



# Alien: Isolation

*Tension continues to rise in this sci-fi survival-horror game*

★ **Platform:** PlayStation 4 • Xbox One • PlayStation 3 • Xbox 360 • PC ★ **Style:** 1-Player Action ★ **Publisher:** Sega ★ **Developer:** The Creative Assembly ★ **Release:** October 7

**L**ast time I was in Sevastopol Station, I didn't have any tools to keep me alive as a xenomorph did its best to track me down. Staying silent and out of sight was the only viable approach, since this isn't a game about taking on the alien head-on, strapped with weapons. The latest playable demo didn't change that core philosophy – if anything, it helped reinforce just how helpless it feels to be hunted.

I was dropped into a challenge mode, where I had to make it through a section of the decommissioned station's living quarters, gathering victims' dog tags along the way. In my first attempt, I ignored the ominous pings from my ever-present motion tracker and made

a beeline toward the first waypoint. That worked out as well as you might imagine. After a few seconds, my sprint was interrupted as the xenomorph lunged and killed me.

Next, I took a more methodical approach. I grabbed some crafting components from a nearby table, as well as a flare. As I inched through a doorway, I spied the creature at the far end of a corridor. It didn't see me, so I thought it would be a great time to distract it. I flicked the flare into life, and threw the sputtering tube into the corner nearest the xeno. My plan was to run down the opposite hallway while its attention was temporarily diverted. That didn't work, either. I don't know if it saw me light the

flare, if it spotted its origin, or if there was something else going on altogether. All I can say for certain is that I learned Amanda Ripley can't outrun an alien, and that hiding in a locker only works if you get in there undetected. I was in the locker for an instant before being unceremoniously yanked out and killed again.

The creature's spawning location seemed to be random in the demo, which ramped up what was already a tense experience. Couple that with the creature's cunning A.I., and *Isolation* has all the ingredients necessary to generate plenty of survival-horror memories.

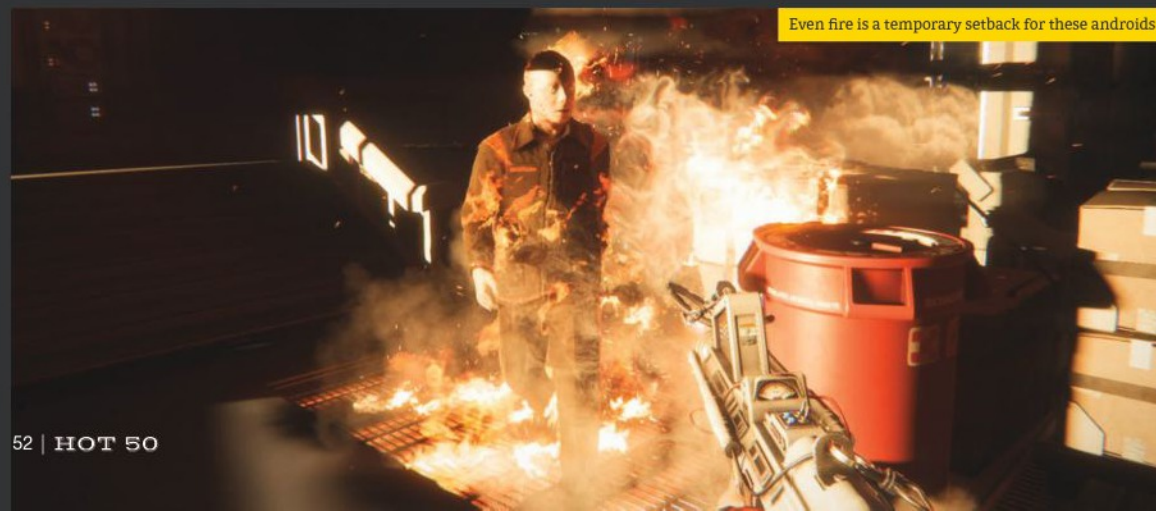
Sega showed off some other elements of the game in a non-interactive presentation. We've known that crafting would

play a part in *Alien: Isolation*, but I hadn't seen it in action until this second demo. Amanda can combine various components to create a variety of useful items, such as med kits and tools to distract the xenomorph or other enemies. That's right – you aren't only in danger of being attacked by a ridiculously powerful alien. Sevastopol Station is also host to a number of survivors and androids. Some of these inhabitants provide aid, or only want to be left alone. Others, however, are so traumatized by the alien's attacks that they've become (or are programmed to be) hostile.

The synthetic humans are particularly fearsome opponents. Even though the Weyland-Yutani knockoffs aren't as sophisticated as their brand-name counterparts, they're able to detect Amanda and are keen to enforce security protocols. In the demo, I watched an android relentlessly follow her even after being attacked and set alight with a flamethrower. She was only able to destroy the machine after using an EMP grenade to stun it, following up with a decisive melee attack.

Everything I've seen (and played) of the game so far points to a fiercely accurate adaptation of the classic *Alien* film. Even surrounded by the din of E3, I couldn't help but feel startled and vulnerable by *Alien: Isolation* – I can't wait to see how the atmosphere holds up at home.

★ **Jeff Cork**



Even fire is a temporary setback for these androids