The Elder Scrolls III

MORROWIND™

20

YEAR ANNIVERSARY

20 YEARS OF MEMORIES

A FAN-MADE COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

Put together by Danae and Xero Foxx

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It may be hard to believe,
but as of 2022, Bethesda Softworks' The Elder Scrolls III: Morrowind is 20 years old.

Ever since that first trip off the boat in Seyda Neen,
Morrowind has captured the hearts of players,
modders,
and artists.

Throughout the years it continues to inspire
passion, creativity & nostalgia.

Morrowind is a journey we each took on our own.
It's about time we shared those journeys.

So, on this 20-year anniversary
we created this book capturing vignettes of the fans' memories of the game,
what it means to them,
what makes it special, all these years later.

So, get a beverage of your choice, sit back, and bask in the nostalgia and special meaning that playing this unique gem of a game has meant to so many people.

- Danae, Xero Foxx & Friends

FREEDOM
Art by Dominik Zdenkovic

Para_N_Era

Silt strider

Lucyhues

FREEDOM
to write your destiny

I was encouraged to play Morrowind by my friend. He watched me go through CharGen and pointed out how the Journal was guiding me towards Caius Cosades in Balmora. After meeting that shirtless man, I looked at my friend and asked "Okay, what next?" My friend replied, "Do whatever you want to do." I said, "Yeah, I understand that, but what am I actually supposed to do?" He looked at me with a big smile. "No, seriously, just go do whatever you want."

I was eager to test the limits of this supposed freedom, so I hopped on the nearest Silt Strider and made my way to a new town called Suran, where I proceeded to steal everything I possibly could. I did choose the Thief class, after all.

I have a very vivid memory, from about 18 years ago, of my Khajiit named Merrick arriving in Suran. I'll never forget that feeling of freedom when I realized that I had finally found an RPG that let me play anyway I wanted.

- Pluto

It was 20 years ago. I was but a wee lad who got a demo disc from my uncle. It included multiple games – some airplane war game, a platformer, a puzzle game, and – you guessed it – Morrowind. It was only a demo version though. This meant that the game would lock after a certain point in the main story.

The thing is if you just didn't do the main story you could enjoy the ENTIRE REST OF THE GAME.

So I, being 11 years old at the time, embarked on the adventure of a lifetime. This one little demo disc brought me hours and hours of joy. Getting into the cave near the Silt Strider in Seyda Neen and getting absolutely murdered.

Reloading the game and taking it slowly, uncovering everything in Seyda Neen before moving on to Balmora. Finding places that felt safe to me in this gigantic, inhospitable environment. And eventually becoming a god amongst men with nothing to stand in my way.

Morrowind meant total freedom for me. It sparked my Open World gaming interest. Morrowind taught me that ANYTHING can be possible in a game.

- Anonymous

Morrowind was the first game I ever played to have so much player freedom. I could take anything I wanted; with no restrictions. I think to a young me it was sensory overload at first. I ended up hoarding every chitin dagger I could find and displaying them at the bar in Arrille's Tradehouse. Presumably, because I thought they were special in some way and looked neat. Later on, I realized they were essentially worthless and my collections shifted to more unique things. But that memory has stuck with me because it just shows that you can be anything in Morrowind. Even an eccentric dagger Collector

– Melchior Dahrk

A memory I have of my hoarding adventure was the fact you could pick up pillows... "hmmm I've got an idea here". I went to the surrounding areas to hunt for pillows and I managed to amass loads of pillows from Balmora, Drarayne Thelas was so kind as to "lend" me her pillow collection, so I went straight back to Seyda Neen, and with my sister watching me play I began to construct a pillow fort: window check, doorway check, roof check. There were only a few shacks and the open sea and I saw that as an opportunity to create my pillow base of operations,... After it was complete I ran straight into the wall of my pillow fort and realized the whole thing had no collision,

HOURS OF PILLOW HUNTING
AND FORT BUILDING...
GONE TO WASTE...

Damn you Vvardenfell pillows.

– TelShadow

I was about to give up on gaming. It was the end of the PS2/GC/Xbox era, and I was tired of gaming. Don't get me wrong, I still loved my GameCube for Pokemon and Zelda but I was not a fan of the RPGs for the Playstation and had grown tired and jaded of the inactive gameplay on that system, where I never felt like it was "my" story, where I could never become "my" character.

Then in the summer of 2005, I worked my butt off and I got an original X-Box from Gamestop. I asked around online for game suggestions beyond Halo, KotOR, Jet Set Radio Future, and the Buffy games. One game consistently came up. That game was Morrowind. So I threw it in with the lot of games I got.

I played through the other games I had. Overall, I wasn't impressed with any of the games, really. I wondered if buying the X-Box was a mistake... then I booted up Morrowind GoTY edition. I created my character, got Fargoth's ring... and the game crashed at least three times before I finally got out of the Census office and entered Seyda Neen proper. I was hooked.

THIS is what I was missing from gaming. A huge world that I literally got lost for hours on end, with a unique art style, and a gripping story. I could make my own character and become who I wanted to be in my own mind. I learned to have fun with gaming again, and for that reason, Morrowind will always be my favorite game of all time.

– Anonymous

I first got Morrowind when the GOTY edition came out on the original Xbox. Up until that point, my only experience with RPGs was like Baldur's Gate, isometric type stuff. I was kind of turned off by the idea of a first-person RPG but my oldest brother told me it was good, so I stuck it out. My two brothers and I spent countless hours playing on the Xbox. My first memory of the game was discovering that you could steal items and some NPCs wouldn't react; however, I didn't know they could still report your crime! I had to delete that file after getting such a high bounty that guards wanted to kill me on sight.

- Leetsupa

I don't have any images to share, but I want to share the history of the second game I ever bought. It came with a magazine (unfortunately, I lost it years ago) that was a very common format here in Brazil.

I first bought Neverwinter Nights and had enjoyed it a lot, but the freedom Morrowind has was a surprise to me. I didn't even know how to speak and read English properly, so I didn't get much of what was happening.

I spent months playing by stealing, discovering new places, learning the fixed place where some good items were (I always went straight to Mentor's Ring), fighting new people, dying a lot.

For some unknown reason to me, I stopped playing, and only rediscovered the game years later, after seeing some videos comparing it to later games. I started playing again, started using mods and since then Morrowind has a special place in both my gaming memories and reality. The mods using the MWSE Lua framework have, in my humble opinion, brought a way for people to play this game and still have access to good QoL features, and I dream of the same being possible in OpenMW.

- Leugimimi

When I first played Morrowind, my ability to understand the English language was very limited, which added to the feeling that I felt like an alien in this strange and uncanny world which is Morrowind. My first character was a Bosmer woman, who was a warrior in heavy armor (because I didn't know anything about creating a character). I picked The Tower as a birthsign because I stole everything and the Tower birthsign's open lock spell was useful for that. (I just tried to survive in an alien world where the odds were against me, really.) Of course, even a rat near Pelagiad killed me. Somehow, I got to level 14 before giving up, because of the language barrier and not knowing what was going on. I don't think that I could finish a single quest in that playthrough. On the other hand, I was impressed by the freedom this game offered: I could pick up every item, kill anyone, swim away from the map without stumbling into a scripted sea monster or an invisible wall, etc. So, I thought that I would try again.

With this first character, I also went to sleep every evening, ate whatever seemed like food for me, and even went to the Odai river every day and consumed a Sload Soap to imitate bathing. Of course, none of these things are actually required by the game, but the fact that it made me believe that they are required proves that Morrowind is a one-of-a-kind, immersive experience. Ever since this first playthrough, I have revisited the game at least once every year and made several mods for it (my English has improved since then so now I know what's going on), and I'm part of the community around it. It's kind of a big deal, considering that I rarely, if ever, revisit video games that I have played through once already. I believe that Morrowind will remain my favorite game forever. I couldn't find anything like that ever since my first playthrough.

- AliceL93

In one of my first runs, I visited the Caldera Mine to kill some guys for Balmora Fighters guild. I was looking around for some loot and found some shacks. Inside them, there were some lizardous and furry slaves, and being a knight in shining armor, I set them free for nothing, just because I can.

Many, many game hours later, me, glorious Redoran warrior with my own manor, almost the leader of the House and Nerevarine himself, took an easy-peasy quest to set free some kitties and lizards in Caldera's Mines. Long story short, I could not do that, because they were already free, so the quest appeared to be broken. As I was a country child with no internet and no clue about console commands, it broke my entire run, because, at this point, the House Redoran storyline was much more interesting for me, than something about saving another fantasy setting from inevitable doom being a semi-good hero. So, I just quit the game... for years. And I returned only when I was already a university student, with another character and another story to tell.

– Vlad, a guy with a PC so old, that he started playing Morrowind in 2011 just because everyone around was talking about Skyrim

I arrive in Balmora for the first time after a long trek from Seyda Neen. It's pouring rain. I have instructions to ask around at the South Wall Cornerclub to see if anyone knows where I might find Caius Cosades. Someone gives me directions – just outside, up the stairs, and take a left... and sure enough, there he is. Such a simple task, but so satisfying.

Later, I get asked to retrieve some mushrooms for Ajira in the Mages' Guild. Just before I leave, I manage to accidentally offend her through some ham-handed persuasion. When I return with the mushrooms, she wants nothing to do with me.

That's when I remember – someone told me that Telvanni Bug Musk makes people like you more, and they sell the stuff at Fort Moonmoth. Another little trek and I'm back at Ajira, this time with the Bug Musk in hand. It's enough to make her take the mushrooms, and finally, I can progress with the quest. I'd never experienced true freedom and emergence in a game like that, and it blew my mind.

– Danjb

Ever since I had this game (I was like 10 at that time and couldn't read English), I loved having a home and decorating it. Clagius Clanler rarely avoided my rage. Then, I would go serve my time and resume living his life. I used to love Gnisis cave homes too, pretending to put meat on the grill. (Thanks Merlord, you make my childhood dreams come true.)

Back then, I didn't care about prophecy and if I rarely left Balmora, I was always eager to find my way back.

– Danteson

I remember one time I clipped out of bounds in Vivec while walking against a sloped wall a particular way and fell into the water below. I found a guard who had died somehow, I figured he had drowned. He had some pretty good armor for me being an early level, so I thought it was a great find. Unfortunately, I learned that the guards in Vivec would attack me upon talking to them, so I turned to a life of crime and spent the entire summer killing every person in Morrowind and amassing a fortune in one of the mansions I stole. Best game ever.

– *ZackTheGreat*

I remember my first time playing Morrowind – this would have been shortly after release – playing on Xbox. It was my first open-world game and also my first RPG. I was astounded by the fact that every single building in Seyda Neen could be entered; that every NPC was uniquely named and could be interacted with. Going to Balmora was a wonder; I had no idea that video games could be made on such a grand and open scale. The notion of such a large, free-roaming video game had simply never occurred to me;

I was so used to linear shooters or Mario games where levels were designed as a single-approach puzzle. I remember thinking that the Balmora Temple (the local Tribunal Temple) was some kind of ancient ruin and that I'd have to come back when I was a higher level and ready to fight some monsters. Imagine my surprise when I mustered up the courage to go in and only find a bunch of bored priests and merchants!

Eventually, I found the Mages Guild and the guild guide service. I remember thinking that if I teleported somewhere, I might end up breaking the game by doing things out of order. The concept of "open-world" still didn't mean anything to me. But my curiosity got the better of me and I decided to teleport to another town, thinking that it surely couldn't be as big as Balmora!

I picked "Vivec". I remember walking out of the Mages Guild, out of the Foreign Quarter exit, and being absolutely blown away and genuinely intimidated by the scale of the canton. And then I discovered there was more than one! Young me was overwhelmed. I loaded an old save from before traveling to Vivec and took things slowly.

That day was an awakening for me; it kindled my love of open-world RPGs that persists to this day, almost 20 years later.

– *Anonymous*

When I first got the game for Xbox, I was playing with my brother and once we walked out of the Census office, we punched someone and got arrested. We were shocked by that. Video games didn't have rules and laws, did they? We immediately walked into a house and grabbed something, then the person attacked us. AGAIN? We checked the manual and found out you could sneak, and that there were ways to go invisible.

We spent the next few hours making new characters (we wanted to try out all the races (not realizing they all play nearly identical) and trying to steal as much as we could without the guards catching us, as well as searching through houses trying to find invisibility potions.

The picture is my most recent character chilling at Rethan Manor after finally clearing DNGDR after many years of attempts. Cheers!

- Drewbertt

I don't have a specific memory. I was quite late to the Morrowind party. I tried it when it came out and was confused and disappointed by the lack of direction, ironically since Morrowind's biggest strength is its absolute player freedom. It took several tries and probably a decade before it finally "clicked" for me. Since then, I've played a vast number of hours, with several characters, played through all three main quests, modded the heck out of it, and enjoyed it in entirely new ways over and over.

What I want to share is the sheer sense of wonder and freedom Morrowind gives you. Almost no other game or game world gives the same feeling of having an entire world in front of you, and complete freedom to do absolutely whatever you want.

"The feeling when you step out of the Census and Excise Office in Seyda Neen, the world spreading out before you and you can do whatever you want and be whoever you want."

That's what I want to share with others.

And of course, I want to mention the modders, all of you, STILL improving and adding to this magical game and gameworld TWENTY years after release. And in particular, the Tamriel Rebuilt team, who have made (no offense) probably the best mod of all time for any game. It's simply staggering the amount of content and the high quality and extreme attention to detail in their work.

- Wolfbayne

FUNNY MOMENTS

Art by Ilona Iske

Maiq

Lynn Dusk

Conor Lynch

FUNNY MOMENTS

FEATURED ART

FUNNY MOMENTS
of an n'wah

I was 10 when I got a copy of Morrowind, and I've never played 3D RPG games before, so playing it for the first time was a pretty confusing experience. I tried to read everything and speak to everyone while I was in Seyda Neen, so when I came to Balmora for the first time (on foot, mind you!), I already knew that there was some horrible disease that spread across the continent, corprus, that makes people look like monsters.

It was a dark and stormy night and just come to a new town through the gates near the Silt Strider. Just as I was trying to figure out where to go next, a horrible monster appeared and started to speak with a very strange voice. Naturally, I freaked out, turned around, and immediately attacked it, and it was not an easy victim for a level 2 Nerevarine. When I eventually won the fight, I looked around and saw a couple of guards rushing toward me. "Oh good, they too saw the monster," I thought. A second later I was killed.

Of course, I reloaded and tried again. And again. No matter what I did, the guards thought I was wrong. I thought that was because they assumed I was infected too. So I loaded an earlier save and tried to figure out what was going on.

That's how I met an Argonian for the first time. In fact, I was trying to kill Hul all this time.

It was pretty shocking to me, the realization of my crime, so when I got older and discovered mods, I always downloaded the prettiest Balmora home, led Hul there, and left her a couple of thousands of drakes.

– Morn_GroYarug

Not really a great story in itself, just me, a 10-year-old guy sitting down to play Morrowind for the first time on my uncle's PC. The game had been out for some years by then, but I wasn't aware of it, as we didn't have the internet at home and the only PC games I knew of were the ones my uncles had – including titles such as Heroes of Might & Magic 3 or King of the Road. So, there is me visiting one of my uncles during summer and he shows me Morrowind which is a "cool game where you can explore everything freely," or so he said. I sit down, start playing and he leaves the room for a while because someone called him.

Now, as I mentioned, the only games I knew were the ones my uncles played, so I wasn't really the gamer nerd type of boy, nor did I know every control for the game. So, I just finished choosing my class in Seyda Neen and thought of using the silt strider to travel to Balmora, but I didn't know how to start a conversation with the NPC who stood next to it. I admit the fact that I'm an ESL person and I just started learning English at that time might have affected my understanding of how the game works. And I also didn't know that I could check controls in the menu. As a result, I started tapping on the keyboard randomly, and accidentally attacked the poor NPC who didn't do anything wrong. The outcome?

A dead NPC and forced marching to Balmora – which I don't regret, not a bit. The fact that I was forced to walk there helped me realize how amazing the game is and how many things you can encounter in the game – let them be courteous bandits or pilgrims on a pilgrimage.

My uncle also laughed at what I had done and said I can just start a new game if I want, but I stuck to playing with that character. That "small" display is something I remember even today and it definitely had an impact on me, in more than one way.–

– Atoru

Finding out there was a main quest after 3 months of playing, from a friend at school. Scouring the traders and pawnbrokers from Caldera to Vivec and finally finding Caius Cosades' package for sale from the trader in Seyda Neen... all while still being level 2.

– Anonymous

My oldest and most vivid memory of Morrowind is when I traveled to Suran for the first time... YES IT'S OF THE STRIP JOINT. I had noticed the locked door upstairs, I think it's level 80 or something. The point being is that it was my first goal that wasn't tied to a quest to unlock that door and maybe find something lil' me wanted to see.

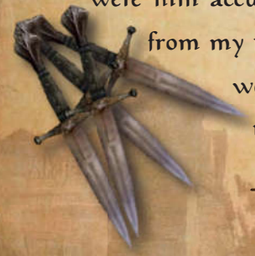
Come to find out it was pretty well empty. Morrowind just has the most wonderful game world ever created :D

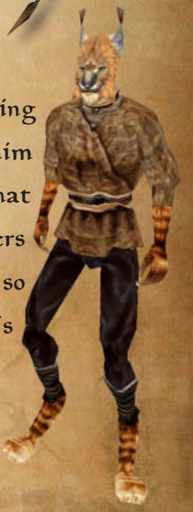
– Anonymous

The first time I ever met a cliff racer, I was going to meet Snowy Granius on the bridge so I was already on edge. Then, I hear this terrifying sound behind me and turn around to see a cliff racer. I had no idea what these things were at the time and it gave me a heart attack. I thought they were dragons and I thought it was the end. Fast forward an hour and I had probably killed about 20 of them and was already annoyed at them but that first experience scared me.

– Scoopy / TheAmazingRacoon

Morrowind is full of so many memories for me. I loved everything about this game. Ra'Virr hated me. I stole an iron dagger from him at some point, and all interactions I ever had with him after that were him accusing me of being a thief and removing ALL iron daggers from my inventory. Me and my brothers thought it was hilarious, so we would collect iron daggers and he would take them. He's the thief! He stole hundreds of iron daggers from me!





– Anonymous

One of my earliest memories of playing Morrowind back in 2007, was getting destroyed by the Kagouti after crossing the bridge, near the Odai Plateau. My first reaction to seeing these beasts was realizing that even dinosaurs exist in this game!

– Urbortzage

Spending an hour losing my mind wondering why the hell Tarhiel kept falling out of the sky!

– *Stonehart*

I remember unintentionally min-maxing my character on my very first playthrough. Found a scrib outside Seyda Neen. I think we all know where this is going... Unequipped my weapon thinking "imma beat this bug to death" Proceed to get stun-locked and the absolute dog shit kicked out of me. Needless to say, that was when I went in a different direction. Forever destined to avoid the scrib no matter the cost, I got jump-scared by some dude quite literally high as a kite.

– *Anonymous*

I remember the first time I entered a tomb. I was expecting a jumpscare and I was on edge. I heard my mom coming downstairs and I remember literally falling out of my chair.

– *Anonymous*

It's quite recent actually. It happened that I was on one of those pilgrim bodyguard missions, the one that leads you to Koal cave. It happened that I decided to take a shortcut and instead of going through the intended path, I swam with the pilgrim to the actual entrance of the cave. As the mission didn't stop I delved into the cave, trying to keep the pilgrim and myself from drowning. After half an hour of trying to reach the end of the cave, I gave up and looked in the wiki, thinking that the mission had bugged, just to discover that all I needed to do was go through the path nearby the cave entrance, where the pilgrim stopped and gave me my reward.

– *Anonymous*

I had arrived at Vivec City for the first time. I reached the highest point of the nearest canton and told myself, "I can land in the water if I jump off from here for sure". Steeling myself, I jumped up onto the side, looked down, and took a leap of faith. I didn't fall for very long because I smacked face-first into the floor of the lowest level of the canton. "Stoopid!" My character yelled just as she died. Indeed, I was stoopid.

- AurielsAscension / Carver

In my first playthrough, when escorting the pilgrim to the Fields of Kummu shrine she stopped moving just before we reached the shrine and wouldn't budge. I ended up taunting her, and she started trying to punch me and chased me for a couple of seconds, stopped to thank me and pay me, before resuming trying to punch me.Instead of killing her or leaving her behind, I let her chase me all the way back to Balmora where she remained for the rest of the playthrough chasing me between the strider port, Caius' house, and the various guild halls. It was nice to count on always being greeted by her after returning from an adventure.

- Anonymous

While definitely not my first memory of Morrowind, my best one would be playing Morrowind during a sick day, jumping from island to island in the Sheogorad and Azura's Coast region, trying to talk to every mudcrab I came across in an attempt to locate the Mudcrab Merchant.

Perhaps not the best answer, but there you go. I'm still abusing the hell outta him to this day.

- Anonymous

Trying to flirt with Only-He-Stands-There. That's it.

- Anonymous

Do you know that how high you can jump is also limited by how much you carry? I didn't. But with my high acrobatics, I never noticed, because I could kinda jump onto some roofs in Balmora if I positioned correctly, so that's pretty high, right? Mostly when I was playing I was carrying like 300-400 units of stuff, potions, scrolls, and spare weapons "just in case I need them". One day I sorted all that stuff I never used and brought my encumbrance to like 60. And that's how I learned I could fly.

- Anonymous

Coming off of Skyrim to try out Morrowind back in 2016, I anticipated having to get used to a plethora of older gameplay mechanics, from learning the intricacies of sneaking to the importance of fatigue in combat, as the Dark Elves of Addamasartus were happy to teach me in the most painful way. The older mechanic I ended up loving the most, however, was how item placement worked; rather than the awkward, sometimes hilarious physics engine of Skyrim, I was amazed that you could just drag and drop items and they'd end up exactly where you wanted them. As a meticulous hoarder and wannabe interior designer, this was heavenly to me... if not so generous to my encumbrance. I quickly began hoarding as many books as I could find, eager to assemble as complete a collection as I could.

Poor Caius became my unwilling librarian as I used his house as storage for all my books. When I finally learned how to take a screenshot, the image I got painted a clear picture of the kind of player this game made me.

– AurielsAscension / Carver

Do you know that how high you can jump is also limited by how much you carry? I didn't. But with my high acrobatics, I never noticed, because I could kinda jump onto some roofs in Balmora if I positioned correctly, so that's pretty high, right? Mostly when I was playing I was carrying like 300–400 units of stuff, potions, scrolls, and spare weapons "just in case I need them". One day I sorted all that stuff I never used and brought my encumbrance to like 60. And that's how I learned I could fly.

– Anonymous

The first encounter with a Bonewalker in an ancestral tomb just gets worse and worse as your stats get degraded until you cannot flee or fight, then eventually die.

– Crammal

I remember feeling really happy during the quest to be named Zainab Nerevarine. It was a strange quest, tricking an Ashkan by giving him a disguised slave as a bride, but it still felt somehow... wholesome.

Falura, although unsure of all the details, was excited to greet her new life outside of slavery. She was ready to play her part, and I chuckled at Ashkan Kaushad's surprised response when we arrived in the village. Everyone was happy.

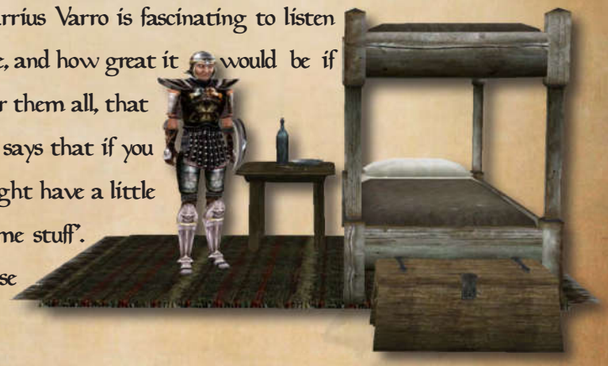
That particular quest was a reminder that, while I was there to protect the nation, I was also there to help and serve her people in any way I could.

– Coltrain

While I adore Morrowind for many reasons, the aspect I love about it most is how it allows for creative out-of-the-box thinking which yields constant fresh discoveries, new fun ways of doing things and best of all some pretty wild adventures. I still surprise myself with what's possible, what I never thought of doing before. what crazy wild idea I've never thought of yet. One such wild adventure happened quite recently. it all began as all adventures do, speeding along the countryside thanks to my favorite boots, when it suddenly occured to me: "I shall build myself an army & these boots shall be my ticket to glory" It's not COWARDICE to run away is it?... I say it's CREATIVITY! For that is how I shall build my ARMY. I'll run, run, run away from all the monsters, bandits, & daedra of Vvardenfell, gathering myself a blood-thirsty band of followers, shepherding them through the swamps, barren hills & grazelands all while they long to feast on my flesh. After hours of careful manuevering, critical-mass has been achieved, my final act of glory shall be TO INVADE VIVEC!... Like a blaze of glory my army enters Vivec. I cross the bridge, But alas I must capture this moment! I save, then take a screenshot to immortalize this victory... which then causes me to get trapped & die consistently.

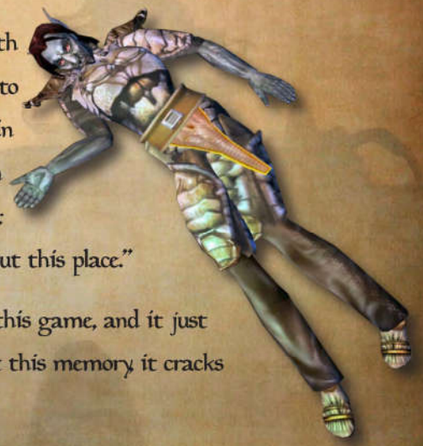
- Xero Foxx

I've never really gotten that far in Morrowind, despite how long the game has been in my life. It has been at LEAST 15 years since I first played it, possibly longer. I have played through the early game more times than I can count, so I've got that down pat. It wasn't until a few years ago that I was introduced to the NPC named Larrius Varro while playing the PC version, at which point I had the pleasure of listening to his nice little story. See, Larrius Varro is an Imperial in the Moonmoth Legion Fort. He's disgruntled that some bad people in the Balmora Council Club are getting away with terrible crimes. Larrius Varro is fascinating to listen to. He goes on and on about these bad people, and how great it would be if someone were to go in there and just murder them all, that way his problems can all go away. And he says that if you take a walk and 'do some stuff', later he might have a little gift for you. But only after you've 'done some stuff'. This man pretty much tells you to kill these people, without directly saying it.



