11] & [12], so a mission can be a completely different experience depending on when you attempt it. There are both pros and cons to conducting operations in daylight or in the dark; you can find an overview of these in the table on page 19. Many players will find it a little easier to deploy after dawn, as the overall visibility is lower at night (making it harder for enemies to spot you), and as certain guards tend to take breaks to sleep. Bear in mind, though, that regular late-night engagements will cause your enemies to adopt frequent use of night vision goggles, which will negate your advantage. A balanced approach is to play missions at the time of day when you encounter them – though there's no reason why you can't wait until dark (with the Phantom Cigar) if an infiltration appears unfeasible during daylight hours.



Shadows: You are harder for enemies to spot when you stand in shadows, especially so if you are prone [13]. This is a feature you can exploit often to conceal Big Boss from prying eyes. At night time, the entire environment tends to be dark, making it easier to sneak through patrols. You can even destroy light sources such as searchlights, if you wish. Any guard that witnesses or notices this act will become suspicious, however, so use this gambit carefully and sparingly.

Cover & Grass: Any physical obstacle between you and an enemy will conceal you from his watchful eyes, so pressing against walls and other cover elements is especially important. You can even use grass and vegetation to conceal Big Boss [14]. Crawling through thick grass on the border of a road, you can sometimes watch patrols or vehicles pass by without a second glance in your direction.



Route Recognition: As you become more and more familiar with the environment, finding convenient points of ingress at enemy bases will soon become second nature. A simple glance will enable you to identify a network of shadows, cover points and grass expanses, so that you can instantly chart a course to your objective [15].

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Creating Diversions

Maintaining perfect stealth is a demanding task. Sometimes, it helps to sacrifice absolute anonymity to change the behavior of nearby guards to clear a path, or to encourage predictable or even outright malleable behavior.



“Peekaboo!”: However paradoxical it might sound, this is one of the most effective ways to manage and manipulate guards, especially those with problematic patrol routes. Simply allow Big Boss to be seen by an enemy within range for a split-second until the distinct arc of the detection indicator appears [16], then immediately duck back behind cover. Of course, you should never do this at close range – the sighting needs to be subtle but inconclusive, just enough to engender suspicion and further investigation. When the guard approaches (always look for the blinking marker), you can then either sneak around and bypass them entirely, silence the target with a tranquilizer dart, or grab, interrogate and then incapacitate your victim with the CQC choke move. A word of warning, though: if a guard radios in his intention to investigate, wait until he gives the all-clear before you introduce yourself. If you find a suitable position, you can lure numerous enemies to a single location with this trick, greatly simplifying a complicated infiltration. If Ahab can't sail towards the whales, make the whales swim to Ahab...



Leaving a Body: Whenever you leave a body of a dead or incapacitated guard in plain sight, there's always a risk that a patrol will spot it. Though you can avoid this eventuality by moving bodies (see page 26), it's sometimes beneficial to leave a living guard in the “ZZZ” state in plain view. Soldiers who notice one of their colleagues sleeping will typically not raise the alarm, but will instead walk slowly to wake and remonstrate with them. This can enable you to put them to sleep as well [17]. Repeating this trick multiple times can enable you to near-effortlessly clear an entire outpost of its defenders. However, do not use corpses or stunned victims: soldiers tend to radio in immediately on discovery of a murdered ally, leading to an escalation in the general alert status.



Throwing Magazines or Decoys: Empty magazines and decoys are items you can toss just like grenades. Aim by holding **L2/L3** and throw with **R2/R3**. The noise of the impact will draw the attention of guards in the vicinity, creating a perfect opportunity to sneak past them, or to interrogate and disable isolated individuals. Decoys can be activated whenever you please once placed by holding **L2/L3** and then pressing **A/Y**. This makes them very useful when you know the patrol routes of guards, enabling you to lure them away at a time of your choosing [18].



Using Buddies: Your Buddies can be used to create diversions with the appropriate orders, or a little imagination. For example, positioning D-Horse in the center of a road will cause a vehicle to stop [19], enabling you to spring an ambush from your place of concealment.



Firing on a Wall: If you are out of any other options with an awkward guard, you can always try to fire a single bullet (with a silenced weapon, of course!) at a hard surface close to his position [20]. If you aim too close, they will raise the alarm; but if the degree of clearance is just right, they will usually move to investigate. This is a high-risk tactic that can often lead to complications, so use it wisely.

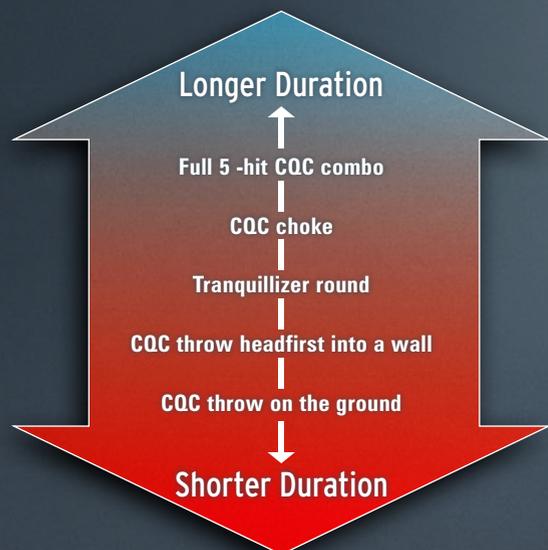


Explosions: If you place a C4 device anywhere inside or outside a base (optimally on something where you will benefit by its destruction, such as an anti-air radar vehicle), you can detonate it whenever required [21]. This can draw numerous enemies away from your position to investigate. You can employ this as a last-ditch gambit to avoid detection, or even to clear a path for an effortless exfiltration with mission objectives complete, depending on the size and layout of the area.

Tranquillizing & Stunning Enemies

To silence enemies without killing them, you have two options: you can either put them to sleep with a tranquilizer weapon, or you can stun them.

! INCAPACITATION DURATION



You can wake an unconscious enemy with a quick kick: stand over their body and tap **R2/R1** to rouse them. Follow this up by aiming at them with a weapon to keep them on the ground while being able to interrogate them. This trick is handy if you need to refresh a period of incapacitation during a lengthy mission, or attend to an opponent only briefly disabled with a CQC throw.

Though disabling an opponent with CQC moves or a weapon that inflicts the STUN effect can be a lifesaver, the drawback of this method is that the victim will report the attack when he comes to.

More generally, even if you manage to incapacitate all soldiers in a base with non-lethal techniques, you must always be aware that they will eventually wake up. Non-lethal takedowns are temporary, meaning that it is always in your interests to have completed your objectives and vacated the area before your victims regain consciousness.

There is one way to remove guards from the fray without killing them, however: extracting them with your Fulton Recovery Device. Not only will this add the corresponding recruit to your Mother Base roster, it will also remove a complication from your current mission. Methodically extracting all guards that you take down is therefore doubly useful, and a practice that you should embrace at the earliest possible stage. When you decide to extract a target, though, be aware that the balloon is likely to be seen or heard by soldiers in the vicinity, who will then become suspicious and call in the event in via radio. If you want to be safe, silence all enemies in the immediate vicinity beforehand. If you're happy to take the risk, aim for a baseline 40m radius clear of enemies and some form of vertical physical cover from onlookers, even at night, before each Fulton extraction.



Putting an opponent to sleep (**ZZZ**) can be achieved with tranquilizer weapons, such as your default pistol; other methods are unlocked later in the story. The duration of this repose is usually sufficiently long to enable you to complete nearby objectives in the early hours of the story. The length of time required for a tranquilizer round to take effect depends on where it strikes the body: instantly for a headshot, after a delay to the limbs or torso. With body shots, multiple hits will accelerate the effect; the victim will be perturbed by these "bites" or "itches", but will not raise the alarm. As a rule, try to perfect the ability to land headshots with great accuracy. A major benefit of using tranquilizers is that even when a victim wakes up, he will not be suspicious and will simply resume his patrol if he did not see Big Boss. Note that tranquilizer ammunition cannot penetrate heavy armor and helmets. You need to hit the exposed portion of a soldier's face if he is wearing impenetrable headgear **[22]**.

Stunning an opponent (**STN**) can be achieved with weapons that you can develop at Mother Base once you fulfil certain requirements, or by using close quarters combat (CQC). As with tranquilizer rounds, causing the "STUN" effect is immediate if you land a headshot, or requires multiple hits if you target the rest of the body. When you employ CQC, the duration of the incapacitation depends on the precise technique that you use.

! SUPPRESSORS



Certain weapons, such as your standard handgun, have a noise suppressor attachment. In the later game, a Customization option enables you to manually attach suppressors to firearms that don't possess them by default. Suppressors are absolutely pivotal to stealth infiltrations, as they enable you to open fire without alerting everyone within a wide radius of your presence. Suppressors become worn with each shot, though, as represented by the gauge that appears in the weapon window. After a number of shots, they will break. You will then need to replace them with a new one found in the field or delivered to you via an "Ammo/Fulton" supply drop.

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Evidence Management

Your passage through enemy territory, bases and strongholds will often lead to an incriminating surfeit of unconscious guards and/or corpses in your wake. When discretion is essential and Fulton extractions impractical or unavailable, the following tips will help you to avoid unfortunate and unnecessary alerts.

- You can pick up and carry unconscious enemies or corpses by holding **○/Ⓔ** when the contextual icon appears onscreen. Hold the button again to place them on the ground.
- To identify a suitable position to hide a body, use a little common sense. Positions close to pathways that might be traveled by a

patrol are a poor choice, as are buildings or rooms that guards may conceivably enter. Look for locations that will conceal the body from multiple angles, and will remain unseen even if the base is on a low-level alert: behind piles of boxes or crates, for example. Try not to use the same spot for multiple sleeping guards if you will be in the area for a while: if one wakes, he'll also rouse his allies.

- Look out for portable toilets **🚽** and dumpsters **🗑️** while you explore: these are always a welcome bonus. Unconscious adversaries hidden inside these enclosed containers (look for the contextual prompt when you are near, then press the displayed button) will not wake up unless removed.

Interrogating Enemies

With the exception of bosses, Big Boss can interrogate enemies that he takes by surprise. There are two possible methods:



Grab and Restrain: While within CQC range, hold **R2/RT** to grab and restrain an enemy soldier [23]. This is usually achieved by sneaking up behind a guard, but can be achieved even if your opponent is facing in your direction, such as during Reflex Mode. With **R2/RT** still held, hold **L1/LB** as well to begin the interrogation. Choose an option with **Ⓑ**, then click the stick button to confirm your choice.



Hold Up: As you approach a target from behind or from the side unnoticed, simply aim your weapon at point-blank range to make them raise their arms [24]. This also works on incapacitated targets lying on the ground that you wake up with a kick. They will remain in that stance as long as you stay behind them, where they cannot see you. Just like with the previous method, you can then hold **L1/LB** to begin the interrogation and choose an option with **Ⓑ**. Alternatively, you can order an opponent to "stay down", effectively removing them from the equation unless a full alert is raised or they are discovered by an ally.

Any soldier that you interrogate using the "Spit it out" option will reveal intelligence: a point of interest, a mission objective (such as the whereabouts of a prisoner or a convoy), or even clues that can help you to find optional objectives or valuable collectibles. The "Where are the rest?" option is only used for guard locations. The iDroid map is instantly updated, making this a fantastic source of information that you should use liberally during missions. You also gain score and Heroism bonuses for every question asked, which can add up over time. You can only interrogate each enemy once, however.

Enemy Reactions & Alert Status

By default, most enemies exist in a very basic state of vigilance: they stick to their patrol or routine, usually dawdling from one post to another, regularly stopping to smoke or talk with their colleagues. Depending on your actions, however, they can become increasingly suspicious, eventually escalating to an all-out alert condition. The range of their possible reactions to the actions of Big Boss is described below, in chronological order:



Small Suspicion [25]: This happens when an enemy catches a brief glimpse of Big Boss from afar, but decides not to investigate. The characteristic suspicion indicator appears momentarily, but soon disappears. This is also how guards react when awakening after being tranquilized without having seen their assailant.



Serious Suspicion [26]: This happens when an enemy spots Big Boss from a reasonable distance, with the visual suspicion indicator remaining on your screen, and the enemy's red triangular icon blinking to indicate their heightened interest. The guard in question will usually inform HQ before investigating your last known position. If you silence him in the meantime, HQ will ask for a "sitrep" (situation report), and raise the alert if no response is forthcoming. To avoid this, do not interfere with this guard until he has called in the all-clear.

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Alert Status [27]: This is triggered whenever an enemy finds something anomalous. This might be the discovery of an incapacitated colleague, a missing prisoner, a power generator turned off, or destroyed equipment; incapacitated guards will also call in assaults of any kind other than mystery tranquilizer darts when they come to. This is not yet a full alert, but all enemies in the area will break their routine and actively search for a threat (though without knowing where to look). The process of sneaking in enemy facilities is harder under such circumstances, so it often makes sense to wait until all guards stand down and return to their normal patrol, which usually takes at least a minute. Unfortunately, the process of investigating the area with reasonable thoroughness will sometimes lead enemies to discover other evidence of your visit, which may extend the duration.



