

PERMADEATH: SPEEDRUN

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<https://vimeo.com/199218711/c3ea84a080>

<https://youtu.be/khYDoXw-Tz0>

Videogames often have a difficult relationship with death. On the one hand it is generally portrayed, narratively, as the ultimate disaster for a player's character. On the other hand, mechanically death tends not to be the end at all, but rather merely one of many brief stops on the road through a linear story or toward a never-ending pursuit of points. In a permadeath run, one plays a game by agreeing to stop playing

immediately upon death, “resurrecting” the power of death as the final word. In a speedrun, one tries to finish a game as fast as possible. In a permadeath speedrun, one uses the idea that a death “finishes” a permadeath playing to complete a game very quickly indeed by actively seeking death. In doing so, games reveal themselves in strange ways. New approaches to play are required in order to find a swift death, and new stories are told as we contemplate the potential narrative framing of such play. In their opposition to conventional play, permadeath speedruns highlight the conventions themselves, while also telling us something about mortality in the land of videogames.