Recently I've started playing Morrowind again on my Xbox One. Yes, I know, the console version is inferior. But this is how I first played it, and I'm going back to my roots as I finally decide to do the main quest for once in my life.

During this playthrough, I went to take on Larrius Varro's bloodbath fantasy. I stepped into the Balmora Council Club, headed downstairs to the main room, and proceeded to stab all the patrons to death right in front of the main counter. Surrounded by bodies and probably covered in the blood of all his friends, I turn to look at the guy behind the counter. After a brief and awkward pause, he simply says "Tell your friends about this place."



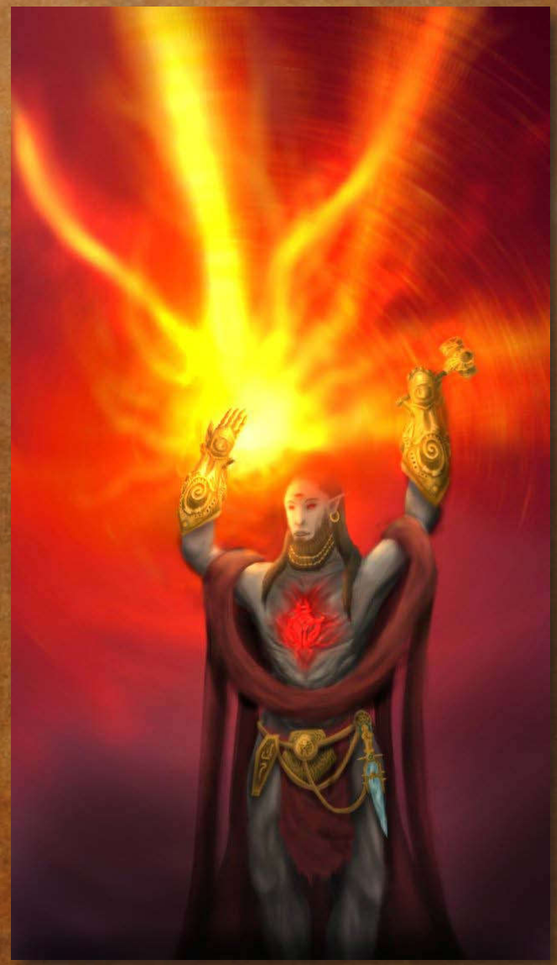
I lost it with that line. This was the funniest thing I've seen in this game, and it just felt so out of place after what just happened. Every time I think about this memory, it cracks me up. I love Morrowind.

- Zaayesha Talimus

SIXTH HOUSE
Art by Dominik Zdenkovic

Ash Vampire

Omnizombi



Dagoth Ur Triumphant

LightGamez

6th House Propaganda

Land

Hooded Sharmat

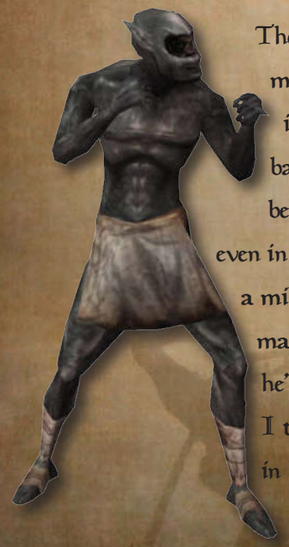
Retro Robot

K.MI

Kogaruhn

Noktpapilio

SIXTH HOUSE
for the dreamers



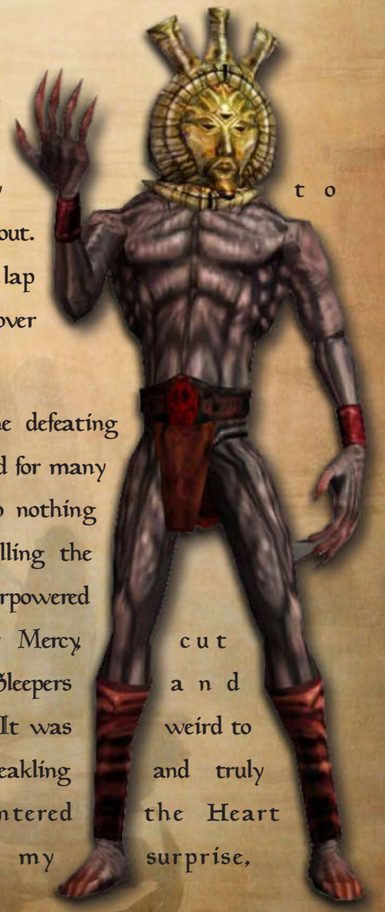
What stands out for me is my first memory of the Sixth House. I was wandering down the foyada from Fort Moonmoth and I stumbled on a cave I hadnt seen before, Hassour. I hadnt yet started the main quest at this point, I didnt know anything about the main quest story either. I'd cleared out a few bandit caves at this point though so I naturally thought it would be a bandit cave and stepped in.

The first thing I noticed is that it was really dark. I couldnt see much of anything. I didnt hear any noise either. I took a few steps in and all of a sudden, my screen lit up really bright with a shock ball that took about half of my health. I literally screamed in panic because this was unlike anything I'd ever experienced in EverQuest or even in Morrowind up to this point. My boyfriend (now husband) jumped a mile out of his chair. Meanwhile, once the shock ball dissipated, I could make out this weird creature with no face lumbering toward me and he's casting another shock ball. I'm going, "Oh shit! Oh shit! Oh shit!" I turned around, fled the cavern, and did not stop running until I was in Balmora, drinking a health potion on the way.

My heart was pounding out of my chest. My boyfriend was agitated, wondering why I screamed. It took me a couple of minutes to calm down enough to tell him what happened. I'd never had a reaction to a game like that before.

I'm pretty sure that was the event that triggered me to look up the game online and find out what that thing was that attacked me. I later learned it was an ash zombie, and about the Sixth House. I found the Morrowind Summit not long after this, I believe. I was hooked from there.

– Denina



I started playing Morrowind in 2018, my first game was Skyrim so I was completely unaccustomed to its mechanics. My dad was actually the first in my family to play any TES games. He played Daggerfall when it came out. I also remember when Oblivion came out and sitting on his lap while he played it. Since then, I've preferred playing TES3 over every other TES game.

A memory that stands out to me was my first time defeating Dagoth Ur with a character that I had worked to build for many months. I knew the full story of the main quest, so nothing surprised me, but going through the facility and killing the Sixth House was so entertaining. My character, an overpowered Dunmer with glass armor and the Spear of Bitter Mercy cut down even the strongest of his minions. Ascended Sleepers and Ash Vampires fell with a few strokes of my spear. It was weird to think of how my character had started out as such a weakling and truly evolved into the person he was in his past life. I entered the Heart Chamber and confronted Dagoth Ur. To my surprise,

he was extremely hard. Despite that, it was so fun to get killed by him over and over again. Vivec knew something that Dagoth Ur did not: no matter how many times he killed me, I always came back. I overcame him, struck the Heart of Lorkhan, and the prophecy of the Nerevarine was fulfilled. I had done it. I was so happy at that moment and reflected on the journey my character had made.

What Morrowind does extremely well for new players, is kicking you to the ground and making you reevaluate what it means to play an RPG. It doesn't hold your hand and, when you finally begin to understand the game, it is so rewarding. Leveling up feels like an actual accomplishment, which I have seen few other games do (mainly Kingdom Come Deliverance and Daggerfall). Since I started playing it, Morrowind has, hands down, become my favorite game. I'm grateful for it giving me such a uniquely bizarre world to immerse myself in.

- Bergenhoek

Hearing that ever so memorable Dagoth Ur line for the first time! Gave me chills just hearing it!

- Anonymous

I was just in awe when I saw and heard Dagoth Ur Whispered Dreams

- Anonymous

In my first playthrough, I got the letter from Dagoth Ur that said to come to the Red Mountain and join him. So I did... at a super low level. I spent hours trying to sneak by the enemies and reloading when they saw me. When I finally get there he tells me he's not ready.

Bro,

I just spent hours getting here to join you.

I almost never played again.

- Anonymous

I have a lot of good memories about the game but when it comes down to it, I have two that I am really fond of:

The first one is how you can't kill Dagoth Ur directly. When I first fought him, I had to summon 4 daedra to help and to use a few potions too. After that, he is still alive in the next chamber so I rushed to Heart with barely any health but I managed to destroy the heart.

My second memory is not from vanilla but from the Julan companion mod. The whole mod is brilliant, one of the best companions I've ever experienced in a game; I think it's because his personality changes as you play the main quest which immersed me even more.

- Anonymous

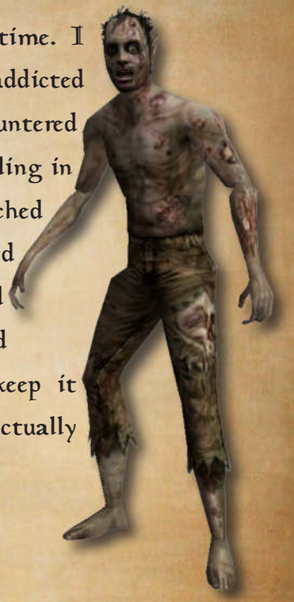
Morrowind was the first game to get me into RPGs as a whole. I remember seeing it being played on the original Xbox at a friend's house the first time and thinking it looked very cool, not like anything I'd personally seen before. I found a copy for the PC and somehow my desktop from back in those days managed to run it. Having zero understanding of how any systems or stats in the game work I set off to adventure, somehow managing to make my way into this alien world.

I remember the sheer terror of seeing some of the enemies for the first time, I still find the ancestral ghosts to be way creepier than ghosts in modern titles, and the ash slaves with their eyes hollowed out. But also the amazing sights in that game.

The titles in the series since then have all been spectacular, but there's something about Morrowind that can't ever quite recreated.

– Dan, the Biggest Gobb

Back in 2002, I was playing the game for the first time. I was on the quest to find a woman's missing skooma-addicted husband in the Vivec Underworks. I had already encountered one or two wandering addicts in the tunnels, saw a figure shambling in the distance, and thought he was another of the same. I approached him from behind, preparing to talk to him when my cursor drifted over him and I saw "Corprus Stalker". This was the first I had ever encountered in the game and I frantically backed away, flailing my weapon wildly, trying to keep it away. I learned much later that they aren't actually contagious.



– ProfArmitage

As a kid, Never having finished the main questline past the Sixth House base mission to Ilunibi because of being too scared (still never have lol)

– Anonymous

It might not sound like a good memory but, when I was around 7 years old, I remember waking up in the middle of the night to play Morrowind on my brother's Xbox while everyone was sleeping and stumbling upon a Sixth-House base and getting scared shitless they would invade MY dreams.

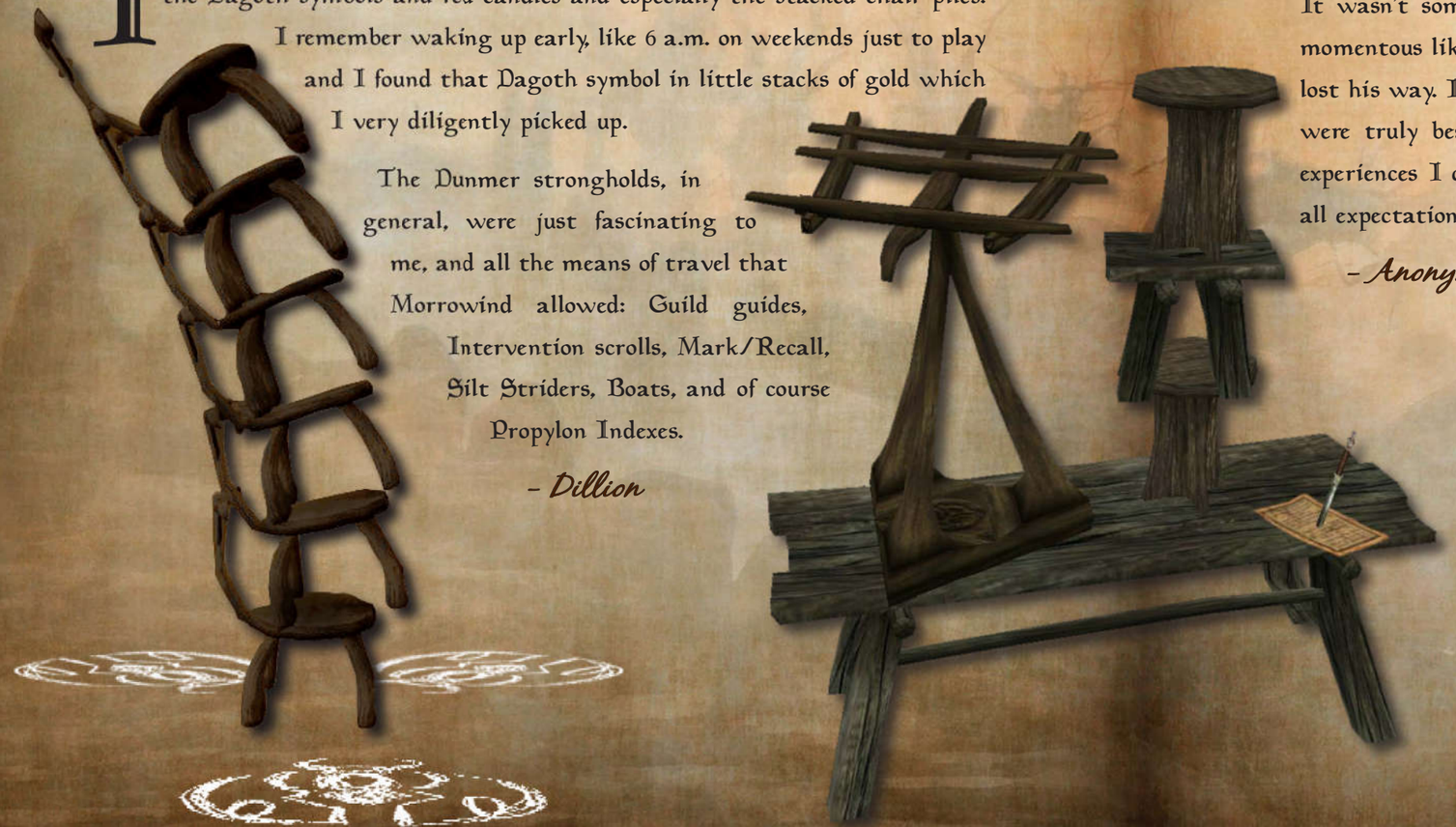
I was scared for at least a week straight. It took my brother to find the base and wipe it out for me to stop being scared. It was a good bonding moment between us.

- Anonymous

I remember my first time getting into Kogoruhn and being so spooked by the Dagoth symbols and red candles and especially the stacked chair piles. I remember waking up early, like 6 a.m. on weekends just to play and I found that Dagoth symbol in little stacks of gold which I very diligently picked up.

The Dunmer strongholds, in general, were just fascinating to me, and all the means of travel that Morrowind allowed: Guild guides, Intervention scrolls, Mark/Recall, Silt Striders, Boats, and of course Propylon Indexes.

- Dillion

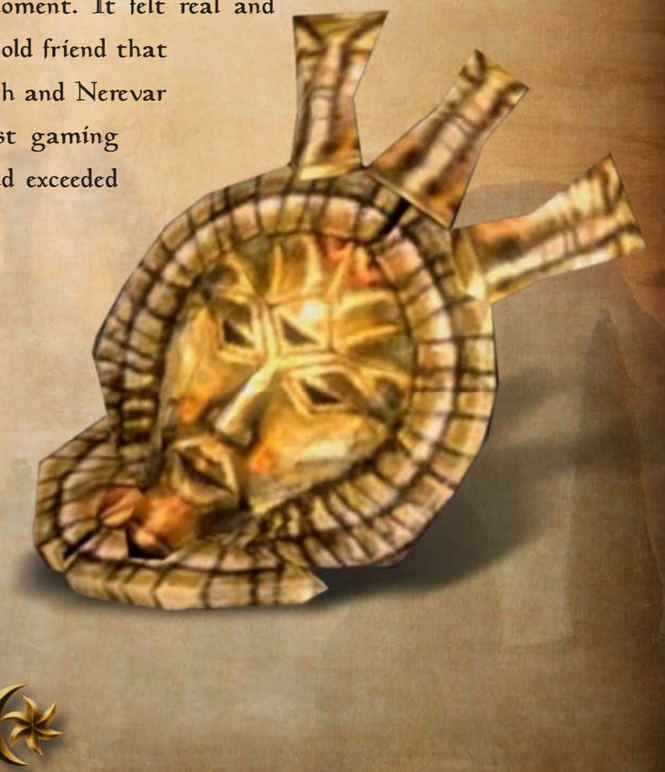


I have always been enchanted by Morrowind. It was the biggest RPG I played in my youth with the largest world I had ever been in. I played it off and on every couple of years and beat it for the first time recently. Having never seen Dagoth Ur before this year, I had this huge expectation for a fire-breathing monstrosity that would be a crazy epic in proportion.

I remember feeling so humbled by him. Was this really him? When I heard, "Welcome Moon and Star, to this place where destiny is made," I was floored. 20 years of expectation of some colossal entity, but Dagoth is not the monster I was led to believe he was. He was a confused and corrupted old friend.

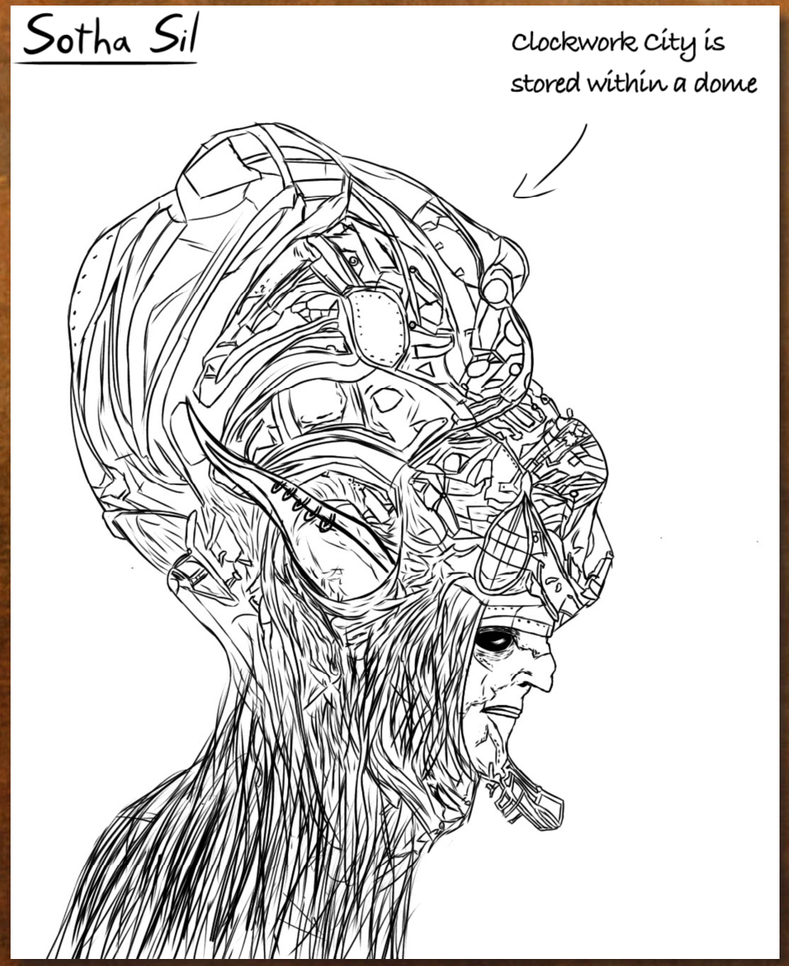
After an incredible dialogue with him, I got ready to battle an old friend. It wasn't some gimmicky "Got ya!" moment. It felt real and momentous like I was putting down an old friend that lost his way. I truly believed that Dagoth and Nerevar were truly best friends. One of the best gaming experiences I could have possibly had and exceeded all expectations. Truly incredible.

- Anonymous



SURPRISING MOMENTS

Art by Dominik Zdenkovic



They call me Bree

Sotha Sil

OmniZombi

SURPRISING MOMENTS
at every turn

This is what I call my Morrowind modding creepypasta story because it sounds like a poor attempt at writing horror and nobody ever quite believes me about it happening. This is about a very unusual bug I briefly encountered quite some time ago.

For context, back then I was using a mess of an install, too many mods to name including a certain mod pack that people frown upon these days, but the main two mods of note to this story were Julan Ashlander Companion and Graphics Extender with the distant land dialed up a lot too high. Thirteen cells high, a perfectly cliched number for this sort of thing. It had been seventeen cells not long before, but the fans on my graphics card were making a noise I'm certain would have had air traffic controllers giving it clearance for liftoff.

I wish I could say it was a dark and stormy night when this happened, but it was a shockingly clear midday sun for the furthest northern edges of Sheogorad.

My main method of travel was a combination of water walking, Boots of Blinding Speed, and Tinur's Hoptoad, all capped off with a very generously overtrained acrobatics skill. Somewhere along the way, traveling like a caffeinated flea, I realized

Julan had somehow gotten lost. Nothing too odd with that so I tried his built-in telepathy ring and asked him to recall to me. No effect.

Retracing my steps I found him standing on a beach not too far back.

Thirteen cells are exactly enough that Red Mountain is always visible which gives it a weird sense of impending doom. It is always just there, combined with the heartbeat hiding behind every ambient track, it's delightfully thematic.

Julan was staring up at Red Mountain. Stranger still, he couldn't be spoken to. Or damaged by blade or spell. He didn't turn his head in any way like an NPC ought to do when near a player, and he had no idle animation.

Clearly broken I used the Ring again which would hopefully jolt his AI packages back into order. It did not. He teleported slightly closer to me but was still staring completely transfixed by Red Mountain.

Then he started walking. He set off down the beach into the water and just disappeared somewhere beneath the waves. I don't mean Water Walking or swimming, he just walked along the bottom of the ocean until he left my draw distance.

Ring recall attempt number three. It got some of Julan back.

What I got was his shadow, or rather him completely textureless black except for the glowmapped red eyes. This time he was not staring at Red Mountain. I think I would have preferred it to him staring at me. Even moving around him he kept perfectly locked onto me, still completely unanimated.

Ring recall attempt number four. It has a condition if you attempt to use it after Julan has died it instead says something to the effect of 'you will need a necromancer to communicate with Julan now, he's dead. That is not something you want to read when the red-eyed shadow of said dead person is giving you their undivided attention.

That was the point where I cut my losses, quit, and reloaded an earlier save. I really wanted to just play and didn't have time to deal with a slightly haunted game. We already have one unholy thing in the game with Dagoth Ur, we really don't need another.

In a very typical horror story fashion, the handful of paranoia saves I had been making whilst prodding at this issue all refused to load, instant CTD. I had to roll back all the way to the Vos and get the boat to Dagon Fel again. The real horror was that I lost about 20 minutes of travel and failed to find what I was in Sheogorad for.

I think it might be Bethesda titles in general that are haunted, not just Morrowind, I've had my Skyrim mildly haunted too.

- Markond / Damius

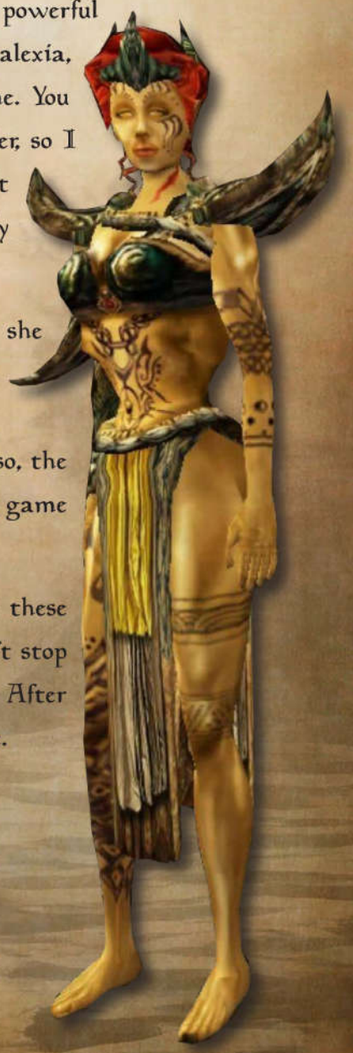
I'd say my favorite memory of playing TES3 was back in 2014 when I was doing my first complete playthrough of the game on vanilla. One moment, in particular, has always stuck with me.

It was while I was completing the Tribunal DLC for the first time. After finishing the main quest in the base game I felt so powerful and was excited to travel to Mournhold to speak to Almalexia, my past wife and surely someone who would stand by me. You spend the entire time in Morrowind feeling like an outsider, so I was excited to meet someone who would appreciate me. At first, I got that feeling while doing jobs for her but quickly felt like something was wrong.

The moment I entered the Dome of Sotha Sil and she appeared to tell me of her betrayal that cut me so deep. I was so immersed in my game at this point that I genuinely felt it. I didn't want to kill her and after doing so, the extreme feeling of loneliness I felt after completing the base game overcame me tenfold.

I guess the fact that the game was able to elicit these feelings from me is why it's my favorite memory. I couldn't stop there though, I had the Bloodmoon DLC to complete. After doing so, I didn't feel loneliness or betrayal. I felt at peace.

