

PUBG Creator Brendan Greene Says He “Expected” Early Backlash to Prologue — But Steam Reviews Are Rising Fast

Inside the vision, controversy, and early-access philosophy behind PlayerUnknown’s new survival sandbox

When *Prologue*, the long-anticipated survival project from Brendan “PlayerUnknown” Greene, quietly launched on Steam Early Access, many players were surprised—and not all of them pleasantly. Greene, best known as the creator of **PUBG**, had teased the game nearly six years ago at The Game Awards 2019 with a brief but atmospheric clip of a storm-ravaged forest. That 20-second snippet introduced the public to his new studio, PlayerUnknown Productions, and hinted at an experience far different from the high-octane battle royale he’s famous for.

Now that *Prologue* is playable, Greene says the feeling is “exciting and relieving” after years of development. But the final game looks very different from what some players expected. With its **millions of procedurally generated map seeds**, a lack of questing or NPCs, and an emphasis on pure wilderness survival, *Prologue* leans toward a minimalist design philosophy rarely seen in modern survival titles. Unlike big names in the genre, you won’t find base-building progression paths, enemy factions, or narrative elements. Instead, it is simply **you versus nature**, armed only with basic tools and your own ingenuity.

A Simple Game With Complex Technology—and a Divisive First Impression

Despite deceptively straightforward mechanics, *Prologue* relies on sophisticated technology under the hood. During a hands-on preview earlier this year, it became clear that Greene’s team was aiming for something ambitious: a survival sandbox that resists gamification, invites experimentation, and pushes players to create their own stories.

But this design direction also raised concerns. Would modern players accept a game intentionally devoid of traditional structure? Could a survival game succeed without typical hooks like missions or visible progression?

When *Prologue* launched, the Steam user reviews quickly reflected this tension. The game initially hovered at a “**Mixed**” rating, with many complaints centered around one sentiment: *the*

game feels empty. For some fans, that “emptiness” is precisely the point, but others expected more content out of the gate.

Greene, however, wasn’t surprised in the slightest.

“I kind of expected that,” he says. “It’s not built like a traditional single-player game with quests or missions. It’s a set of systems meant to let you craft your own adventure. You’re playing against yourself more than anything else.”

Instead of frustration, Greene expresses gratitude toward his team for their rapid response. “We got two hot fixes out in the first week,” he notes, adding that an upcoming update will introduce **new items like batteries** along with other early improvements. Impressively, the review score jumped from about **55% to 70% in just over a week**, a turnaround that Greene attributes to both development responsiveness and a growing understanding of what the game is supposed to be.

Prologue’s Early Access Strategy: A Return to What Early Access Was Meant to Be

Although early access releases have become standard in the industry, *Prologue* reaches the public **earlier than most developers would dare**. It currently features three modes and endless replayability through procedural generation, but it lacks many of the systems players typically expect at launch.

When asked whether the meaning of “early access” has been diluted in recent years, Greene offers a diplomatic but pointed perspective.

“There’s a tendency to use early access or open betas to release what is essentially a full game,” he explains. “If it doesn’t do well, that’s the end—there’s no roadmap, no commitment to building with the community.”

Greene believes this pattern is especially common among larger studios. While he praises indie developers for adhering to the spirit of early access, he criticizes the industry-wide shift toward treating early access as a convenient label for incomplete but otherwise “finished” games.

Instead, Greene views early access as a collaborative development phase.

“It should be used to work with the community,” he says. “We wanted to find the fun alongside players, not dictate what the fun should be.”

This philosophy mirrors the early days of **PUBG**, when the community played a crucial role in shaping the game’s meta, rules, and emergent challenges.

Player-Driven Survival Stories Are Already Emerging

Even at this early stage, *Prologue* players are crafting their own survival narratives—some bordering on superhuman endurance runs.

In the game's most punishing mode, **Objective: Survive**, cabins are removed (these normally act as safe resting points), replaced with minimal shelter. You're tasked solely with staying alive for as long as possible while battling hunger, storms, and environmental hazards.

According to Greene, one community member has already reached **18 or 19 in-game days**, a feat made even more impressive given the harsh weather and lack of protective structures.

Other players are imposing their own challenges, such as **no-clothing runs**, which are essentially instant death sentences whenever a blizzard blows in. This emergent difficulty is precisely the kind of player-generated gameplay Greene hoped would arise.

The studio encourages these experiments, too. Every week, PlayerUnknown Productions posts a new **map seed challenge** in their Discord server, asking players to find the shortest route between the starting cabin and the central weather tower. These self-imposed goals echo the creative stunts from PUBG's heyday, when fans attempted to win games using only frying pans or other gimmicks.

What Comes Next: More Updates, More Community Input, and Project Artemis

Greene hints that this is only the beginning for *Prologue*. The early access phase will continue to evolve with feedback-informed updates, new systems, and expanded survival options.

Additionally, Greene's long-term vision extends far beyond *Prologue* alone. He mentions **Project Artemis**, his ambitious project aimed at generating massive, planet-sized virtual worlds—a stepping stone toward his interpretation of a dynamic, community-driven metaverse.

Prologue, in many ways, is the testing ground for the technological and design concepts that Artemis will eventually use.

Final Thoughts: A Bold Survival Game That Rejects Convenience for Creativity

Greene's willingness to embrace criticism, invite community experimentation, and defend a less traditional survival design reflects a confidence in his long-term vision. While *Prologue* may challenge player expectations, its rising Steam rating, active community, and emerging stories suggest that many people are starting to understand what Greene is trying to achieve.

In a gaming landscape where early access often means "unfinished but feature-complete," *Prologue* stands as a reminder of what early access was intended to be:

a collaborative journey between developers and players to build something unique, ambitious, and driven by discovery rather than direction.