Combat Status [28]: This corresponds to a full alert, usually accompanied by a strident alarm effect, and happens whenever an enemy identifies you (and subsequently survives your reaction during Reflex Mode). All enemies who can see you will fire at will until you either die, escape or hide for a sufficient period of time. Note that you completely lose the safety net of Reflex Mode once Combat Status is in effect.



Search Mode [29]: This is triggered when you manage to elude your pursuers during Combat Status. All enemies in the vicinity actively look for you, starting with your last known position, but they will temporarily cease fire and the use of grenades. If a guard should spot Big Boss, however, Combat Status is reinstated instantly and all soldiers will resume fire. Conversely, if you remain hidden, guards will stand down after a while, reverting to Alert Status.

Avoiding all forms of suspicion is easier said than done, granted, but should generally be the focus of your attention at all times. Not only are there score penalties for being detected (see page 45), but alerts will also make you lose valuable time as you fight soldiers or hide until they stand down.

Reflex Mode



Reflex Mode is a slow-motion interval that is triggered every time an opponent fully detects you. During this window of opportunity, time almost stops for enemies and objects (including vehicles), whereas Big Boss can continue to move and act, giving you a massive edge on your opponent for a few seconds. Essentially, Reflex Mode is your final chance to silence an enemy before he can raise the alert and cause all soldiers in the vicinity to enter Combat Status.

To make the most of Reflex Mode, you first need to ascertain where the guard in question is. Look at the arc of the onscreen suspicion indicator to discern this. The upper half of the circle corresponds to positions in front of Big Boss, while the bottom half represents the area behind him.

With default control settings, you can also press **L2/L1** to make Big Boss automatically lock on the assailant in question.

Once you have identified your target, your goal is to take him down, either with a firearm or a CQC throw.

■ **CQC:** If you are only a few meters away from your opponent, sprint in his direction by tilting **LS** and pressing **L3/RT**, then hit **R2/RT** within range to stun him with a contextual CQC throw. However, you should note that the Stun effect duration of a throw can be very short. As a rule, it's better to run to close proximity and hold **R2/RT** to execute the hold maneuver, then use the non-lethal choke move (press **R2/RT** rapidly) to ensure a more lengthy period of incapacitation.

■ **Weapon:** Whether you use a tranquilizer dart or lethal bullets, be sure to aim for the target's head [30]. Only headshots have a chance to fell your quarry instantly; shots to the body, especially with armored foes, will often fail to stop your opponent in time to prevent them from calling HQ and raising the alarm.

If you fail to silence an adversary during Reflex Mode, all nearby enemies enter Combat Status, the alarm is raised, and your best option is usually to run and hide. If you choose to stand your ground and fight, though, you'll need to employ a whole host of other techniques – which leads us to...

[🔫] LESSON #04: COMBAT

Even if you become highly adept at employing stealth techniques, there will always be instances where combat becomes unavoidable. On occasion, it may even be the fastest or most appropriate way to accomplish an objective.

Aiming & Firing

Whenever you aim a weapon at an enemy, the effectiveness of your shots is dependent on which body parts you hit. Headshots will instantly take down all but the most unconventional targets, whereas shots to the body require multiple rounds to kill or incapacitate. Mastering the art of calmly targeting unprotected areas of the head, then, is vital when Big Boss can potentially face over a dozen enemies at once during full alerts.

To aim your weapon, hold **[L2]/[LT]**. This instantly brings up a target reticule and positions the camera view behind one of Big Boss's shoulders. You can then aim freely with **[R3]**. Note that you can move the camera to the opposite shoulder by pressing **[R3]/[RT]** **[O1]** & **[O2]**.

If you point a firearm at a hostile within the weapon's effective range, the crosshairs turn red to signify that your shot will hit if you press the trigger. Over longer distances, where the crosshairs remain white, factors such as gravity and bullet spread will drastically reduce the accuracy of your marksmanship. If auto-aim is active in the Options menu (as it is by default), the camera automatically points the reticle at the nearest target whenever you ready a weapon in the firing stance, giving you a head start. (Purists may wish to head for the pause menu and disable auto-aim for a more challenging and authentic combat experience.)

To open fire, press **[R2]/[RT]** while aiming. If you hold the trigger while wielding an automatic weapon, the accuracy of your shots will rapidly decrease, as reflected by the increasing size of your aiming reticle. With such weapons, short, controlled bursts are almost always better than an all-out "spray and pray" approach at anything other than point-blank range.

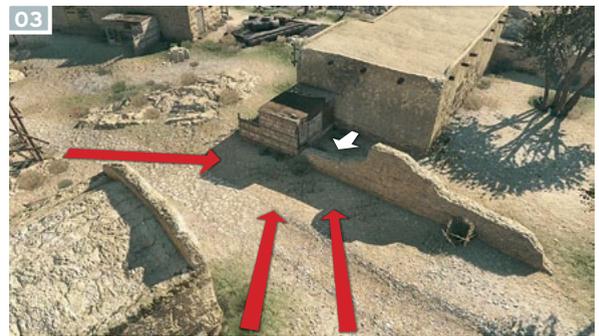
While aiming, you can switch to first-person view at any time by pressing **[R1]/[RB]** for greater accuracy, or to use a scope if a weapon is equipped with one; change the magnification level (if applicable) with **[R3]/[RT]**. You can move freely in first-person view, but Big Boss's speed is vastly reduced.

If you need to move sideways while you are aiming in a prone position, note that you can roll by holding **[L3]/[LT]** and tilting **[L3]** left or right. This can be useful to move in and out of cover, or to dodge enemy fire and grenades.

Taking Cover

Taking cover whenever adversaries enter Combat Status is essential: in the open, you can be cut down in a heartbeat. It is also important to be smart in your choice of cover, where anything fragile or with explosive potential should be avoided. Always try to head to a refuge that presents few opportunities for enemies to flank you, ideally with a solid barrier directly behind **[O3]**. If your chosen refuge is too exposed, the need to keep track of hostiles moving in and firing from multiple angles can soon become an overwhelming task. That said, you should also be extremely wary of locations that leave Big Boss with a solitary avenue of escape – enemy grenades can easily turn a tactical cul-de-sac into a grave.

A benefit of attacking from behind cover is that you can "snap" Big Boss against a suitable wall or surface. While "wall pressed", you can jump in and out from cover immediately by holding or releasing **[L2]/[LT]** as required. Pick a target, usually one exposed or presenting the most pressing danger, then jump out and aim to neutralize them with a quick



shot or burst before returning to cover. Sustained fire should generally be avoided. From cover, you can safely reload by pressing **[C]/[B]**, monitor enemy movements or incoming grenades (which are signposted with the **[B]** icon), or even apply first aid if you sustain a serious injury.

Reloading

If you are too casual or haphazard in your approach to reloading weapons, you will suffer dire consequences. Big Boss will reload automatically whenever an ammo clip is empty, but this process takes a few seconds, which you often cannot afford in life-or-death scenarios (such as Reflex Mode, where every second counts, or in the midst of a protracted battle).

To avoid the horror of the "dead man's click", then, you should get into the habit of reloading often and obsessively. To reload manually, press **[C]/[B]**. By performing this action when the time is right for you, you will avoid situations where Big Boss is left completely exposed. Ideally, you should make it a habit to reload after practically every shot that you take during stealth infiltrations, and whenever an ammo clip is at most half-emptied during open conflict.

CQC

Close Quarters Combat (abbreviated as CQC) is a system of swift hand-to-hand combat techniques used to immediately neutralize enemies. CQC can be a fantastic alternative to weapons, offering distinct advantages: these decisive blows and throws consume no ammo (and do not wear down suppressors), they are instantly effective, and they can even be employed against multiple opponents in close proximity when executed in rapid succession. Of course, this requires you to become adept at approaching hostiles without being detected or cut to pieces, but this will become easier as your infiltration skills improve throughout the adventure.

The most useful CQC applications during combat are as follows:



Throw [04]: Tilt **L** and press **R2/RT** to quickly throw an opponent and knock them out. The stun duration can be maximized by throwing the victim headlong into a wall, but this move is context-sensitive: no wall, no wall slam. The throw command can even be used during Reflex Mode: just sprint towards the guard who spotted you and incapacitate him before the slow motion period ends. You can employ this move against groups standing in sufficiently close proximity, knocking all enemies out by tilting the stick in the required direction and pressing the button repeatedly. The strength of each consecutive throw will increase, incapacitating enemies for a longer period of time. Bear in mind, though, that throw moves render opponents unconscious for a rather short period of time.



Choke [07]: If you need to silence an opponent that you are currently restraining, press **R2/RT** repeatedly to choke them out, incapacitating them. This effect lasts longer than tranquilizer rounds, so it's sometimes more appropriate for complicated infiltrations. It also enables you to preserve weapon suppressors until the moments where you need them most.



Punch & Kick Combo [05]: By rapidly pressing **R2/RT** without moving, you will unleash a series of punches and kicks. A full five-hit combo can knock an enemy unconscious for the longest possible "STUN" effect duration



Restrain/Human Shield [06]: To restrain an opponent, press and hold **R2/RT** when the distinctive  icon appears. While restraining a guard, you can change stance and move at different speeds when crouching or standing, dragging or pulling your quarry with you – or, in combat situations, employing them as a human shield. In these scenarios, you are restricted to the use of your Secondary Weapon, though you can aim and fire at any time. Enemies may hesitate to shoot if you are holding one of their colleagues, but this spell may be broken immediately if you threaten their lives. If a hostile moves within close range while you are holding a human shield, he may knock you down with a melee strike, immediately removing your advantage.



Slit Throat [08]: While restraining an opponent, press **△/Y** to slit their throat. Killing an opponent in this manner is gruesome, and leads to penalties in your final mission scores like all other non-essential deaths. That said, there may be times when you deem it a necessary evil, such as when there are enemies in pursuit who might simply wake an unconscious ally and add him to their hunting party.

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Manning Turrets

As you explore enemy outposts and bases, you will regularly encounter fixed weapons that you can operate and turn against enemies, from relatively small machine guns to mortars and powerful anti-air artillery [09].

While these emplacements definitely have their uses – taking down a troublesome enemy chopper, for instance, or destroying an approaching armored unit – they also have the obvious adverse effect of revealing your presence to everyone in the vicinity. The firepower that you gain must be offset against the fact that soldiers in the area will raise the alarm and seek to attack from multiple directions. Furthermore, don't forget that full alerts and every death that you cause have a negative impact on your final mission score, so it's generally better to leave them alone unless it's a last resort, or the best way to complete a very specific objective. Naturally, you can feel free to use them as much as you like during roam sessions if you feel a need to cut loose and raise hell.



Weapon Types

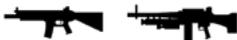
There are many different types of weapons in *MGSV*, each with their own unique traits and ratings. Each category features a vast number of models that you can gradually develop, upgrade and customize over time by making progress in the Mother Base management metagame.



Handguns are one-handed weapons designed for short-range engagements. If equipped with a suppressor, they are ideal for most stealth-oriented activities. The default tranquilizer gun should be a mainstay of your arsenal in the vast majority of missions.



Submachine Guns are also suited for close quarters combat. Their high rate of fire gives them formidable stopping power, but there is a distinct (and tactically damning) drop-off in accuracy over greater distances.



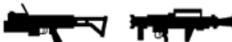
Assault Rifles and **Machine Guns** are suited to combat at close-to-medium ranges. An assault rifle with a suppressor is always a versatile and reliable fallback when tranquilizer darts just won't cut it. Machine guns are a better choice when you actively anticipate open conflict against strong opponents.



Sniper Rifles are accurate over long distances, with the precise range determined by the model and scope. They boast extremely high penetration power.



Shotguns offer unparalleled stopping power and damage potential at close quarters.



Grenade Launchers and **Rocket Launchers** can destroy or disable vehicles and equipment (such as anti-air radar dishes), or be employed to take down multiple enemies simultaneously. They can also be deadly for Big Boss if used incautiously.



Throwing Weapons include obvious staples such as grenades and tactical gadgets (such as decoys) that can be lobbed over short-to-medium distances.



Placed Weapons include C4 explosives and mines that can be employed for the strategic destruction of enemy assets, to create diversions, or to engineer ambushes and traps.

As a rule, lethal weapons prove far more efficient in open combat than those that stun or tranquilize opponents. We generally recommend you rely on a non-lethal weapon with a suppressor for infiltrations, but switch to more powerful firearms when combat is unavoidable.

Though you can call for a supply drop of alternative equipment during a mission, it's generally a good idea to pay attention to available intelligence and choose appropriate weapons before you deploy. If the objective may involve contact with enemy vehicles or the destruction of a specific target, a grenade launcher or rocket launcher makes sense (and you should always carry C4 – it's brilliant for contingencies). If you are to infiltrate a position (a base, a village) with a suitable vantage point that overlooks the area, you could potentially simplify your job by neutralizing targets with a sniper rifle in advance (ideally with a suppressor equipped).



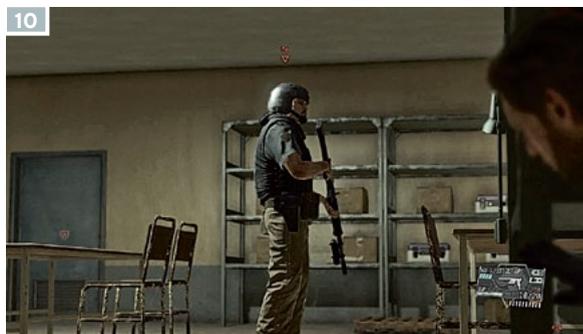
Bullet Penetration & Armor

As you make progress in the storyline, you will begin to encounter enemies equipped with body armor and helmets [10]. Not only are these protections impervious to tranquilizer rounds, they also prove very effective at stopping actual bullets. To dispatch such enemies easily, you either need to land precise shots to their unprotected faces [11], or assault them with powerful weapons such as sniper rifles, launchers and explosives.