- KingCraft



I remember when I first started playing Morrowind, I was so mesmerized by the weird and alien-like world. Everything, from visual design to music accompaniment, keeps this 20 year old (crazy!) experience incredibly fresh and unique not only among other Elder Scrolls games but also among most of the RPGs we have today. I also want to say special thanks to Young Scrolls for keeping Morrowind's music alive! Dagothwave, Neon Vivec, and Balmora Vice are still on repeat on my phone!

– its_me_elijah

Still a kid, 14 I think. Tried to wear my big man pants and decide to explore the northeast of Seyda Neen instead of taking the Silt Strider. View Distance was set to lowest, so this was a new and scary experience for me.

Didn't realize it was close to nightfall until it was too late. Got into the Ascadian Isles region while it was night, so I couldn't see how pretty it was, only how scary it was. Inching along, half-expecting giant monsters to get me in the dark.

Found a watering hole that was near Pelagiad (don't know where that is yet) and met my first guar. I genuinely thought it was gonna attack and eat me. Color me surprised as it didn't. It even made that purring sound which actually calmed me down. Finally noticed how beautiful the night sky is.

– Kalsonic

On my first playthrough, I remember my first NPC kill. It was a guard in Balmora; I killed him for his armor. Well, I died a lot of times but eventually succeeded thanks to healing scrolls bought in Seyda Neen.

It is worth noting that, until that point, I've only ever killed mudcrabs and nix hounds; sometimes they have meat on their corpses, other times they don't. So I was rather impressed to find a whole set of armor. I looted the corpse...then the NPC model updated, revealing a Dunmer in his undies, eyes open but dead. I had two thoughts at the same time.

There was admiration: "This is awesome! I've never seen this in a game before! You mean all these armor pieces were rendered separately from the guard?!?"

There was also horror: "Oh god, it had a face! There's a person inside this armor. I killed him. He had a family... hopes, and dreams."

I was so swept away by how realistic Morrowind was (at the time), that it took me a few weeks to get to the point where I could kill NPCs without guilt feelings.

– Anonymous

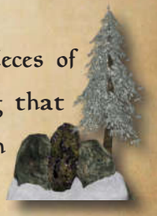
I bought an Xbox of Morrowind with my friend at EB Games on its release day with no prior knowledge of the series, Bethesda Softworks, or the game itself. What happened when we got home was quite similar to stories I'd read on Morrowind Summit and the Bethesda.net forums of people first experiencing this incredible adventure; we were completely immersed. My first character was a Nord Battlemage (having answered Ergalla's questions) while my friend made a Redguard with a custom class. We traded off playing every hour, using our downtime to plot out our next course on the paper map included in the jewel case while completely fixated on the screen. The next thing we knew it was 5 am and my dad was coming home from working overnight, absolutely baffled at why we hadn't gone to sleep!

By far, the moment I most clearly remember in the game is that first run through the Corprusarium. My friend and I were finally buckling down and intent on seeing the story through. But when we entered that dark labyrinth it was chaos. We couldn't find Yagrum! We couldn't see which way to go! And OH MY GOD what the hell are these zombies, they hit so hard! He was guzzling potions and running around while I jumped up and down, finger on the TV yelling at him where to go! Then when he turned the corner to the Last Living Dwarf's platform he...smashed him with the Frost Blade of the Monarch in his panic. I don't think that was the first time we'd severed the threads of prophecy, but it was definitely the most impactful (in our world and Yagrum's).

– *Gad the Nord*

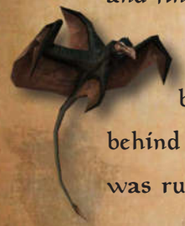
My Morrowind is always full of surprises, often due to the insane number of mods I like to have. These are a few examples of unexpected things that happened to me:

1/ Due to a bug in Frostwind (Merlord's first survival mod before Ashfall), my Nord Vampire died... of cold.



2/ Freshly arrived in Raven Rock, I'm asked to collect a few pieces of Raw Ebony. A walk in the park, unless you have Morrowind Crafting that gives you a Mining skill and you happen to suck at it. That quest, which normally takes a couple of minutes top, took me forever!

3/ Adventuring with Julan and Arnand, 2 companions, each with romance options. I am torn but eventually decide in favor of Arnand. We spend the night in an Ashlander yurt (it actually belongs to Julan's mum). The very next day, I woke up and find out that I have caught a common disease. I should have gone with Julan.



4/ Hunting Cliff Racers in the West Gash with Jiub. I am fighting the best I can (i.e. not well and 4NM makes my game extra challenging). I look behind me, wondering what's taking Jiub so long. That idiot left me to die while he was running towards a Mabrigash camp. An old acquaintance of his, I guess.

5/ My two Argonian companions suddenly started to dance, going in circles around each other, a mating ritual maybe?

I could tell you about the friends I've made along the way thanks to Morrowind and its modding community, the creative outlet that I found in mods, even the few skills I've picked up modding (I am old enough to NEVER have had an IT class), the beauty of the world or its lore. But since I am trying to narrow down what Morrowind means to me, it will have to be STORIES. The stories the game tells me, the ones it lets me invent, and the ones I can share with friends.

– *Danae*

DEATH
Art by Ilona Iske

Vvardenfell Ogrim

Omnizombi

Bone Lord Guardian Dungeon

Omnizombi

DEATH
comes for ye or for thee

The first time I saw Morrowind I was at a friend's house and they were playing it on Xbox. I was instantly impressed, there was nothing else like it on Xbox, the setting, the open-world freedom, leveling up by using skills, making custom spells, haggling over price, etc. Just wow.

So anyway they let me play and they had me go find the Dwemer puzzle box. I get to the bridge and I see this NPC (Snowy Granius), I go over to talk to him and bam he kills me instantly lol.

Reload.

I charge at him, destruction spell ready. He spawns a skeleton so I attack it, and he kills me.

Reload.

This time I charge at him, ignoring the skeleton, I get a hit in, and bam the skeleton kills me.

Reload.

Ok, I'm gonna need a plan, I look through my inventory and spell list and see this ancestral guardian spell. Yes, just like (American) football, I'll get a blocker and head for the end zone. I charge in, he spawns a skeleton, I summon my ghost, the skeleton goes after my ghost, I run past them, hit Snowy with my destruction spell, and kill him.

Yes. I did it!

Then, 3 cliff racers swarmed me and I died.

- Stripes

There's a cave near Caldera (I think, might have the location wrong) that has a deep pond with a chest at the bottom. It's a trapped chest that has one of the weakest effects in the game of a simple Damage Fatigue. Yet because I'm always at 0 Fatigue it had the effect of knocking me down in water long enough that I ended up drowning. Ever since then it's been my favorite trap in the game because of how something so simple ended up killing me.

-Anonymous

I played a lot of Morrowind when I was around 10. I didn't fully understand everything, obviously, and I never made it too far into the main quest. I would mostly just roam the landscape - repeatedly saving, dying to Cliff Racers and other high-leveled enemies, and reloading. I must've explored damn near every corner of Vvardenfell - all while vastly underpowered. I even found that Spider Dwemer guy! (Never looked up anything either!)

I also restarted quite often. I knew where to go to steal some decent starting armor, weapons, valuables, etc. to get going. I didn't understand combat very well, so I mostly role-played a thief - I'd prefer to sneak through a dungeon than fight anything.

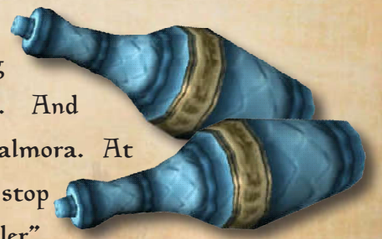
Anyway, one time immediately after starting a new game, I silt strider-ed to one of the close towns. Looking it up online, I think it would've been Gnisis. I immediately ran into the dungeon that's right near the silt striding place. I snuck all the way past all the enemies that could one-hit me and found a Daedric Katana (or something similar). I was very excited, it looked like an amazing weapon

I snuck out alive and proceeded to one-shot everything I could for a couple of hours. Loads of fun!

I must've played hundreds of hours of Morrowind. All of them on an OG Xbox that would freeze at least once an hour and take way too long to load any new scene. I got very used to saving often. Lol

-Anonymous

This is more of a longer tale of my first character and the many, many mistakes he made. My first character was a Nord Warrior who specced into the Warrior Sign with no magical capabilities whatsoever. In the beginning, he did not take anything from the tutorial except the gold that you receive after you exit. He also saw everything that wasn't humanoid as a threat to his survival.



So, my first moments in-game were me punching scribs hoping for my life that they didn't paralyze me. And eventually, after sustaining tons of damage, I went to Balmora. At this point, some of my health was back but not enough to stop the pestering of the people saying I was "needing a healer". So, I went to the temple and talked to the people there but I wasn't able to find out how to heal myself. Finally, I went to the Mages Guild and bought some Fortify Health Potions...

Yeah, I had some health for a bit then panicked when I saw it go away. In my not-so-sane state, I tried resting in another person's bed, got caught, accidentally resisted, and killed off my Hrolmar the Bloodied without any save.

- Anonymous

Getting beaten up and stun-locked by a female farmer near Vivec the first time I played

- Anonymous.

I started Morrowind on Jan. 31st, 2022. After traveling between towns, I came to realize that all of those memes about the cliff racers being the most annoying thing were true, as I looked up and saw 4 above me. I swiftly met my demise soon after.

- Nick

My most vibrant memory of Morrowind was the first time I ever played it after finishing Skyrim and oblivion, I was so pumped to play more elder scrolls. I got out into Seyda Neen and spent 30 mins trying to work out where the map marker was and then the next 30 got killed by a mud crab because I didn't understand the combat. Convinced there was something wrong I didn't play it for like 4 months after I bought it until I realized I was just bad at the game lol. One of the more frustrating memories of the game but still.

- Queernice

I came to Balmora, killed a Shopkeeper, and lived in his house happily for a few in-game weeks, when one random day, I rest and am suddenly jarred awake. I turn and there is a shadowy figure. Dark Brotherhood. He kills me effortlessly. I thought myself safe. I lost hours and feared him at every rest. It changed how I played the game entirely. From then onward: I prepared for an ambush from them, investigated them, and eventually hoped to hunt them down.

- mechaMayhem

My most vivid memory connected to Morrowind is the first time I decided to play it. It was around 2014, and I thought I'd give vanilla Morrowind a go after I'd discovered that Dragonborn DLC wasn't the only instance of Bethesda's Morrowind content. In TES V: Skyrim, I loved Solstheim and all my characters eventually got stuck on the island. I didn't even know that Solstheim was a part of the Morrowind province at the time.

My case is less common because I came to Morrowind from Skyrim. I was quite impressed with how decently the graphics had aged on such an old game, and the water shader's magnificence has been embedded in my memory up to this day. My first character was an Altmer male. I exited the Census and Excise office as a confident freshman, conducted my first investigation, thoroughly enjoyed the silt strider cries (it was good to see more of them, I knew Skyrim era only had one remaining), and got slaughtered by the Addamasartus mage because not only had I chosen an Altmer but also picked Apprentice sign for him (R. I. P.). I realized it was evening only when it got dark, and I had only planned to play for a couple of hours.

It took me ages to find Caius for the first time. Us Skyrim kids, who are used to having a compass and quest markers holding our hands, take a lot of getting used to games like Morrowind. I spent two hours in real-time looking for him while in Balmora.

My first day in Morrowind was concluded by nearly getting a heart attack in Vivec after I'd been informed that there's a killer on the loose, and an Ordinator growled: "We are watching you, scum!" right into my ear.

Morrowind will always be my favorite Bethesda game, with Oblivion being a close second, and I'm fairly certain even Bethesda themselves will not be able to recreate that magical atmosphere again. Long live The Elder Scrolls III: Morrowind, its fan base, and its modding community!

– alva_the_wanderer

I had bought the game on Steam sale, but never actually played it until recently. After watching a funny video about it I hopped on, got my eardrums melted by the default audio setting, and created my character. An imperial man who's good mostly at fighting but knows a little magic, mainly restoration and alteration (because I heard those were the best for non-mage characters). After doing a couple of easy, insignificant quests in the starter town, I heard a group of slavers was operating just outside town in a cave. Being a Skyrim veteran I believed it would be easy, but actually a fun side quest to do. As soon as I enter the cave a bandit rushes me. After pausing to remember the weird control scheme in the game I pulled out my weapon and began attacking.

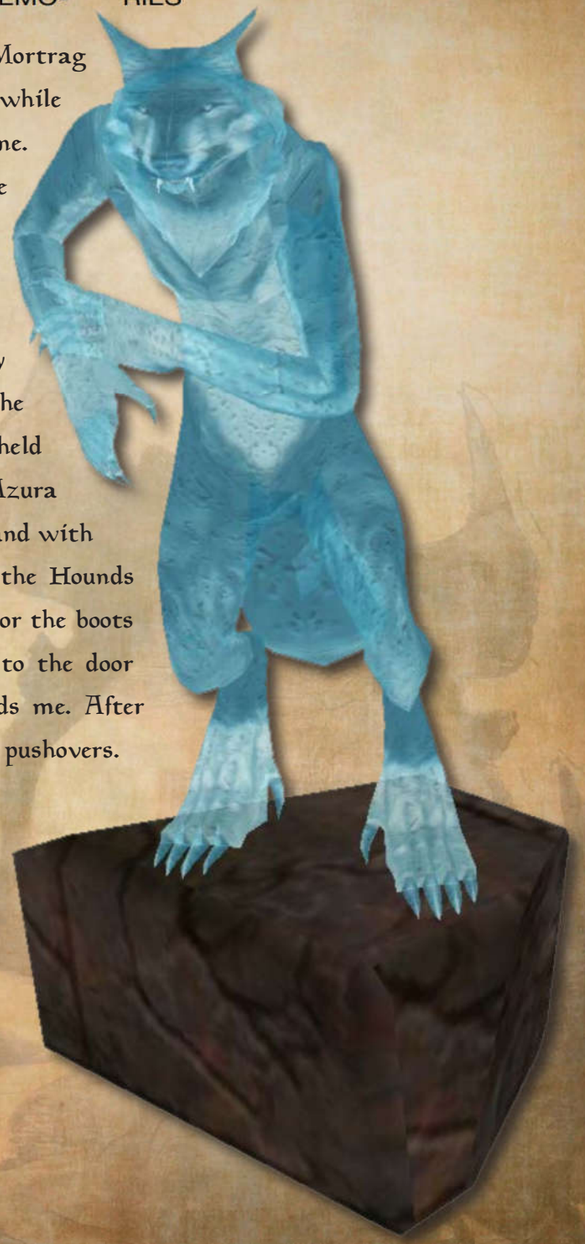
That's when I realized the unique mechanic in this franchise, attacks only work based on your stats and your fatigue. Both my stats and my max fatigue were, to put it lightly, absolute garbage. Only through luck did I manage to come out with only about 6 or 7 less HP. I robbed the bandit's corpse of its gear and walked further in. I only had a few seconds to glance at the slaves over the left when another slaver spotted me from further down, a mage. Again, thinking nothing of it I charged forward. Thinking if nothing else, mages are usually pretty squishy, so this should be a little easier. And I thought I was right at first, as I repeatedly smashed left-click poking and prodding my foe I thought I was laying into him hard, as he just stood there repeatedly casting some spell. Then, when his health was halved, one of them hit my character. Immediately I noticed my health bar shrink to a mere sliver of what it once was. I was so shocked that I didn't even think to open my inventory to see if I brought a potion or check how to use any healing spells I might know. Instead, I just kept hitting and hitting, hoping that maybe I'd kill him before another fireball finishes what the first one started. It was not meant to be, as I got his health to maybe a fifth of what it was, another fireball struck me, instantly killing me. It may have not been glamorous, comedic, or even heroic, it was my experience. And I think it perfectly encapsulates the feeling of an uninitiated Elder Scrolls fan, going 20 years back in time, and experiencing the gem that is Morrowind.

- AmericanKaiser

I first played Morrowind on my friend's original Xbox. He hated the game and said it was trash. I got on and I sucked, really really badly, and I had so much fun. I couldn't hit anything. I was so SLOW. And the landscape was so immersive, and the stories were so good. I was hooked from my first play.

I remember my first death very, very well. I was going along the Bitter Coast near Seyda Neen, barely killing the Kwama foragers and mudcrabs, because my skills were terrible and unoptimized, and I was chugging healing potions. I came across a tomb by the water, went inside, and proceeded to be entirely unable to strike the spirit inside. I tried to run, but it kept right on me and doing the 'knockback' animation on me so it kept stopping me... and I ran out of healing potions. I hadn't saved since I left Seyda Neen and was very annoyed. I'd like to think I've gotten a lot better since then.

- Dagothagahnim



I wasn't prepared to take on Mortrag Glacier and got destroyed while fighting the Hounds of Hircine. Unfortunately I'd overwritten my save and the most recent one from outside the dungeon was a few levels back. I almost considered giving up on that character, but I tried a Hail Mary strategy to get out of there: I put on the Boots of Blinding Speed which I had held on to for ages as well as the Ring of Azura which granted Night Eye: With those and with a dozen or so attempts I ran past all the Hounds and reached Karstaag. Near the lady door the boots broke and I ended up slowly walking to the door with all the Hounds barrelling towards me. After that ordeal Karstaag and Hircine were pushovers.

– baronnolanvonstraya

I remember having the Morrowind paper map on my wall and using it to find where to go next for a quest. I also remember killing everyone in a rich Hlaalu mansion in Balmora and using it as a display mansion for my loot (armors, weapons, books, etc.). I got killed so many times by rats, slaughterfish, and cliff racers that it wasn't funny anymore until it got funny again. lol

I have a lot of memories from the Morrowind community on Planet Elder Scrolls, Bethesda Forums, etc. Thank you, Morrowind for those wonderful and fun years.

– Papill6n

I was so enamored by Morrowind when I first played it that I tried sharing it with everyone. I had a friend in school who liked it as well and we would go to his house to just play Morrowind. Even if I wasn't the one playing, it was still so much fun to watch and discover things, unravel mysteries, and complete quests. My favorite thing to do was get the Boots of Blinding Speed and the Scrolls of Icarian Flight and see where we landed when we died.

– Anonymous.

It's my first time playing Morrowind, a couple of years ago. Early in the game, I got my hands on a dwarven shortsword of paralysis. Which I use a lot to emerge victorious from encounters that should have definitely ended with me dead on the ground. Turns out most threats aren't that bad once they can't move, and my shortsword skill being pretty good, I usually manage to get a paralyzing hit very fast and can get just hack away my powerless enemies.

I also have an amulet allowing me to spawn a little skeleton buddy to keep me company in dark caves and tank some hits for me. He sucks, but I enjoy not heading into fights alone.

Adventures ensue until I find myself investigating the sixth house base and face Dagoth Gares, at this point the first real big fight my character has to face. I run to his face paralyzing sword in hand, skelly buddy by my side, and hit him...

Turns out he has Reflect. He is paralyzed. So am I. My skeleton friend, however, is not, and he does what he does best: hitting stuff doing incredibly low damage. As the paralysis effect wears off, I immediately panic seeing my foe starting to move and hit him again. He's paralyzed again. So am I. Skeleton buddy is still happily hacking away Gares' HP one by one. Rinse, repeat.

And that's how I beat the first major opponent in the game: standing right in front of him, looking him in the eye as we both get repeatedly paralyzed while a skeleton slowly stabs him to death a couple of HP at a time.

- Anonymous.

I never got to play Morrowind, or Oblivion for that matter, when they first came out. My family was somewhat impoverished, so in many cases, I would instead rent strategy guides from the local library, or read about them online. The Elder Scrolls is a unique series in that it has truly deep lore, and this was extremely fortunate for me. I fell in love with the series thanks to the work of UESP and The Imperial Library. It wasn't until 2012 that I finally got to play Morrowind for the first time. I had beaten Skyrim and was talking to a college buddy about the series, and whene heard I hadn't played the previous games, he immediately gave me his old copy of the game.

And so, at long last, I booted up the game, chose my class, and was promptly savagely murdered by the trio of bandits lurking in a cave outside Seyda Neen. I imagine my Morrowind experience is pretty similar to everyone else's: the constant struggle against the world and the game mechanics themselves, spurred on by the fascinating world and characters, the frustration balanced out by the marvel of just how intricate it all is. Even now, I'm discovering new things, like the enchanted axe hidden right in a stump by the first port, and the multitude of ways to resolve a single sidequest, each with its own rewards and outcomes. Morrowind is my girlfriend's first game, and I imagine we'll be sharing memories and exploring for a long time to come, and I'm glad to have more people to share these memories with.

- Some chubby neckbeard with a deep love for RPGs.

LOOTING

Art by Dominik Zdenkovic

Ordinator

Severed

Telvanni Warmagus

Xeno

LOOTING
for fun and profit

Back when I was 10 and Morrowind first came out, my neighbor friend and I were reading the case of the game at a local rental store (Mr. Movies). I picked up the case to show it to him and we started reading the back of it.

One little thing caught my eye – a series of small screenshots including captions underneath praising the game. The last one was a screenshot of an Argonian standing Under-Skar with two captions. The top one read "Game of the Year" and right below it was "RPG Vault". Being the incredible genius I am, there was only one reasonable interpretation of this:

That place in the screenshot was the RPG Vault, and because it's a vault it must hold really, REALLY good loot.

We needed to play this game and freakin' loot the heck out of it.

My friend and I were sold instantly and began our descent into madness, cliff racers, crime sprees, Internet search for cheat codes (B B W W B for Fatigue regen, and that's the Black and White button from the OG Xbox controller), Fargoth, and of course, spamming Left Trigger to jump anywhere and everywhere because it was faster than the snail's pace our crappy level 1 character could run at. We searched everywhere for the vault. We went from Seyda Neen to Vivec, to Ebonheart, to Molag Mar, and even ended up in Tel Aruhn at one point.

This game became our lives. Going to each others' houses to play it after school, spending weekend nights diving further and further in, and even being thoroughly convinced we met a real-life equivalent to Fargoth himself at a local church.

But a level 1 character he remained as we continued to waste time trying to steal anything and everything simply to have good items. Who needs progression when you can just take it all? The problem was that the only thing we constantly found was death and failure as our poor fledgling character was continuously and semi-purposefully put into situations out of his league. I believe it took us a few weeks (even buying the game outright because I was so enchanted by it all) before we arrived in Ald'Ruhn and happened to go Under-Skar.

We did it. We arrived. It all was coming together.

RPG Vault? Redoran Personal Guard Vault. Surely the esteemed political house of Redoran would have the BEST armors and weapons stored within their halls.

Oh, what a naïve young fool I was.

And what we found was a dizzying maze of identical doors and corridors that were nothing but the most heinous and clever trap designed to catch master thieves such as my friend and me. We must've gotten stuck in the Redoran Council Hall for a good hour, being unable to find the door that lead back to the exit.

Once we managed to free ourselves, we looked at each other and agreed: No more focusing on stealing things. We've got nothing done other than die more times than any average lad in a classic Flash rage-platformer...

Until we returned to Balmora and discovered the Thieves Guild.

With a shared, sly grin between us, we were back in business.

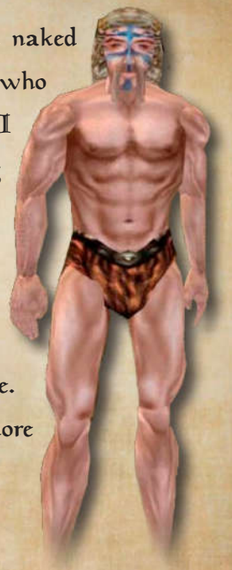
And no, neither the Limeware Platter nor the Seyda Neen Storehouse Key was safe from us. Can't get stolen goods confiscated if you drop them before a guard seizes you. *Forehead tapping*

– Sings-All-Night, Argonian Bard.

My memory is about finding the Ice Blade of the Monarch. I was playing a Redguard long blade build that was getting along pretty well. In my first playthrough of the game I had only focused on the main quest, so in this second playthrough, I was really diving into the sidequests. I was doing the Temple, Morag Tong, Telvanni (I don't know why either), and Fighters Guild. I was really enjoying it but at the same time, I was feeling that sense of saturation that comes when playing too much of the game in too little time. I was slowly getting the sense that I wasn't discovering secrets or doing exciting missions. Then I stumbled upon a Dunmer stronghold, with an arena inside. Huh. Pretty cool!

So I go in, curious as to what's going on here. I beat some Daedra and angry Dunmer before going down to one particularly strong Dunmer. I reload and the same happens. "This guy has some serious gear!" I can remember thinking. It was really giving me that feeling of discovery again. So when I finally beat him and see he has a crazy strong long blade, perfect for my character, I just go a little crazy. It was so exciting and I immediately felt like there was so much more I could discover and since then, I haven't felt burnt out with the game anymore. It was my first real find in the game and it felt great.

– Frank Rensen / SpookyGoHappy



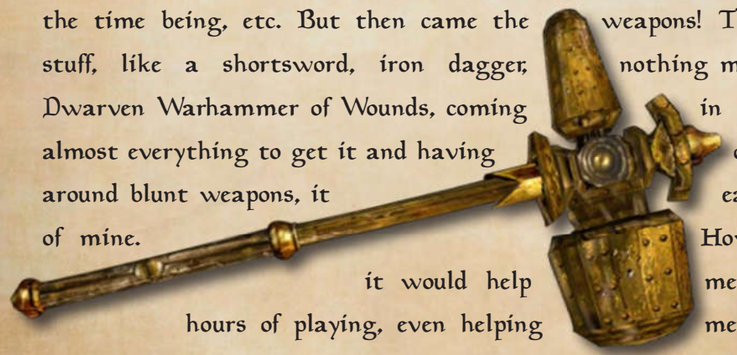
My most recent memory of Morrowind was finding the naked Barbarian, Botrir, and attempting to locate the witch who stripped him of his clothes and mighty battle-axe. I attempted this quest in my first playthrough but went in the wrong direction. However, now wiser, I went in the other direction, and found the witch, before an epic battle was fought. Upon retrieving the axe, Botrir asked for it back, but I declined due to how much of a profit I could earn from selling it. A less epic battle was fought and after I returned to civilization, I pawned it off to someone. Sure, it was an awesome weapon, but the gold I got was even more awesome. My character has a very low axe skill anyways.

