



Immortal



nce, long ago, there lived a wise and benevolent king.

Strong of arm, kind at heart, and just in rule, the king was dearly loved by all his subjects. They sang his praises in the streets, they whispered prayers for him at night, and they hoped with all their hearts that he would reign a hundred years.

So great was their love, however, that the gods grew jealous of this king. "No mortal should be loved so much greater than we," they cursed, and plotted how best to punish this proud king. Then one god smiled, and said to the others, "So no mortal shall he be."

This jealous god took human form, and appeared before the king that day. "The heavens have taken note of your virtue without peer," said the god to the king, "and so we offer you this gift of life eternal."

The king grew silent as the god's words faded, uncertain if any man was deserving of so tremendous a power. But his court cried out, begging their king to accept this god's immaculate gift, and the king could not bring himself to deny his subjects' their desperate plea.

With a single nod of the king's regal head, the god raised his hand and filled the chamber with a blinding light. Once the light had faded, the god was gone, and the king sat his throne, immortal.

For decades after, the king reigned as he always had, now never growing ill or old. His queen stared into his youthful face as sickness took her from this world. Their son was buried beside her once age had weathered his body unto death. His grandchildren, he buried beside them both.

As the king stood before the graveyard of his lineage, generations of his progeny entombed in the earth beneath his feet, he realized at last that he had been given no gift. And eventually, after many centuries, even his kingdom crumbled before him, and his subjects were no more.

Then, the king longed only for oblivion.

Immortal

Immortal is a 3D third-person action-adventure RPG set in a gothic-medieval fantasy world. Players take on the role of an immortal king who delves deep into a hellish labyrinth in order to find an imprisoned evil capable of ending even the cursed sovereign's eternal life. With similarities to games like *Dark Souls*, *Diablo*, and *Castlevania*, *Immortal* is set apart by its uniquely realistic injury system, its nuanced dungeon randomization system, and its psychological exploration of a suicidal man who cannot die. While players will still be classically entertained by challenging hack-and-slash combat, they'll also be forced to consider and answer an exceptionally heavy question. Ultimately, the choice will be given to allow the king to end his otherwise endless suffering, or to deem the cost of his death too high, and hope he finds some other reason to live.



Tone & Style

Immortal is not a happy game. The player character has spent literal centuries longing to see the faces of his loved ones again, and believes the only way to achieve this is to somehow end his unnaturally infinite life. He will literally be cut limb from limb by nightmarish creatures, face pain unimaginable, only to be pieced back together by his cursed powers over and over again, undeterred, all so that he can find a final reprieve from his living hell. While the game's primary labyrinth will have a variety of uniquely themed areas, *Immortal*'s overarching aesthetic will reflect the extremely dark state of the king's mind, and the even deeper dark he is yet willing to brave.

Legends speak of the immortal king after his kingdom's fall. Of a grim and silent hero, wandering the world's winding roads. With sword and shield strapped to his back, he halted his journey only to help those in need.

His flashing blade cut through beast and bandit with skill honed over the course of a hundred lifetimes. From those whose lives he saved, the wealthy offered him wealth untold. The skilled, their finest works. The poor, all that they could give. Always, the king refused.

Instead, he asked only if they knew of any way to fulfill his sole desire. For decades he asked, and for decades all answered the very same. And so the king would sheathe his regal blade, and resume his long journey towards the horizon beyond.

Until one day, a wizened priest the king had saved called out just as the sovereign turned to leave. "I know not what ruin I may bring through my actions this day," the priest began. "But I see the purity of your soul despite the darkness that hangs heavy upon your heart. I must believe that helping you find peace is right."

The priest then handed him an aged tome, within which lay a tale more ancient even than the king. Scribed and rescribed by the priest's order each time the ink began to fade over the course of untold millenia, this record spoke of a battle for the world's very fate. Of a singular monstrosity of impossible power locked in combat with an immortal warrior, for only one with life eternal could slay this fearsome abomination.

But so too could the terror end an immortal's existence.

Their struggle alone lasted through a hundred cycles of the sun, until at last the beast's wicked claws pierced the chest of this ancient champion. And then he fell, never to rise again. With their only hope for true victory vanquished, the world's greatest sages eventually succeeded in at least sealing this demon far beneath the earth. In the deepest reaches of a shifting arcane prison, they prayed he would remain entombed for all time. There, in the Formless Labyrinth.

The king's hungry eyes consumed every word, like a man who had been starved a thousand years.

Overview of Play



After the player is familiarized with the tale of the immortal king and his quest for self-destruction, the game begins before the gates of the Formless Labyrinth. Once past its threshold, the labyrinth's massive stone portal slams shut behind the player of its own accord, cementing the fact that this is not a journey from which one is intended to return.