Bullet penetration and overall damage is also factored in other situations, such as when you attempt to destroy enemy equipment. You might, for example, decide to shoot out a searchlight on a tower to facilitate an infiltration or create a distraction. In this instance, a tranquilizer round would just bounce straight off; a handgun or assault rifle loaded with standard bullets would break the glass; a powerful sniper rifle would break not only the glass, but continue onwards and kill a soldier manning the searchlight; a rocket launcher or grenade launcher projectile, meanwhile, would level the entire watchtower.

As a general rule, handguns and submachine guns have low penetration and are only appropriate when used against enemies who are not wearing specialist armor, or when directed at exposed parts of the body for those who are. Assault rifle and machine gun rounds can, if sufficiently powerful, punch through soft surfaces, such as a wooden crate that an incautious guard might be hiding behind, or dislodge a helmet to enable a clear headshot. Sniper rifles, meanwhile, will fire through anything other than a stone or thick metal surface, and can even neutralize two enemies simultaneously if the opportunity presents itself.

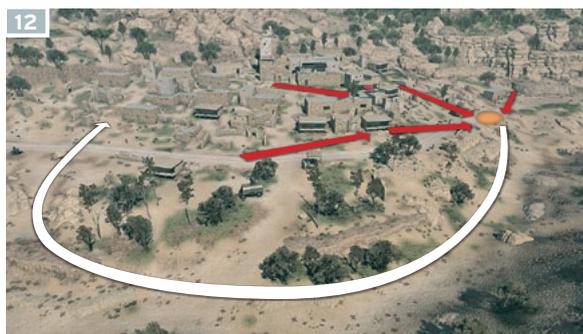
When you face tanks or other armored vehicles, put all standard firearms aside – standard bullets are approximately as effective as the power of dance or a raised eyebrow. Only explosive weaponry (launchers and C4) will suffice if you resolve to destroy them, and you may require three or four direct hits to finish the job. However, once you unlock the Cargo 2 Fulton device upgrade, you can employ a brilliant trick: sneak up on the vehicle in question and disable it with a balloon extraction. Not only will you remove a deadly foe from the battlefield, you'll acquire another valuable asset for Mother Base.



Evading Battle

Given that battles can prove witheringly difficult, especially if the enemy is in a position to wear you down with waves of reinforcements, the easiest solution is sometimes to leave them far behind. The best way to achieve this is generally to sprint away from your pursuers, darting from cover to cover to avoid incoming fire, and – once you break the line of sight – escape by simply outpacing them. The moment that opponents lose sight of you, they will focus on your “last known position”, which is represented on your iDroid map by a glowing orange circle.

Once you have shaken them off and moved clear of your last known position, one option is to hide and wait for the alert phase to end. Alternatively, you can also attempt to skirt around the mission area and approach it from a completely different angle. If there is an alternative entrance, you can actually greatly benefit from the diversion that you created, as the commotion often draws guards from critical posts – possibly leaving you free to reach a mission objective with relative ease [12]. Alternatively, you could exploit the confusion to pick off guards one by one as they separate from the rest of the search party.



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[A] LESSON #05: NAVIGATION

One of the greatest challenges you will face in the massive *MGSV* sandboxes is the simple process of moving between locales. Naturally, running and riding will always get you there – eventually – and there are usually things that you find to make these extended hikes worthwhile. When you just want to get straight to business, however, it pays to know how to reduce journey times.



Using The iDroid Map

You can access your iDroid map at any time. One important point to keep in mind is that time does not stop (in other words, the game does not pause) while you study your map or any other iDroid feature. If enemies spot you while you are planning a journey or checking the position of a mission objective, they will raise the alert, so make sure you only do so while far from another soul or in a suitable place of concealment. The same principle applies to moving targets. If you're tailing a soldier or following a convoy, for example, they will continue to travel while you are using the iDroid.

Map Controls: Use **L** to move around the map, **R** to rotate the camera, and **C2** & **R2**/**LT** & **RT** or **R3**/**PS** to control the zoom level. To see a description of any icon on the map, move the cursor over it. You can also press **PS** to change the map's orientation, and change the map display style to Aerial Photo.

Markers: Markers are icons that you can manually place (or remove) on the map with a simple press of **X**/**A** (or by pressing **C2**/**LT** when you are looking through the binoculars). Each manual marker is easy to track due to its unique letter. Once placed, a marker on the map also appears directly in-game, on your screen, making navigation towards the point in question much easier. It only disappears if you remove it or arrive at the specified destination. We can't emphasize enough how useful it can be to make it a habit to drop map markers regularly, especially while you are less than familiar with the environment.

Map Mode: By default, the map is locked in an orientation where up is north, which makes it easier to navigate (and is also the convention that we use throughout this guide). If you would rather have the map lock to Big Boss's icon, with the map rotating around him, press **PS** while on the iDroid map.

Map/Nav Mode: If you need to move around while keeping an eye on the map in real time, press **A**/**Y** from the iDroid's main map screen. In this navigation mode, your movements are slow and abilities restricted (you cannot open fire, for example), but this can nevertheless be useful if you are tracking down a specific collectible or point of interest [01].

Map Icons: All marked enemies and objects, places of interest, points of interactivity and active waypoints are represented by icons on the map.

Key Map Icons

	Player Character		Side Ops (Standard)
	Player Character: Most Recent Steps		Side Ops (Important)
	Ally/Prisoner		Last Known Position
	Marked Enemy		Custom Marker
	Marked Object		Resources
	Mission Objective		Landing Zone

Travelling Efficiently

Given the immense size of the *MGSV* play areas, travelling between destinations can prove extremely time-consuming. There are, however, ways to optimize or abbreviate your journeys.

Map Reading

Even though you will find the maps in this guide to be an invaluable aid to navigation, learning to read your iDroid map is still a key skill that you should try to develop. Before you set off on a long journey, studying the map in advance can save you several minutes of travel.

There are three things to consider carefully. Firstly, your map gives a clear sense of the exact elevation of each area of terrain. If your route takes you through a flat desert, chances are you will be able to move in a straight line, heading directly for your objective. Conversely, if you move through mountains or canyons, the only path available will probably be winding, which you can double-check on the map. Paying attention to the precise topology will also reveal which vantage points can be found close to enemy facilities for reconnaissance purposes.

Secondly, your map faithfully depicts every detail of each area, enabling you to identify shortcuts and dead ends [02]. While going through rocky areas, for example, there are sometimes shortcuts that enable you to avoid long detours around hills and mountains. Some of these offer alternative approaches to enemy facilities, often giving you a commanding view of the area – or, potentially, a point of infiltration with fewer guards to worry about.

Lastly, your map is a great tool to gauge distances. To find out the exact distance that separates you from a destination, drop a marker and the distance in meters will appear directly on your game screen. Making lengthy hikes on foot (or even on horseback) can take several minutes, and require you to take detours to bypass obstacles such as enemy outposts and patrols. In these instances, it can be better to choose another form of travel.

Buddy Choice

Once you unlock new companions later in the story, your choice of Buddy can help you to travel more efficiently. While riding D-Horse is by far the fastest way to traverse long distances (don't forget to use $\text{Ⓢ}/\text{ⓧ}$ to gallop), other Buddies can offer benefits that may justify a decision to get there under your own steam. Your second companion, for example, has a unique aptitude for identifying enemies from afar – which helps to prevent instances where you accidentally stumble upon patrols, vehicles or outposts. A third Buddy can be ordered to move ahead and scout locations on your behalf, providing useful intelligence in advance of your arrival.

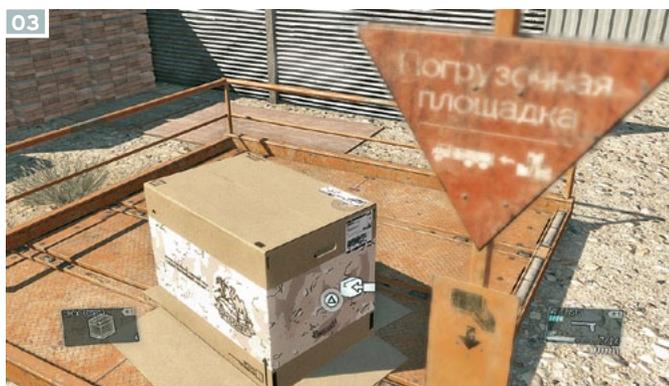
If you wish to change Buddies during the course of a mission or while free roaming, be aware that you can do this via the Buddy Support option on the iDroid's Missions tab (see page 38 for details).

Fast Travel

Though *MGSV* doesn't feature a fast travel system per se, there are two methods that you can use to transfer between

distant locales. The first one involves using cardboard boxes to have Big Boss loaded on enemy trucks and transported automatically to a destination of your choice. To achieve this, all you need to do is pick up the "invoice" collectible on as many cargo loading platforms (also referred to as "Delivery Points" in the game) as you can. Every one that you retrieve becomes a new travel destination that you can reach by hiding in a cardboard box while standing on another cargo loading platform [03]. After a short delay, a truck will pick up the box, and you can then "warp" directly to any other cargo loading platform that you have unlocked so far. This is probably the fastest way to reach a remote destination on your current map.

The second method is to call for a chopper pick-up via the iDroid interface, then redeploy elsewhere in the same theater from the Aerial Command Center. This process actually takes a few minutes, as you have to wait for the chopper to arrive at a nearby landing zone, then select a new LZ where you can redeploy after the ensuing cutscenes. This isn't immediate, granted, but it's still much faster than the process of running or riding for miles.



Free Roaming

Don't be too quick to always abbreviate journeys or skirt around outposts and other enemy-controlled locations. *MGSV* rewards free roaming, providing long-term benefits to those who take the time to explore the map. This doesn't necessarily mean that you need to wander the vast expanses aimlessly in search of secrets, of course. Exploring and plundering the points of interest that you encounter naturally while completing missions and side ops is more than enough to bankroll steady progress in the Mother Base management side of the game.

Metal Gear Solid V's maps are designed in such a way that you will encounter at least one enemy outpost, occupied building or base between mission starting points and objectives, offering plenty of opportunities to gather resources. If you habitually bypass these and never take the time to wander from the beaten track, you could starve Mother Base of essential resources and funding. This may, ultimately, cause the gradual unlocking of new equipment and features to slow, leading you to fall behind the game's natural difficulty curve. We'll return to this topic towards the end of this chapter.

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[] LESSON #06: RESOURCES & COLLECTIBLES

The sheer quantity and variety of resources that Big Boss can find in the field or accumulate via Mother Base (and its associated enterprises) might seem baffling during the early hours of a first playthrough. Worry not. In essence, the vast majority of these can be regarded as currencies that are used to obtain benefits from the multilayered in-game economy. They are not only the primary means by which you unlock equipment, but they also bankroll and facilitate the expansion of Mother Base – which enhances your ability to accumulate and process further resources, wealth begetting wealth.

The systems that underpin *MGSV*'s management metagame generally consume or provide resources, but sometimes both. However, early in the story, the primary engine for Mother Base's economic growth is Big Boss's ability to accumulate resources during missions and free roam sessions. If you are picking up or Fulton extracting everything that isn't nailed down whenever you can – and you really should – you'll reap the benefits.

Here is a description of the game's core resources and collectibles:



Money (GMP) [01]: The in-game currency is called Gross Military Product, or GMP. You acquire GMP mostly by completing missions, sending your recruits on Combat Deployment assignments (unlocked relatively early in the story), and by picking up Rough Diamonds while exploring the map. GMP, in conjunction with processed materials, is required for practically every aspect of the Mother Base business, from weapon research and upgrades to building and expanding new facilities. You also spend small sums of GMP to perform certain actions while on the ground, such as the attendant costs every time you use the Fulton Recovery Device or order a supply drop.



Recruits [02]: You can obtain new recruits by extracting incapacitated enemy soldiers and prisoners from the battlefield with your Fulton device, or by completing Combat Deployment assignments. New staff are then assigned to the most appropriate Mother Base department, thereby improving its productivity or proficiency. Some recruits are Specialists, usually acquired during main missions or side ops, who have skills with very specific applications (such as translators, or engineers who unlock new R&D projects).



Processed Materials [03]: Processed materials such as fuel, metal and biological resources can be obtained either as collectibles when you explore the map, or as rewards from Combat Deployment assignments successfully completed by your staff. These materials are required to develop a multitude of weapons, devices, upgrades, and the facilities at Mother Base. Later in the game, you will acquire the ability to Fulton extract shipping containers of unprocessed materials from enemy positions. These actually have to be refined at Mother Base (which takes a little time) before they can be invested as resources.



Medicinal Plants [04]: Plants can be collected as you find them while in the field. They can also be supplied as a reward, usually in significant quantities, when your recruits complete Combat Deployment missions. Medicinal plants are employed to develop or manufacture various items. For example, you need Golden Crescent to create tranquilizer rounds, African Peach for sleeping gas, and so forth.