- Anonymous

When I discovered the game in 2006, the character that I went the furthest with was a Nord thief called Azefragh. I was a little afraid to explore the wilderness (I got slaughtered a lot with my previous characters, didn't quite understand the battle mechanics), so in the first dozen hours, I would travel from city to city, steal everything I could and sell it to pawnbrokers. I ended up making some solid money and paying for training in combat skills, then I started exploring a lot and I found Fury, the 2-handed sword in Kogoruhn that damages your armor skills when you equip it. Of course, I equipped and unequipped it multiple times (I wanted to see the blinding effect of the sword), effectively setting all my armor and unarmored stats to 0. It gave me the impression that the game rewarded you for exploring is actually a double-edged knife (and it felt awesome!).

- a French dude

I remember when I was new to Morrowind back in late 2021 and was mostly confused on what to do, or where to go, coming from Skyrim. I came across Caldera, got my bearings, and started doing some shopping to get some gear! I went to the trader, and I remember getting some iron armor, a potion or two for the time being, etc. But then came the weapons! There was your normal stuff, like a shortsword, iron dagger, nothing much - but then came a Dwarven Warhammer of Wounds, coming in at ~750 gold! I sold almost everything to get it and having one of my major skills around blunt weapons, it easily became a favorite of mine. However, little did I know it would help me for upwards of ~25 hours of playing, even helping me when I got full Ebony Armor! Finally, though, I came across an Orcish Warhammer, which is what I use now. Also, I got lost in Vivec City for around an hour, and I couldn't skip around buildings thanks to my Acrobatics skill, lol. I think it was around 55 at the time, even though that was also a major skill?

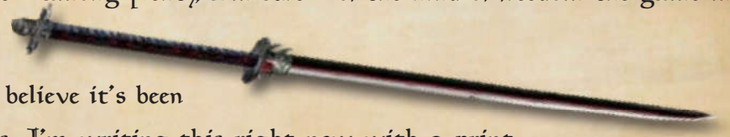


- Joseph / Niche.

Having played a fair amount of Daggerfall in the nineties, I had been waiting for the release of TES III for a while, read all the previews, and marveled at the beautiful images... I remember how the water rendering mesmerized me. Truly it was going to be a superb game, I was pretty optimistic about that!

Morrowind came out just when I was leaving my parent's house and starting an independent life. So, I had no money. I was living in an old flat in Rouen, France, which was in a pretty bad state. The windows were literally separating from the woodwork. And with cold winters over there, it was biting. I remember fondly exploring Vvardenfell in front of my old yellow tower computer, fully equipped with gloves and a wool cap. I didn't mind, I was in Vvardenfell!

The thing that springs to my mind now when I think of my first Morrowind playthrough is the crazy Daedric dai-katana that I fire-enchanted. By then, fighting was ridiculous; nothing could stop me anymore. That thing was dangerous. It's a good example – among plenty, I'm sure – of the kind of freedom the game mechanics allowed.



Hard to believe it's been twenty years. I'm writing this right now with a print of the game island's map hung right in front of me on my wall, and a fully modded version of the game on my computer. Long live Morrowind!

– Constantin Dubois Choulik

MODDING

Art by Dominik Zdenkovic

1 'He' is in reference to our beloved Warrior-Poet, Vivec. It is important to stress that, being a hemaphrodite, Lord Vivec does not adhere to the same pronouns in the way that most of his people might. Either 'He' or 'Her' would be acceptable were it not for his preference being made clear in this sermon, among others. It is not fully understood as to why our Lord Vivec would prefer one over the other at this time. This passage notes Vivec as being born among the Velothi, who are our ancestors lead by St. Veloth to our homeland, away from Aldmeris. It was Veloth who taught our precursors of the Good Daedra and the House of Troubles. From them came the Chimer, and from them came the Dunmer. The War with the Northern Men refers to the conflicts between our Chimer ancestors and the Nords which took place in the First Era, commonly accepted as starting in the year 222, and ending in 416.

2 'Ayem' is one of the many names of our healing Mother, Almalexia. The reason as to why she came down to the lowly Netch herders is due to The Tribunal's love for, and from, the most overlooked and common peoples of Morrowind. The origins of our Lord Vivec are akin to our own. Her shadow being that of Boethiah is in reference to one of the three Good Daedra, and the anticipation of Ayem. It is our Mother Almalexia whom took over the tasks given to her by the daedric Prince of Plots. The passage also clearly illustrates the domain belonging to the Mother of Morrowind is that of the distant stars.

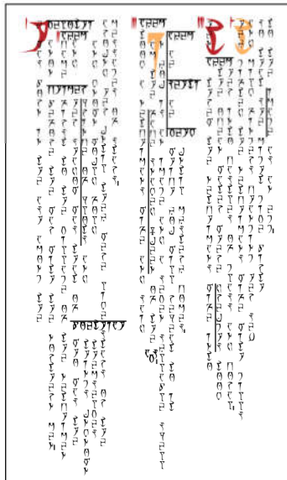
3 Here, Almalexia selects a netchiman's wife, the casual and non-specific nature of which is in reference to the wife being the people of Morrowind in their entirety. Almalexia tells the wife that she is one of our beloved Three. The image is Vivec. The spell can be literally translated as: 'Ayem (Almalexia) is Sehti (Sotha Sil) is Vehk (Vivec),' forecasting the Tribunal, their oneness, and their divinity being inevitable. The spell being cast on the image-to-come represents not only preordained divinity, but its' origin intertwined with the belief of the common people. 'Mystery' here refers to our Father, the Clockwork King, Sotha Sil.

4 Ayem throws the netchiman's wife, who carries the image of Vivec and the mantra spell, into the ocean waters - the domain of our Father, Sotha Sil. This is when the dreughs, a crab-like sentient species that inhabit the deep waters of Nirn, come and take her to safety. It is currently hotly debated among the Temple Priesthood what the dreughs are meant to represent, and what their role is in the rise of the Tribunal Temple.

5 The dreughs give the netchiman's wife gills, which she needs to survive below the surface, underwater. The milk fingers are meant to symbolise the sexual organ of the male sex, meaning she is transformed into a creature of both sexes, a hemaphrodite, so that she may carry Vivec, also a hemaphrodite. Now she is deemed ready to carry the image, the idea and non-corporial form of Vivec, his possibility, in physical form - as an egg.

Synopsis: Vivec's inception came from the distant past, even before the Velothi became the Chimer. His image is carried by the common folk, the people of Morrowind who follow the three Good Daedra - the anticipations. This image carries potential which is released by repeating the mantra 'AYEM AE SEHTI AE VEHK,' which are holy words. It is also clear from this that Ayem and Sehti already existed and had required Vehk to become fulfilled. This part of the First Sermon deals with the complex origin of Vivec, and the Tribunal. Their power is at once divine and of the people. For as long as the Dunmer exist, they will love the Tribunal, and as long as the Tribunal exists, it will love the people back. This circle ensures the prosperity of our land, and further emphasizes the dangers of heretical deviancy that may try and break this unity.

Remember the holy words, and the love that they represent, and repeat them each day upon waking and upon preparing sleep. Repeat them in the Temple, and while meditating. This will bring blessings of the Tribunal upon you, your family and your ancestors.



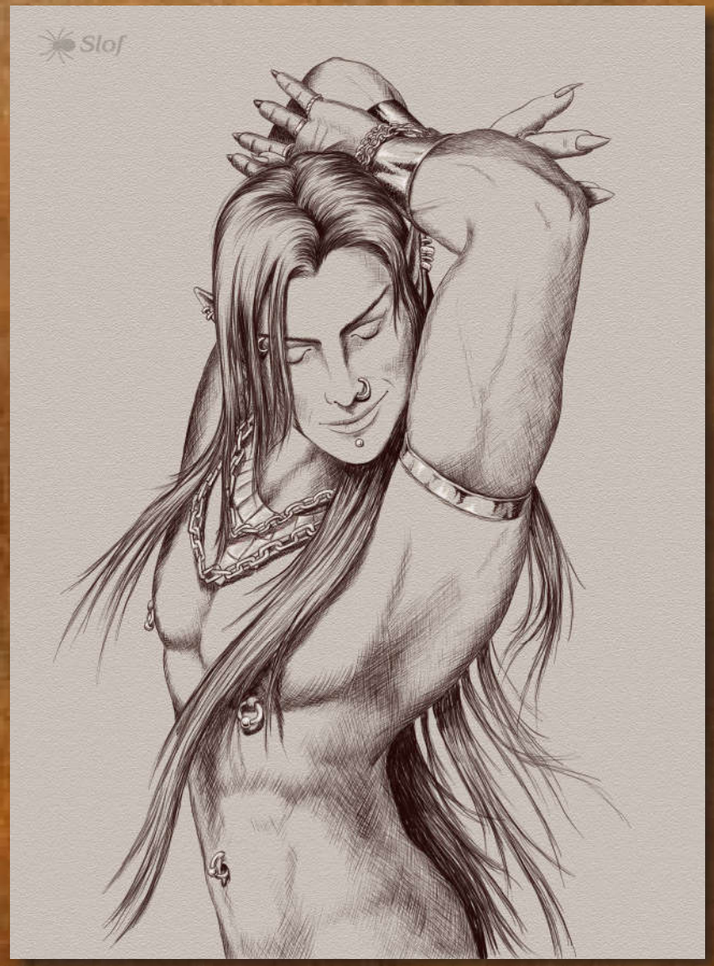
1 He was born in the ash among the Velothi, anon Chimer, before the war with the northern men.
2 Ayem came first to the village of the netchimen, and her shadow was that of Boethiah, who was the Prince of Plots, and things unknown and known would fold themselves around her until they were like stars or the messages of stars.

3 Ayem took a netchiman's wife and said:

'I am the Face-Snaked Queen of the Three in One.
In you is an image and a seven-syllable spell,
AYEM AE SEHTI AE VEHK, which you will repeat to it
until mystery comes.'

4 Then Ayem threw the netchiman's wife into the ocean water where dreughs took her into castles of glass and coral.
5 They gifted the netchiman's wife with gills and milk fingers, changing her sex so that she might give birth to the image as an egg. There she stayed for seven or eight months.

Vukov_Intrigued



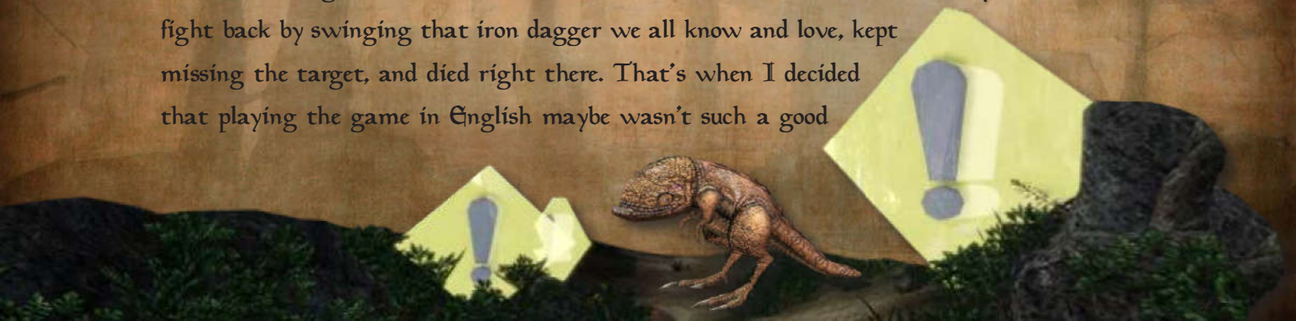
Basil Beautiful

AlienSlof

TAMRIEL ART

MODDING
along the path to CHIM

What does Morrowind mean to me? In short: everything! Well, maybe not everything, there is more to life than just Vvardenfell I suppose. But man, this game... it's one of my favorite games of all time, if not the favorite (hard to tell, I can't just swap aside Ocarina of Time, that's a strong contender), and one that I have been playing the longest. I bought a copy all the way back in 2002 shortly after it was released. Little did I know that it was only available in English at the time, which quickly turned into a major obstacle since my school English wasn't really up to par for the amount of text and complexity that Morrowind confronted me with. So after installing it and somehow making it through the character creation process I was entirely lost. I had no idea where to turn or what to do. I didn't understand what the game wanted from me. So I started running around through the wilderness, came across a weird-looking creature that I now know to be a Guar, was attacked by it, tried to fight back by swinging that iron dagger we all know and love, kept missing the target, and died right there. That's when I decided that playing the game in English maybe wasn't such a good



idea. I uninstalled it, returned it to the store the next day, and waited a couple of months until the German localization was released. I bought it, played it, and fell in love.

I played the game all throughout the 2000s and then lost sight of it a little. It must have been in 2014 I think that by accident I came across some screenshots of the game somewhere on the internet. I don't remember how or where. I only recall thinking that those screenshots didn't look at all like I remembered the game. Why was I able to see so far into the distance? Why were the colors so crisp? Why was there so much detail? So I did some research and that's when I learned of a thing called MGSO. Now, there will be some that might roll their eyes in derision, and I get it, don't use MGSO, especially not in 2022, but in 2014 and knowing nothing about modding it was a revelation to me. I just had to play the game while it looked like it did on those screenshots. So I finally got the English version of the game for good (my English had improved significantly since 2002), installed MGSO and once I fired up the game I fell in love all over again.

Ever since then I have kept in touch with Morrowind. Shortly after playing the game with MGSO for the first time I came across Darkelfguy's Morrowind Modding Showcases channel which would turn out to be another major influence on me. Not only did it help me to find new mods to play, but it also got me to a point where I started making my own mods. At first just for myself, but I eventually released a mod to the Nexus in 2019. Modding has been a major part of my life ever since, even in times when I don't mod myself, because I like to keep track of what other people are working on and releasing. I haven't been playing Morrowind as much as I used to since I got into modding, but that's okay. I'm sure I will find the time at some point. My fingers are itching, in fact, and I do yearn to see Seyda Neen again and to hear that iconic silt strider scream echoing through the Bitter Coast. Ah, good times ...

– *Seelof*

Morrowind was my first introduction to Elder Scrolls and first-person RPGs in general. I was 12 at the time it was first released. The inclusion of the mod tools was my first exposure to any sort of modding, and I probably wouldn't be modding today if it wasn't for that exposure. Nor would I have probably gone to go into a technical field professionally if I didn't experience Morrowind then.

The wide variety of lands within Morrowind was pretty novel in the scope of this game. The only other game I played up to this point with similar ranges of environments was the Legend of Zelda series on the Nintendo 64. Magic was also the most wondrous of any game I had played up to this point and instantly fell in love with the Mage's Guild in my first few playthroughs.

I always come back to Morrowind even with the newer RPGs out there. Oblivion didn't quite capture the feeling of being large that Morrowind offered, and Skyrim while also in my top RPGs doesn't quite capture the variety of experiences.

One of the first big moments was seeing Tarhiel fall, picking up the scrolls, and proceeding to use them with mixed results within Dwemer ruins. This was a terrible idea if you didn't have the right equipment, but showed the freedom offered to experience the way you wish the world.

I didn't end up releasing a Morrowind mod until 2008 which just added a shack in Solstheim with a set of armor and a note. Released this back on FileFront when they used to be one of the titans of the day and NexusMods was laying the foundations for where they are today. Today, I know enough to actually do something with the Construction Set, in part from the wealth of dedication the community continues to have and lessons learned from either Skyrim modding or from my software engineering background.

- Arron Dominion

I remember when I first played Sword of the Perithia total conversion, which made me think: "wow, one person can do all of this?" and open the construction set for the first time.

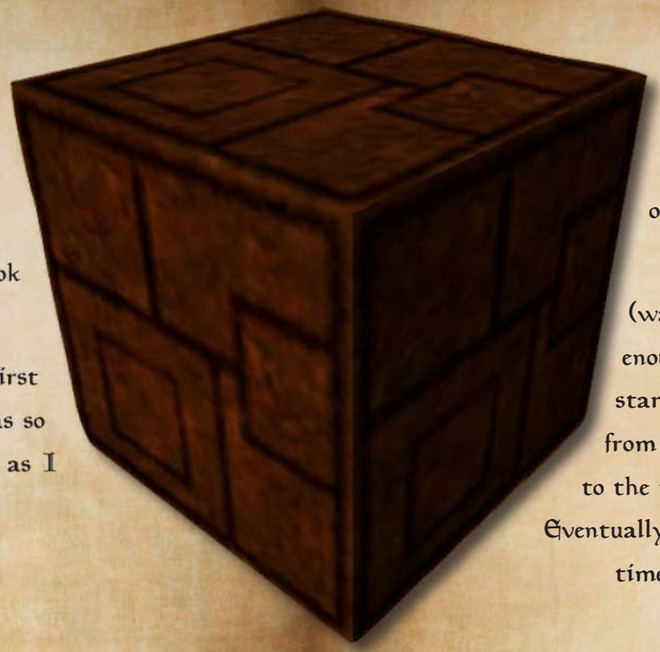
- Abot, a Morrowind player /modder since 2003

One of my fondest memories of Morrowind is messing around and figuring out the Construction Set as a child. I made so many horrible caves with all the assets horribly stitched together with no order but I was happy with it.

I remember being ecstatic when I edited the text of an in-game book and was able to add my own lore and backgrounds for characters.

Also, can't forget trying to find the Dwemer Puzzle Box for the first time. I was in that first dungeon for hours before realizing the box was so close to the entrance. My emotions were a mix of joy and frustration as I remember well.

– MickyD



My first experience with Morrowind was on the original Xbox. My grandma had one in her basement and I would occasionally receive games for it as gifts. Morrowind was one of these gifts, one that stuck with me longer than the Xbox did.

It took me a bit to understand the game. I could read at the time (wasn't that young, but still young), but my attention span wasn't enough for the walking encyclopedias of Morrowind. Eventually, I started wandering off, climbing mountains, entering caves, and fleeing from anything that moved. I would "camp out" and usually end up dying to the rats and assassins who would rudely interrupt my peaceful camping. Eventually, after maybe a dozen characters who had all met the same fate, my time with the game came to a close.

Years passed, and occasionally I would revisit the game in between playing excess amounts of Skyrim. This time getting to Balmora or Vivec. Killing the smugglers outside of Seyda Neen for the first time. Finally finding Caius. It wasn't until I was already an adult that I managed to finally clear out that first Dwarven ruin for the main quest. I feel that now I can appreciate the game more, in no small part thanks to mods!

Sometimes I regret that I missed out on the early modding community for Morrowind, but then again, there has never been a better time to mod than now. Here's to another twenty years in Vvardenfell!

– Codering

Perhaps my fondest memory – or set of memories – of Morrowind way back when it was new, was about maybe 6 months into the game and I started my big Basil the Bastard character. He was my first vampire in the game, and together with what was fondly termed the 'Unholy Trinity', (Vampire Embrace, Vampire Realism, and Vampiric Hunger) which really fleshed out playing as a vampire as well as opening up all of the game to one. Those mods removed the restriction of NPCs refusing to talk to him and gave him interesting strengths and weaknesses to play around with. Quite often, the weaknesses were the most fun, as I had to think in creative ways to work around them.

Basil is an amalgam of several things, and I made him as a custom high elf so I could make him properly unique. His exceptional height came from the first man in my life, who was seven feet tall and sadly died when he was just twenty. There is also a bit of Christopher Lee's Dracula in there too, and whenever I imagine him talking, he does so in Lee's posh English accent and deep voice. I used a voice mod that gave him an evil laugh too!

I played Basil for around 5 years and he reached level 105. I had to keep looking for quest mods that were as difficult as possible to keep him busy! I then went on to make him again when Oblivion came out.

The saddest moment was when my storage hard drive crashed spectacularly, losing Basil's files and 10+ years of modding. I did stop modding for a while after that, but couldn't stay away! Basil has been my main character through every Elder Scrolls game since.

In that time, I have written numerous stories about him, both alone and together with my writing buddy, Denina – we wrote a series where Basil and Leah were Hlaalu colleagues and a second series where Leah was Redoran and Basil Telvanni. We felt that those Houses suited them better. We are currently writing a third series with them as Redoran and Telvanni, but quite a lot different, concentrating on the main quest and several sub-plots inspired by the game.

At this point, I'd like to thank Denina, Arty, and the folks in the MMC discord for helping me find the files I needed to remake him as he was before. Without them, Morrowind Basil would have stayed buried.

Although I've also played him in Oblivion, Skyrim, and Elder Scrolls Online, his Morrowind incarnation was always my favorite and he had the most personality of all (thanks to the right kind of mods!).

I have since remade Basil in new high-res textures and am currently enjoying playing him again, after almost 15 years away.

-AlienSlof

Basil and Leah in Suran

I had been looking around the Morrowind Discord for some help with modding Sadrith Mora back in July of 2020. When I noticed a guy had mentioned he had made a mega merge of a bunch of Sadrith Mora mods. We got to talking and I was ecstatic that he was willing to share it and help me out. I was blown away by how amazing it was!

I remember thinking it was the coolest overhaul I've ever seen, and that I was sure others would love to try it out as well. It's crazy to think that only after a few months passed, and 29 mods later, we got Beautiful Cities of Morrowind. I'm glad I was there to see it start as an idea, and become what I think is one of the most comprehensive Morrowind overhauls ever.

– *ShadowFyre*

Modded Sadrith Mora

The first thing I did in 2002 after telling Fargoth to go get lost was to run off into the hills. I happened upon a smuggler's den, sneaking in but got spotted and was immediately attacked. I died, I died a lot. Many threads of fate were cut... and I still haven't finished the MQ. Perhaps once OpenMW is 'finished'.

– *Psi29a*

When I first played Morrowind, the movement was so slow, and the combat felt so weird, but rather than one memory, it's more that over time, I came to slowly love everything about the game. The graphics, the atmosphere, the systems, even the combat. Everything. I removed my combat overhaul mods, and now I play it like it was intended to be played. I do like to run faster, but I generally play an experience where it is generally pretty similar to vanilla. Over time, I've come to love the game and everything about it.

– *StrawberryGirl22*

My first character was a kleptomaniac Breton. While I never really got far in any questlines, I did enjoy stealing stuff for the sake of it. Of course, my real love for the game came when I started messing around in the Construction Set and making my own mods.

My wholesome relationship with actually playing the game was cut short though as I was mostly only opening the game when I wanted to test a mod. Still, I have much love for the game.

– *Endoran*

When I was younger I really loved all things Elder Scrolls (especially the lore) and I had exhausted Skyrim or at least I felt like I had, so I bought Morrowind. I really liked the lore and the landscape and I wasnt bothered by the graphics: I used to play oldish games because I had a really bad pc and could only run older stuff. I didnt really play much Morrowind. What I would do was make new characters and play for a bit, then get bored, stop playing, and so on and so forth, never getting much further than after Caius sends you to Vivec for the first time.

After about 60ish hours of this on-and-off thing, I grew up a small bit and the characters I used to like playing (sneaky dudes) turned into heavy armor, two-handed dudes. With this mindset, I went into Morrowind and made my first proper long-term character. I don't remember his name but he was a heavy armor Orc using a long blade and with this Orc, I really felt like I understood the game and I got hooked. I was playing every day into the early morning (which is my personal favorite time to play Elder Scrolls games). I started messing with mods more and making my modlist more tailored to how I wanted to enjoy the game.

Basically, to make a long story short, I played this Orc, beat the main game, beat Solstheim and I loved every bit of it. But in a freak modding accident, I downloaded that one graphics overhaul mod that's kinda old but still rated highly and it messed up my whole game because I couldnt run it and some things were broken. I tried to uninstall the mod but in the end, I reinstalled the game and wasnt tech-savvy enough at the time to save my savefile. It's alright though because I've had the chance to play different characters and make more memories with different builds. I'll never forget my one true G who got me into the game.

Keep doing what you're doing, you're a hero to the Morrowind community

-Russtyyy

When I was younger, 17 - 18 or so, I really got into modding Morrowind. At the time my younger brother Jon, 6 years younger than me, was also playing Morrowind. Well, one day, I decided to play around with the construction editor and make my own custom cave system. It was super basic. It had a door with the entrance and exit spawn points set and a few Centurion Spiders placed just around a corner in a larger open area in the cave. That is literally about it though. No decoration, no sound effects, nothing. I thought this was cool enough just to let someone see what I was starting. So I asked him if he wanted to check out my mod. He agreed and sat down putting on my headphones. I told him "just go into that cave right there." He timidly looked back at me and said "Is there anything scary in there?" In the most "I don't trust you" voice I think I've ever heard. After collecting myself from dying of laughter I told him no. He was still super hesitant about entering the cave. After a minute we walk in, kills two things, walk out and he says that's cool and leaves.

- Old brother Cody

Morrowind was not only my introduction to open-world games back in 2005, but also introduced me to the concept of modding (and online gaming communities) when I found the separate construction set disc that came with the game! So obviously I created the Sword of Uber (999 damage or so) and dropped it in the middle of Balmora to kill some guards. But more importantly, I discovered an awesome modding community that's still going strong! Ten years later I even used my modding skills to create a small mod for a newer Bethesda game, to put myself into the game as a character, and record an in-game job application video. And yes, I did get that job!

- Povuholo

It was 2005 and I was 11 years old when a school friend donated me some random games. Morrowind was one of those, the base version without the DLCs though. It was the very first RPG I ever played, and oh boy, it was so hard to get into. That, and our old family PC was barely up to it. I don't remember the details, but I failed horribly during my first three hours. It was a terrible gameplay experience at first, however, there was something else about it that deeply resonated with me.

I guess it was the music and the calls of the silt strider in Seyda Neen. The world-building and weird soundscape of this game still mesmerizes me to this day, and I get all teary-eyed and hardcore nostalgic when hearing them after a long pause from playing Morrowind.

