

# Sony brings virtual reality to the mainstream

While the Oculus Rift and the HTC Vive have made people sit up and take notice as to what virtual reality headsets are and what their great potential could be, with the launch of the PlayStation VR, Sony gets ready to put its headset into the ring. For the mainstream gaming audience, this will likely be the first moment they actually have to start thinking about buying one of these gadgets.

Launching Oct. 13, the PS VR headset costs \$549 in Canada. For an additional \$129 you can also shell out for a pair of PS Move controllers, which allow better control in some games. The PS VR also requires a PS4 and a PS Camera to work.

Sony has promised there will be 30 games available at launch, with another 20 coming by the end of 2016. For review purposes, the company sent out a sampling of 11 games including PlayStation VR Worlds, a set of games that comes

with the launch bundle. Those games can also be bought separately for \$39.99. They feature five experiences that show the headset's capabilities and the potential future of VR.

Out of the box, it is a much easier setup than the HTC Vive. For that device, you have to mount cameras around the space you plan to play in. For the PS VR, Sony's camera has to sit on top of or in front of the TV.

There are a lot of USB cables, so it is a bit messy in front of the console. In terms of space requirements, you need to be sitting or standing between two and six feet away from the camera. I found a sweet spot of about five feet away from the TV, so I had to do a bit of rearranging, such as moving my coffee table.

That said, sometimes when I leaned back I would be out of range, which prompts an onscreen warning, so the camera can be a

bit finicky. As with all VR headsets, you need to clear out the space around you so that you don't hit anything while you're jacked into The Matrix.

The 11 games I was given to check out were a good reality check of where VR is right now. The headsets are clunky, glasses still get smushed against your face, and the immersive visuals can be jaw-dropping.

In terms of control schemes, some of the games just use the headset, so you can control the experience by moving your head. But most utilize the familiar Dual Shock PS4 controller which is generally visible inside of the game, so you can visualize the buttons or the Move controllers, which come closest to fine motor control. You can pick things up, toss Batarangs and since these are video games, obviously shoot guns, although this is an area that Sony's competitors cur-

rently have them beat on.

What was also interesting is seeing how developers decide to deal with some of the issues with VR games. For one, while a few of the games said a standing position would be best, the majority of the games were a seated experience.

You can also see some of the video-game design problems with the VR genre, such as whether you see your virtual body when you look down, or just a set of floating hands. As well, both in reality and online, the experience is incredibly anti-social right now, and rudimentary compared to traditional games.

And while the headset is fairly comfortable, it does start to feel cumbersome after a while.

There is a nice variety of games at launch, including physics-based puzzlers such as a block-stacking puzzle game called Tumble VR; a choice of shooters, such as amusement-park horror-themed Until

Dawn: Rush of Blood; and interesting arty experiences such as Wayward Sky, which calls itself a look-and-click adventure.

PlayStation VR Worlds is likely going to be the Wii Sports for PS VR and it has a good batch of experiences, including an underwater adventure called The London Heist, a gangster based shoot-em up, and VR Luge, which has you lugging down a street. My stomach would jump when we hit a ramp in the game.

For hardcore gamers, Batman Arkham VR is a draw, but this is where the buyer should pay close attention to reviews. The main game is about an hour long. It's well done, and fans of the previous games in the series will enjoy it, like I did, but it's very likely some gamers will feel that the Canadian price of \$29.99 is too expensive for such a short experience.

-Torstar News Service

## Seasonal Inspiration!



All Season  
*Custom*  
Design Service

Order your winter custom design today!

# Sheridan Nurseries

12266 Tenth Line | Tel: 905-873-7547



**Specials from Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> to Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup>**

Go to our website & sign up to receive our store specials by email: [www.macmillans.ca](http://www.macmillans.ca)

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK. M-F 9am-7pm Sat. 10am-6pm Sun 10am-5pm Like us on Facebook!

<p><b>Carvers Choice Bacon</b></p> <p>(reg. \$3.99) <b>\$1.99!</b></p>	<p><b>IQF Brussel Sprouts</b></p> <p>(reg. \$3.99) <b>\$2.99!</b></p>
<p><b>16/20 Black Tiger Shrimp</b></p> <p>(reg. \$16.99 ea.) <b>\$13.99!</b> <b>\$38.99!</b> <small>cooked, peeled and deveined</small></p>	<p><b>Apple Dumplings!</b></p> <p>(reg. \$9.99!) <b>\$4.99!</b></p>

A Large Assortment Of Appetizers On Sale Now! To Many To List! See Store For Details

**SENIORS 10% OFF EVERY WEDNESDAY**  
(REG. PRICED MERCHANDISE, CASH & DEBIT ONLY)

**NOW 2 locations to serve you!**

**HWY. 7, 1 MILE WEST OF ACTON**  
519.853.0311 1(800) 387.4039

**715 WELLINGTON ST. W., GUELPH**  
519.265.5592

## United Way Halton Hills

### Notice of Special Membership Meeting

**Wednesday, January 4, 2017 at 6:30 pm**

Notice is hereby given that a Special Meeting of Members of United Way Halton Hills will take place at St. John's United Church, 11 Guelph Street, Georgetown for the following purposes:

- To vote on an amalgamation between United Ways, Burlington & Greater Hamilton, Oakville, Milton and Halton Hills
- To transact other such business as may properly come before the Meeting.

For more information or a proxy form, please contact:

**United Way Halton Hills**

Email: [unitedwayhh@bellnet.ca](mailto:unitedwayhh@bellnet.ca) • Phone: 905 877-3066

**United Way**  
Halton Hills  
Change starts here.