Vehicles & Turrets [05]: Once you have researched the Cargo 2 upgrade for the Fulton device, you can extract not only enemy soldiers, but also turrets, light vehicles and even tanks. These are automatically transferred to Mother Base, where they can be employed to complete Combat Deployment missions that require their use, strengthen the base's defenses, or deployed on the battlefield for Big Boss to use in missions. If you lose vehicles, they are gone for good. If you order one for a mission, don't forget to Fulton extract it before you leave!



Buddies [06]: Your Buddies can also be seen as resources in a sense, as completing missions with them develops your relationship with them, which gradually unlocks new skills that you can put to use on future assignments. You will also invest significant sums of GMP and resources to improve their equipment as their bond with Big Boss grows.

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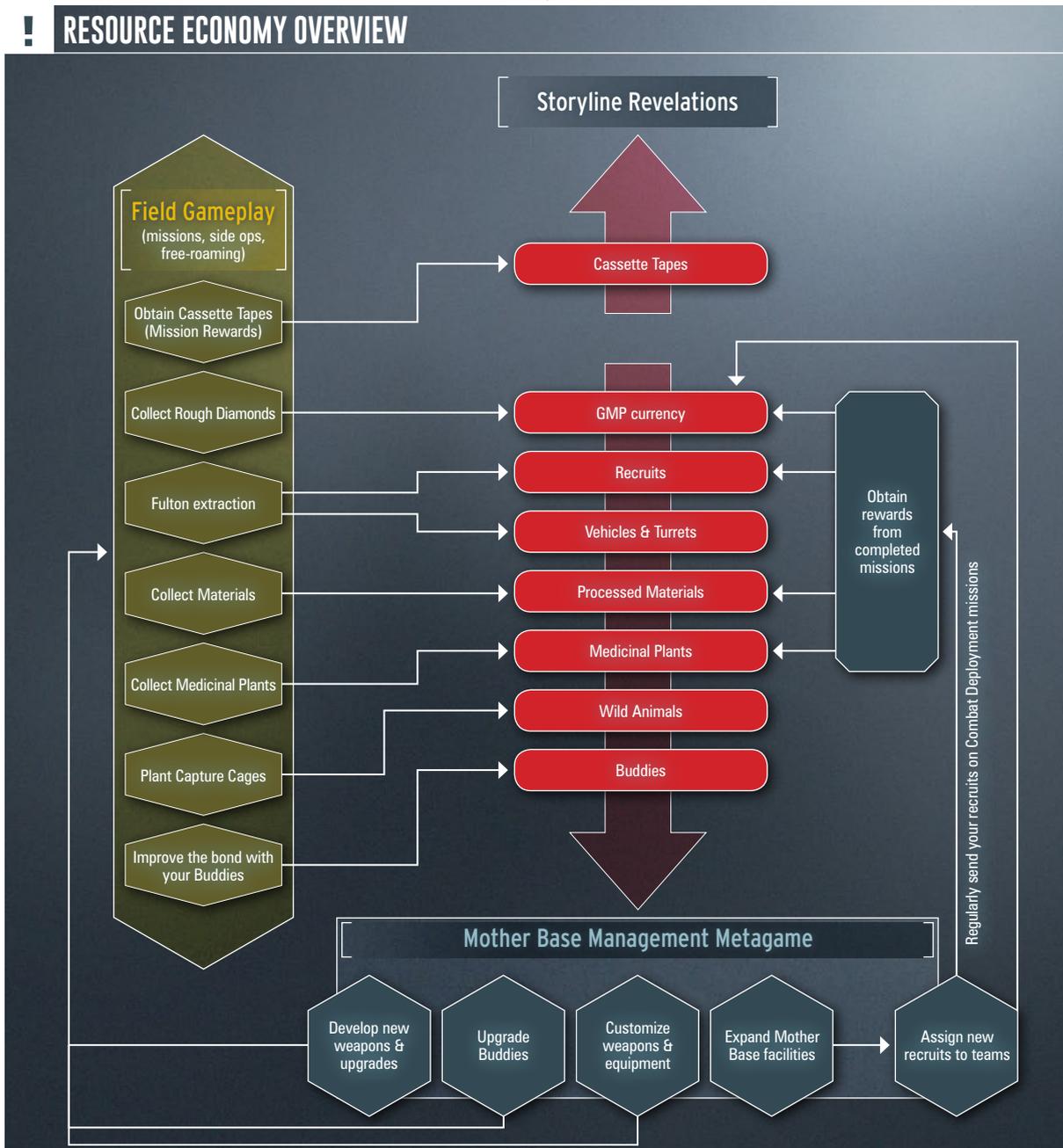


Wild Animals [07]: You can capture wild animals, either with capture cages (convenient for small animals) or by tranquilizing and extracting them with the Fulton device (the only option with large targets). By collecting all available creatures, you can build up a unique menagerie on a dedicated platform back at Mother Base and obtain various rewards.



Cassette Tapes [08]: There are many Cassette Tape collectibles that you can pick up while exploring enemy bases or obtain by completing specific missions or achieving certain feats. The ones you collect manually are usually songs that you can then listen to at your leisure, but those unlocked as mission rewards are a rich source of story information that brings the wider world of *MGSV* to life – and even, in some instances, offer closure or reflection on prior plot strands. Rather than rushing to listen to them the moment they are unlocked, we suggest that you save them for long journeys: they really help the miles to fly by.

! RESOURCE ECONOMY OVERVIEW



[→] LESSON #07: TIME MANAGEMENT

Time is a critical factor in *Metal Gear Solid V*, and something that you need to manage carefully. In this section, we offer a brief overview of how time affects the game world – and ways in which you might turn that to your advantage.

- **Time Flow:** Time flows constantly in the game, at a rate of one in-game minute for each three real-life seconds. Time only stops when you pause the game. When you open the iDroid, be it to consult your map or to manage Mother Base, the clock continues to tick. Therefore, if a guard's patrol leads him to discover you while you use the iDroid, the game's usual mechanisms will apply: Reflex Mode will be triggered, and all enemies will enter Combat Status should you fail to react. Of course, you can also use this to your advantage. When you trigger an alert phase, for example, you can hide and use this opportunity to manage Mother Base while you wait for guards to tire of the search and return to their posts.
- **Day/Night Cycle:** The current time of day can have a profound effect on mission difficulty. It is usually easier to infiltrate areas at night – though frequent use of twilight deployments will cause enemy forces to make regular use of night vision goggles. During the day, there is often a greater need to incapacitate guards to clear a path. For a full appraisal of the differences between night and day when it comes to infiltrating enemy bases, see page 19. Day and night commence at 06:00 and 18:00 respectively. The twelve in-game hours it takes for a full day or night to end correspond to thirty-six real-life minutes; you can check the current time via the iDroid interface. You should also pay close attention to automatic prompts. If your iDroid informs you that daybreak is imminent, that might not be the best time to attempt to crawl over open ground surrounded by assorted sentries and patrols...
- **Weather Conditions:** Sudden shifts in conditions can have a bearing on your efficient use of time. For example, the reduced visibility that accompanies a sandstorm might enable you to easily bypass a complex configuration of guards. If you are unfamiliar with a base layout or need to Fulton extract assets, however, you will need to wait out the storm to continue. Whenever weather

conditions cause a delay, treat it as an opportunity to check on Mother Base and listen to Cassette Tapes.

- **Phantom Cigar:** As long as there is not an active Combat Status or Alert Status (and you are not fighting a boss), the Phantom Cigar is an item that you can use to greatly accelerate the flow of time to reach a specific hour [01]. To activate it, hold [D] to display the Items window and select the cigar with [R]. Time will then speed up; you can stop the process at any point by tapping [D].
- **Travel Time:** As you probably know by now, *MGSV*'s environments are so vast that travelling long distances by foot (or even riding D-Horse) can become a chore. You can make these commutes worthwhile by turning them into excursions, exploring the areas you pass through and collecting valuable resources, but there are ways to speed up journeys if you so wish – see page 33 for details.
- **Combat Deployment:** Combat Deployment is a feature whereby you can send your Diamond Dogs recruits on virtual assignments to obtain payments and other valuable rewards. The moment this feature is unlocked, make it a habit to constantly have as many men as possible away on missions while you attend to your own affairs. They will return after the specified duration, furnishing you with a steady supply of currency, resources and staff. With Combat Deployments, the passage of time always works in your favor. If you need to step away from *MGSV* for a while, and Big Boss is in no immediate danger of detection, it makes sense to leave the game running.
- **Multitasking:** Whenever you need to travel long distances, wait for a specific moment in time or attend to Mother Base management, it makes sense to play story-oriented Cassette Tapes. You will unlock dozens of these during play, and they all contribute to the overarching storyline – indeed, some even feature critical revelations that help to make sense of major events, or provide closure for certain plotlines.



[!] LESSON #08: INVENTORY MANAGEMENT



Once you have been deployed to the battlefield, management of your equipment (particularly in terms of the items that you use most regularly, such as ammunition, suppressors and Fulton devices) becomes a pressing concern.

■ **Maximum Carrying Capacity:** You can carry two Primary Weapons, two Secondary Weapons (one of which has to be a prosthetic arm), eight Support Weapons, and eight items. Once you are at the maximum carrying capacity in each category, you must discard an existing piece of equipment to pick up another.

■ **On-Site Procurement:** When you neutralize an enemy, he will drop the weapon he is carrying. To pick it up, hold **○/B**; this will replace your current weapon in the same category, with both firearms involved in the swap shown onscreen. You can also replenish ammunition automatically by moving close to a dropped weapon that uses the same type of bullets [02]. When presented with the choice of adopting an interesting firearm that you find, first think about your objectives and play style. Even if you have access to a powerful grenade launcher, what good will it be to you if your current objective calls for a stealthy infiltration? Does the new firearm have sufficient ammunition to make the trade worthwhile? As a rule, it is advisable to always have at least one weapon with a suppressor for stealth scenarios, and another suitable for crowd control.

■ **Changing Weapon:** When time is of the essence, you can use the Quick Change function to change equipment without losing a second. Simply tap **↻** in the corresponding direction to change gear instantly: **↻** for Primary Weapons, **↻** for Secondary Weapons, **↻** for Support Weapons and **↻** for items. Alternatively, you can hold the required direction on **↻** and choose your weapon or item manually with **R**.

■ **Weapon Limitations When Carrying:** You cannot use your Primary Weapon while carrying a body. If you have your Primary Weapon equipped when you pick someone up, you will automatically switch to your Secondary Weapon [03]. This is a major consideration whenever you are required to deliver an injured prisoner to a landing zone for helicopter extraction. If events conspire to make handguns inappropriate, it's usually wise to place the prisoner in a safe spot and return to collect them once active hostiles have been neutralized.

■ **Supply Drops:** If you run out of ammo or realize that you need a completely different weapon type during a mission, you always have the option to request a supply drop from Mother Base – our next topic.

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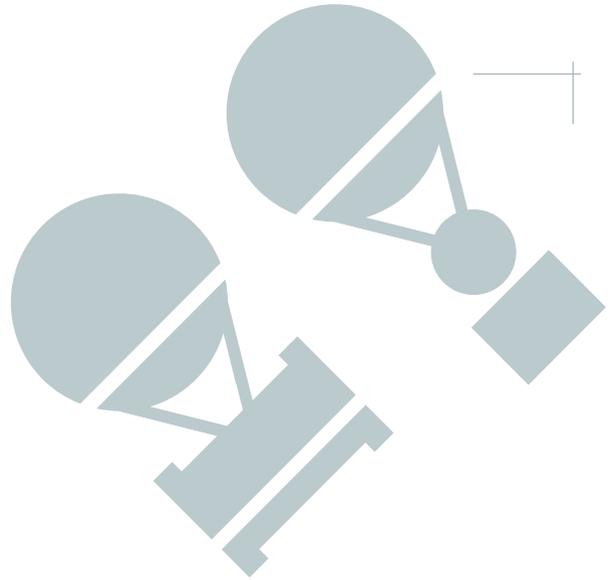
LESSON #09: TACTICAL SUPPORT

Though you are mostly required to rely on your own wits and ingenuity once deployed on the battlefield, with only a single Buddy at a time to provide direct assistance, you can also call for support from Mother Base at practically any time. Each intervention or delivery has an attendant cost in GMP and resources, though, and may have a negative impact on your final score if a mission is in progress. That said, the (usually nominal) sacrifices are offset by the tactical advantages that these requests can provide.

- **Supply Drops:** The ability to summon supply drops is probably the most useful of all, and one that you should take advantage of whenever required. You can request either a drop that will fully refill ammo and stocks of Support Weapons and items (including the all-essential suppressors and Fulton devices), or the delivery of new armaments – say, a rocket launcher to deal with a tank with a persistent interest in your whereabouts. For extended stays in the field, supply drops are a must: never feel obliged to make do with what you have, or use inappropriate weapons through a misguided sense of thrift, as it simply isn't necessary. When you request a supply drop, it will be dropped at the position you specify after approximately one minute. If you are on the move, take this into account and order the drop to fall a few hundred yards in front of your current location. If you are stuck in a confined space, or even lying down and unable to move far, take care to avoid an unfortunate incident where the package lands on its hapless recipient [O1].