Well, as a kid, I then hooked into our ISDN-powered internet and copied all kinds of quest guides and cheat codes into MS Word and printed my own little manual. In retrospect, I really didn't play the game how it was intended, but after that, me and my friends couldn't stop obsessing and talking about it for at least 2 years on end. There was a lot the others didn't catch in their playthrough, some hidden secret, quest, or treasure, and I'm sure I still didn't get it all to this very day.

A lot later in my life, after having played Oblivion and Skyrim, my passion for Morrowind re-ignited and I did a 'serious' playthrough with mods. I discovered that this game was still very worthwhile and even shared my experience with it in the form of a nostalgia-ridden review on the German Gamestar website. I won 'review of the month' for that, which was very neat.

After delving deeper into the realm of modding, I now became one myself. And the 'modder's curse' hits hard indeed. I literally can't play any game anymore without thinking about its level design, world-building, and gameplay systems. Morrowind is no exception to that, yet it offers in my opinion the most freedom for customization, while still being somewhat easily accessible (under the hood). That, and its alien world and weird assets simply dont get old. Morrowind is so uniquely crafted, that I can't bear any other run-of-the-mill fantasy games for long anymore... It's like the Lord of the Rings, but for gaming. :D

- Neph/Nephtelas

Back in the mid-2000s, my friend gave me a set of data packs or "mods" to run with the game. Little did I know what I was in for... he had changed most of the game sound files to hilarious newly recorded sounds of his own doing.

Blunt weapons became "peanut butter jelly time," any bow with any arrow was now making shotgun sounds, and the ever-annoying cliff racers came at you with a custom "caCAW!"

I'd never before laughed so hard at a video game, and I haven't since.

This game gave us endless fun while we were playing, and I'm so glad it's still giving people unforgettable moments today.

- Anonymous

One of my early characters was a disgraced Imperial soldier, one Varius Vantius. Your basic wandering swordsman tale was planned, then I was going to dump the guy for a mage probably. But, then I decided to try two mods: Sabregirl's Werewolf Clans and TundroWalker's Lilacor. Changed the whole tone of the play-through, less edgy swordsman and more struggling guy with a fuzzy problem, a concrete goal (finding a cure), and an "imaginary" buddy providing commentary.

It really drove home to me how much mods can change the game and shape a character. It remains a very fond memory.

- Tizzo

I have so many memories of Morrowind from over the years. I was awed at the open world when I was a kid, at how much potential I saw when I first opened the CS and realized that the world could be changed. But it has been even more memorable to come back, all these years later, to a game that has never truly left me, and help people expand their worlds further. Every time I load up the game there are a dozen new mods I can play with, and it has been immensely gratifying to know that I made, or helped make, the tools to make them possible.

It's great to open the game and see new UI elements and know I made them. It's even better to camp out in the swamps near Seyda Neen with Ashfall, seeing all the passion that was poured into that project when Merlord was given the right tools. The explosion of new Lua mods, the new experiences I get to have some 20 years later, may be something of a meta Morrowind memory, but it is growing to be my favorite by far.

- NullCascade

DUNGEON DELVING

Art by Dominik Zdenkovic

Nerevar

Syz N

Monk

Tj K

FEATURED ART

DUNGEON DELVING

for the daring

Morrowind was the first videogame I ever played, at the age of six. I was playing it with my best friend/my later first girlfriend, and we were absolutely enchanted and clueless. That main theme, that intro, that freedom to just go wherever you want... It was truly magical. But at the same time, we had absolutely no idea what to do or how to play the game. We were doing that thing, where one is playing with the mouse, while the other is at the keyboard and it worked... acceptable, I guess.

If I had to pick one memory, it would be exploring the Urshilaku Burial Caverns. I don't know why, but that place to this day just puts me on edge. Especially as a child, the mummies, undead, and all-around vibe of the place terrified me for some reason.

It became like a punishment for us, for example playing tag and the loser has to go there while playing at night. Later on, it became more of a joke, but I'm not gonna lie, the place still gives me the creeps.

- Michael

This one time I was in a tomb and there was this bone lord, which summoned a bone walker. I felt confident in myself with gear and potions, but it drained me of almost all of my strength before I killed it. Stranded in this tomb, I was forced to drop all of my stuff and run back to Gnisis to cure myself. After I got to the temple in the town, I cured myself and brought several different restore attribute potions, still almost completely naked.

I made my way back to that tomb, got all of my stuff, and delved no further into that tomb. After walking around, I eventually encountered the naked Nord, saying he needed my help; of course, he had my sympathy and helped him get his stuff back.

- Noobman

One of my favorite memories of Morrowind happened just outside Gnisis. I was watching over the shoulder of my roommate (this was long before Twitch) as he was exploring a Velothi tower. He killed a few skeletons and rats, stealing what he could, and then opened a door to find...

a Daedroth!

This was the first time either of us had run into one, and it was terrifying! I can't tell you how many times he tried to kill this thing, reloading his game. He eventually retreated, to come back when he was stronger.

It was much later that we learned the daedroth in that tower was actually a passive mob -- unless attacked!

We named the Dunmer in the tower "Uncle Scary guy", and bribed him extensively to stay on his good side.

It is an amazing example of a completely unintended encounter, and one of many I had in Morrowind.

For the next two years, modding Morrowind was my primary hobby. I remember those times, and the modding community, fondly. Attached, is a blooper/WIP screenshot that I don't think I ever posted.

- Lingarn

When I first started playing, I had no idea what to do. I kept making new characters for one reason or another. I used to make hunters and just kill mudcrabs along the Bitter Coast, trying to hit them from as far away as possible. I would run out of arrows and money, so I would make a new character and start over!

I used to also massacre Gnisis, for whatever reason.

Years later, I got tired of not understanding Morrowind's scrolls. So, I sat down and learned the Daedric alphabet. I now read it as well as the Latin alphabet. A friend of mine didn't believe me, so he showed me a random book in Daedric. I was able to tell it was N'gasta! Kvata! Kvakis! Learning Daedric was one of my favorite experiences.

- Abahu AKA Claw-Dancer

Everyone has a lot of memories of their first characters, but one of the first things I remember was the feeling of extreme exploration in an alien world with constantly changing scenery (going from the Bitter Coast to Caldera, and then Gnisis and the Ashlands, and all the mushroom houses in Sadrith Mora). Playing a slow character without distant land made me feel like the Vvardenfell was really huge and the possibilities were endless.

I also remember the first time I went to explore a Dunmer stronghold only to be chased by a stronger Daedra and probably flee because I was still too weak. The next time I went into one of those I proceeded with a lot more caution.

Every dungeon could be a generic smuggler cave or a Daedra lair with a great artifact deep in it. The feeling of having become too strong after level 30-40, and the urge to start again with a new character!

Another great memory was creating the first mods combining different meshes together, changing textures, heads, armors... Thank you for making me remember all those nice moments ;)

- Black_a

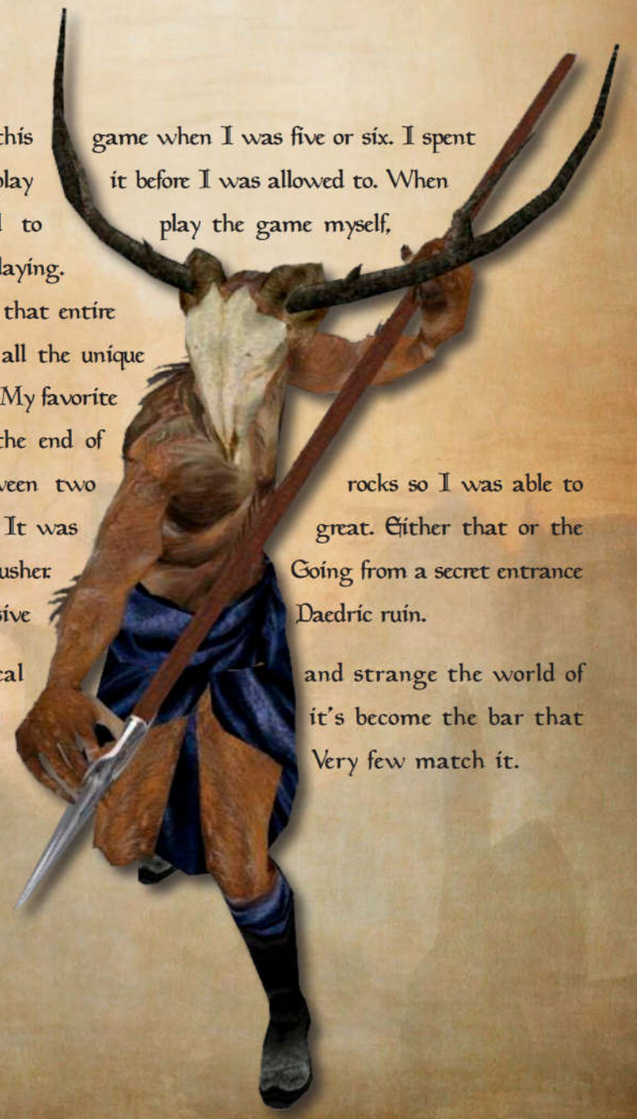
That first time looking for the puzzle box in Arkngthand, spending over an hour scouring every hallway several times over before realizing it was right next to the entrance all along. LOL.

Also, on my first playthrough, I got attacked by the Dark Brotherhood on my first sleep at level one and killed them with great ease somehow. I powered through the game with massively over-leveled gear.

- Leafdrink

I remember getting so lost the first time I played that I ended up at a Dunmer stronghold and savescummed my whole way through it before realizing the mages guild wanted me somewhere else.

- Abiotic



My dad introduced me to this game when I was five or six. I spent years watching him play it before I was allowed to. When I was finally allowed to play the game myself, I spent 400+ hours in one summer playing. I think my favorite memory is just that entire summer. I played everything, I got all the unique items, beat all the DLCs, everything. My favorite little bit was fighting Hircine at the end of Bloodmoon. He got stuck in between two rocks so I was able to win a fight I had no right to win. It was great. Either that or the dungeon where you retrieve Skull Crusher. Going from a secret entrance to a simple dungeon, to a massive Daedric ruin.

It just drove home how magical and strange the world of Morrowind is. It's so unique that it's become the bar that I hold all other games to since. Very few match it.

- Lewkat

Super random, but I remember vividly something probably no one else did, but there is this smuggler cave called Mannammu, near Pelagiad. I remember loving the last room so much for its vibe, it had hammocks, a cool tent roof thing, and barrels and carpets and torches. I loved it so much in fact, that I made it my permanent base when I first played the game after I offed the residents. I more recently modded in Morrowind and recovered my old saves. So now I have some screenshots made pretty with mods and it just makes me feel all warm inside, even if it's not as... scuffed looking as it was when I first played the game, it's still giving me nostalgia.

I used to organize my storage based on potions, scrolls, and everything I thought I could use, and also, every single book I saw in-game, I grabbed and read and then put them on the book piles. So much useless elder scrolls lore in my brain, but now it's there, and I know I have some books multiple times because I loved them so much. I remember making up lore/roleplay reasons for my character hiding out there, and I put lanterns along the whole cave for light, and I slept in one hammock and collected clothes on the other.

Mannammu was super out of the way and a pain to get to, but I just felt such a connection with it really being "mine," I didn't want to move into the Redoran house that I had even helped make, so I used those blinding speed boots every time I got there. I remember every few times I'd come back to it a bloody rat had spawned halfway through which was fun to walk into while blind and at sky-high speed. Worth it.

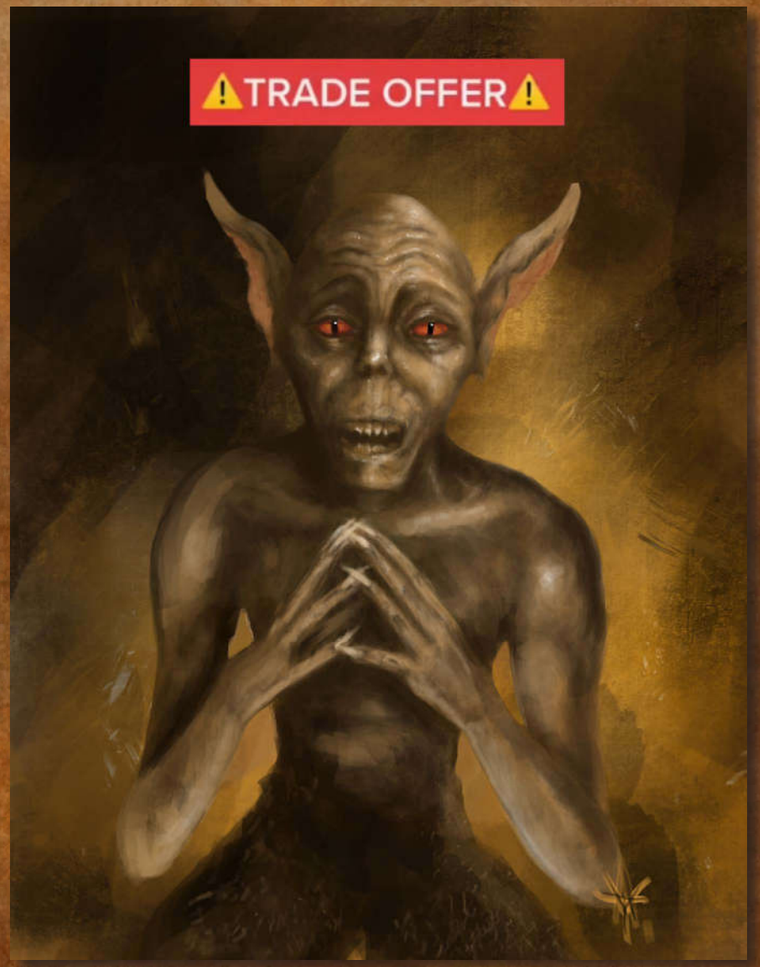
"Mannammu"

Morrowind is special to me, it's my favorite Elder Scrolls game, and is also exactly my age. It's celebrating twenty years alongside me which makes me kinda sentimental. :') I played it when I was a little girl, and I still sometimes open it up to walk around or start another run once every few years; did so last year, for instance, and I know I will be doing it again at some point. It's just really special to me and I wish it got more recognition and more love. The characters and story and Vvardenfell still live in my heart and I can quote Dagoth Ur in my sleep. <3

– Para

ENDLESS EXPLOITS

Art by Ilona Iske



The Creeper

Omnizombi

ENDLESS EXPLOITS

because why not?

Collecting all the moon sugar and skooma I could find. The stuff in the Census and Excise warehouse, the cave northeast of Seyda Neen, the stuff found in bandit caves all around, etc...

then consuming it all in one go,

running and jumping across half the map in a single leap.

- Anonymous

When I started playing the game was much too complicated for a young me, so I always would turn god mode on in the console. Everything was fine, I was an immortal god walking around, killing enemies, exploring caves, trying to solve some quests until one day I was fighting my way through some dungeons and I suddenly died. Just like that, there wasn't even an indication that my health was dropping, with god mode on I went from full hp to zero.

Young me was shocked and afraid beyond reason, what sort of trickery is this that these enemies are so powerful that I die even with god mode!

After I reloaded the game I noticed I actually had almost no hp, so after turning the god mode on and drinking some potions I went in again, thinking it was a bug.

And I died again!

A few tries later I realized that certain types of enemies can kill me even with god mode on, so I started drinking potions and playing for real.

And I remember the real fear I felt of these super-powerful creatures, even more, powerful than the cheats I was using. From that point forward I was always on edge when I entered dungeons, especially the dark ones as I never knew when I might die.

Of course, a few years later the mystery was solved and I figured out the enemies had a reflect spell, and god mode doesn't stop that.

- Dominik Zdenkovic

My favorite experience was figuring out that I can put a summon bound weapon for 29-second enchantment on almost any article of clothing, and with a minimal amount skill level in Enchant. It costs 1 point to cast, but the really great part is that by the time the effect runs out, the item in question will have regenerated the 1 point it took to cast the effect, meaning that even with the smallest souls you have unlimited access to a Daedric weapon. It's become such a staple strategy for me, that I have to actively force myself not to make my every character use it.

Another memorable moment was from my playthrough where I did both Telvanni and Mages Guild questline. My intention was that the character was primarily loyal to Telvanni and trying to control/exploit the mages guild, and the best part was Ranis's storyline. In most of her quests, you can secretly take sides against her and lie to her to still get the rewards, finally culminating with her asking you to out a Telvanni spy. I proceeded to find the spy without issue, gave him a wink, then accused Ranis of being said traitor, and the gigabrain Trebonious, despite acknowledging moments before that I happen to be a member of the Great House Telvanni, believed me. Some might think it's a flaw; I think Trebonius is indeed stupid enough to believe this. If anything, I think Tiram was trying too hard

– *Anonymous*

The first time I ever saw Morrowind was when I was in trade school. I hadn't had much exposure to video games before then, and the biggest RPGs that I'd played were Chrono Trigger and Final Fantasy 6. One day, one of my dorm mates hooked his Xbox up to the T.V. in the lounge and starts playing Morrowind. Everything about it completely blew me away. There was so much to do, so much freedom...it was a completely different kind of game, more like the D&D I'd played in school than any videogames I knew. I'd hang out and watch him play whenever he had it in, learning all these tricks like spamming jump on stairs to build acrobatics or soul trapping effects to yourself for permanent boosts. I knew right from the start that I just had to get this game for myself.

– *KefkeWren*

Drinking boatloads of Sujamma and mazte right before storming the Museum of Artifacts with my brother whooping and hollering behind me to steal Stendarr's Hammer and bring it back to our (stolen) house as a trophy.

- Anonymous

When I learned about the spellcrafting exploit that lets you create permanent spell effects. I created an army of undead that I thought was unstoppable. Turns out that even 100 skeletons cannot kill everything.

- Anonymous

There was an exploit on Xbox (or all versions probably) where you could make temporary stat buffs with spells permanent. I used it to increase my speed until it got so high that I started clipping through walls. It was completely unplayable. I had to start over.

- Anonymous

Freeing slaves, then casting chameleon, then Frenzy Humanoid on the slaves so they kill their master.

- Anonymous

Looking for that dang Dwemer cube without quest markers while barely being able to comprehend English.

Also, cheating up Acrobatics so high that I zipped past Vvardenfell straight into the infinite waters beyond the map. Good times, good times.

-Anonymous

At the time Solstheim seemed like a fever dream. I remember getting those three followers and having them follow me back to the mainland. I would use them to cheese the game and kill enemies well past my league (which was basically any NPC with more than basic armor), got myself some Daedric at like level 2 or 3 from the Dren plantation – you'd be surprised how efficient those 3 NPCs are at draining fatigue! When you're a kid and can't play that well, Morrowind sure lets you do a load of crazy creative things to compensate. So I got much farther in the game than I had any right to.

- Vukov_Intrigued

Bting 12 years old and casually abusing ring enchants to spam shoot frost bolts, because it had no cooldown compared to spellcast. Remembering the first time playing Morrowind was like this: No English knowledge, total random exploring, completing quests accidentally without any idea about lore.

The main quest was to find out all cheaty game mechanics, get full shiny 'Constant Effect' enchanted gear to have more active effect icons showing, and make totally useless but cool-looking custom spells.

So the main things I remember from Morrowind:

Trying to open Vivec's annoying 100pts locked door, and as revenge, try to kill him in various ways.

Entering Heart Chamber without Keening or Sunder, kill Dagoth Ur with console command over and over, hoping I can loot his gear.

- Anonymous

I remember when I first played the game from start to finish and decided to play a mage, Jee-Ra, my Argonian "Lizard Wizard," as I called him. I remember when I learned how to do the Intelligence exploit, and decided to experiment and make some wild potions. I wound up making a potion that would fortify Athletics to an insane degree, somewhere around 20k, and I could at that point cross the entire map in about 10 minutes at walking speed. Running, probably around 5. The animation was so fast it was basically just two frames rapidly shifting, and the music had no idea what to do because I was going in and out of aggro range for enemies so fast.

That was the moment that sold me, that this game was ripe for me to absolutely break it however I please. And that's a rarity in games, now more than ever. I love Morrowind.

- 25-year-old IT specialist from Vermont

EPIC MOMENTS

Art by Dominik Zdenkovic

Saint Jiub the Eradicator

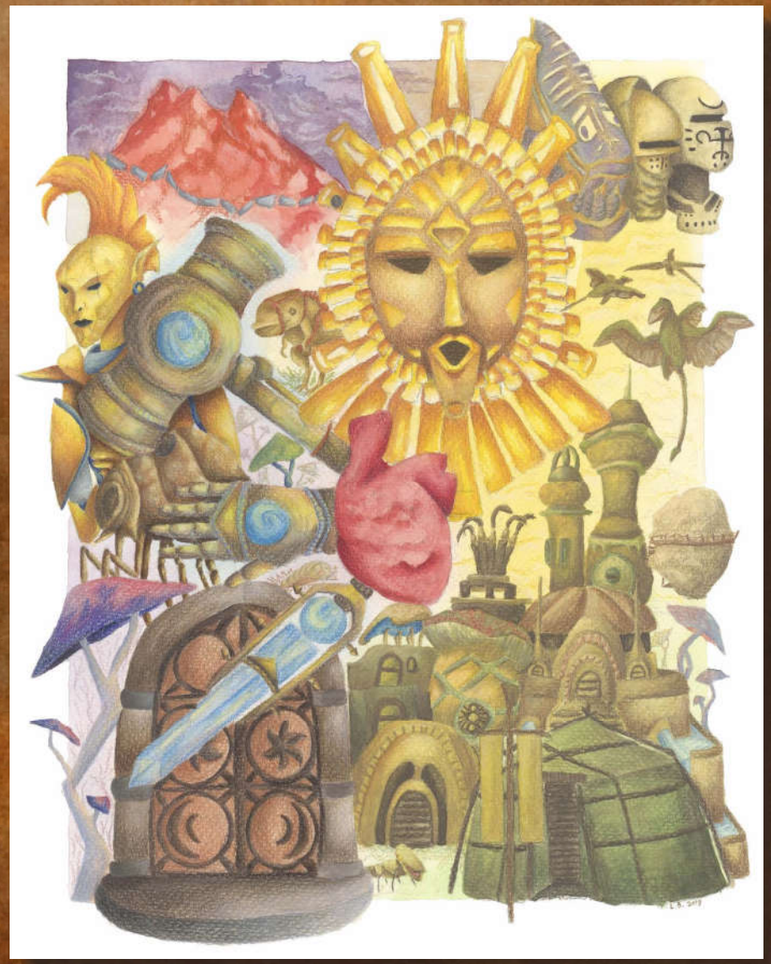
Light Gamez

St. Jiub Defeats the Cliffracers

Anemone

M

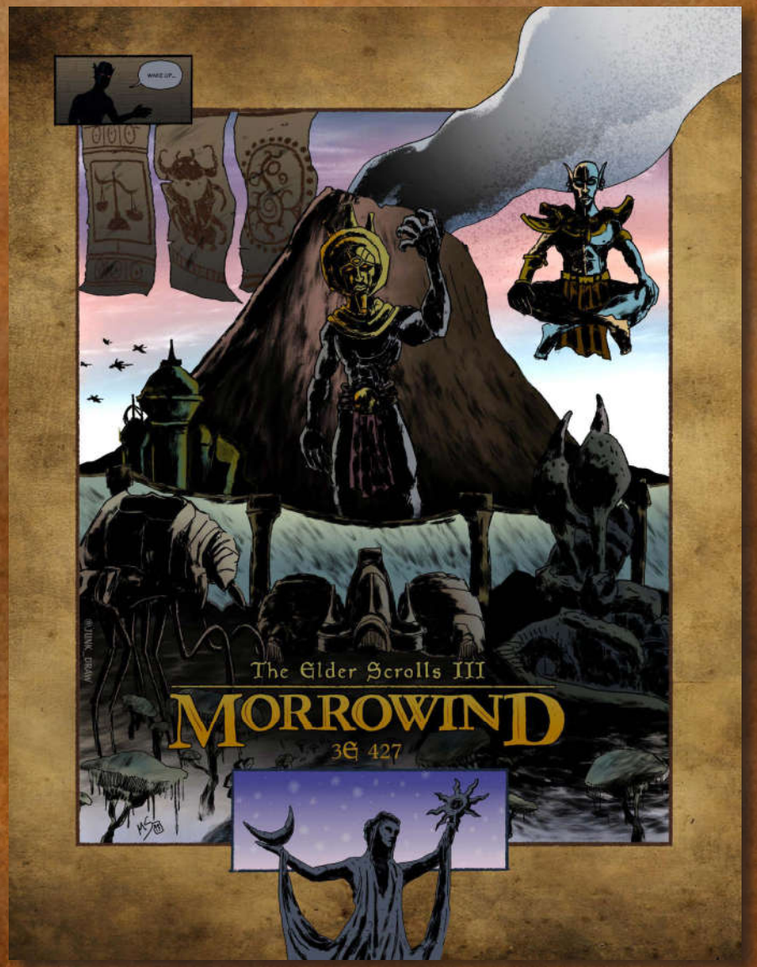
Sugared Tea



Lucyhues

Vivec

Omnizombi



Junk Draw

EPIC MOMENTS
of adventure & glory

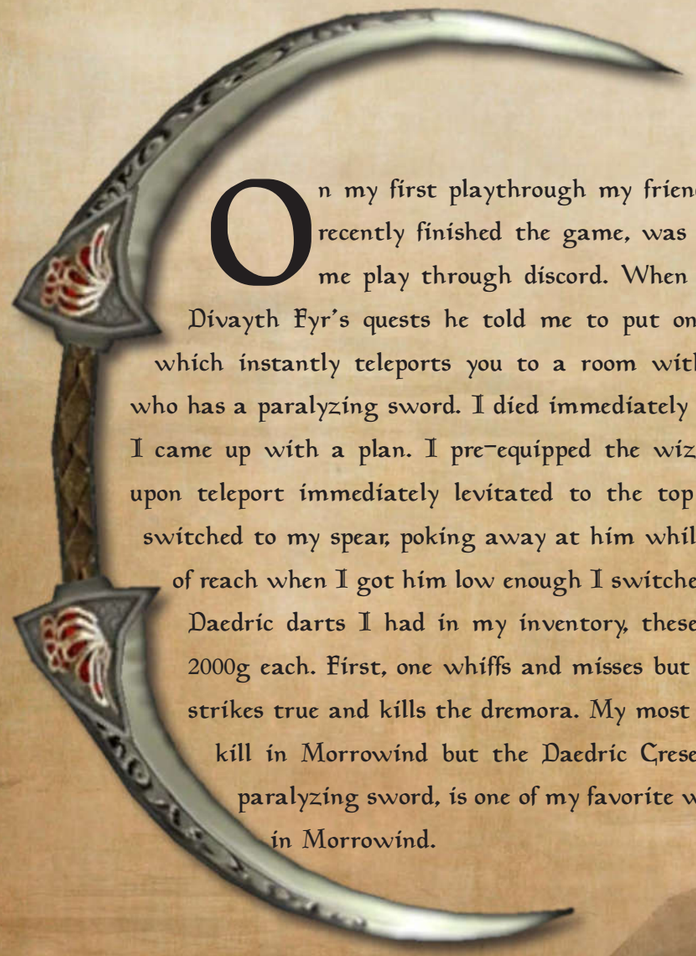
Two memories of discovery triumph above the others, and they're both related to books. I was always interested in the books and collected them even before I found bookkeeping mods; I even made a Scholar class dedicated to hunting down books.