Players are then tasked with drawing sword and shield, and doing battle with a wide menagerie of nightmarish creatures that have come to call the Formless Labyrinth their home, all whilst exploring its ever-changing depths, and collecting ancient artifacts hidden within.

As players grow in both power and skill, they will travel deeper and deeper into the Formless Labyrinth's reaches, overcoming yet greater monstrosities in an always-challenging but sustainable difficulty curve. Progress milestones will be marked by tremendous boss battles, which take the form of both gargantuan beasts, leaders of the terrors populating the labyrinth's cursed halls, and strangely heavenly entities, eternal sentries who will desperately try to stop the king from reaching the immortal-slaying demon at the dungeon's end.

Lore surrounding the nature of this creature, the ancient immortal first slain by the beast, and the true cost of the king's end will all be made available to the curious and observant player throughout, such that they might inform their final decision at the game's termination.

The Formless Labyrinth

The entirety of *Immortal* takes place in a singular dungeon with four subdivided areas, each of which has its own unique theme and boss. While the carefully planned individual rooms of each area are not themselves randomly generated, they are procedurally selected and placed in a semi-random order at the beginning of the game.

Each room is essentially classified with a given challenge level, and arranged so that the difficulty progresses in an intelligent manner. The distribution of artifacts which power up the player is achieved in a similar way, with each artifact being assigned a relative power level, and then being spawned semi-randomly in locations commensurate with the challenge of reaching them.



As such, optional “challenge rooms” will serve as offshoots of the main rooms through which the player normally progresses, and will allow players to test their abilities. Confident players will brave exceptionally difficult enemy combinations and deadly obstacle courses for the chance to achieve a “bonus” artifact of slightly higher power than normal. But players only get one shot at each one of these detours; failure means that not only will the player not be allowed attempt the challenge again, but they will be forced to redo what progress they’d made in the main room as well.

This semi-randomization effectively makes every playthrough of the game unique and unpredictable in a number of different ways, but still fairly and intelligently designed. This encourages multiple playthroughs by making each one its own distinct experience.

Player Progression

Since the immortal king has spent literally centuries honing his body and his abilities to a razor's edge, he has little room left for genuine personal improvement. As such, he does not "level up" in the traditional RPG sense, and he does not acquire gamified "experience" for slaying monstrosities or overcoming challenges. While the player will learn how best to handle and maneuver the king throughout the course of play, the only hard statistical improvements to the character himself will come in the form of unique artifacts scattered throughout the Formless Labyrinth. Some artifacts may even fundamentally alter the way the game is played, offer unique abilities or bonuses, or synergize exceptionally with one another, making their discovery all the more exciting. Each artifact will also have a small paragraph of game lore associated with it, hinting at secrets and information about the game world for those willing to seek it out.

Sample Artifacts

Uncanny Card



Once per room, the power imbued within this playing card will deflect the first injury the player would otherwise sustain from an enemy attack, be it light, medium, or severe.

Berserker's Symbol

Every injury sustained by the player increases the force of their blows substantially, and medium injuries no longer slow the player's attacks. As a trade off, the player now bleeds out faster.



Combat

Immortal's combat is intended to follow a slower, more deliberate, and semi-realistic formula, not dissimilar to the compelling system found at the core of From Software's *Souls* series.

The player will have a light and heavy attack, as well as the ability to chain those attacks together in varying combinations, with each attack draining a portion of the player's stamina meter. The player can defend with shield and blade as well, though each attack deflected will also drain the stamina meter, with the guard being broken if the stamina is dropped too low. Players may also dodge in four cardinal directions, darting quickly away from danger, again at the cost of precious stamina.



What really distinguishes *Immortal's* combat is the realistic nature of how damage is dealt; sophisticated hit-boxes will allow players to aim attacks specifically at monsters' arms, legs, or torso, and severely injure or even sever certain body parts on the beast. Both the player and most monsters in this game are fragile creatures, capable of being put out of action through a few well-placed cuts, or intelligently crippled to the point of helplessness.

Defense and careful observation of each enemy's moveset is absolutely essential to success.

Injury

In keeping with its grim aesthetic, *Immortal* does not utilize “hitpoints” in the traditional sense. Rather, despite the king’s immortality, players can still receive realistic injuries based upon the type of weapon their opponent is wielding, the force with which the blow was received, and the actual limb or torso area which has been impacted.

In the simplest terms, injuries come in three stages: light, medium, and severe. Using cutting weapons as an example, any bladed implement will produce lacerations of these varying degrees, and cause the player to lose blood regardless of how the blow lands. If the player fails to address the bleeding, their vision will begin to blur and their movements will slow. If the wound is still not addressed past this point, the player may “die” from blood loss.