- **Changing Buddy:** Just as you can change weapons during the course of a mission, you can also switch Buddies. When you give this order, your current Buddy is extracted immediately, and the new one joins you after a brief delay of approximately one minute. Companions severely injured during combat are automatically airlifted back to Mother Base, and you will fight alone until you request for another to join you (if available).



- **Helicopter Extraction:** In many missions, you will need to rescue targets that cannot be extracted with the Fulton device because they are too frail to survive the rigors of the experience. Many assignments also require Big Boss to depart the mission area in a hurry, which, if he stays on the ground, might expose him to dangerous adversaries or necessitate a time-consuming exfiltration. In such instances, calling a chopper for a swift pick-up is the most obvious solution [O2]. When you choose a landing zone, take your current position and the enemy presence in the area into account. Each chopper will offer some degree of fire support if required, but can also be damaged or destroyed (though you can upgrade their weapons and armor over time). Whether you take the time to clear an occupied LZ or hike to a more distant but secluded rendezvous is entirely your choice, but going that extra mile (sometimes literally) is generally faster and safer if the option is feasible.

- **Fire Support:** If you are in a dire predicament, you can request fire support from Mother Base, with options including the bombardment of a zone with an artillery strike and the dispersal of smoke. The full range of military support options are unlocked as you progress through the story. As a rule, aggressive interventions by your allies tend to be extremely powerful, capable of turning the tide of a battle. The downside, of course, is that this leads to a mission score penalty (a maximum cap of an "A" grade), but this is not something you need to worry about when you play a mission for the first time. The best way to learn about their use is to experiment for yourself, but a word of warning: if you order an air strike, be sure to leave the targeted area or seek shelter...

- **Delay:** Whenever you call for tactical support, it is essential that you take travel time into account. This usually takes approximately one minute. If you run out of rocket launcher ammo while facing a tank on open ground, for example, sixty seconds is a *long* time. Similarly, if you have hostiles in hot pursuit as you arrive at an LZ, you (and any individuals that you might be extracting) will be sitting ducks until the chopper arrives and completes its descent. In short, always try to anticipate a need for supplies or direct intervention before it becomes a matter of urgency. If you are in the process of sniping enemies from afar with only a single clip remaining, then, request a supply drop immediately so that it arrives *before* you run dry – not after.



LESSON #10: WILD CARDS



If you hit a brick wall during a mission and simply cannot seem to fulfill a mandatory objective, there are a few features that you can use to tip the odds in your favor.

■ **Buddy [03]:** Choosing the right Buddy can make a world of difference, especially if you use the full range of their abilities. Your second combat companion, for example, has a knack for pinpointing the locations of enemies and prisoners alike, and more besides – intelligence that will save both time, and, often, lives. Another ability enables this Buddy to create distractions. There are other Buddies with unique abilities and fantastic applications, but for now we'll leave you to discover them by yourself during the course of your playthrough.



■ **Chicken Hat [04]:** If you really struggle to complete a complicated infiltration, the game will automatically offer to grant you the boon of the Chicken Hat. You can also activate this manually via the pause menu: select Game Settings to find the required option. This accessory makes you much harder to spot, granting a form of quasi-invisibility. Though perhaps not the most satisfying conclusion, it's a trick you can resort to when you really feel the need to move on to a fresh challenge. Use of the Chicken Hat restricts your mission score to a maximum A grade – but don't let this dissuade you, as mission scores are essentially meaningless until you master key gameplay systems.



■ **Fire Support [05]:** As mentioned in the previous section, summoning air support from Mother Base gives you a massive edge on your opponents. You can use these raids to raze an entire area, disperse smoke or sleeping gas, or even to change the weather conditions. If a battle spirals out of control, or if you do not have the time or inclination to pick your way through a well-guarded perimeter in the latter stages of a long mission, this feature can be your get-out-of-jail-free card. As with the Chicken Hat, use of this feature will limit your final mission grade to a maximum A rating.

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LESSON #11: MOTHER BASE

Mother Base is the offshore facility that is home to Big Boss and his Diamond Dogs – a hub that you can visit when you please, and a location that hosts major story cutscenes and a selection of activities. Certain events and cinematics, for example, are only triggered if you visit specific platforms or individuals at an appropriate time, and there are also dozens of collectibles hidden throughout the map. As a fringe benefit, being seen by Diamond Dogs troops while moving around the facility will provide a boost to their morale.

Mother Base is also a virtual space that you can interact with at any time by opening the iDroid menu. Press (L1)/LB to access the Mother Base tab for all administrative tasks, or (R1)/RB to access the Missions tab from where you can send your recruits on Combat Deployment assignments. We offer an introduction to the most critical features in this section, each one describing the management functions accessed via iDroid menu options.

“Staff Management”: Assigning New Recruits

You will secure the services of hundreds of new recruits to Mother Base during the course of the story, both by extracting individuals from the battlefield with your Fulton device and by undertaking Combat Deployment assignments. As Big Boss's fame grows, you will also obtain volunteers between missions. Unless departments are at full operational capacity, new recruits are automatically assigned to the division appropriate to their abilities. If there is no space, prospective Diamond Dogs are placed in the waiting room, awaiting an opening or your direct intervention.

There are two methods to assign recruits found in the waiting room tab:

- **Automatic Assignment:** In the iDroid's Mother Base tab, select Staff Management. Press (R3)/RT and, when the two available options appear, choose to delegate recruits in the waiting room to appropriate jobs, or, if you wish, reassign your entire staff to their best roles.
- **Manual Assignment:** Select individuals of particular interest with (X)/A to bring up a menu that enables you to transfer them between departments. You could use this (as a typical example) to boost the overall rating of the R&D Team to unlock a research opportunity that you are eager to secure immediately. Generally, though, this degree of micromanagement isn't really necessary. If you wish to fire a staff member, use the “Dismiss” option.

As you must necessarily leave most human resources decisions to the Mother Base AI, less gifted staff in oversubscribed roles will be automatically reassigned or dismissed when superior hires are made available. If you become attached to a specific individual, you can even highlight their name and press (L2)/LB to give them a permanent contract, maintaining their presence until you revoke this special privilege. You will find that automatically reassigning all base staff once in a while can help to keep all departments operating at their best potential level.

To help you identify the strengths and weaknesses of each recruit (including all potential hires that you encounter in the field), the game uses a rating system. These grades are letters used to represent an individual's prospective competence for the six primary Mother Base departments. The complete hierarchy of ratings is, from worst to best, E-D-C-B-A-S. Every individual has a grade associated with the main departments, meaning that a recruit who has their highest rating in the R&D category will be a natural candidate for the R&D Team, and so forth. It's all very straightforward.

Here is a brief description of the various departments that become available as you expand your Mother Base facilities:

✂ **Combat Unit:** The troops that you send on Combat Deployment assignments.

🔧 **R&D Team:** Develop weapons and items on your command when requirements such as department levels, resources and GMP funds have been met.

📶 **Intel Team:** Provide operational support in the form of intelligence, such as iDroid map updates and notifications, whenever you are in the field.

🩹 **Medical Team:** Provide treatment for sick or injured staff.

📦 **Support Unit:** The team who provide supply drops and fire support when requested.

🏠 **Base Development Unit:** Dedicated to the essential task of procuring and processing vital materials and the development or expansion of base facilities.

🛡 **Security Team:** Established much later in the story than the other departments. Used to protect your facilities from outside threats.

The more staff that you assign to a team and the higher their rating in the corresponding attribute, the more features and upgrades you can potentially unlock. Some innovations require that multiple departments reach specific levels before new tech or abilities become available for research or use.



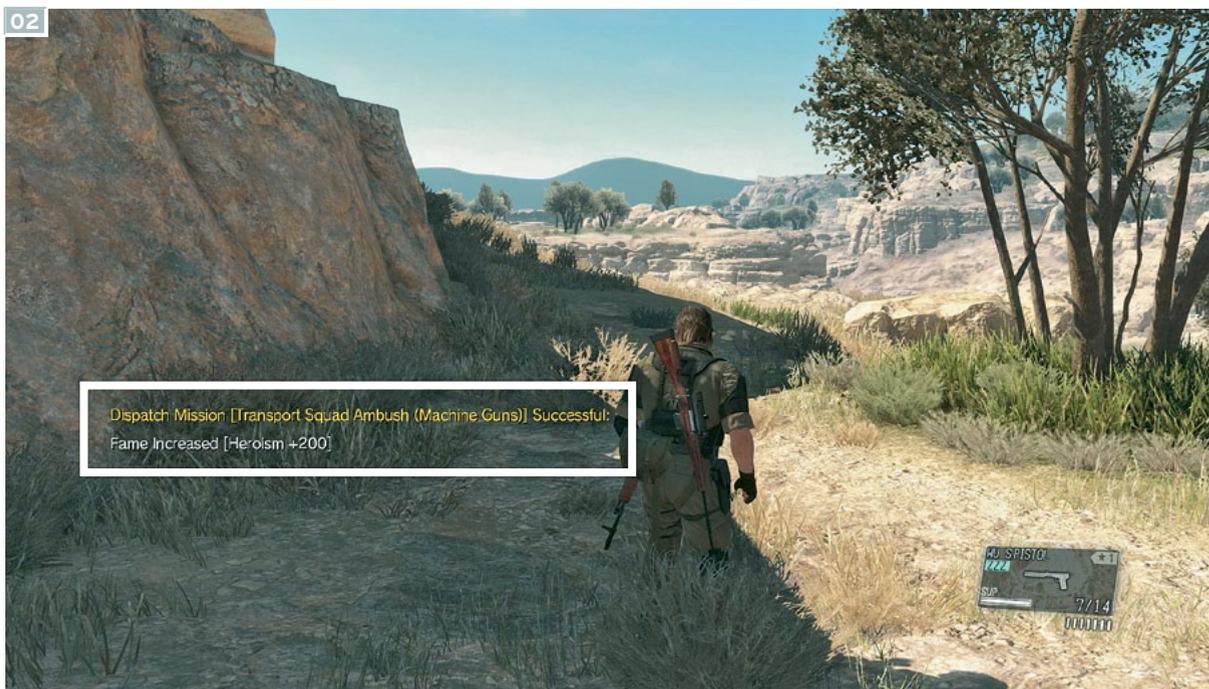
By upgrading your Int-Scope binoculars, you can learn more about an individual's potential ability when you study them [O1]. From this point forward, you gain the ability to be a little more selective in your choice of who to extract. As a rule, the ratings of the enemies you can recruit improve gradually as you advance in the storyline. Early on, most soldiers are of D or C grade at best. Over time, though, the quality of prospective staff that you encounter rises.

During the first half of the story, quantity is perhaps more important than quality: take everyone that you can get. When you reach the staff limits for each department, be sure to increase the employment capacity by ordering appropriate Mother Base expansions. Later, it pays to be more selective in whom you extract. Scan all enemies that you encounter during missions or while free roaming, and choose to pressgang only those who offer a noteworthy level of expertise (B, A and, especially, S).

In addition to the teams and units described here, there are a few other sections of the Staff Management menu that warrant a quick introduction. The Sickbay is where injured or unwell staff are treated; patients are removed from active duty while bedridden. The Brig is where troublemakers or those yet to sign up with Diamond Dogs spend their days until released to an appropriate department. Finally, the KIA/Former tab provides a list of erstwhile staff who have been dismissed, or sadly succumbed to illness or injury.

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“Combat Deployment”: Send Recruits on Assignments

Combat Deployment is probably one of the most lucrative (and therefore essential) systems in the entire game. Accessed via the Missions tab in the iDroid menu, this option enables you to send troops in your Combat Unit on assignments while you continue with your own objectives. This will become your principal method of securing large quantities of key resources and considerable GMP payments as time goes by. Without these rewards, the development of Mother Base and most associated projects will eventually slow to a crawl.

The process is easy: simply highlight a mission from the list, check its details (in particular the duration, chances of success and rewards), then confirm once you are ready to commit a team to the duty. Missions can lead to serious injuries or death, so always try to opt for assignments that have a very good projected success rating. The highest possible chance, 95%, should be the baseline you favor to ensure that your men will survive in most instances, though there is nothing to stop you from pressing your (or, more accurately, *their*) luck if you feel so inclined.

With most commissions, you can simply select an appropriate staff grade from the deployment menu and send an auto-assigned group of troops on an operation within seconds. For difficult missions with noteworthy rewards, however, you may wish to hand-pick your best possible team: press **△/▽** to enter the appropriate menu, then use **□/×** to select or deselect soldiers.

Once a squad has been deployed, you can safely forget about them until a notification informs you of the mission results and rewards [02]. Time flows constantly in *MGSV* (pause screen excepted), so make a habit of having the maximum number of Combat Deployment assignments active at any one time. By default, you can only have two missions in progress at once, but this total can be extended later in the game by building Forward Operation Bases – a topic we introduce overleaf.

Every time a Combat Deployment mission is completed, the corresponding rewards are made available for collection in the Mother Base tab of the iDroid menu. You can go through each reward individually, or collect them all at once by pressing **□/×**.

“Development”: Unlocking New Gear & Upgrades

While the Combat Deployment system is the mechanism by which you accumulate great financial and material wealth for the Diamond Dogs operation, the Development menu is where you'll invest most of your gains. Available via the iDroid's Mother Base tab, this option enables you to spend your resources to create brand new pieces of gear and furnish existing equipment with upgrades.