As I read them, sometimes I found a place that existed in the game. Having read Hanin's Wake, accidentally finding Balansour and realizing that someone tried to imitate the Wake, I chuckled. Later on, I found Ibar-dad and it all came together; this was Hanin's tomb! This was the Wake! These were the daggers that held his enemies!

– kigurumibiblestudies

I remember climbing a hill after the main quest was over. I just stood there and looked at the game (which looked great to my mind raised on low-end games). As I kept on looking, the camera switched to third person rotation at just about the same time as Nerevar Rising swelled, showing my character in all his majesty, in painstakingly pieced armor and clothes, just standing there and looking majestic amidst the beautiful landscape and heart-tugging music. The single most emotional moment for me in any game. It's been almost ten years since, and it still sticks with me.

– Anonymous



On my first playthrough my friend, who recently finished the game, was watching me play through discord. When it came to Divayth Fyr's quests he told me to put on the amulet which instantly teleports you to a room with a dremora who has a paralyzing sword. I died immediately but on reload I came up with a plan. I pre-equipped the wizard staff and upon teleport immediately levitated to the top of the room switched to my spear, poking away at him while staying out of reach when I got him low enough I switched to the two Daedric darts I had in my inventory, these darts cost 2000g each. First, one whiffs and misses but the second strikes true and kills the dremora. My most expensive kill in Morrowind but the Daedric Cresent, his paralyzing sword, is one of my favorite weapons in Morrowind.

Three happy Telvanni memories:

1) After being awestruck by the Telvanni mushroom towers for so long, finding out I get to have MY OWN!!!???

2) Magic in a game like Morrowind feels really god-like, being able to fly and teleport and everything. I loved the line in Tel Fyr where Delte casually goes "You CAN levitate, can't you? ...I'm afraid we aren't set up to accommodate barbarians or peasants."

It was a fun moment.

3) My second Telvanni playthrough was as a magically gifted Argonian whose mission was to rise through the ranks and reform the House. After becoming Archmagister, he joined the Mage Guild, and the faction system made all of house Telvanni appropriately resent him.

– Anonymous

Getting stuck outside the woods in Seyda Neen, I was very early on in the story and just received the first stage of the vampirism disease, so I used one of the intervention scrolls since I read that It would take me to a major city where I can cure my vampire disease.

I got transported to Vivec with little to no knowledge about the game and it was a breathtaking experience getting randomly put in there since it was such a unique and grandiose town and a very different experience from Seyda Neen, and I ended up getting caught up in the Murder Mystery questline, It was one of the few times a game really felt like an adventure.

- Anonymous

The absolute emotional whiplash of not only finding Sotha Sil dead in the tribunal expansion but being betrayed by Almalexia.

- Jason Greenwald

The first time I played I couldn't get past the first cave of smugglers, so I stopped playing it. The second, I got to Vivec, where I got lost and left the game again. The third time, however, I decided I was gonna finish it.

I made a Breton (my favorite race) and I was gonna use S P E A R S. As I still didn't know much about the game, I decided to join the Imperial Legion Let me tell you when I got to Gnisis I felt... I really felt like a newcomer, like a rookie getting to a new town, on a new continent, with nothing more than my newly regained liberty and a low-quality iron spear. I actually felt like I have been given a second chance in a life I didn't even have. But I was ready to confront anything and so I rose through the ranks and, eventually, through many trials and challenges, I killed Dagoth Ur.

This game is an experience, a slow one, mind you, but because the story demands it. You are the Nerevarine, I have no doubt about it, but you are still a nobody, a rookie in a new town, in a new continent, and if you don't show your worth, nobody is gonna help you.

This story structure makes it that, when you step out of the Red Mountain and you see the clear skies, it doesn't matter if nobody ever believes you. The prize is not recognition, is self-assurance.

YOU are the Nerevarine.

- Tula

I'm sure lots of people felt somewhat similarly so I'll try to keep it short. Disclaimer I am autistic so this may seem strange to some people. I don't think I'll ever forget the first time I progressed far enough to speak with Vivec. I had played Morrowind before but never made it far enough in the main quest as a kid to meet Vivec.

Before Skyrim came out I decided I had to at least play through the main quest and factions of Morrowind. At this time I was already a huge TES lore nerd so I knew the story pretty well. Doing it yourself though was an entirely different experience in my opinion.

Not to be super sentimental, but I was actually crying when I met Vivec. Not from sadness; I guess maybe out of awe that I had actually managed to get this far in what had seemed like an impossibly hard game as a kid. I still get a feeling like "this is a big deal" at that stage of the main quest. I was sort of obsessed with out-of-game Apocrypha and especially MK's works; so Vivec was a character I was very interested in

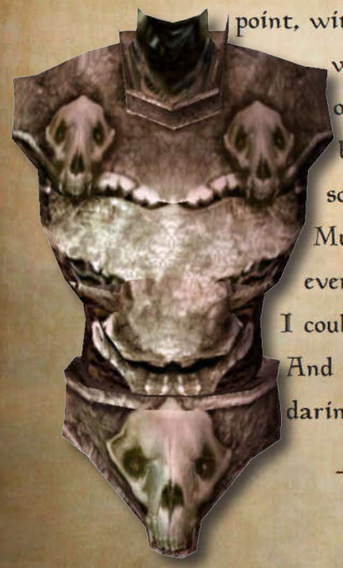
Vivec's dialogue is still some of my favorite video game writing. To my teenage brain, it almost felt real. Not the world of TES, but specifically how Vivec talks about the God Place and other concepts. In hindsight knowing how much was inspired by Hinduism and other religious practices makes some sense. Overall I thank Morrowind for starting my interest in studying actual religions in the real world. Now I am sad that I feel pessimistic about the future of TES.

Much later, I accidentally, again, found Anudnabia, the Daedric ruin that holds the Skullcrusher. My almighty lockpicking didn't need keys, so I accessed Hilbongard's Forge without any missions. As far as I knew, this was a random tomb with a few Daedra.

I claimed the Skullcrusher and while I picked up the wondrous treasures inside, I remembered. I knew the name Hilbongard, but from where? I Recalled back home and skimmed through the books until I found Hanin's Wake again. Hilbongard, the legendary smith from Anudnabia, who visited... Assurnabitashpi, the Daedric ruin close to the Urshilaku camp. The same ruin that was close to Ibar-dad. Of course.

The 36 lessons of Vivec are much denser in references, but the connection between literature and "real life", the links that I could have gone several playthroughs without noticing... That was when I started treating Morrowind with respect.

-Anonymous



My first real playthrough of Morrowind was on a paladin-type Dunmer named Tedryn, who I've also come to remember as the purple guy on account of his purple extravagant robe. He was still low-level at this point, with just steel armor if I recall correctly. I had joined the Temple, was doing the Seven Pilgrimages, and had just donated a potion of levitation to the Shrine of Daring. Armed with the shrine's blessing of long-lasting and fast levitation, I decided to run south of Vivec and explore the sea beyond, where I discovered Mudan Grotto. After a long and very cheesy battle, in which I used every potion I had or could find and every cheesy levitation tactic I could imagine, I emerged victorious with the Dragonbone Cuirass. And so I paid thanks to Vivec and always remember the grace of his daring, for fortune favors the bold.

– Discontinuous Qualia

When I entered the Dunmer Stronghold ruins for the first time, I felt a real sense of being in a world that had a proper history. Morrowind happened before me, and it will happen long after me.

– Anonymous

The first time I discovered a Dremora trap in a Daedric shrine is still the most memorable fight I've ever had. Low level and having barely defeated the orcs in the shrine, I picked up some loot and quickly exploded. Through heavy trial and error, I figured out that an enemy (who I thought was Malacath himself since it was his shrine and I was new) spawned behind me when I picked up the pearl. The issue is that they knocked me down and killed me in one sword hit, and I was playing a melee character with mostly short-range magic. So began a long fight where I used everything at my disposal to take down a seemingly impossible opponent. I had just learned Levitate and this was my first time using it in combat, so I felt like a true magician flying up onto shrine structures; I used all my scrolls, summoned skeletons, and drank potions as I wore the dremora down. When their health was low enough I distracted them with a bonelord, giving me enough time to leap off the shrine and kill them with my weapon. It was an ultimately meaningless encounter but it made me feel like a badass that I had actually pulled it off and was when I realized what made the game special. Haven't looked back since!

– Anonymous

Started off by punching rats with low hand-to-hand.

By the end of the Main Quest,

I was punching Dagoth Ur.

- Tsinels

It was when I was searching for the Dark Brotherhood. I put together some pieces... felt like a detective, to be honest. And when I finally got there, I had huge trouble actually going anywhere in Mournhold. But when I finally did... I played in some performance and then got attacked by the DB. So then I thought "That's enough", and started searching for the Dark Brotherhood.

I eventually found them! Went the wrong way and had to kill a bunch of ghost people, but I did find the base. When I entered the Dark Brotherhood base. I had a hand-to-hand build, and now the best part - I saw a dozen DB assassins rushing towards me. All in a big creepy cave. I knew I was gonna die, but I thought that maybe if I pull out my backup spear. I ended up slaying each and every single one of the Dark Brotherhood assassins without any trouble, and I felt like such a legend.

The road there to the base, the base itself. It was an amazing experience. I'd consider it one of the best hunts for... anything in Morrowind. In my first few playthroughs, I had very low Personality, so I couldn't even find them at all... But the build that I was weakest on...

I finally found Mournhold...

City of Light...

City of Magic.

- Secret Sauce

Me and my two best friends used to play a LOT of Morrowind in primary(grade) school. One day they were telling me a story about using the Scrolls of Icarian Flight, one of our favorite past times.

They told me an apocryphal story of flying through clouds of smoke and landing in a tiny puddle surrounded by ash and lava. Being spooked by the atmosphere, they regaled me with the story of a terrifying samurai coming out of the fog, before challenging them to a duel to the death. Upon dying, they raced back to where they had been but the samurai had vanished like a ghost.

I of course fully treated this as a 'my dad works at Nintendo and told me mew is under the truck' sorta tale. Until, years later, I was wandering around the hills above Balmora, and lo and behold the exact same samurai figure they had told me tales of wandered out of the fog. They had run into Umbra, and he had promptly wrecked them. I was absolutely FIZZING with excitement. It was like finding the holy grail. A living myth in the flesh. This was back before I really used, or even knew about, wiki's for games.

I ran downstairs, calling their house on my home phone. When I died fighting it, I didn't even care. When I ran back to where he was and he was gone? It was like it confirmed his myth as a benevolent and honorable ghost in the machine.

When I finally managed to kill umbra in a playthrough over a decade later, it was bittersweet. More of an interestingly placed wandering tough enemy than the living and breathing myth I remembered.

- Anonymous

Morrowind was the very first open-world game I ever played. The very idea of an open-world game was an entirely new concept to me, I had never experienced a game that didn't have some form of invisible wall or boundary to keep the player contained within a tiny playable space, so being able to go where I want, explore whatever I desired, to form my own adventures...well, that was a novel and intoxicating idea indeed.

So when I arrived in Seyda Neen and got my marching orders to go to Balmora, I went in, what I thought at the time was, the exact opposite direction, taking the road to Hla Oad and getting absolutely lost in this strange alien world. I wandered through bogs, got into fights with strange worm-like creatures, and dodged a falling wizard. But it wasn't until I reached Hla Oad, well into the nighttime hours, and stood upon that shore looking up at an alien sky that I became fully immersed in the world of Morrowind. Poking through the clouds were the twin moons of Masser and Secunda, though I did not yet know them by those names, looming amongst twinkling foreign constellations, and it was at that moment, gazing upon an unfamiliar sky, that I truly fell in love with the world of Morrowind.

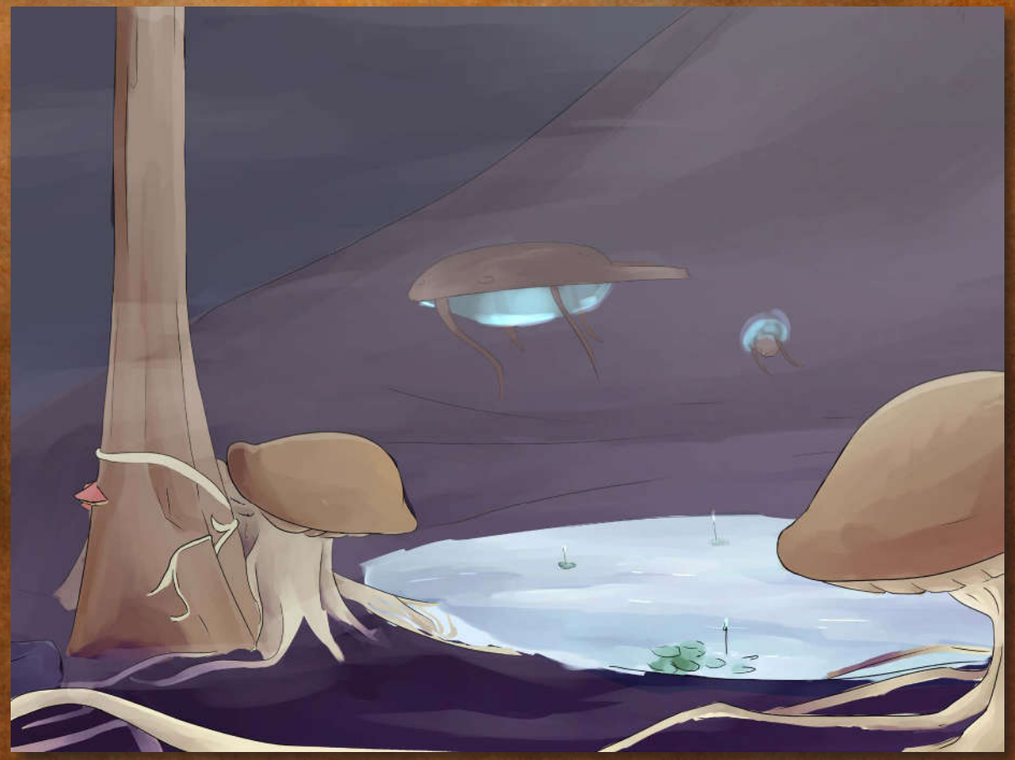
Twenty years later, Morrowind has become a place I call home, a world I return to again and again, and while that once alien-strangeness has become a familiar and welcoming sight, I'll never forget that first night stargazing on a foreign shore.

- DarkElfGuy

EXPLORATION

Art by Dominik Zdenkovic

Arokun



Tj K

Idresa Arenim

David Duffy

Why Walk When You Can Ride

Anemone

EXPLORATION
of a new world

I started playing Morrowind around 2018, moved by the curiosity to see how it was to play the first Elder Scrolls in 3D after playing for dozens of hours on Skyrim and then Oblivion. I never expected to find what I've found. I loved the music more than in Skyrim and even Oblivion, I loved the atmosphere with its alien-like creatures and enemies, I loved that the npcs were less anthropomorphic, and had more distinctions than in Oblivion and Skyrim. When I realized that I can't use shoes and some helmets because I was using a Khajiit I was amazed, because it felt unique, even if it is a practical limitation. I loved the contemplative aspect of Morrowind and its architecture.

Since in my first playthrough I didn't distribute points correctly, my character was slow as an iceberg, but that let me contemplate the whole unique world and its cities and villages.

I love how you can actually see how Morrowind came before (or at least its production came before) than the production of TLotR movies. I love them too, but I feel subsequent games take too much of the trilogy feeling more like classical, kind of less inspired, medieval fantasy worlds. This doesn't happen in Morrowind, and it feels so special to me. But the thing that I love the most is, without a doubt, the fact that there is no minimap with an arrow that indicates where you need to go. The way to get to places and complete quests is by understanding the indications the npcs told to you and being aware of your surroundings, which is a design sensibility I feel is lost in modern RPGs.

I understand it's because it's a risky decision and many players would get lost, but it can make even the most boring tasks (go and get me 5 MacGuffins) an interesting quest.

Like the time when I needed to collect some mushrooms for the Mages Guild and to find them I needed to understand the descriptions an NPC told me. It feels so refreshing to get treated like an intelligent human being simply by virtue of using surrounding awareness as a design choice.

I remember the first time I needed to find the Dwemer box, and I got lost as soon as I left Balmora, I misread an instruction and surpassed the Imperial Fortress and followed the route heads toward the north for about 30 minutes, until I realized that maybe I got lost and I had no clue where I was, and to me, that's part of the charm of Morrowind. <3

– PantuflasRojas

First of all, I'm not good at English but I want to share my beautiful memories with this fantastic game. I had been playing Morrowind before but stopped after a while. That was when I was young and my PC wasn't as good as what I'm having now, I was thinking it was boring and hard to play, so I quit. I started Oblivion as my first Elder Scrolls game, the game was great, it was fun and all of a sudden, my PC got an issue and my save was lost. After I got my computer fixed, I decided to try something new, maybe Skyrim because it has high ratings but I think I should give Morrowind another try. Installing OpenMW and Tamriel Rebuilt and I was ready to go.

After the first cutscene, seeing Jiub almost brought me to tears, the nostalgia was there and it hit me like a truck. The world was so much more beautiful than I remembered in my youth (maybe OpenMW really did the job!). The experience was so much different. I created my character, they had me send the packet to Caius. Like most of the players who have experienced this game, the first quest I did was returning the ring to Fargoth, the Bosmer, the first NPC I faced besides those Imperial guards. At Seyda Neen, I fought my first enemy, the mudcrab. It did a great job bringing my HP to half but I managed to stab it dead.

After I got to Balmora, Caius just told me to go away. I was like, "What???" I even wondered if that was the main quest, lol :) I joined Thieves Guild, Fighter Guild, and Mages Guild, and progressed so much that I had to come online to track the main quest.

Came back to Caius and started to progress it to the point that he assumed me as the Nerevarine. I was so damn excited to see what the Ashlanders look like. Oh and the ash storm, when I first got to Ald'ruhn, you wouldn't know how excited to see people, even myself, covering our faces with their hands in the direction of the storm. That was so cool, to be honest.

The thing was that those Ashlanders didn't think I was the Nerevarine so they gave me the tests and trials many have gone through. I met Divayth Fyr and the last living dwarf, Yagrum Bagarn, that was weird and mysterious but really memorable... Eventually, I made my way to the fourth trial and I obtained the Moon-and-Star. The tribe now recognizes me as the Nerevarine. For the upcoming sixth and seven trials, I am told to UNITE all four tribes as NEREVARINE and three houses as HORTATOR. It was then that I knew that Nerevar Rising (Jeremy Soule's soundtrack) is just great.

Last but not least, the fast travel system is much better than in Skyrim and Oblivion as you have to learn the way around, ask for directions and remember the itineraries. I managed to remember most of them. That was when I felt it was much more realistic than in other Elder Scrolls games, it was like learning the way, the environment, and the people when you came to a new place. And the way you experience it is much less generic than the other RPG where the games mostly fill your inventory with everything you need and the world revolves around you. In Morrowind, you were nobody from the start, no one gives a damn about you. You do people's errands to advance but also need to have your skills higher. That makes me feel like I even need to become a master at that craft just like in real life.

I may have missed many many more good things about this game. There are so many things to tell about but my English forbids me to advance further. Well, my time is short so I'm gonna Jump or Levitate away. I hope one day I get to see other Morrowind enthusiasts.

-Anonymous

My greatest memory in Morrowind is waking up to the thumping sound of the Scrib after a night of sleeping in the wilds. I remember that when I first started playing the game if something didn't want to kill me, then it wanted to roast me. Not the Scrib. He just sits there minding his own business, thumping away. The fact that this repeatedly kept happening makes me think that I'm a friend to all Scribkind, and to this day I've never harmed a single one.

- Sepraf

I came to Morrowind after playing Skyrim and the thing that that I remember most distinctly is entering the cities for the first time, compared to Skyrim these cities felt much more memorable and unique, also much larger though that's probably, at least in part because of the fog distance.

The other thing I adored was having 8 separate armor slots and being able to wear clothes, robes, and armor at the same time, it made kiting yourself out so much more satisfying.

- Ruffin Vangarr

I'm making my way through Sadrith Mora for the first time for a quest, slowly exploring the town before deciding to climb my way up a building to get a better view when suddenly it all clicks. Both alien and beautiful views from above, the sense of wonder and exploration from wandering through a town for the first time not knowing what is there on the other side, and my favorite track, Road Most Traveled, blasting through my speakers. For a full minute there I was, just completely entranced in a way that no other game was able to do. All the worries of the real world were gone, I was fully immersed in the game and I loved every moment of it. It was from that moment I knew this would be my favorite game, and a few years later here I am still playing through it. Never had a game hit me quite like that one moment.

- Anonymous

About 20 years ago, fresh off the boat, I completely spaced out and didn't realize I had orders to follow (you know, the MAIN quest); so I set off on my own grand quest to walk around the island and somehow made it to Vivec. Big city blues hit me hard, I was totally broke, the people weren't very welcoming ("we're watching you, scum" on every corner), and I had no clue what to do with myself since I kinda forgot about the whole prophecy dream thing. Once I realized that making a buck in Vivec wasn't easy for a rag-wearing beggar, I left the place and ventured into the wilderness to seek my fortune -- while vowing that one day I'll have my revenge on Vivec city.

PS. I eventually ran into Caius Cosades in Balmora while casually "cleaning" houses (real-life months after I started playing).

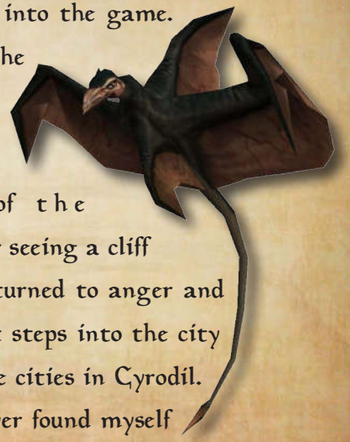
- UltaanGames

I played the game for maybe 150 hours before I found out that there were dungeons hidden behind the storage rooms in Vivec. I had always skipped over the storage rooms because I had just assumed they were decorative/for immersion purposes only. There aren't any quests connected to these rooms (except the Morag Tong one), so the only way you could find them, as far as I know, is to just stumble upon them yourself.

I've never played another game that rewards exploration like that!

- Anonymous

I only got into the lore of Morrowind a few years ago but with the outdated graphics and the rng combat, I could never properly get into the game. But with Morroblivion I was finally able to explore the legendary land of the Dunmer.



My first reaction was one of amazement and excitement. It was so alien compared to Cyrodil, it reminded me more of the Shivering Iles than Nirn. (That's not a bad thing.) I remember seeing a cliff racer for the first time and being awed by it.(My awe slowly turned to anger and disgust at them constantly attacking me!) I remember my first steps into the city of Vivec and being amazed by just how different it was from the cities in Cyrodil. I couldn't help but fall in love with Morrowind as a place. I never found myself getting bored with just exploring like in Skyrim. I thank Bethesda for creating such an interesting world, and team Daggerfall for giving it new life.

– *Thunderstudent*

I remember using the upstairs of the Balmora bookstore as a house, and I had no idea where anything was, I had to use the custom map markers to find the mages guild and fighters guild.

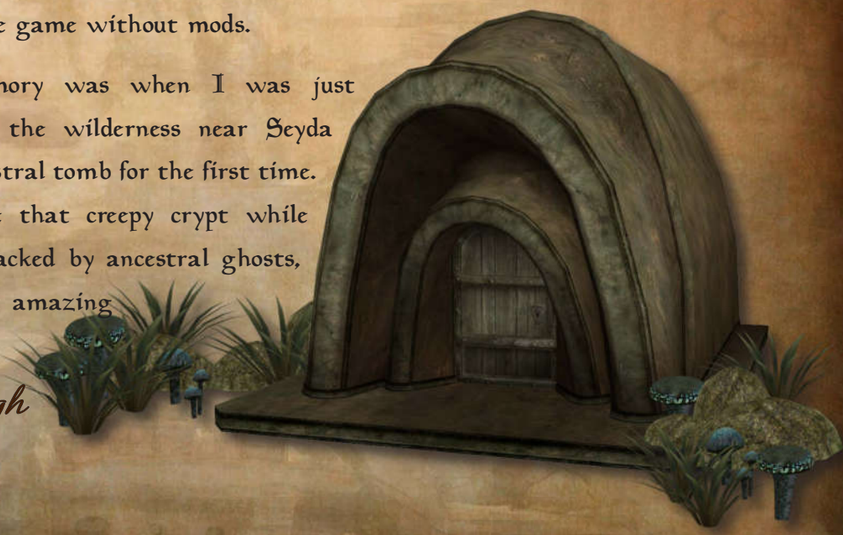
– *ToastyFries114*

The most memorable part for me was during my first playthrough when I first left the Census and Excise Office in Seyda Neen and got a glimpse of the wonderful, open world that lay before me. The thing which made me wow was the great insectoid Silt Strider standing next to me, bellowing, and most of its giant arms gently in the water. I remember that when I saw it at first, I thought it was an enemy and tried attacking it.

