



# INFERNAL

Oh god, you devil!

• Fear my awesome telekinetic powers—for with them, I shall, um, move barrels!

PUBLISHER: **Playlogic/Eidos Interactive** DEVELOPER: **Metropolis Software** GENRE: **Third-Person Shooter** AVAILABILITY: **Retail Box** ESRB RATING: **Mature**  
 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: **1.7GHz CPU, 512MB RAM, 2GB hard drive space, 128MB videocard** MULTIPLAYER: **None** VERSION REVIEWED: **Near-Final Reviewable**

## REVIEW

**Y** You have to go all the way back to *Daikatana's* robot frogs to find a shooter that opens as ineptly as *Infernal*. It does get better, thank goodness, but someone really should have reminded developer Metropolis Software about the importance of first impressions—because if this had been a blind date, I would have excused myself to the bathroom and climbed out the window after the first hour.

A terrible cut-scene, with vacant-eyed, plastic-looking 3D characters reciting cringe-inducing dialogue, sets up the even-more-criinge-inducing (and nonsensical) plot: You are Ryan Lennox, an angel with tattoos and a goatee and a handy repertoire of tough-guy wisecracks, fallen from heaven and now enlisted by hell to do its bidding. At least that's what you tell the hot, pouty-lipped female angel with the excellent stomach muscles. Next, you get ambushed by a, um, swarm of armed goons from heaven. And I'm not sure which is worse: The fact that heaven employs armed goons, or the fact that even with the Creator on their side, these guys still can't shoot straight (the AI is atrocious throughout). Whatever the case, it's a terrible opening—a glorious burst of lameness that may send you rushing to the uninstall button. But hang in there, because the game gets better.

*Infernal* isn't a first-person shooter; it's played from an over-the-shoulder third-person perspective, with as much of an emphasis on "OK, how do I get past *this* now?" puzzle-solving as on shooting. It's the *Half-Life* school of design—all strict linearity and scripted sequences—and, despite its derivativeness, gets better as your goodie bag of tricks expands over the game's five long missions.

As an agent from hell, you are endowed with special powers that just so happen to provide the exact solutions to every obstacle thrown at you. A right-click unleashes a blast of demonic firepower, but requires mana, which only regenerates in darkness. The power of telekinesis (this game's version



HOW COME I CAN TAKE 50 BULLETS TO THE HEAD, BUT I DIE FROM ONE 3-FOOT-JUMP INTO WATER?

of the gravity gun) lets you move objects from a great distance—including dead bodies that you can then use to siphon health and ammo back to yourself. Best of all is teleportation, which lets you temporarily transport yourself to normally inaccessible places, as well as sneak up behind enemies—both of which figure heavily in the game's puzzles and boss fights. Near the end of mission three, *Infernal* throws a timed puzzle at you that is essentially an obstacle course of everything you've learned so far, and it's quite satisfying to finish. On the other hand, a number of puzzles lack adequate clues and internal logic, meaning lots of guesswork and luck, or constant visits to message boards (or, in my case, calls to the company). And here's one more gripe: How come I can take 50 bullets to the head, but I die from one 3-foot jump into water?

So it's not going to win any awards. And the lack of multiplayer plus the linear gameplay means minimal replay value. But *Infernal* is just clever enough to warrant a mild recommendation to shooter fans looking for a fix. Just don't expect any miracles. • **Jeff Green**

### VERDICT

• **Some clever tricks; purty-looking graphics.**

• **Poor A.I.; not enough feedback/hints; lame story; horrid dialogue.**

6/10

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