The usefulness of the objects that you can acquire via the Development option goes way beyond just providing a mere quantitative increase in the range of toys you have to play with. Throughout the course of the game, it unlocks many new firearms and tactical items that can **completely** change your approach to missions.

New research opportunities become available as you make progress in the Mother Base management metagame, mostly by hiring more and better recruits to level up the various departments. For certain projects, however, you will also need to secure corresponding blueprints. Blueprints are collectibles that appear in very specific positions, usually in key bases and outposts visited during important missions and side ops, or are acquired via Combat Deployment assignments.

Your initial setup in the early game consists of a silent tranquilizer pistol, a couple of automatic rifles, and a few support items. Over time, though, you'll develop an incredible arsenal of weapons and gadgets that not merely help you to beat future challenges, but to replay previous missions in completely different ways. As a simple example of this, a set of objectives that you might tackle one way with a silenced sniper rifle that fires tranquilizer rounds will play completely differently if you enter the fray with an advanced magazine-loaded grenade launcher. There are inventions such as the Decoy (inflatable soldiers designed to fool enemies), Stealth Camo (offering temporary invisibility) or even items as exotic as Bait Bottles (vials that attract wild animals to a location, with much potential for mischief) that provide boundless potential for experimentation.

When you study a weapon via the Development menus, its stats are represented with blue bars in the window on the right-hand side of the screen. Any bar segment of a different color corresponds to stat differences between the weapon you're looking at and the weapon of the same category you are currently equipped with. If the segment is red, it means the weapon has a lower stat (the red portion corresponds to the attribute points you will be losing if you equip the weapon). If the segment is yellow, it means the weapon you're looking at has a higher stat (the yellow portion corresponds to the attribute points you will be gaining if you equip the weapon). You shouldn't always read too much into stat differences between armaments in different categories: rocket launchers have lousy Penetration stats when compared to sniper rifles, but it only takes a moment to realize that this really doesn't matter.

In addition to developing new weapons and gear, you can also enhance staple pieces of equipment that will enable you to better supply Mother Base with required assets. First and foremost, you can upgrade your Fulton Recovery Device – and you should, at every available opportunity until its full potential is met. At first, it only allows you to send back individual people. With successive enhancements, though, you can double Big Boss's Fulton device carrying capacity, and then extract heavier items such as turrets, leading later to an iteration where you can lift cargo containers and vehicles [03]. Many advanced Combat Deployment missions have specific requirements that cannot be met without a duly upgraded Fulton device (for example, that you own at least one truck), so do everything in your power to fully develop this technology as soon as you can.

Another key item to upgrade is your Int-Scope binoculars, as this device increases the amount of information you can obtain by analyzing enemies. Once you have access to their individual attribute ratings, you can determine in advance which soldiers are worth extracting to Mother Base. This can save literally hours of play time, and it will also enable you to identify and target the very best possible recruits [04]. Again, this has a ripple effect that touches other systems. Better recruits will lead to new development possibilities;

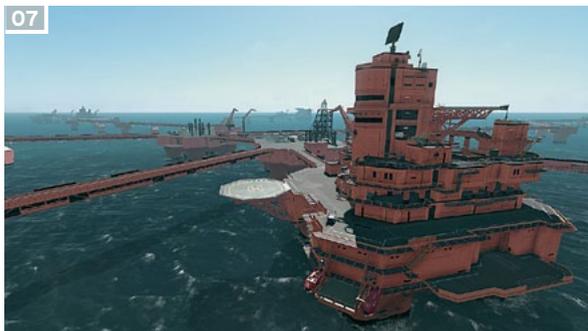


superior soldiers in the Combat Unit will enable you to take on more dangerous Combat Deployment commissions.

Last, but by no means least, you can also improve the equipment of your Buddies [05 & 06]. If you are keen to protect “No Kills” bonuses during missions or preserve the lives of potential recruits, for example, you could research and equip nonlethal weapons for applicable Buddies. If D-Horse is regularly wounded by enemies enraged by your cavalier approach to covert ops, why not work towards providing him with special armor? Though some items are purely cosmetic, others have direct applications that can greatly impact your play style.

“Base Facilities”: Expand Mother Base

From the moment that the option is unlocked, expanding Mother Base should be a priority [07]. Early in the story, each facility that you build unlocks new features that you can exploit by assigning recruits to the corresponding department. Furthermore, each subsequent expansion also increases the number of staff that you can employ. The more platforms you build, the more rewards you acquire. As departments level up, you also gain access to more and more equipment and upgrade options.



As a rule, you should make it a priority to expand Mother Base whenever you have an opportunity to do so. Since each new platform represents a fairly hefty GMP investment, this means that it makes sense to slowly but surely stockpile resources, spending them on key weapon and upgrade developments as they become available, but saving lump sums for the expansion of your Mother Base structures. If you invest in each research option as they appear, without restraint or discernment, you may experience periods of scarcity where you can't afford to make real progress where it matters.

Forward Operating Bases

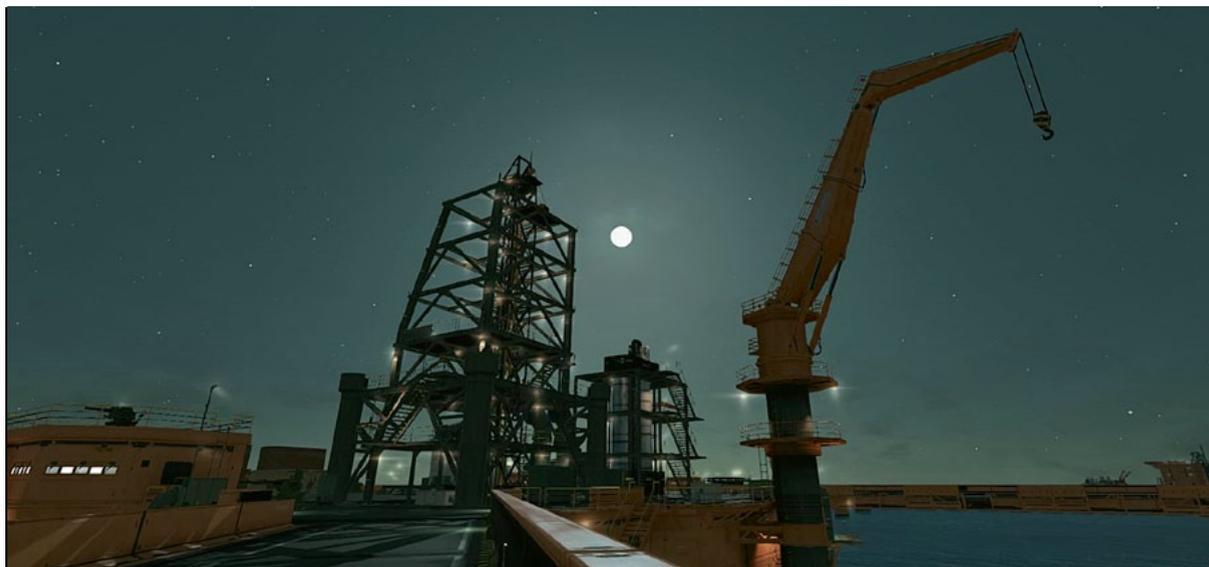
As you approach the midway point in the main storyline, you will be given the opportunity to build a Forward Operating Base (FOB) if you have an active online connection. You gain the first one for free; further (entirely optional) FOBs are acquired via microtransaction payments. Each FOB is, essentially, an *additional* Mother Base that you can expand just like your main one, increasing your haul of rewards and resources even further.

Any FOB that you own is effectively virtual, however: unlike Mother Base, you cannot physically explore them on demand. In practical terms, FOBs do not change the way that you manage the Diamond Dogs – they are simple but powerful catalysts for accelerated development.

Though this is a topic for later chapters, it would be remiss for us to not mention that your FOBs can be attacked by other players, just as you can attack theirs should you wish. If you successfully infiltrate an FOB and reach your objective, any soldiers and equipment that you have Fulton extracted are transferred to your possession. Naturally, other players can do the same to you, sparking cycles of heists, revenge, counter-revenge and counter-counter-revenge (and so on). It's an absorbing time-sink.

“Customization”: Improving Weapons With Attachments

As you progress in the story, you will unlock a menu in the Mother Base tab (only accessible while in the Aerial Command Center) that is used to customize firearms. The attachments and improvements that you can equip to your weapons include suppressors, flashlights, scopes and expanded ammo clips [08]. Spending some time and resources to improve key aspects of your favorite weapons can lead to very significant bonuses. A durable suppressor on a favored sniper rifle, for instance, could be employed to clear an entire base of potential threats without once troubling the enemy HQ with bad news.



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[] LESSON #12: SYSTEM INTERDEPENDENCY

All gameplay and management systems that make up *Metal Gear Solid V* are interconnected in one way or another. Ultimately, though, your true progress (story aside) is determined by the following activities:

- You **gather resources**, which is achieved by:
 - completing missions and side ops in the field;
 - acquiring assets while free roaming;
 - expanding Mother Base;
 - sending recruits on Combat Deployment assignments.

- You **invest these resources** via the various Mother Base menus.

Whenever you accumulate resources, you are then free to spend them as you please. That said, it's common sense to focus on investments that will either improve Big Boss's capabilities (critical research on major innovations rather than alternate weapon types), or to expand Mother Base with new platforms that enhance its ability to accumulate assets, provide services and employ more staff.

Equipment purchases expand your tactical possibilities and overall efficiency on the battlefield, enabling you to accumulate more resources, which you can then reinvest through further purchases in the Mother Base management metagame.

The (usually significant) payments for new Mother Base platforms expand the staff caps for Diamond Dogs divisions, making them more effective in the services they provide (including, it *must* be reiterated, the procurement of new resources), all of which *also* drives your progress both in action and in the management metagame.

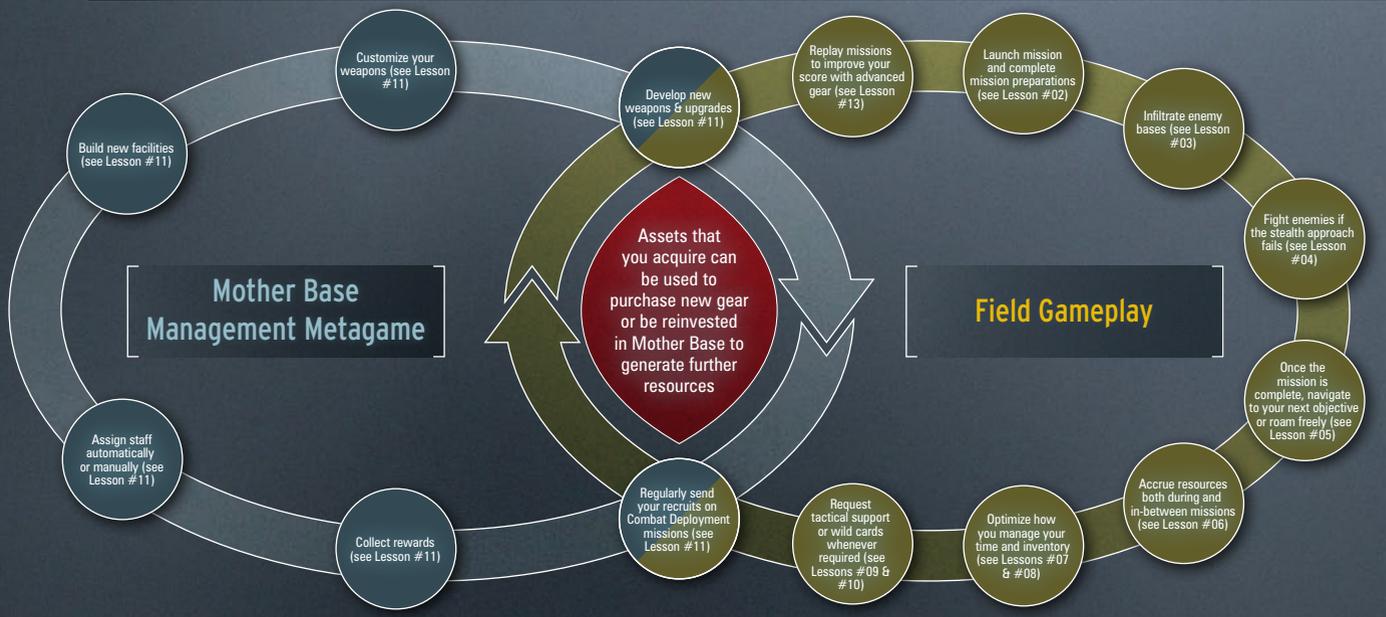
This carefully woven tapestry of interdependency between all systems is represented visually in the accompanying diagram. A quick glance should suffice to make it clear that consistently working to make

progress with all major game systems will lead to numerous positive, game-changing rewards and tactical benefits. Conversely, focusing solely on missions to speed your way through the storyline will leave Mother Base (and, therefore, Big Boss and his Diamond Dogs) ill-equipped for later challenges.