Another memorable thing was when I first looked at the twin moons Masser and Secunda in the night sky, and I was just awe-struck – it was so beautiful even in the base game without mods.

Another great memory was when I was just roaming and exploring the wilderness near Seyda Neen and found the ancestral tomb for the first time. Making my way inside that creepy crypt while getting freaked and attacked by ancestral ghosts, I finally found the most amazing item – Mentor's ring.

– *Harshdeep Singh*



My best memory from Morrowind was making my way to the Urshilaku Camp for the first time. It felt like it was miles removed from civilization, and once I eventually arrived I was super spooked about potentially offending Ashlander customs. Truly felt like an alien world, fully apart from the Imperial settlements I was used to. In my defense, I had played Oblivion first!

- Legoless

It's been well over a decade since this all happened, so hopefully my memory serves me okay but boy did I have a funny experience playing Morrowind for the first time.

I'll try to keep it as short as possible, but after I got off the boat in Seyda Neen, I get the main quest to deliver a letter to good old Caius Cosades. After exploring and doing some side stuff, I decide to head to Balmora where he is so I go to the silt strider. I think I tried and failed to persuade the person running it so she insulted me and wouldn't take me to Balmora. I was like fine, I'll walk there! I have an awful sense of direction so it was no real surprise that I got lost. I tried my damnedest but I just couldn't find Balmora. Ten or so hours go by and I'm just doing side quests and exploring and I randomly decide to clean out my inventory, dropping the letter for Caius. I still vividly remember the random house in the middle of nowhere I dropped it. Five or 10 more hours go by doing side stuff before I finally find Balmora and Caius! But I had no letter to give him and I couldn't quite remember where I dropped it at this point. So another few hours or so go by looking, maybe 5 or 6 I'd guess before I finally find it and can start the main quest. I'm a good 25 or 30 hours into the game, pretty high-leveled and fully geared before I even started the main quest, by accident mind you. I thought it was a kinda funny experience.

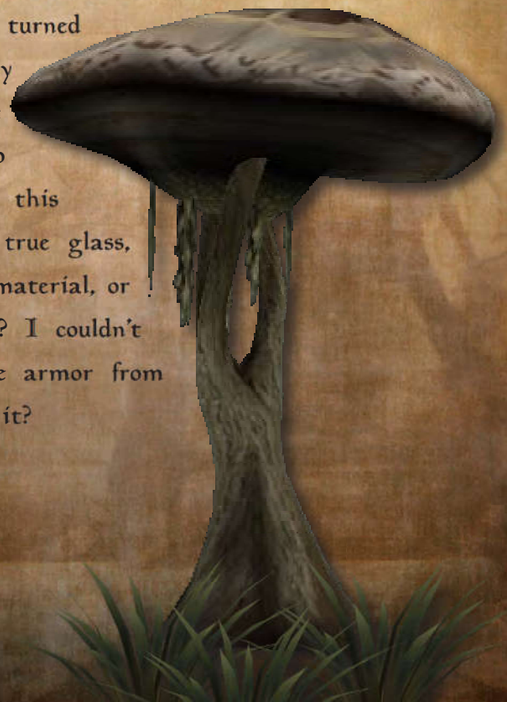
I wanna say I had some glitch or sequence break where I couldn't get the Wraithguard either because I remember using sunder and keening without it but I was really overpowered and had lots of potions so it was mostly fine. I had a lot of good memories with that game, that's why it's still my favorite game of all time.

- Deej / deejvol2

I decided to share my earliest Morrowind memories since these are the most nostalgic ones. I've got 3 of them.

The first one is from an e-mail correspondence with a friend of mine from elementary school (happy early 2000s). He started to play Morrowind at the same time as I and soon sent me a very detailed relation from his first encounter with a "Gut Strider", in reference to the in-game description of silt strider driving technique (the name sounded pretty catchy). I was really struck by the strangeness of this idea – being transported inside the gut of a giant flea? There had to be something to that game.

The second memory is from Suran. I got to the city by accident/pure exploration and was wandering around, visiting inns, and talking to people. I remember it was evening and the lights hanging from the buildings created that really immersive ambiance. Then I stumbled upon an Orcish warrior wearing some strange, glowing greenish things on her shoulders, which turned out to be glass pauldrons. They looked so otherworldly to me that I instantly started to gather information about this whole glass thing. Was it true glass, like the real one, some other material, or something completely different? I couldn't understand it, who would make armor from glass? It would be silly... wouldn't it?



The third loose memory from my early Morrowind gameplay is from Vivec. It was an utterly confusing place, of course, with all of these identical cantons, strangely decorated interiors, and corridors full of Aztec-like Ordinators.

But the most confusing thing was Vivec itself. I was talking to people and some of them were using the word about the city, but others seemed to imply that it was actually a name of a god. Of course, I thought, a typical worshippers' approach to show their devotion. However, soon I was told that Lord Vivec actually LIVED in the city. What the hell? Did it mean that I could meet the god himself or talk to him? The exposure to this concept was so weird compared to my previous RPG experience that I didn't know what to think. In fact, it took me another 19 years to advance enough into the Main Quest to finally meet Vivec. But that's a story for another time.

– Rosynant

Morrowind visuals (in order of importance)

Azura's Coast towns,

Ascended Sleeper,

Propylon Chambers.

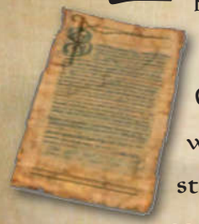
I haven't played for a – long – time and the visuals are what I remember the most. I also remember I spent hours reading the books and I'm not the reading kind (so it must have captivated me), but I don't remember a single sentence (maybe if someone talked a bit about one it would jog my memory of it).

– DynV

Glarthir was a sorta joke character, role-playing a paranoid Wood elf running around Vvardenfell turned into one of the best Elder Scrolls characters I've created! From the shady town of Balmora to the grand city of Necrom, the silly paranoia of rats with Julan to dueling Bolvyn for Redoran, Glarthir's had quite the journey from joke to legend (in my eyes personally). He's also been my first real experience with Tamriel Rebuilt, starting from Firewatch and ending in Old Ebonheart where I finally decided to tackle the rest of the main quest. Glarthir is truly the best Morrowind I've played with for a long time!

– LakeBeAr

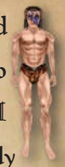
The first time I played Morrowind, I was very young and very bad with directions, and this resulted in me taking a very roundabout path to Balmora. Although the silt strider was quite cool,



I wanted to walk to Balmora to deliver the package to Caius, so onward I walked – in the wrong direction. Balmora was straight north, so it made sense to my foolish brain to go straight north, rather than around towards Pelagiad as the game suggests. I was lost and terrified the whole way. I thought Tarhiel screaming was a whole pack of murderous bandits rather than a foolhardy wizard, so I stayed off the roads after that, which I'm sure helped my flawless navigation skills. I took one step into Hla Oad and decided it was entirely too shifty, then

continued north, awkwardly stomping through the puddles of the Bitter Coast and failing to find a way over those foggy mountains to Balmora. I soon met a gruesome end at the hands (tusks?) of three Kagouti, and that pack of three Kagouti just north of Hla Oad remains a nostalgic memory for me to this day.

Undeterred, I tried the same route again, this time dodging the kagoutis, and I managed to escape that intolerable swamp, full of screaming bandits and murderous Kagouti. I ended up in West Gash and was thoroughly perplexed by Hlormar Wine-Sot, the half-naked Nord on the side of the road. I tried to do his quest, but couldn't find the witch he spoke of, so I decided he was just unhinged and hallucinating and continued on my way. Somehow I stumbled into the Caldera mine, and stole everything I could carry,



before eventually finding Caldera itself, and following the road to enter Balmora from the most bizarre angle imaginable.

This memory still stands out to me 18 years later as part of what made me fall in love with the game and the world. No other game I had played at the time gave me the freedom to take such a bizarre path with so many distractions, and no world had immersed me with such alien wonder as Morrowind. I've delved into many worlds since, whether in games or otherwise, and to this day very few have lived up to Morrowind.

Thank you for reading this, and wealth beyond measure, outlander!

– *Filthy N'wah*

I'm in the process of exploring all of the mainland's map before going to Tamriel Rebuilt's territory.

Basically, I'm doing what people might call a tourist run of the game. Hardly any quests, just enjoying the beautiful landscape, looting tombs, and exploring trying to fill the whole map.

I'm used to seeing things like guars, slaughterfish, and the occasional Daedra.

Getting chased by an army of skeletons not too far off from Seyda Neen (Fort Firemoth) was something I would never have expected, though. As I explained earlier I wasn't there for a quest, just by myself and it was definitely challenging. It was a very interesting and rewarding experience, something which this game keeps giving me after all these years (first played in 2003, now playing using OpenMW). I have lots of great moments in this game, but this sticks out as one of the most memorable experiences.

A lot of my time playing is just relaxing, watching the sunset on top of a Dwemer tower after exploring a dungeon, or taking screenshots of the beautiful environments and settlements in this world.

The scale of the world and the amount of content in Morrowind and Tamriel Rebuilt shows it was a labor of love, and it's why people keep playing and updating the game 20 years later (and will probably keep doing so for another 20 years or more).

– Ermis/Dusk Fall

I remember that I got money for my 15th birthday, just enough for Red Hot Chilli Peppers' "Greatest Hits" CD and this weird box set of games. It was a game I'd never heard of before, Morrowind, which promised that I could play "any character I could imagine". The box boasted hours of content plus 2 expansion packs. The box was HUGE, it was basically 3 game boxes lined up horizontally, which made it really awkward to carry to the car.

I was a lonely kid. With a neglectful single parent and a severe case of undiagnosed ADHD, life sucked. Usually only ever had one or two friends, often acted out in school, and spent more time in detention than anyone else I knew. I spent a lot of time in my room alone, playing games on my computer. Didn't matter what, if I could run it on my HP home computer I would play it.

I put on the RHCP CD in my stereo and installed the mammoth of a game. It was really weird. It asked me what race I wanted to be, something I didn't really remember another game asking me before. I chose a lizard man, because they looked cool, only to my horror I discovered I couldn't wear shoes. I quickly restarted as a wood elf and set off on my way.

Everything was bizarre. I couldn't really do much damage even with the game making it look like I did. There was a sad-sounding bug that loomed over the town that tore at my heart when I saw what they did to its back. I was horrified to find that this was my transport to the next town!

I decided to walk instead, only to nearly get hit by a man falling from the sky! I got turned around somewhere and ended up in a tomb, guarded by a ghost that I couldn't hurt. I reloaded a save, only to get lost again and be harassed by a pterodacty!!

Weeks went by. I got into more trouble at school because I couldn't focus on anything else other than getting back to my adventures. Days would blur together, the only thing linking them was the sound of a Bosmer grunting, the clank of metal, and the WISSSSHHHH of spells. And then I found mods. I spent hours downloading, installing, and uninstalling mods until my PC threatened to melt. Weeks turned into months where all I could think about was how I was going to get through the next challenge.

I wish I could say that Morrowind taught me how to code, or got me into a dream job, or anything "productive". It didn't. If anything, it made it harder for me to live in the real world; with teachers frustrated at my lack of enthusiasm for anything, and my peers not understanding my talk of prophecy, outlanders, and Daedra.

But it was there when a young boy needed to feel important, to feel like anything other than a burden and a loser. To this day, I cant listen to anything by RHCP without thinking of those years in that bedroom, exploring a world larger than I had dreamed possible. It's a part of me now, like a tattoo on my soul. And to this day, if I close my eyes and sit quietly, I still hear that silt strider. It mournfully wails into the distance, beckoning me home.

- Phill / the_phloop / Phloop

The first time I played Morrowind 20 years ago, I was 12 years old and had no idea what I was doing. I didn't even make it out of Seyda Neen, it was just too scary. The oppressive fog, the strange animal noises, the daunting character sheet, and incomprehensible combat mechanics. It took many tries before I was finally brave enough to explore the alien world.

But man, I had a blast. Seeing Fargoth sneak into the swamp at night to hide his ring, amazed at the incredible AI.

Watching a man fall from the sky and die in front of me, taking his scrolls and meeting the same fate myself moments later ("should have seen that coming", I thought).

Being chased from dusk till dawn across the entire island of Solstheim by a gang of very angry naked Nords. Wandering hopelessly through the mist,

finally encountering a strange mushroom tower and delving into its depths... and meeting the ancient, hideous, half-cancerous, half-robotic dwarf, the last of his kind.

These early memories of Morrowind contain a sense of awe and wonder that can't be replicated once you know the game as thoroughly as I do.

And yet, playing the game 20 years later for the thousandth time,

I still find myself discovering new things,

and the feeling I get comes pretty damn close to what I felt back then.

I can't see myself ever getting sick of this game.

– Merlord

It was almost 20 years ago when I launched Morrowind for the first time. I got no idea what the game was about or what I had to do.

I just clicked wherever I can with no idea what the captions meant.

When I finally stepped into the Seyda Neen, I was amazed – the sky was full of stars, 2 moons looked like Moon and Mars, the lights were flickering, people were wandering around and a strange flea-like creature stood still...

Everything was so strange and the darkness around felt very uncomfortable, yet the warm light of lanterns was very charming and safe

I went outside, through the little swamp with a glowing flower, and saw a door.

It led me to a cave, where I was attacked and almost instantly died.

I felt horrified, my hands were shaking. And I never played the game for almost a year. However, I decided to give it one more chance. And it worked!

I spent hundreds of hours exploring this hostile, but so attractive world,

reading books, planning my travels, and searching for artifacts.

I hunted rats which infested a house full of pillows,

I returned pants to a man, who got them stolen,

I ran in boots which blinded me completely (and I had to increase brightness to see the way)...

And all of that (and much more) was a part of the epic main story. In the end, I felt like I really was there, and it was me, not the character, who cleared the skies of Morrowind.

I also learned Construction Set, which I used to make some houses and islands for myself. I'm pretty sure, that I'm making games now because of Morrowind.

And Morrowind taught me, that strange things are most likely very interesting.

Recently I've launched it again, for the first time in a decade.

And I still love it, I still remember it. And for now, this world is not hostile anymore, it feels like home. There's its own very special memory behind every corner, in every town.

Will I wake up as a prisoner on a ship again?

Will I search for the Dwemer puzzle one more time? I will.

After all these years?

Always.

– *True Fullmoon*

ESCAPING DANGER

Art by Dominik Zdenkovic

ESCAPING DANGER

to survive another day

Started playing Morrowind for the first time recently. I came from newer Elder Scrolls games and decided to try Morrowind after hearing many, many good things about it. My character is an Altmer Apprentice with a magic-oriented custom class.

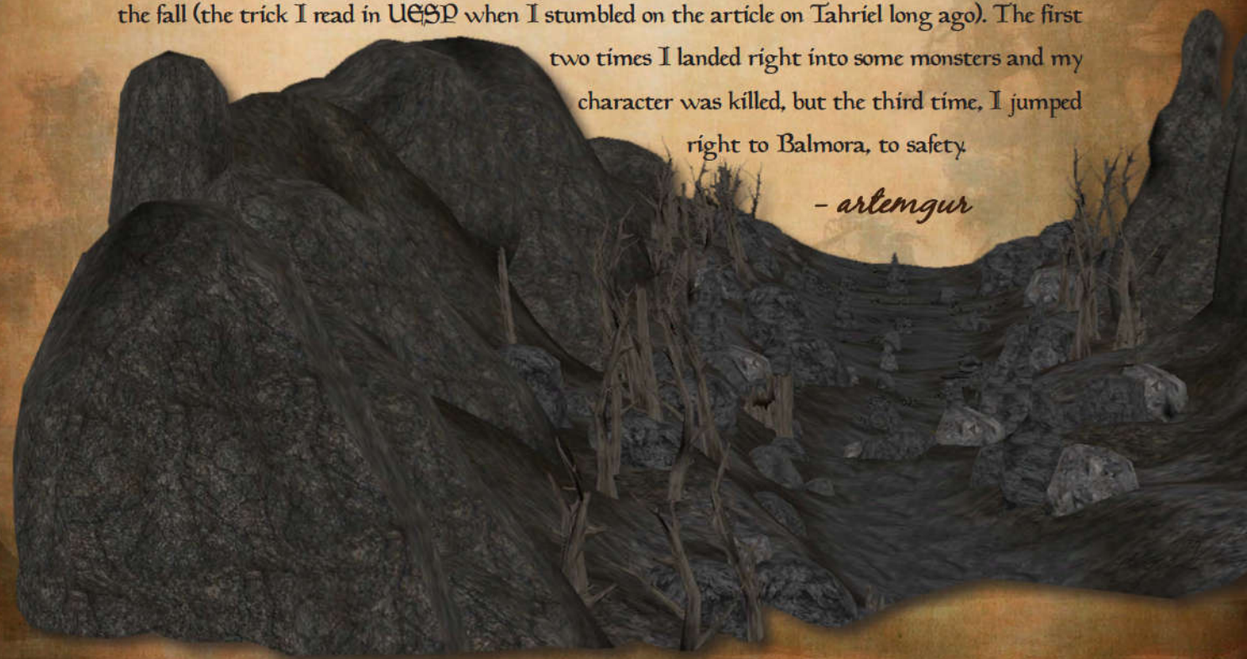
In Seyda Neen, I bought that cursed ring for 100 gold and didn't have enough money for a silt strider trip to Balmora. I tried to go to the cave nearby to earn money, but the mage there incinerated me no matter what I did. So, I decided to walk to Balmora on foot because... why not?

Soon, I encountered Tarhiel and looted his corpse. I chose the wrong road and came to Hla Oad. After Hla Oad there is a bridge with a Nord bandit who demands 100 gold. I couldn't pay even if I wanted because I had only about 5 gold. He attacked me. He was way too strong for me and I started running away. Here the cursed ring actually helped me, because without the ring he was slightly faster than me and managed to hit me from the back with his axe.

After many reloads, I saw a fortress on the horizon and ran to it hoping that some local guards would help me. Unfortunately, the fortress wasn't garrisoned. I desperately ran into the closest building. It was a Propylon chamber. I obviously didn't have those indexes and couldn't teleport away. So I rested and looted the place, and the bandit continued to patiently wait outside. So, I was effectively trapped.

I made a couple of futile attempts to kill him. Even potions and Sujamma which I found in the Propylon chamber didn't help me. And then, I remembered about the Scrolls of Icarian Flight.I ran outside and used a scroll. Before the landing, I used the second one to survive the fall (the trick I read in UESP when I stumbled on the article on Tahriel long ago). The first two times I landed right into some monsters and my character was killed, but the third time, I jumped right to Balmora, to safety.

– artemgur



One of my most memorable Morrowind moments happened during a modded playthrough geared for a magical-rogue build. I was supposed to return Tsiya's Skooma Pipe in Balmora, as you do, but I got a bounty just trying to get into her house. I had Beautiful Cities of Morrowind installed, so instead of the side balcony on top of a flight of stairs where I can discreetly lockpick her second-floor door, the balcony was on the front where I was visible from the riverside. Using the Mantle of Ascension - A Climbing Mod, I climbed up to the roof from the back alleys and slid down to the balcony where I could lockpick the door. I was Invisible but it wore off the moment I unlocked the door and I was either seen by the guards or reported by some Friends and Foes NPCs. I managed to enter Tsiya's house where they couldn't catch me, but now I have a bounty and a number of guards waiting for me outside.

And then I remembered that the Thieves guild is just across the river and they can take care of my bounty.

I considered my options and inventory. It was nighttime outside with guards waiting for me down in the streets. I had a spare potion of Chameleon, a Tinur's Hoptoad spell, and a rooftop route to the South Wall Cornerclub. It was time to live out the phantom-thief fantasy

I had modded this playthrough for

After returning Tsiya's Skooma Pipe (and getting her as a new Skooma buyer with the Skooma Dealer mod), I drank the Chameleon potion, went back out to the balcony, climbed up to the roofs, and Hoptoaded my way to the Silt Strider area where I crossed the river over the city's outer wall from there. I reached the Cornerclub just in time for the Chameleon effect to wear off, but there were no guards on this side of the river and I was scot-free. Once inside, I roleplayed a bit asking about the Thieves Guild and what it took to join them. Sugar-Lips Habasi swore me in after reading me the honor-among-thieves rules while Phane Rielle downstairs took care of my bounty with the customary member's fee.

I walked out of the Cornerclub bounty-free, now with Guild connections, and with a new buyer of Skooma in town. It was a night well spent.

- FrummYonda/AllanBorne

Getting chased by guar, hound, cliff racers, and kwama forager on my first playthrough.

- Lord Nerevar

Too many to choose from, but putting on a full set of Indoril armor for the first time not realizing what the consequences would be, just running around Vivec was pretty hilarious.

– Anonymous

My first time in Morrowind was shortly after some experiences with Unreal, and I had a strong tendency to avoid the hanging vines, as I distinctly recalled the unpleasant 'dwellers above' that would leave a sticky tongue dangling, and then attempt to pull the player upward into its maw... then, just outside of the tomb containing Mentor's Ring, I turned to Toccatta to comment and he looked at my screen, then said

"Oh god, run!"...

just as a corprus stalker was stepping out of the water next to me. That was rather startling... most especially as I had not even a dagger upon my person, as yet the character was not 15 minutes old).

– Drac

Long ago, my dad brought home a copy of Morrowind from GameStop for the OG Xbox. I hadn't played a game like it before, so I didn't know exactly what I could/should do, and the only thing I had heard of RPGs was that they were online games with a bunch of cheaters. The box DID say online-enabled, in spite of it being a single-player (I was not aware of the expansions.) I had the original copy, no Bloodmoon no Tribunal. My first character was an assassin, only not the legal kind. He never actually managed to kill anyone, not at first anyway and not before he changed his ways. I didn't understand the game mechanics, so I bought a chitin bow and some arrows, and a dagger I had next to no skill in marksman.

I went to Dagon Fel and quickly found out that people couldn't jump, and I could. I jumped up on a roof and began trying to shoot at them with a bow. My crime was reported and I got a bounty. After a while, my bow broke too. There was nothing I could do, I couldn't take on all the people there. I cast an eye of fear on one guard (I was a Khajiit) and made a run for it. I went south and found water, and I kept running. The combat music didn't stop. Guards, animals, and other npcs who wanted me dead and made resting impossible. I was running low on health after getting hit a few times, and I was running scared. I found myself in the Ashlands, in the middle of an ash storm. Things were getting bad, and I had no idea what to do.

Then, I saw what looked like ruins. Crumbling walls in an ash waste, people dressed in what looked like menacing gear, and best of all, no one was chasing me! I found myself taking cover under the Rat-in-the-Pot Inn, in a place called Ald'ruhn. I thought to myself "This must be a bandit town!" Since they weren't attacking me. Going into the Inn "proved" me right, as I found the Thieves Guild. I joined, of course, and got my name cleared right away. Next thing I know I'm off on quests! It took some time, but I remembered the package in my inventory. I went all the way back to the beginning of the journal and found out that I was supposed to be in Balmora talking to some old man named Caius Cosades. I took the package to him and started my adventure on the Main Quest.

Before I knew it, I was steeped in lore and found myself dreaming about the game. At school, it was all I could think about. I realized this game was now my all-time favorite, and it has been since then. I've played it for nearly 20 years, and every second was filled with fun and adventure! I even have my wife playing co-op with me now through OpenMW! A dream come true!

– Gabe the N'wah!

WITH OTHERS

Art by Ilona Iske

WITH OTHERS
along the journey

Grew up playing DOS and Nintendo games and had never played any western RPGs. My friend called me on the phone and said he found the most incredible game -- you could do *anything*.

"Anything? No way."

I rode my bike as fast as I could to his house, where he was deep inside some strange cave. Some levitating monster made entirely of fire kills him, and he reloads back to the city.

He asks what he should do now. He could do *anything*, he reminded me.

"Kill that guard." Without hesitation, my friend pulls out a chitin spear and stabs the guard in the groin. We decide to resist arrest; prison is no place for 12-year-olds. Seconds later we see the death menu again and decide to try another path this time.

Later that day I begged my parents to take me to the shop, and a new copy of Morrowind was mine.

– *Mort*

When I got Morrowind, I was 12 (around 2003). My parents were full-time busy with my younger brother so I was left at my grandma's most of the time. And naturally, she didn't have a PC at home (she had one later and was a very advanced user at her age), but my school buddy had. So, I crawled to him at night with my cd (it required the original cd to launch) to play Morrowind. At night because he was a kinda troubled kid and was constantly grounded and prohibited from playing video games.

So each night, it was an exciting adventure in itself, but one night I remember more than others:

We decided to visit Solstheim and, of course, we didn't follow any quests, just wandering around and we stumbled upon the infamous uncle. "Candy, candy, he makes so much!" These words are stuck in my head even 19 years later. "Uncle Sweetshare has a magic touch!" The fact that it was at night and we were worried already not to alert his mom made this even more surreal. "So it's back to the workshop in the snow! With lovely lanterns all aglow! He he! Ha ho! He he he ha ha ho!"

Our Morrowind journey ended another day when he was grounded (as always) and we thought it was a good idea to return my CD by throwing it off the window, but that's another story.

– *Viacheslav*

When my son was born, I would often hold him while I played Morrowind at night. He'd be on my lap as I explored caves and abandoned Dwemer strongholds. I still remember holding that little guy on my lap as I played on my old laptop, my earliest memory of gaming with one of my kids.

- MacBone / Jesse

My history with Morrowind has been an on-and-off relationship. I started with Oblivion and kept trying and trying over the years to get into it. The lack of quest markers really disturbed me, but I wanted too badly to see what was so cherished by people, even after Skyrim was released.

