

How a Completionist Run The Last of Us Pushes the Game to Its Limits

A growing number of players are testing the boundary of what it means to fully exhaust a game's content, and one of the most demanding examples of this approach involves Naughty Dog's post-apocalyptic survival story. A completionist run The Last of Us requires the player to collect every artifact, hear every optional conversation, unlock every upgrade, and finish the campaign on the hardest difficulty setting. The practice has drawn attention from speedrunning communities, trophy hunters, and content creators on platforms such as YouTube who document the painstaking process.

The scope of a full completion

The Last of Us, released in 2013 and later remastered for PlayStation 4, offers dozens of collectibles spread across its linear chapters. These include artifacts, comic book pages, training manuals, and Firefly pendants. A completionist run The Last of Us also demands that the player locate every optional conversation between Ellie and Joel, as these exchanges are tied to the game's optional dialogue trophy. Missing a single conversation forces a full chapter replay or a new playthrough.

Beyond collectibles, the game tracks weapon upgrades, skill upgrades, and the use of special items such as Shivs and Molotov cocktails. The Grounded difficulty setting, which the game unlocks after a first completion, adds an extra layer of challenge: enemies are more aggressive, resources are scarce, and the player's health bar is drastically reduced. A [completionist run The Last of Us](#) therefore becomes a test of resource management, route planning, and endurance.

Why players attempt it

The appeal of a full completion run lies in the sense of mastery and discovery. For many players, the game's world is so richly detailed that returning to it with a checklist reveals narrative layers missed on a first playthrough. The optional conversations, for instance, expand on the backstory of both Ellie and Joel and deepen the emotional stakes of the journey. Unlocking every weapon upgrade allows the player to experiment with combat styles that a normal playthrough might never encourage.

Content creators on YouTube have found an audience for these runs. Videos titled "100% The Last of Us" or "Platinum Trophy Run" attract viewers who want to see every corner of the game without spending dozens of hours themselves. The format often combines gameplay footage with commentary explaining the location of each collectible and the strategy for surviving the

hardest encounters. These videos serve both as guides and as entertainment for fans of the franchise.

The role of trophy hunting

The PlayStation trophy system has formalised the completionist approach. The Last of Us Remastered includes a platinum trophy that requires the player to earn every other trophy in the game. This set includes trophies for finding all collectibles, upgrading all weapons and skills, completing the game on each difficulty setting, and performing specific combat feats such as killing an enemy with a brick or shivving a clicker. For players who want the platinum, a structured completionist run is the only viable method.

Trophy guides on websites and forums break the run into ordered segments. The typical approach is to complete the game on a lower difficulty first, focusing on collectibles, then replay on Grounded to earn the difficulty-based trophy. Some players combine the two objectives by using chapter select to revisit missed collectibles after a Grounded playthrough. The community has also developed save-file strategies that allow a player to reload a checkpoint without losing progress toward a trophy.

How the community has shaped the run

Online communities dedicated to The Last of Us have produced detailed maps, video walkthroughs, and checklist spreadsheets. These resources reduce the guesswork and allow a player to plan a completionist run in advance. The community has also identified glitches and exploits that can save time, such as skipping certain encounters or duplicating items. These discoveries are shared openly, though some players prefer to complete the run without such shortcuts.

YouTube channels that focus on completionist content have developed their own styles. Some present the run as a narrative, treating each chapter as an episode. Others adopt a more clinical, tutorial-like approach with on-screen timers and collectible counters. The variety of formats reflects the different motivations within the audience: some want to watch a curated story, while others want a precise guide they can follow step by step.

The impact on game design

The existence of completionist runs has influenced how Naughty Dog and other studios design their games. The Last of Us Part II, released in 2020, includes a tracker that shows the player how many collectibles remain in each area, a feature that directly addresses the needs of completionist players. The sequel also adds a New Game Plus mode that carries over upgrades and collectibles, making a full completionist run more feasible. These design choices

suggest that developers are aware of the completionist audience and are building features to support it.

Publishers have also recognised the marketing value of completionist content. When a high-profile YouTube creator publishes a completionist run of a new game, the video can generate sustained interest in the title long after its launch week. The Last of Us, with its strong narrative and dense world, has proven to be a durable subject for this kind of content. Years after its release, new completionist runs still appear on YouTube, each one offering a slightly different perspective or strategy.

Practical considerations for a completionist run

Time is the most significant factor. A standard playthrough of The Last of Us lasts around 15 hours, but a completionist run can stretch to 30 or 40 hours, depending on the player's skill and familiarity with the game. The Grounded difficulty alone can add ten or more hours because of frequent deaths and the need to restart encounters. Players should expect to invest several days or weeks, playing in sessions that align with their schedule.

Patience is equally important. Some collectibles are hidden in locations that are easy to miss, and a single oversight can force a lengthy backtrack. The game's checkpoint system is generous but not foolproof; a player who misses a conversation early in a chapter may have to replay the entire chapter. Keeping a written or digital checklist, or following a video guide in real time, can reduce the risk of missing an item.

Hardware reliability matters. A corrupted save file or a console crash can erase hours of progress. Backing up save files to cloud storage or a USB drive is a recommended precaution. Players who stream their runs on platforms such as Twitch or YouTube also need to consider internet stability and recording software performance, as technical issues can interrupt a live session.

The future of completionist runs

As games become larger and more complex, the completionist run will likely evolve. Open-world games with hundreds of collectibles already push the endurance of even the most dedicated players. The Last of Us, with its contained linear structure, represents a manageable but still demanding challenge. The fact that players continue to document and share their completionist runs years after the game's launch speaks to the enduring quality of the experience and the strength of the community around it.

Platforms like YouTube have turned the completionist run into a genre of content that can attract millions of views. The format rewards patience, attention to detail, and a willingness to share knowledge. For the player who wants to see everything the game has to offer, a

completionist run is not just a checklist but a different way of engaging with the story and the world. The Last of Us, with its careful pacing and emotional weight, rewards that engagement in ways that a casual playthrough cannot fully capture.