Ideally, you should aim for something approximate to the following itinerary to maintain balanced progression and a steady flow of rewards:

- You **play missions and roam freely** on the map to earn GMP, pick up resource collectibles and extract incapacitated enemies with your Fulton device.
- Simultaneously, you regularly send at least two Combat Unit teams on **Combat Deployment** missions. Whenever the log that appears onscreen informs you that a mission is over, you immediately send your men on another assignment.
- With a healthy supply of necessary assets, you make regular use of the services provided by your support team while engaged in operations, safe in the knowledge that Mother Base can afford the expense. This includes **supply drops** and chopper support whenever you deem them necessary.
- Every once in a while, you quickly open the Mother Base menu to **collect rewards** received from Combat Deployment missions. Resources acquired via automatic Mother Base procurement methods can be used in due time to make valuable purchases.
- Between missions, you check to see if you can afford the **development** of equipment for Big Boss or his Buddies, increasing your effectiveness on the battlefield, and periodically make major investments in Mother Base **facilities** – which will in turn lead to additional income.

! SYSTEM INTERDEPENDENCY OVERVIEW



[🔒] LESSON #13: SCORES

Late Game Challenges

Once you have a solid command of primary game mechanics, and have the Mother Base metagame running smoothly to generate resources and unlock new equipment, you will be ready to begin replaying previous missions in an attempt to achieve the best possible scores.

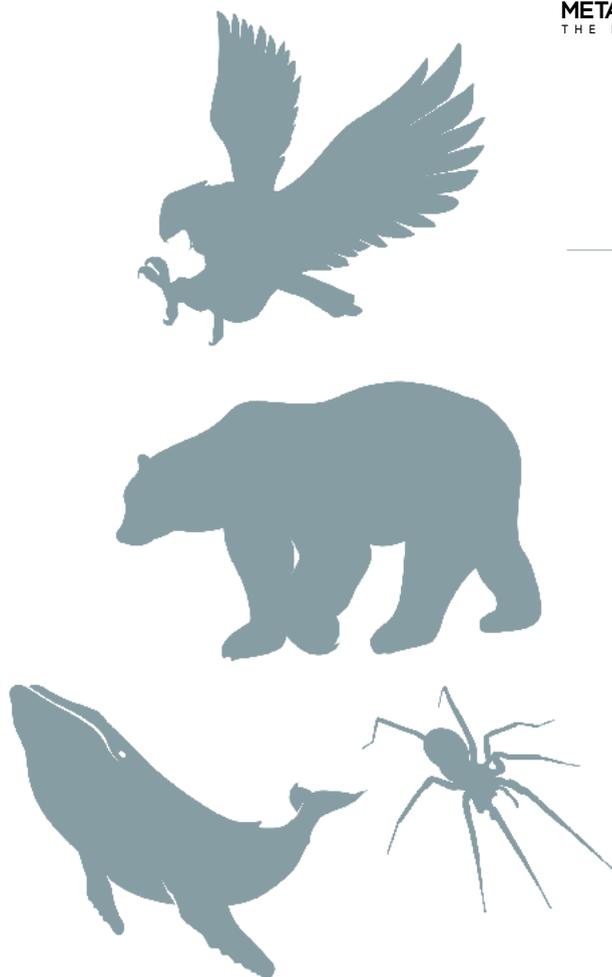
■ **Ratings:** The complete hierarchy of ratings is, from worst to best: E-D-C-B-A-S. Certain main missions do not provide final ratings.

■ **Score Calculation:** The rating you receive is the result of a complex calculation that involves a multitude of individual scoring categories, as detailed on the mission result screen [01]. We offer a more comprehensive explanation of this system on page 296 of our Reference & Analysis chapter, but for now keep in mind that the most important criteria for a high rank includes:

- your speed (the time you take to complete the mission, where faster is better);
- how many optional Mission Tasks you fulfil in addition to mandatory objectives (as detailed on your mission screen and in this guide's Walkthrough chapter);
- how stealthy or violent you are (if you avoid alerts and fatalities, there are score bonuses).

Obviously, earning high scores in missions often necessitates advanced gear, hand-picked to suit the nature of the objectives, but also a commanding understanding and mastery of the game's controls, environments and AI behavior. This knowledge is something you will gradually acquire and develop by playing *Metal Gear Solid V* and experimenting with all systems, devices, enemy types and situations that you can possibly encounter.

But don't worry too much about this just yet. On a first playthrough, the most important thing is to enjoy the incredible variety of new



experiences that the *MGSV* main storyline will deliver, time after time. In fact, it's liberating to play without paying attention to the scores. As long as you are making progress and working to expand Mother Base, low grades are of no concern – they're an inevitable side-effect of all the exploration, pilfering and experimentation that you really should be enjoying when you first play each mission.

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01

SCORE

Episode 3: A HERO'S WAY

PLAY RATING		BONUS	
TOTAL PLAY TIME	18:45:46.501	---	---
TIME	7:46.706	117997	Extracted the Spetsnaz commander 5000
ENEMY COMBAT ALERTS	0	0	NO RETRIES 5000
HITS TAKEN	0	0	NO KILLS 5000
TACTICAL TAKEDOWNS	1	1000	NO REFLEX 10000
HEADSHOTS	0	0	NO ENEMY COMBAT ALERTS 5000
ACCURACY	-(-/-)	0	PERFECT STEALTH, NO KILLS 20000
NEUTRALIZATIONS	2	400	
MARKINGS	0	0	
EFFECTIVE INTERROGATIONS	1	150	
PRISONERS RESCUED	0	0	
TOTAL	119547	TOTAL	50000
SCORE		169547	

Bond Level

D-Horse

D-Dog

Quiet

CODENAME

PUMA

RANK

S

ⓧ Next



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WALKTHROUGH



This chapter has been designed to guide you through all main missions in *Metal Gear Solid V*. Once you have completed its opening prologue and embark on the first “true” mission, you will be continually astonished by the extraordinary amount of freedom that you are given. Stationed on an offshore facility called Mother Base that acts as a hub, you are soon given license to explore a massive theater of operations in Afghanistan, where you can complete objectives whenever and however you see fit.

The degree of freedom that *MGSV* entrusts its players with can be quite daunting at first. For this reason, we strongly suggest that you take the time to read the Primer chapter (see page 8) to pick up advice and insights on subjects such as primary controls and features, the rhythm and structure of the game, the tools at your disposal, and the relationship between its many systems – from management metagames to mission scores.

[V] INTRODUCTION

One essential fact to acknowledge before you begin to use the Walkthrough chapter is that the game as you experience it changes in real-time in accordance with a multitude of factors:

- The movement patterns of each individual guard are subject to constant variations. Unlike previous instalments (and, it must be said, most stealth games since the dawn of the genre), most soldiers do not follow the exact same preset paths at all times. They can and will mix up their routine on a whim, necessitating constant adaptation and improvisation during infiltrations.
- The current time determines how enemy patrols and sentries may behave, with the positions and paths favored by hostiles often varying from day to night. Visibility is also a critical factor, with daylight and evening infiltrations defined by distinct benefits and drawbacks.
- Your actions have an impact on the environment and mission difficulty. If you are detected and the alarm is raised, for instance, all enemies in a base alter their routine and move to different positions, making them far more unpredictable. What's more, a firefight in one location radioed in to HQ may lead to an order that places all local enemy bases and guard posts on a state of heightened alert.
- Your objectives in each main mission (called "Mission Tasks") are varied and numerous. Only a handful of these are mandatory requirements that you must fulfill to complete an assignment. By undertaking optional tasks, though, you can change the way that a mission plays – and, if successful, gain further rewards and final score bonuses.
- Last, but definitely not least, *MGSV*'s difficulty and parameters are adjusted dynamically throughout the story in accordance with your play style. If you always rely on the same strategy, the game will adapt and invite you to use new approaches. If you become a headshot expert, for example, tranquilizing all guards that you encounter, your opponents will wear helmets with greater frequency. If you always complete missions at night to facilitate easier infiltrations, enemies will make regular use of night vision goggles to counter this proclivity.

All of these features, and many other factors that we cannot hope to detail here, mean that there is rarely a single best way to complete each mission. Instead, there are literally dozens of potential approaches – and each one could become redundant or require immediate ingenuity to complete after an unforeseen event.

Success in *MGSV* is often a matter of observation and adaptation. This has influenced the format of our Walkthrough chapter. Rather than attempting to insist on step-by-step solutions to follow blindly, we offer map annotations, captions with expert insights, and tactical advice gleaned from months of cumulative play time to help you make your own informed decisions.

Even if we tried to present prescriptive paths and foolproof methods, you would run the risk of constantly encountering variations or perceived errors. What if we were to suggest that you tranquilize a particular guard, but he is wearing a helmet and full body armor when you encounter him in your game? What happens if an earlier commotion at a guard post has led to a general state of alert for all enemy bases? What if the guard simply isn't there, because he's taking a nap at night?

The very design of *Metal Gear Solid V* fosters creativity and regularly presents small scenarios that are unique to each player – which is why this chapter focuses primarily on offering visual guidance, enabling you to master main missions without constant hand-holding.

While we still provide many of the traditional trappings of a conventional walkthrough (numbered steps, recommended tactics and secrets), we eschew a proscriptive "go there, do that" approach in favor of map-based observations and strategies that will suit a first playthrough and later replays alike, with a strong emphasis on stealth and non-lethal tactics. On your first journey through a mission, we offer the tools you'll need to follow the story and complete feasible objectives without too much difficulty. Later, you can return to the same pages for assistance with securing a high grade, and to complete optional Mission Tasks that might have been unfeasible earlier.



! MAP & SCREENSHOT LEGEND

The following legend details annotations and icons that you will encounter throughout the Walkthrough. Naturally, all of our maps are oriented in accordance with the default in-game convention, where "up" is north. All maps in this chapter focus solely on mission-related objectives and items. You can find the standard collectibles that appear at all times in the game world (and not only during missions) on the poster that comes with this guide.

ANNOTATION	MEANING
	Player Movement (Screenshots)
	Player Movement (Maps)
	Walkthrough Step
	Landing Zone/Deployment Point
	Enemy Movement

[!] POINTS OF INTEREST

There are many different types of objects, entities, events and other such points of interest that you will regularly encounter in the *MGSV* sandbox. To help you have a clear sense of how they might be exploited to your advantage – and the potential consequences of your actions – the following five pages present an overview of the many things that you might find on your travels during the early hours of a first playthrough.

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Lights: You can destroy searchlights and most other sources of illumination with bullets or explosives (but not tranquilizer darts), though some cannot be damaged – for example, strong glass fitted with a protective metal mesh. Uninterrupted darkness usually works in your favor, but be warned that guards who witness a change in lighting or notice the destruction of equipment will become suspicious.



Communications Equipment: Using explosives to destroy communications equipment will disrupt radio chatter, preventing the local guards from calling for reinforcements. If an enemy-held position has more than one transmitter, all of them must be destroyed to cut them off from the outside world.



Radio Transmitters: Alternatively, you can seek out and vandalize a transmitter to achieve the same effect as destroying communications equipment immediately – but as they are found inside buildings, you may need to clear a path to reach them. If you have a suppressed weapon that fires standard bullets, it's possible to destroy this equipment with several shots – which may go unnoticed.



Power Systems: An outpost's power system can be disabled by turning it off, or destroyed with explosives. Cutting the power will shut down equipment that requires an uninterrupted supply of electricity, such as lights and surveillance cameras, making infiltrations much easier. Though using the switch to turn it off is the most stealthy approach, be aware that a guard will usually be dispatched to investigate, and turn it back on. If you destroy a generator, expect enemies to enter alert status.

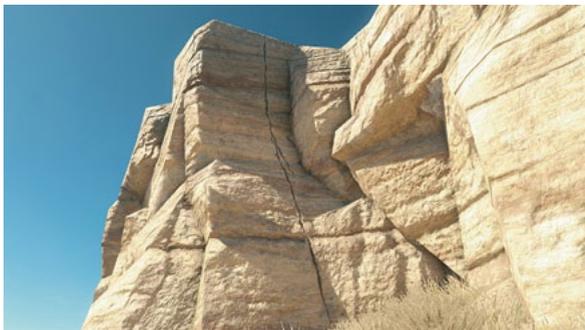
[!] POINTS OF INTEREST [CONTINUED]



Anti-Air Radar: Destroying an anti-air radar dish will create a permanent hole in the enemy's aerial surveillance network, unlocking a new landing zone for your support helicopter. Of course, the necessary explosion will raise the alert level of all guards in the vicinity, so either secure the area first or be ready for the search that will ensue.



Locked Doors: You will sometimes encounter locked doors, as indicated by a lock icon. To open these, simply press **△**/**Y**, though you should note that the unlocking process will take several seconds. You can also open locked doors by luring enemies to pass through them – or, for entirely unnecessary effect, blow them open with explosives.



Cracks: You can use these visually distinct vertical paths to ascend or descend. They are found on natural rock formations such as cliffs, and occasionally appear on stone walls. Whether they offer a convenient shortcut, a secret point of infiltration at an enemy base, or simply lead to a vantage point where you can scout the area, it's always a good idea to investigate them when you find them.



Explosive Barrels: Red metal drums are filled with volatile fuel or chemicals, so hitting them with lethal weaponry will cause them to explode with devastating effect. Always be mindful of their positions during firefights, steering Big Boss clear of them whenever a stray shot might lead to disaster.



Wooden Boxes: Wooden boxes found at outposts and guard posts can be destroyed by the CQC kick attack performed by rapidly pressing **R2**/**RT**, or with shotguns and explosives. This can occasionally be useful to clear a pathway. During firefights, wooden boxes make poor cover for Big Boss and his enemies alike: bullets from all but the weakest weapons can penetrate their surfaces and hit someone behind them.



