

Witching Hour

Pitch Document

By Mark Kawucha

An ancient evil stirs, darkness returns to the world. Take up what weapons you can and fight back against the ever-growing tide of hellish beasts, necrotic death cultists, and nightmarish aberrations. Combine forgotten magicks and mysterious technologies as you journey in search of the source of this malevolence. It is up to you to brave untold horrors and stop it once and for all, lest the earth be scorched and cursed 'til naught but an empty husk remains.

“Don’t fear the night. Fear what comes with it.”

Witching Hour is a 2D side scrolling game that combines elements of action, adventure and RPG games. While being primarily a platforming style game, there is a large variety of additional game play elements, including a loot drop system, dungeon crawling, character advancement, crafting, and even an editor for user-generated content! The primary goal of these systems working in tandem is to provide a tailored experience for each player, across a wide variety of preferred playstyles.

In **Witching Hour**, you play as **Sol**, the last descendant of a long-forgotten sect of Templars called the **Night’s Vigil**. This group made a vow hundreds of years ago to rid the world of evil and swore to see that it never returned. An evil cult known as the **Stygian Coven**, consisting of the most powerful mages from across the land uncovered an ominous relic and used it to gain immense power, turning the wildlife into beasts, and fellow man into monstrosity. These two factions battled against each other for decades, and the casualties were high. Eventually, both sides fell and the surviving Templars sealed the relic away, never to fall into enemy hands again. Now, one hundred years later, the **Night’s Vigil** is no more, and all has remained calm. Rumor has it however, that the mages have risen once again, and the dark artifact’s maddening hum can be heard for miles. Sol is humanity’s last hope, and it’s his duty to hunt down the relic and destroy it permanently, before it unmakes all of creation.

Gameplay and its diversity in Witching Hour is the most important aspect of the game. A breadth of varying content means there is always something for everyone, and players will be able to play through the game in their own way. Perhaps the biggest factor in regards to this would be the day/night cycle. While having such a mechanic is commonplace in today's games, there would be a crucial difference in Witching Hour. When the night comes, humanoid enemies transform into beasts, and the wildlife gets temporarily buffed, creating a dynamic difficulty change that can be ignored via resting in the main hub, or attempted for the chance at better loot and more rewards. Currency and materials can be used to craft new items, weapons and armor at the main hub, and experience points can be spent to increase your characters attributes. All of these things can be found as drops from monsters, or in dungeons.

Dungeons are a great feature, as they appear in every level, and exist solely as completely optional content. They are randomly generated, and the experience changes each time you enter one. Inside one can find tougher enemies, deadlier traps, more intricate puzzles and of course, treasure which can be more powerful equipment and materials. Since these dungeons are optional, players can choose when and where they want to dungeon crawl, completely at their own leisure. The level editor would take advantage of this system and let players create their own dungeons of any size, with unique features and content that they can then share with their friends. This creates a lot of replayability and would increase the longevity of the game by a significant amount.

Witching Hour is fun because it has something to offer every player. Whether you're somebody that loves puzzle solving and extrinsic thinking, or someone that wants to cut down every foe in your path to get some of the best gear you can, there is no shortage of content to stay engaged with during the time you play the game. The possibilities created via the editor can provide a host of new gameplay types and challenges which can include (but are not limited to):

- Parkour style levels (extreme platforming)
- Horde style levels (surviving against ever increasingly difficult waves of enemies)
- Player vs. Player combat

Since there is a melding of multiple systems, both old and new, Witching Hour is the perfect game for those looking for nostalgic gameplay mechanics from retro 2D side scrolling games, as well as those who like the modern day approach to some of the content, such as the RPG elements as well as the dungeon crawling and custom content capabilities. Witching Hour takes mechanics that have been proven to be successful and adds a plethora of depth to them. There are features that will be interesting to fans of critically acclaimed games such as the Castlevania and Diablo series, to Minecraft and Terraria, and everything in between, and what sets Witching Hour apart from all of those is the ability to control how you play. You can choose what you want to do and when, creating an ever changing experience, each and every time.