So I continued to attempt to love my journal, but that eventually burned out for me as well. That's when, in 2020, my friend who'd been trying to sell me on the game for years proposed we do a playthrough in TES3MP. We made our characters, Big Spice and Big Steve, and embarked from the Census office. I complained about all the small things that bothered me about the game for the first hour or so, but then I came to understand it much better with his tutelage. I stopped button-mashing combat in favor of measured power strikes, I began to solve puzzles from the journal to figure out where I needed to go. I memorized the silt strider network and the Mages Guild network, and together we journeyed through the strange but beautiful land of Vvardenfell together.

Soon Big Spice and Big Steve were covered in drip, custom enchanted bling, and armed to the teeth with deadly artifacts. Our journey together had taken us all over this racially-charged island, but we hadn't gotten to Red Mountain. We did all our preparations, gathering potions, recharging our items, making sure we had our best gear, and proceeded to the entrance. It had been a long session, 5 hours or so, so we called it for the night and logged off.

My good friend playing Big Steve disappeared from my life after that. He ghosted me, and I had no idea why. He is still on my friend list and still ignores any attempts to contact him to this day. It has turned the wonderful experience I had with him into something very bittersweet. These days, I give him space and maybe he'll come back sometime, but I'm not holding my breath. I cant bring myself to finish the game though. Big Steve is still there at the door to Red Mountain, inanimate, and it feels wrong to finish without him.

- Spicylad / Hoboken56

Morrowind has been a big part of my life since childhood. One of my earliest memories was my dad handing me the big ol' GOTY box, and getting lost in such a fantastical world. As a kid, I put hundreds of hours into wandering and exploring, not even touching the story. When I came back to the story a little older and a little wiser, I found so much more to love within the rich lore and political nature of Vvardenfall history.

More importantly for me was Jeremy Soule's soundtrack accompanying the game, the best music ever made for a video game. For every hour I've spent in-game, I've probably spent 2x the amount just listening to the soundtrack. I had to stop listening to it on Spotify because my top listen every year was Jeremy Soule! It was almost unfair to the rest of my music haha. Hey Todd, can we get a vinyl remaster?

Being a part of this fanbase has been amazing, to say the least. Between the crazy hilarious memes, and the close friends I've made through this game, to call it influential on my life is an understatement. I love Morrowind A LOT, and I'm so happy to be a part of the legacy this game has created, going TWENTY years strong now, and here's to another 20!

I have something from the first time I saw the game in my life. I was in a shopping center with my mother, almost 10 years ago. I was just a child at the time and I entered a toy store looking without really looking for something. And then I saw it, on one of these PC game magazines: TES III: Morrowind, in all its glory.

The whole magazine, a manual, and (one of my most prized possessions to this day) a full-color, 2-pages wide map/poster of the island of Vvardenfell. For just $12.90, it was all mine.

I couldn't have even grasped at the time how much that single decision would impact me. After playing for a while, I had to look up "RPG" on Google and for the next couple of years I learned how to play tabletop RPGs and TCGs, I made lots of friends, I went to a number of cities in my country and many other things that I think wouldn't have had been possible if I didn't buy some strange game from 2002 lying in some generic kids' store.

I still get teary-eyed remembering when Caius was recalled back to the Imperial Capital, leaving me all alone on the Island, and when I struggled for days trying to overcome the fear of delving into Arkngthand and its Dwemer weirdness.

Ten years playing this game and I STILL don't know everything about it: I never became a vampire or a werewolf, I hate Solstheim and I never met Almalexia. So, there's still much to do, much to learn.

– ElderD

At the time of this small story, I was a 10-year-old and at this point, I had just beaten Skyrim and just started Morrowind. So my brother (older than me by a good amount and plays Morrowind a bunch) told me that the shopkeeps don't care if you steal from them.

I took everything and since I had not much gold I tried selling it back.

I am not very smart and about 20 seconds later I got murdered by a guard and was confused and kept trying to steal everything and sell it to the shopkeep. Rinse and repeat over and over I steal I try and sell I get murdered by a guard.It took me a very long time to realize I was tricked by my brother.

- Anonymous

So Morrowind came out when I was 3 or so. I was a little late to the game. But I remember sitting in my dad's lap watching him play. When I was about 6 he let me play but he warned me it would be hard and like a kid, I didn't listen. Although it was hard and there were tears, I loved it and I kept coming back for more. Eventually, I got ok at the game that's when I made MIKE THE MONK. An Orcish monk obviously named MIKE and he was my favorite. Also, he was the first character to beat the game. He was my favorite but eventually, he died with the computer so I have nothing to show. R.I.P MIKE

But because of him and my dad, I still play today.

- Gabriel / Feelancer1000

Don't remember the year it was, what I do remember is, I was a very small child and my brother was only 4 years older than me. Our sister was much older than all of us, and one day she bought something from the magazine shop and that was something was a Morrowind CD.

Well neither of us could install the game so my sister bought Dracula instead.

Fast forward to a time when we were climbing some trees, me my brother, and some friends. My brother was climbing pretty far but suddenly he was falling. Fortunately, he only broke some small parts on both his feet. He couldn't move for a while for a while and he thought about that game we couldn't install.

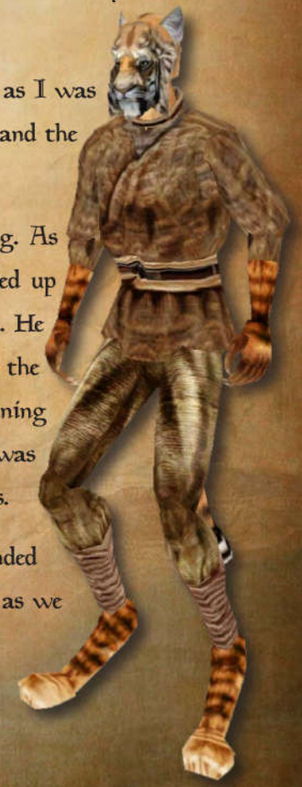
And that's when it all began. He managed to install Morrowind against all odds (yes this was a huge deal at the time) And we were ON IT!

And man it all happened and more. With the first character he played as I was watching - a Khajiit - he did jump on a mudcrab thinking it was a rock and the surprise we all had when that rock started attacking us...

But the most unique experience we had was trying to buy something. As proven before his English was bad and mine was non-existent, so he ended up somehow in Molag Mar. Well, he got up to the top and there was a shop.... He saw a bow on the counter, checked the price, counted the gold, put it down on the counter, and took the bow. Man when the guards game and he started running and screamed that he paid what are you doing. The man in that game was priceless. We lost the CD 3 times and kept buying it that's how good it was.

Morrowind shaped our childhood in ways no other thing has. It has bonded my brother and sister and me, that without it we would never be as close as we are now. So yeah, Morrowind was a huge part of my life. Xo

- Samuel



Being able to walk into Balmora with all my friends by using TES3MP. Never thought it would happen.

– *Anonymous*

Starting college in 2002, Morrowind was a great bonding moment for me and my roommates. It was our first open-world game of this caliber, and we all had different goals and motivations. Some wanted to collect every book and painstakingly put them on a shelf. Another wanted to loot all the ancestral tombs and Dwemer ruins and make some cash. I wanted to make a name for myself in the Balmora guilds and settle down in a house.

The fact that we all went down different paths and yet were playing the same game, blew our minds. There was so much detail and mystery to the game.The ability to play the game as you want and truly break it with mods and exploits still keeps me coming back every few years. The fact that you can take a break for a year and come back to an entirely new modding scene keeps me motivated to roll a new character and try again. I also remember when Tribunal came out and getting enemy health bars was an insane improvement.

– *StealthRabbi*

I will never forget walking down the Xbox aisle in Blockbuster.
Like a beacon of gold, there it was.

Morrowind.

I was about eight, going through a real rough patch in my life, and I had no idea that my perfect escape was right there before me, sitting neatly atop that first set of shelves. I snatched the display case up, flipped it over, and immediately fell in love with that beautiful Bonemold armor and Daedric longsword.

I never returned that copy, my parents paid the fees and it was mine. I didn't mind not having the case, it lived in my Xbox. I seldom played anything else, my dad too. We had that large Prima guide for it, I read that thing cover to cover over and over when I couldn't play.

For my first Nerevarine, I had to make him look just like the one on the back of the case. Stepping out into Seyda Neen for the first time, crossing the Ghostgate, finally acquiring one of those awesome gondolier helms, getting slaughtered by Ordinators for wearing their armor and wondering why for the longest time, discovering the incredible world of modding, and then finally falling in love with the lore when I was old enough to appreciate it. It was all perfect. Still is.

I have played this game for 20 years, returning to it nearly every year. You'll catch me even today in the multiplayer servers, usually as a wayward monk, just taking in the scenery and reveling in the nostalgia.

– *Ike*

LIFE CHANGING

Art by Dominik Zdenkovic

LIFE CHANGING
in so many ways

I've been playing Elder Scrolls games since Daggerfall, because I'm older than music, but I never paid much attention to the lore since, as most people will agree, most lore in video games is generally skin-deep and not worth a second glance.

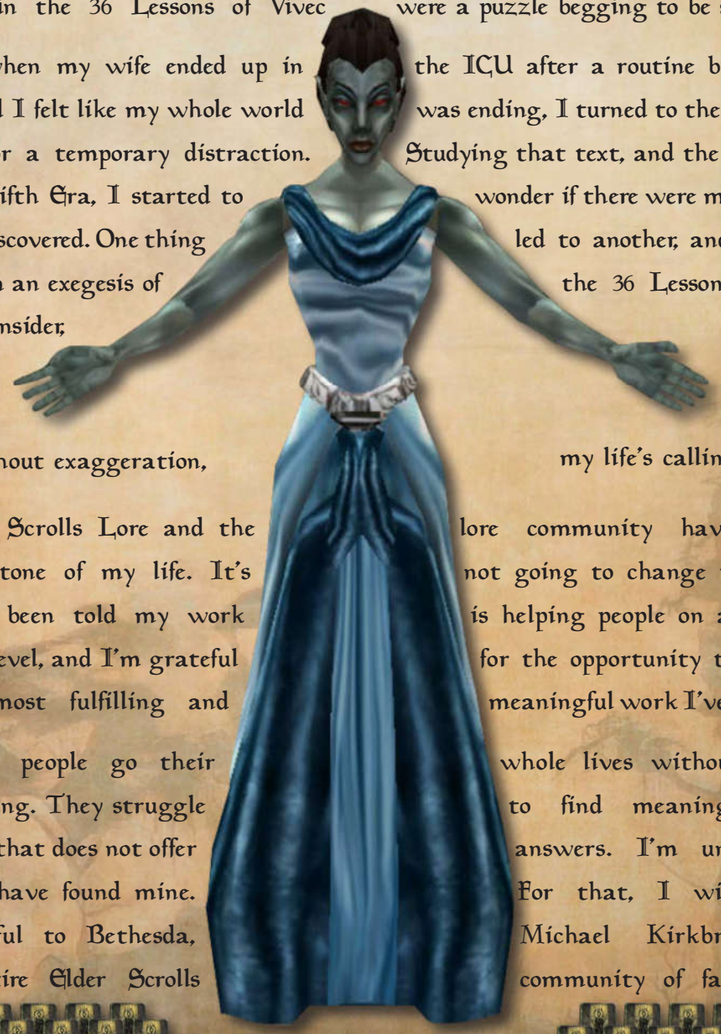
In fact, much to my shame, I played through Morrowind without really giving it a second glance. I was paying enough attention to understand the dilemma behind Nerevar's death, and Dagoth Ur's desire for widespread domination, but I'd consider that the minimum effort required.

I played through Oblivion twice, discovered mods, and started a hundred more games that eventually crashed beyond repair. You know, as you do.

During my first playthrough of Skyrim, however, my wife began having life-threatening health issues. I spent a lot of time in hospitals with her, waiting during surgeries both routine and emergency, surfing the internet on my phone, trying to find something to distract me.

So it was, like so many other Deep Lore fans, that I found fallingawkwardly's three-part blog post, "The Metaphysics of Morrowind," and a hidden world unveiled itself to me. The idea of a self-aware game was a complete revelation, and the hidden messages in the 36 Lessons of Vivec were a puzzle begging to be solved.

And when my wife ended up in the ICU after a routine biopsy went wrong, and I felt like my whole world was ending, I turned to the 36 Lessons of Vivec for a temporary distraction. Studying that text, and the Loveletter from the Fifth Era, I started to wonder if there were more puzzles left to be discovered. One thing led to another, and now I'm working on an exegesis of the 36 Lessons of Vivec, which I consider, without exaggeration, my life's calling.



Elder Scrolls Lore and the lore community have become a cornerstone of my life. It's not going to change the world, but I've been told my work is helping people on a real and personal level, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to do some of the most fulfilling and meaningful work I've ever done.

Many people go their whole lives without finding their calling. They struggle to find meaning in an existence that does not offer answers. I'm unbelievably lucky to have found mine. For that, I will always be grateful to Bethesda, Michael Kirkbride, and the entire Elder Scrolls community of fans.

– Rotten Deadite

Well, I've been fairly new to the franchise. The first ES game I played was Oblivion and I freaking loved it. The wilderness, the story, the monsters, everything. It was the first game like it that I played so naturally, I would look up the previous entries to see if they are as good as the game I played.

So I bought Morrowind; at first, I hated it.

The controls were clunky, the enemies were much stronger than me, the directions were confusing, and so I rage-quit and deleted the game.

After a couple of months for some reason I got into r/morrowind and I saw some interesting things that you can't do in Oblivion like throwing stars, knives, having so many slots of armor, the exploration, and you could become a werewolf if you want to.

Since I looked at all this stuff, I was intrigued and I downloaded it again, and this time I was gonna finish it. I made a character called Alinah who was a Breton woman.

I made a whole backstory

for her just like I did for my Oblivion Argonian, I also made them related in some way. I finished the main quest with some cheats to help me on the way and

I fell in love with this game,
mainly for the story.
The depth, the drama,
the villain,
everything.

The story was the main focus for me and it inspired me even to write a fantasy novel, with this weird spin on the characters.

I love Morrowind because it changed me into who I am,

I was always that kid that hated writing and hated long stories and songs but now I am writing my own songs and stories. They probably won't be mainstream but I am happy with them.

-Akhul

I played and finished Morrowind only last summer.

The day I started playing

was just a few days after we had to put our dog down,

and needless to say,

I was the saddest I had been in my life.

Morrowind helped immerse me in another world

and comforted me

at my lowest point.

-Anonymous

Morrowind came to me at a turning point in my life. I was sixteen, starting to work my first real job, and the chronic health issues that would plague me to this day were beginning to rear their ugly heads.

I would feel like garbage after a shift and was looking for something to help me relax. As chance would have it, I had also gotten my first PC; an old clunker that nobody else had any use for anymore. I figured it would run old games though, and

I vaguely remembered a friend mentioning something about 'Morrowind.'

So one day after my shift, I detoured slightly on my way home to the local Best Buy to see what I could see. Sure enough, they had a copy of the Game of the Year Edition there on a shelf. It was one of the first purchases I made with the proceeds from my job. I remember sitting in the parking lot, examining the packaging; a minimalist design in black with gold trim. The strange seal and mysterious lettering were intriguing and mysterious, and the screenshots on the back offered an even more tantalizing glimpse at what was in store.

I rushed home and installed the game, and thankfully, it ran! ...Barely.

But the experience of the opening was eye-opening.

I vividly remember stepping out of the ship's hold, standing and blinking in the sunlight, looking up and seeing... a giant bug. It was just barely visible as an outline in the fog, looming over the town. But rather than smashing buildings and eating people, it was just standing there. In fact, nobody seemed perturbed at all, like it was just part of the landscape. I would learn a few moments later that this was just the local version of a city bus, which would intrigue me even further.

But at that exact moment, I was already hooked.

Before that, my experience with the fantasy genre had been with Tolkien, or all the myriad of copycats. Those pieces of the genre did not include things like scratchy-voiced dark elves brushing shoulders with roman centurions. And it certainly never had giant bugs as a means of transportation. This was a world unlike any other I had experienced before, and I simply HAD to see more.

And the game delivered on the promise of those opening moments and much more, sweeping me into an experience unlike any I'd had before. It was my first 'big boy' game, and initially, the scale of possibility was overwhelming. It felt like I could do anything I wanted! I remember being extremely impressed that the doors I opened would still be open when I returned and getting a kick out of being able to jump over the tables in the Hlaalu Council House. Every door had something behind it. Every character could be talked to. And perhaps most importantly, my character was just another person within this world, rather than some kind of exceptional chosen one. The world was not put there FOR me, it was simply THERE, and that made it that much more vivid.

The experience culminated near the end of the main quest. My most vivid memory of that first playthrough was that of my character climbing Red Mountain for the first time, with both of us feeling the full weight of history pressing down on us. We were bringing an end to a story that had begun long before my character was ever born, and in which our involvement was merely the final chapter. One way or another, a thousand years of history would be ended by me.

As the rest of my life was crumbling beyond my control,
devolving into the crushing monotony that chronic illness brings,
this was something that I could control, made me feel powerful... but also humble.

It would also plant the seeds for a lesson that I would only come to appreciate much later: that our destiny is not what is decreed by circumstance, but by our own choices. As I continue my struggle to put my life back together, I try to remember the words that my character boldly declared to Dagoth Ur:

"I am a self-willed hero. I make my own fate."

– Anonymous

From staying up past my bedtime
staring down an old CRT tv,
to talking Morrowind every day on the playground,
to reading the strategy guide on road trips,
to the relief of escapism during the stresses of college,
& even to playing on Nereverine Prophecies (TES3MP) today

-- Morrowind has always been a constant to me.

This video game helped shape my life and find my passions.

My love of the alchemy system had me interested in herbs and flowers at a young age.
Though I never followed this interest until discovering permaculture.

That initial fascination that started in this awe-inspiring fantasy realm
is what pushed me to take that first class.

I am now working, growing, and studying
to help inspire some of those same passions in others through garden design.

To this day I can still close my eyes and envision walking the lands of Vvanderfell.

This is a great comfort,
almost meditative, and a reminder
that I still have a vivid imagination
and a childlike sense of adventure
even as this game makes me feel dated
by turning 20 years old.

I would be amiss to deny that Morrowind has shaped who I am, and all for the better.

- Dino_Spamoni

When thinking about my memories of Morrowind, there's no specific incident that comes to mind for me. Instead, I think of how I have grown through my experiences with Morrowind and its community.

I started playing Morrowind around 2013 when I got the game for my birthday, and I spent the next few years playing and modding until my game completely broke. I had some mod conflict or script issue (I still have no idea what caused it!) that caused all my new save files to load me into an empty ocean with nothing in sight. After that happened, tired of trying to fix these strange bugs, I decided to try out OpenMW and then found out about TES3MP. I set up a co-op TES3MP server for a friend and me to play on back in 2016, but our interest eventually faded and I drifted away from Morrowind for a few years.

Fast-forwarding to early 2019, I remembered TES3MP and decided to try it again on a public server this time.

This drew me into the wonderful world of TES3MP roleplay groups
and introduced me to a lot of friends that I still have to this day.

We formed a lot of memories as our characters went on adventures together, too many to go into detail about. From the time I started playing with other people,

I always wanted to be able to make my character sit down in-game, and finally realizing this dream in late 2020 with my first released mod introduced me to the Morrowind modding community,

bringing new friends,

new experiences,

and new projects.

Modding has taught me many skills that I never imagined I would have learned without it,

like 3D animation,

and the desire to learn how the OpenMW and TES3MP engines worked
spurred me into pursuing a minor in computer science at university.

Group modding projects have taught me
how to work with people of various skills and personalities,

and my time in the roleplay community
has greatly improved my speaking and writing.

Now, I run a public TES3MP server myself
with much more experience than I had back in 2016, and

I can't thank the Morrowind community enough
for shaping me into the person I am today,

in a completely different way than I could have expected

when I stepped off the boat in Seyda Neen for the first time.

- Vidi_Aquam

This game changed my life.

I was 13 and not into any particular game type. I loved to write, inspired by Diablo. I mostly wrote about adventures I had in the catacombs.

On a whim,

while at Electronics Boutique at my local shopping center,
while Mum was in the queue for something else,

I saw Morrowind for Xbox.

I looked at it and put it down four or five times, umming and aahing,
thinking it seemed too... different.

I made a snap decision to spend $60 of my pocket money
– all of it –

and gambled on the game.

It blew me away.

The start on the boat,

the exploration and freedom,

the character development,

and world lore.

The design of the world itself.

The imagination into every, small detail.

It was the first time I ever felt games were like books.

I was playing a book that unfolded with my every action.

It inspired an endless love to continue writing fantasy fiction, mod games with a sense of purpose,

lore,

storytelling,

and realistic character personalities.

It changed my passions for the rest of my life,
and I'll be eternally grateful for the game and that well-spent $60.

– Matt 'Sanitybane' Smith

Morrowind is my favorite game of all time. There were so many things that were memorable about this game.

It has a magic to it,
a huge, immersive world
supported by deep, detailed systems that really give it a charm
that makes it unforgettable to me.

There's so much I can remember about this game – more than every other game I've played combined – as I've experienced the world of Vvardenfell for over 25 years.

I would like to say thank you to the community for allowing me to share my experience with you, as this wonderful game unites us all once more.

I would also like to thank Todd Howard and Bethesda,
for giving us such a masterpiece of a game.

It really affected my life,
and I believe those experiences helped to define
who I am even now.
Thank you.

– Anonymous

For my memory, I wanted to share a story about the first Morrowind character that I ever played.

I started playing Morrowind at the tail-end of 2007. I had been introduced to the world of the Elder Scrolls through Oblivion which I had been playing for the better part of a year and I knew I needed more. I had talked about Oblivion with my parents and my Dad surprised me when he purchased a used copy of Morrowind for me as a gift. I dusted off my original Xbox, and off I went on my first adventure through the land of Vvardenfell.

Plying for the first time, I decided to recreate one of my favorite characters that I had played from Oblivion. He was an Argonian Alchemist named Tereth-del. In Oblivion, he always used long blades and poison to defeat his enemies. I was of course disappointed when I found out that poisoning weapons was not a mechanic in Morrowind, but luckily we now have mods for that! Anyway, later on, I learned about 'cast when used' enchantments, so I was able to use this to more or less mimic his poisoning skills.

When I first stepped out of the Census Office and into Seyda Neen, I did what any young, inexperienced Morrowind player would do. I immediately ran into the swamps, paying no attention to my fatigue, got bitten to death by the first, angry little mudcrab that saw me, and had to remake my character because I had, of course, not saved. I quickly learned that this world was not the low-difficulty setting Cyrodiil that I had grown accustomed to. The wilds of Vvardenfell were perilous and would eat you alive if you let them. So, I stuck to the towns and cities and was terrified anytime a quest sent me off into the wilderness. I tried to avoid it as much as possible.

When I finished exploring Seyda Neen, I made my way to Balmora via the Silt Strider. This quickly became my preferred method of travel. After meeting with Caius for the first time I ended up joining the Mages guild and eventually House Telvanni when I discovered Sadrith Mora through the Guild Guide. At the time, I was completely unaware of the rivalry between the two factions or of the latter's use of Argonian slaves, so even though this didn't make much sense, I was still having a blast.

I had been doing all the quests I could get from the two groups, avoiding ones that sent me off into the wilderness. This was until I had acquired a good number of potions and enchanted items from the quests I had been doing, so I finally decided to bite the bullet and make one of my first major treks off into the unknown.

Skink-in-Tree's-Shade sent me on an errand to deal with a necromancer near Hla Oad. My idea of necromancers was the ones from Oblivion, they were never particularly threatening, so I figured this would be something that I could handle with no problem. I had no idea how wrong I was.

When I finally made it to the cave Shal, I remember being struck by how mysterious and scary, but in a strange way, beautiful the cave was. It was full of glowing crystals and mushrooms, as well as flaming skulls on spikes. I loved it. After I walked through the short cave and dispatched the skeletons on the way, I finally reached my target, Telura Ulver. She didn't look particularly intimidating, wearing the ridiculous yellow and pink robes that she had. I walked toward her sword drawn when all of a sudden in front of her appeared a horrible monstrosity that I had never seen before – a Greater Bonewalker. It took nearly everything I had in my arsenal but somehow I managed to dispatch my foe and her horrifying pet. I wish that I had original screenshots from this moment, but I decided to recreate it in my modern, heavily modded install of Morrowind, attached below.

Battle in Shal

After finishing the fight, I soon realized that I couldn't move at all. My strength had been completely drained! My last save was ages ago, so I dropped all of my gear there on the ground and made for Balmora. Somehow managing to avoid enemies on the way, I found the temple and restored my attributes. I made it back to the cave and it was there while picking up my gear that I realized I had an extra Almsivi Intervention scroll from a House Telvanni quest that I had done to deliver new clothes to Therana. I felt embarrassed with myself until I discovered that in the cave was a full set of master alchemy equipment, and at that moment, the whole ordeal felt like it had been worth it. I ended up making the cave my home base for the rest of that playthrough. Every time that I visit that cave when I play, I always have fond memories of that time.

Having played Morrowind off and on for nearly a decade and a half now, I can say without a doubt that it is not only my favorite game but my favorite piece of media of any form. I know Vvardenfell as if it were my own neighborhood. I have modded it to Oblivion and back for personal use and even released a few different mods to the public over the years under different usernames.

At this point, Morrowind is almost like a way of life.

Last year, when my husband upgraded my gaming PC for my birthday, he was shocked that the first thing I did with it was to install a twenty-year-old game. But as anyone who loves Morrowind knows, that is simply the way it had to be.

Anyway, I've rambled long enough now. Here's to twenty wonderful years of Morrowind, and here's looking forward to many more.

– Kalinter / KJS94

Thank you for joining us on this journey.
It's been an amazing 20 years.

Here's to another 20 years
and beyond.

Credits

My heartfelt thanks to all those who contributed to this digital booklet!
All the wonderful people who shared their stories
and trusted me to complete this book.

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Bethesda for a game that keeps on giving.

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