Delivery Points/Cargo Loading Platforms: Every "invoice" collectible that you acquire from cargo loading platforms unlocks a new fast travel destination that you can reach by hiding in a cardboard box while standing on another cargo loading platform. After a short delay, a truck will pick up the box, and you can then "warp" instantly to any other delivery point that you have unlocked so far. This is the fastest way to reach remote destinations on your current map, so retrieving invoices should be a priority when you explore a new enemy base.

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Rough Diamonds: Rough diamonds are glimmering collectibles hidden throughout the game world, though primarily found in outposts and bases. They are automatically converted to GMP (the in-game currency) when you pick them up, with the exact sum determined by the size of the haul: 10,000 GMP for "small", and 100,000 GMP for "large". Enemy soldiers will occasionally reveal the locations of rough diamonds when you interrogate them.



Processed Materials: Processed materials include fuel, metal and biological resources. They can be obtained either as collectibles found while exploring, or as rewards from Combat Deployment assignments successfully completed by your staff. These materials are required to develop weapons, upgrades, equipment and facilities back at Mother Base.



Raw Materials: Shipping materials containers found at outposts and other enemy-occupied locales can be extracted once you research an essential Fulton Recovery Device upgrade. When delivered back to Mother Base, the Base Development Unit will gradually (but automatically) transform them into processed materials.



Medicinal Plants: Plants can be found all over the map, and can be collected at any time. They are also offered as a reward for certain Combat Deployment missions. Medicinal plants are consumed to research and manufacture various items. For example, you need Golden Crescent to create tranquilizer rounds, African Peach for sleeping gas, Wormwood for the Phantom Cigar, and so forth.



Cassette Tapes: Cassette tapes are collectibles that you can pick up while exploring enemy bases or obtain by completing specific missions. Those that you collect manually are usually songs that you can listen to at your leisure. To find them, pay attention to sources of music while exploring, then track the sound to the tape player in question; if a  icon appears, press the specified button to collect the tape. Cassettes unlocked as mission rewards feature dialogue that provides background information, plot development and even closure on past events. We advise that you develop the habit of listening to the story tapes (via the Missions tab of the iDroid menu) as you perform other activities, such as making long journeys or attending to Mother Base management.



Blueprints: Blueprints are collectibles required for the development of specific weapons and items. They can be found in enemy-occupied locations, or obtained as rewards for the completion of Combat Deployment assignments.

[!] POINTS OF INTEREST [CONTINUED]



Posters: Posters are collectibles found on walls, most commonly in enemy outposts and bases. Approach and press the displayed button to pick them up.



Enemy Soldiers: While enemy soldiers will always attempt to kill Big Boss when given an opportunity to do so, it's inadvisable to treat them with equivalent aggression: they are also essential resources for Mother Base. Every opponent that you stun or put to sleep can be extracted from the battlefield with your Fulton device. They will then – sometimes after a stay in the brig or sickbay – automatically join the Diamond Dogs fold. There are also score bonuses for completing missions without fatalities.



Bodies: As you sneak through enemy bases, you will frequently leave unconscious bodies and/or corpses in your wake. When discretion is essential and Fulton extractions impractical or unavailable, you can pick up and carry unconscious enemies or corpses to locations where they will be concealed until they come to, or even hide them in portable toilets (🚽) or dumpsters (🗑️) where they will not wake up unless removed.



Cameras: Mounted surveillance cameras monitor a specific area in a predetermined cycle. As with guards, a detection indication will appear whenever you enter their cone of vision; linger too long and Big Boss will be detected. The best tactic is to wait for openings and slip by when they are facing away, or exploit blind spots (such as directly beneath them). Cameras can be destroyed, but be warned: this action will almost always cause enemies to investigate and trigger a low-level alert.



Vehicles & Turrets: Vehicles (such as four-wheel drives, trucks, tanks) and weapon emplacements (mortars, machine guns, anti-air artillery) are regular sights on missions and during free roam sessions. If unoccupied, you can use any fixed weapon or vehicle that you encounter. You will be able to appropriate these assets for Mother Base once your Fulton device has been developed to a sufficient level, where they will be used to strengthen defenses, or (with vehicles) kept in stock for deployment on the battlefield at your behest. Unoccupied fixed weapons and vehicles are marked with white icons when you scan them with your binoculars; if an enemy is using or driving one, the icon is red.



Intel Files: You can collect intel files during certain missions that reveal critical or useful information, such as the location of a prisoner you need to extract or a predicted travel route for a target. Some are mandatory, others entirely optional.



Weapons & Ammo: In addition to the weapons and ammo that you can have delivered via supply drops, you can also find supplies in the field. Weapons can be picked up by holding **○/B**; note that the two firearms that will be swapped both appear onscreen to avoid confusion. Ammo is retrieved automatically at close proximity whenever Big Boss encounters an appropriate supply.



Grass: Patches of grass and foliage can be used to crawl past watching enemies in relative safety – even in daylight hours. When you encounter larger bushes, you can sometimes risk a crouching stance to more easily survey the area – or, perhaps, to get a clear shot at an enemy.



Wild Animals: You can capture wild animals by researching and deploying capture cages (ideal with small creatures) or by pacifying and extracting them with the Fulton device (the only option with large animals). By taking these animals into protection you will receive rewards, gradually building up an impressive menagerie back at Mother Base.



Cover: Approach obstacles such as walls or crates and tap **L** in their direction to “wall press”, locking you to the surface until you pull away. Taking cover in this fashion makes Big Boss harder to see and provides essential protection during firefights, and enables you to jump in and out from cover to take a few shots simply by holding and releasing **L2/L1**.



Waypoints & Markers: Mission waypoints are yellow onscreen navigational markers that offer a broad indication of where to go in order to complete an objective. If you think of these as “move here and figure it out” prompts, rather than “X marks the spot”, you’ve got the right idea. Manual markers are white icons that you can manually place on the iDroid map by tapping **⊗/A** (or by pressing **L2/L1** while looking through the binoculars). Once placed, a manual marker will appear onscreen when you look towards it during play, simplifying navigation towards the point in question. Markers can be disabled at any time, and are automatically deactivated when you reach the destination.



Weather Conditions: The weather changes in real time, with certain conditions having a significant impact on the way that you play. Sandstorms, which are relatively common in Afghanistan, drastically limit both hearing and overall visibility. When you know where you need to go, a sandstorm can be a gift during a complicated infiltration – but if you’re scouting an unfamiliar base, it might be safer to hunker down and wait it out. Most other weather effects are less dramatic, but influence guards in the way that you might expect: rain masks noises, mist makes it harder to see, while cloud cover will slightly reduce the maximum view distance of prospective hostiles.

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THE STORY SO FAR



BIG BOSS

(AKA Punished "Venom" Snake, Naked Snake)



MAJOR ZERO



OCELOT



THE BOSS

The story of the complete *Metal Gear* series spans over one hundred years, from the origins of The Philosophers in the early 1900s to the current conclusion of the overarching narrative in 2014. *Metal Gear Solid V: The Phantom Pain* takes place in 1984, nine years after the events of *Ground Zeroes*. If you are new to the series, the following short summary of events prior to this episode should help you to get up to speed. Once you have completed *MGSV* at least once, you can find a comprehensive (but, it should be said, **spoiler-intense**) story analysis section that covers the full *Metal Gear* timeline to date in the Extras chapter.

1900

Early 1900s: Creation of The Philosophers

The starting point of the *Metal Gear* saga is the creation of The Philosophers during the early 1900s. This unique and deeply secretive organization comprised a select group of eminent figures from the three most powerful countries of the twentieth century, the United States, Russia and China. Together, these individuals amassed a functionally boundless supply of funds, known as The Philosophers' Legacy, that they believed would be sufficient to win or forestall any future world conflict.

However, with time, and the death of its founding members, the *raison d'être* of this clandestine committee was gradually corrupted. In the confusion and chaos that followed the Second World War, a Soviet colonel named Volgin gained sole possession of the Philosopher's Legacy.

1964

1964: Retrieval Of The Philosophers' Legacy

The United States launched *Operation Snake Eater* in 1964 to avert a looming nuclear catastrophe, but principally to claim the incredible wealth of the Philosophers' Legacy. The key operative in this covert mission was an American agent known as *Naked Snake*, supported by a remote team under the oversight of his commander, *Major Zero*. A master in the arts of infiltration and survival techniques, Naked Snake triumphed in preventing the ambitious Colonel Volgin from breaking the fragile balance of the Cold War. With the assistance of an American double agent known as *Ocelot*, he also laid claim to the Philosophers' Legacy for his country.

The whole operation was made possible by the scandalous betrayal of a legendary United States soldier, *The Boss* – Naked Snake's mentor. In truth, though, the defection of The Boss was but a deception designed to enable her to get close to Volgin and facilitate the retrieval of the Philosophers' Legacy. Her final duty for her country was to maintain her assumed role as a traitor to the last, and die at the hands of her apprentice to conceal the true nature of her mission.

This was the price of The Boss's ideal, the cost of her commitment. She was ready to die for the way of life she freely chose, the expression of liberty that she lived for. The death of The Boss is a critical event, a shockwave that reverberates throughout the entire *Metal Gear Solid* series.

For his heroism, and status as arguably the world's greatest soldier, Naked Snake was given the award of a new designation: *Big Boss*.

1970

1970: Creation of Cipher

Disillusioned by the death of his spiritual mother and mentor, Big Boss grew to resent the role of his government in her downfall and disgrace. In 1970, he joined Major Zero and Ocelot (among others) to establish a secret independent intelligence organization funded with the Philosophers' Legacy: Cipher. Though broadly serving North American interests, Cipher was envisaged by its creators as a benevolent steering committee seeking to benefit the global community as a whole – a reimagined version of the original Philosophers, bankrolled by the funds of their precursors.

Under the specific auspices of Major Zero, however, Cipher soon adopted a radical solution to ensure peace and unify nations under a single command via a process of imposing the political, economic and social model of the United States on the rest of the world. A gradual estrangement occurred between two key founding members, with Big Boss dissatisfied with Zero's ideology and methods.

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KAZUHIRA MILLER

(AKA Benedict Miller, Kaz)

1974

1974: First Confrontation Between Zero And Big Boss

After two years spent assembling a mercenary force (and, in the process, acquiring a second-in-command named *Kazuhira Miller*), Big Boss had his first direct confrontation with Cipher (and, by extension, Zero) during the *Peace Walker Incident* in 1974. This crisis involved the CIA, the KGB, and Big Boss's private troops, all struggling for control over a Metal Gear armed with a nuclear warhead known as Peace Walker.

These events served to reinforce Big Boss's belief that governments and their associated agencies could never be trusted. He decided to further develop his organization both by expanding his ranks and by hiring two notable scientists – *Dr. Emmerich* and *Dr. Strangelove* – to design their own advanced nuclear deterrent on Mother Base. This creation was a bipedal tank that they named Metal Gear ZEKE.

However, it later transpired that the entire Peace Walker Incident was actually a subtle maneuver by Zero that, among other objectives, served to insert a specially trained triple agent named Paz close to Big Boss. When Paz revealed her true affiliation and seized control of Metal Gear ZEKE, Big Boss defeated the Cipher spy, retrieved Metal Gear ZEKE and rejected the offer that Zero had ordered her to deliver: that Big Boss rejoin the fold and have his mercenaries become Cipher's military wing, or face the consequences.

With a well-trained army, the Mother Base headquarters (an offshore platform in the Caribbean) and a Metal Gear possessing nuclear capabilities, Big Boss was close to achieving his dream of establishing a nation of soldiers. This was not meant to be, however, as it would soon turn out in the events of *Ground Zeroes* in 1975.



DR. EMMERICH

1975

1975: Destruction of Mother Base

Paz, who survived miraculously after she was defeated by Big Boss, was captured by Cipher agents and held in a U.S. military base on the southern tip of Cuba known as Camp Omega. Soon afterwards, Mother Base was contacted by representatives of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), who demanded access to Mother Base for an immediate nuclear inspection.

Lured away on an extraction mission to save Paz (and another long-term resident of Mother Base called Chico) on the eve of the IAEA inspection, Big Boss successfully located and rescued the two prisoners. During the chopper ride back home, though, Big Boss discovered that the incoherent Paz had been surgically implanted with an explosive device. After the on-board medic removed it in a traumatic procedure, Big Boss arrived back at Mother Base to witness the final stages of his facility being razed by the so-called inspection team – who were actually soldiers belonging to a secret "XOF" Special Forces unit. Cipher's elite covert ops group, this unit was led by a man known as *Skull Face* who had developed a pathological hatred of Big Boss.

The IAEA inspection, and the precision-targeted leak of information that compelled Big Boss to launch a simultaneous rescue mission at Camp Omega, were the setup for a plan initiated by Skull Face to utterly destroy Mother Base. Big Boss managed to rescue Miller before bullets, bombs or waves could claim him, but a second explosive device planted in Paz's body took them by surprise and caused their chopper to crash. Despite the sacrifice of the on-board medic, who used his body to shield Big Boss from the explosion, the grievously wounded Big Boss was left comatose by the event – a coma that would last for nine whole years.



SKULL FACE

This is where *The Phantom Pain* begins. The year is 1984...