

The Last of Us Part II: Ellie and Abby Gameplay Compared in New Analysis

The release of The Last of Us Part II brought with it a divisive narrative structure, but one of the most discussed elements among players and critics alike is the distinct gameplay approach for its two protagonists. A new in-depth examination of the title contrasts the combat styles, traversal mechanics, and player loadouts available during Ellie and Abby gameplay. The analysis underscores how the developers used mechanical differences to reinforce character and story, offering a richer experience for those who engage with both halves of the campaign.

Combat Philosophy and Player Loadouts

Ellie's segments lean into agility and improvisation. Her default loadout favors speed and stealth, with a smaller health pool that encourages hit-and-run tactics. Players controlling Ellie can craft smoke bombs, stun traps, and proximity mines, but her arsenal of firearms is limited to compact models with smaller magazines. The game's dodge mechanic feels more responsive during her sections, and her prone movement is slightly faster, allowing for quicker repositioning during firefights.

Abby's gameplay, by contrast, is built around direct confrontation and heavy weaponry. Her larger frame translates into a higher health bar and the ability to absorb more damage before going down. Abby wields rifles and shotguns with greater stopping power, and her melee attacks cause more stagger on enemies. The game's resources are distributed to support this: Abby finds more ammunition for high-caliber weapons and can craft heavier throwables such as pipe bombs and explosive arrows. This creates a tangible sense of power during her chapters, which is crucial for the narrative's shift in perspective.

Traversal and Environmental Interaction

Environmental design also changes to complement each character's style. Ellie's locations often feature vertical spaces, open windows, and ledges that reward parkour-like navigation. Her smaller hitbox lets her slip through tight gaps and hide in cramped spaces that Abby cannot access. During [ellie and abby gameplay](#), the same areas can feel like different levels because the pathfinding options are distinct. Ellie can use ropes and grappling points to bypass combat encounters, while Abby must often break through barriers or force open doors, a difference that subtly reinforces her more direct approach to obstacles.

The game's Seattle setting provides a backdrop that shifts from overgrown suburbs to industrial facilities. Ellie's sections in the earlier chapters emphasize exploration of abandoned storefronts and residential homes, where stealth and environmental storytelling merge. Abby's

chapters take place in larger-scale environments like the stadium and the hospital, where open sightlines and multiple flanking routes are common. This architectural shift is not accidental; it mirrors the broadening scope of the conflict as the story progresses.

Player Feedback and Difficulty Adjustments

Players have reported that the transition between the two characters can be jarring at first, particularly when they have invested skill points into one style of play. The game's skill trees are separate for Ellie and Abby, meaning that upgrades earned in one character's campaign do not transfer. This design choice forces players to adapt their strategies when switching perspectives. Some critics argue this split improves replayability, as it encourages mastery of two distinct combat philosophies rather than a single optimal build.

Community discussions around ellie and abby gameplay often highlight the difference in enemy AI behavior. During Abby's chapters, enemy soldiers are more likely to use coordinated flanking maneuvers and call out positions in a more aggressive manner. This creates a higher-pressure dynamic that matches Abby's own aggressive toolkit. In contrast, Ellie's encounters feature enemies that patrol more predictably, allowing for methodical stealth approaches. The AI tuning is a subtle but effective way to differentiate the two experiences without changing core mechanics.

Narrative Integration Through Mechanics

What sets *The Last of Us Part II* apart from many action-adventure titles is how gameplay mechanics serve the story. The physicality of each character informs the player's emotional connection to their journey. Ellie's vulnerability is reinforced by her limited capacity to take hits, making every encounter feel like a struggle for survival. Abby's durability and offensive power convey a sense of hardened experience, but also a weight that makes her losses feel heavier. When players control Abby and experience her backstory, the gameplay choices help humanize a character initially presented as an antagonist.

The game's pacing also benefits from this dual structure. Action sequences are interspersed with quieter moments of exploration and environmental narrative, and the shift between characters prevents the combat from becoming stale. A player who spends hours mastering stealth with Ellie may find a refreshing challenge in Abby's more aggressive sequences, and vice versa. This variety is a core reason why the game has sustained a dedicated modding and speedrunning community years after its release.

Technical Performance and Accessibility

The analysis also touches on technical performance across platforms. On PlayStation 5 via backward compatibility, both characters' gameplay runs at a stable 60 frames per second with

improved loading times. The haptic feedback on the DualSense controller is used to differentiate weapon types, with a heavier rumble for Abby's shotgun and a lighter, sharper feedback for Ellie's pistol. Accessibility options, such as customizable difficulty sliders and audio cues, apply equally to both characters, ensuring that players of varying skill levels can experience the full narrative.

Motion capture and animation work are particularly noteworthy. Ellie and Abby have unique movement sets, from their sprinting strides to the way they climb over obstacles. These animations are not just cosmetic; they affect gameplay timing. Ellie's smaller frame allows her to mantle over ledges slightly faster, while Abby's larger build gives her a longer reach but slower climb speed. These differences are consistent throughout the game and contribute to the feeling of controlling two distinct individuals rather than a single character model with swapped skins.

For players who have yet to experience the full campaign, the contrast between Ellie and Abby gameplay is one of the most compelling reasons to play through both storylines. Skipping sections or focusing only on one character's chapters means missing out on half the mechanical depth the game offers. The development team's decision to commit fully to separate gameplay identities for the protagonists is a bold design choice that has influenced subsequent action games in the genre.

The analysis concludes that *The Last of Us Part II* succeeds in using gameplay as a storytelling tool. By giving Ellie and Abby distinct tools, physics, and pacing, the game creates a layered experience that rewards players who engage with the whole story. Whether approaching it as a stealth title or a third-person shooter, players will find that each character offers a fresh perspective on the same brutal world.