Minor wounds cause minimal blood loss, create no lasting detriment to the player, and can easily be bandaged, though bandages are a finite resource.

Medium laceration wounds, however, are deep cuts which impair or even sever the king’s muscles and tendons. The bleeding can still be bandaged, but the player will still have to cope with a semi-permanent slow to his movement, a slow to his attacks, or a slow to both if the king is hit in the legs, arms, or torso respectively.

Severe wounds inflicted by a cutting weapon are bleak. If struck in the torso by one of these devastating attacks, the king is eviscerated or decapitated, and can fight no more. If struck in the arm or leg, that limb is severed entirely, and the player will bleed out very quickly. These injuries cannot be bandaged by normal means, and will obviously cripple the player substantially.

Recovery

Fortunately for the king, his immortality allows him to recover from even the most severe injury literally overnight — even severed limbs will be regrown as soon as he is able to rest in a quiet place of peace. Conveniently, the Formless Labyrinth provides regular rest areas in between each major room. These rest areas also contain a stock of healing supplies, like bandages, to restock the players dwindling supply.

Even if the king suffers a wound so great that an ordinary warrior would succumb to death, time itself will immediately reel backwards, back until it reaches his last resting place. There he will awaken, restored and whole, and players will be free to try to learn from their mistakes, though all monsters previously slain in the attempted room will have their deaths undone as well. Essentially, this incorporates “save points” seamlessly into the world through the use of in-game lore, allowing immersion to remain unbroken.



Sleep, Perchance

At the end of the game, the player is faced with a complex choice. It's been made obvious by now that immortal blood fuels the monstrosity who has finally been reached. If the king chooses to let the demon end his life, it will likely gain enough power to free itself and leave untold destruction in its wake. If instead he chooses to drive his blade into its heart, to end this creature as only an immortal can, the threat it represents will be gone forever.

But then the king can never die.

The demon now before the player is not a final boss, or an ultimate challenge; a final guardian just before the demon's room serves that role. Rather, the demon is just a chained, emaciated thing, its terrifying body withered to near nothing after millenia of starvation and atrophy.

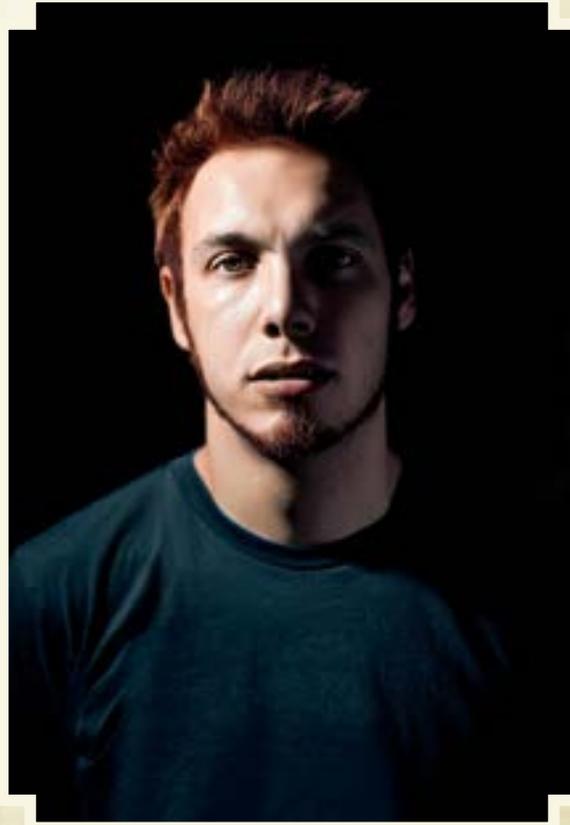
But it will speak to the player, should they choose to listen. It will sympathize with the king's clear plight, with seemingly uncanny insight to the sovereign's mind and memories. It will confide in the player that the ancient immortal it first did battle with was actually far more powerful than the demon. That the first immortal wished for death the same as the king, and that his struggle was merely a show meant only to preserve his honor.

It will tell the player that its power allows it to kill any immortal. Even gods. Even the jealous god who first cursed the king.

At that point, the player is tasked only with making their final decision. The game will not cast judgment on the player either way, as both endings will have parts both bitter and sweet.

Rather, its only intention is to make the player think.

Audience



Immortal's intended audience is a particular niche of the hardcore gaming community. They've played games, and they're good at them. But now they're in their 20's and 30's, and they've started to realize how little substance many of the games in the action genre have. They've matured to the point that the simply purile spectacle of blood and gore no longer excites them, or has them willing to pick units up off the shelf. They feel a connection to video games that isn't quite matched by any other form of media, and are eager for an interactive experience that leverages the emotional connection that a player forms with their characters over the long hours of play. While they didn't read much when they were young, they've started to pick up more books in their spare time.