

# Midnight Guns

.. : REVELATIONS AND ASPIRATIONS 1.1 : ..

## what is this

Midnight Guns is a tactical, competitive FPS built from a love of crunchy gunplay, kung-fu cinema, and multiplayer shenanigans.

The game is set in New York City in the near future, which has largely been abandoned due to a series of natural disasters, flooding, and radiation leaks. Gangs struggle against each other for control and survival, while a larger threat lurks for them all.

In a typical match, teams of 4 eliminate each other over the course of several rounds, altering the state of the environment in meaningful ways: barriers are demolished, vehicles are immolated, and machinery is activated.

The following document details our current status, goals, and development roadmap.

## gameplay

|               |                                                                                                                     |                   |                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Join a SERVER | Either casual drop-ins via browser or organized match servers                                                       | GET EM ALL        | Eliminate the other team! The map state resets at halftime, including items and destroyed objects.                                  |
| Join a GANG   | 10 Gangs, 2 in a match. Gangs have distinct models and sounds, but play identically                                 | Pick up STUFF     | Hockey sticks, dynamite, molotovs, alive rats. Dead rats. We could go on.                                                           |
| Pick a GUN    | 6 primaries, each occupying a specific role. A backup pistol comes free!                                            | KICK up WALLS     | Get a boost, gain height advantage, go hella fast, but don't break your legs! Landing in puddles or on cars helps!                  |
| Select GEAR   | Grab Gear for your A and B slots. Kevlar, laser sights, milk, etc. Gear and Guns can be swapped freely every round! | grab SUPER ITEMS! | At the end of a round, a SUPER ITEM spawns to help you win the fight, or aid you in the next round. Don't let the other guy get it! |

## where we are

The project started in 2022 as a movement demo, aiming to recreate the Strafejumping and ramp boosts of classic shooters.

This quickly grew legs as we bolted on bespoke assets, and a fully playable alpha accompanied our 2024 Patreon launch, which allowed us to establish a player base that is actively playing, making maps, and giving us a detailed look at what competition will look like at a high level.

In terms of core gameplay, Midnight Guns is a complete design.

We (and our players) love the way guns work, how our movement feels, and how our systems work together during a match. There is a lot of content to generate and polish up, but it is within the context of a game that we already thoroughly enjoy.

While there have been several tournaments that have demonstrated the absolute edges of what is possible, Midnight Guns is still largely geared for allowing fresh players to join and have a good time, whether or not they have prior knowledge of the movement or other mechanics.

We can happily report that our core players average well above 1000 hours ingame, according to Steam

## our team

-[ .. : NOLIFES TEAM : ]-

ALEX POPA..... JEHAR..... CREATIVE LEAD..... FULL-TIME  
AUSTIN MATTHEWS... CLASSY..... GAMEPLAY PROGRAMMER..... FULL-TIME  
SAMUEL PIPER..... REKI..... ENGINE PROGRAMMER..... CONSULTANT

-[ ++ OUR NETWORK OF COMMISSIONED CONTRIBUTORS ++ ]-

RISTO HÄMÄLÄINEN... RIISI..... 2D ILLUSTRATION / 3D PROPS / ENVIRONMENTS  
TAYLOR DAVIS..... GRAM..... WEAPON MODELS  
ERIKA LYNN..... CODEXA..... ART DIRECTION / CHARACTER DESIGN / CONCEPT ART  
JAMES BREWER..... UPLINK..... VOICE / FOLEY

## design pillars

Partially through intended design, partially through discoveries over countless matches, we've discovered the things that are fundamental to how Midnight Guns plays.

These have become our guiding signposts:

-[ SURPRISE ]-

Between gun knockback, ramps and wall boosts, object interactions and throwable weapons, every fight in Midnight Guns can and will go sideways. There ought to be elements that compound to make players laugh (or scream) from the sheer kinetic chaos. This also means that there are always options, for both new players and veterans, in every round. Something new to try, something funky to attempt.

-[ GRANULARITY ]-

A lot of us come from the older set of shooter enthusiasts that care a hell of a lot about input latency, sensitivity curves, and frame timing. The first thing anyone will notice when first touching Midnight Guns will be the way movement and guns feel. Which is important, because moving and shooting are the predominant verbs. They'd better be fun every single time.

-[ READABILITY ]-

One of the biggest lessons 16-bit-era games (especially fighters) have to teach us is in conveying information visually, giving important feedback and making every action feel satisfying. Hit animations, sound effects, all of these should deliver as much tactical info as quickly as possible. This extends to keeping the UI simple, the number of binds needed to a minimum, and maintaining visual balance between game objects and the level design.

## the art

Midnight Guns exists in a grimy, unsanitary and under-served city.

Our art style reflects this while calling back to palette-based rendering techniques from the 8-and-16-bit days. Colors are managed with custom per-material lookup tables that react dynamically with environmental lighting. Additionally, characters and items are shaded with outlines and dynamic halftones to help them stand out from the environment.

Ask Jehar for details on any of this; he'll be happy to bore you.

## the tech

The need for fast reactions and immediate gunplay isn't the only lesson we've learned from Quake over the years. We also highly value the oldschool philosophy in terms of engine design as well:

.. Lower asset fidelity helps keeps objects readable at a distance, and also keeps the minimum specs for the game low. We want Midnight Guns to be enjoyed at high framerates by everyone.

.. Maps are compiled from standardized formats, authored with well-established tools like Radiant and Trenchbroom. We want as few barriers as possible when it comes to players creating content.

.. Similarly, modding is vital; player-generated content will keep the community alive far beyond even the best official support. Many aspects of the engine are designed to be modular and swappable, including assets and game modes.

.. The reliable client-server framework makes it trivial for players to spin up their own servers.

## the plan

We currently enjoy a large pool of content that keeps our players going. This includes maps, both official and player-made, weapon skins, and gameplay modes to support a variety of team sizes (including solo play).

Again, the core gameplay is a finished sprint. The fun has been found.

This allows us to focus on the things we want to accomplish prior to release:

.. Fully arted levels with all the decorative and functional objects that define the look.

.. A robust set of weapon skins, with a fully-realized skin acquisition system, including trades and user submissions.

.. Polished UI and onboarding (including tutorials).

.. Additional player models representing each Gang.

.. A networked hub system, facilitating matches and between-match downtime.

These will allow us to launch on Steam as fully free-to-play, sustained via the skin/item economy (detailed below).

The larger task ahead is the move from our current engine (FTEQW) to Godot. This is to facilitate better geometry culling, lighting, profiling, and maintenance/extensibility into the future.

## help us grow!

Midnight Guns is a game that has already been vetted by players, and it's one we want to see become everything it can be.

This is a setting we want to flesh out for the multiplayer side, exploring what each Gang will bring to the table.

We also want to follow directly with a single-player title in the same universe. Design docs and concepts have been explored for this effort, and is currently pending actual development. This title would be a separate single-purchase SKU that builds on the same tech and assets from the multiplayer title.

Our current bottleneck is simply that of being over-employed while making time to work on the tasks that get us closer to launch.

The core team recognizes that this project has legs and worth, and wishes to transition to full-time development.

As mentioned above, we can be tactical with our use of commissioned artists and keep the number of full-time staff manageable.

We know our scope, and we know our targets. With support, it would be realistic to expect a full Steam launch within 18 months. Post-launch, additional Gang releases would represent the extended content, each coming with player models, weapon skins, levels, and items.

Thanks for making it to the end!