

GAMER GUIDE

SONS OF
THE FOREST
EDITION



the need to know you didn't know you needed



WHAT IS IT?



Sons of the Forest is a survival video game developed by Endnight Games and published by Newnight. It is the sequel to the 2018 video game *The Forest*, and was released via early access on February 23, 2023.

SONS OF THE FOREST

Similarly to *The Forest*, *Sons of the Forest* puts players in control of a protagonist stranded on an island inhabited by cannibals. Players can build weapons and buildings to aid in their survival. New to the game are friendly NPCs. The game supports up to eight-player cooperative multiplayer, though players can also opt to play the game solo.

BREAKDOWN THE BASICS

The *Sons of the Forest* gameplay is built on *The Forest*'s open world survival game where you use the weapons and tools you craft to survive and fight back cannibal mutants. You'll be able to play solo or in co-op multiplayer sessions.

Much like *The Forest*, this sequel will focus heavily on crafting, cooking, and combat – the latter of which has been massively expanded to encompass more weapon types. Guns will be more prevalent, although ammunition will be limited, so *Sons of the Forest* will have a melee-focus.



Mechanics



There are a few different places you can begin your survival journey in *Sons of the Forest*, and if you don't like where you start, you can simply restart the game! For the best head start, we'd recommend beginning a run where you crash land in the forest. It's right in the middle of the action and conveniently located next to some of the most important points of interest and underground caves for key items.

The first thing you'll pick up before you even take control of your character is the crafting mat (with a nifty backpack included), as well as an emergency pack. Press I and open up the crafting mat, then hover over the emergency pack and get your hands on your starting equipment.

Inside you'll find:

- A GPS tracker
- A lighter
- An axe
- A survival handbook that shows you how to create structures

Your GPS tracker will act as your map. Simply press M to open this up and see the points of interest around your starting position. You can begin the game in different starting locations, but the items, resources, and equipment will be in the same underground caves or points of interest.

Your backpack can be used as a quick menu now for items, so open the crafting mat by tapping I, go over to your backpack and you can pick and choose what to have quick access to. Hold I to bring up this Quick Pack and avoid having to open the crafting mat fully each time.

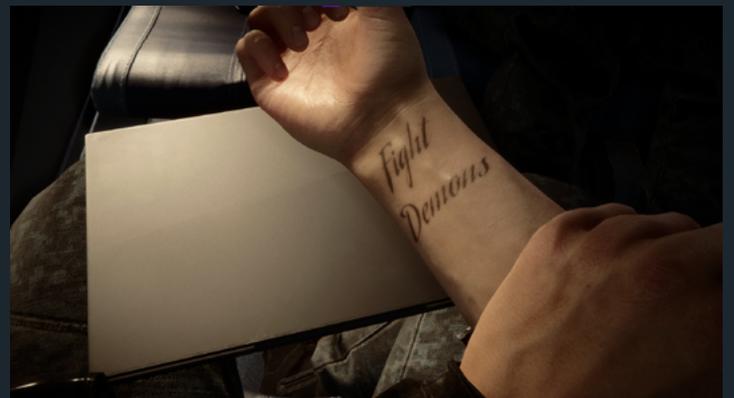


Companions

One of the more significant changes between *The Forest* and *Sons of the Forest* is a new AI system dubbed 'V.A.I.L.' – a tool which governs the NPC behaviour. Characters will be impacted by hunger, thirst, and their mental state, which can alter their routines and reactions to events.

Enemies will also have their own ecosystems, with your actions helping to influence whether mutants are more likely to stick to the network of underground caves or roam the wilds above; the developer has also teased that the cannibals will find expansive ways to coordinate their attacks, and that you can even use fear as a weapon against them if you're smart with your resources.

There are also *Sons of the Forest* companions that you can get to help you out by issuing commands. These AI helpers can gather resources and do other time-consuming jobs, which will help you out a lot in your survival efforts.





Collecting Resources

From the moment you wake up, wherever you've landed, you'll find some suitcases you can open up. The game makes it clear that collecting resources immediately is key, and anyone who has played The Forest will know that the more you get hold of, the better your shelter, exploration, and combat can become.

As you begin to pick up these initial items, you'll unlock crafting recipes. Whatever direction you decide to set off in, pick up everything you find along the way until you can carry no more — this will be essential for building your first base/shelter as the first night draws to a close.

Once you've started to make your base, you'll want to make plenty of storage racks for rocks, logs, bones, and more. This will ensure you have a good supply at all times and can continue to expand the base.



Building & Crafting

Sons of the Forest will feature more robust cooking, crafting, and building systems. Endnight has introduced a digging mechanic, and the ability to use a 3D printer to create more elaborate and complex items – be it to help aid your survival, or to create different coloured objects to help you stand out from your friends in multiplayer sessions.

Building will still be a core focus in *Sons of the Forest*, and you should expect a more grounded series of systems to help further immerse you in the world. For example, if you want to add a window to the base you're building, just pull out your axe and chop in the space for one; spears are created by sharpening wood, and campfires are created by snapping twigs and lighting them. *Sons of the Forest* is still a survival horror game at heart, so managing your resources and conditions will still be key, even as more challenging crafting systems are implemented.

On your crafting mat, you'll be able to see all of your equipment, items, and resources. You can craft recipes here including Weapons such as bows, clubs, and spears.

The cog on the right-hand side of the crafting area will show a red exclamation mark when you have a new recipe you can make from the resources you've gathered. It's also easy to see what you can't combine, as once you add an item to the crafting area, anything that's not compatible will be greyed out.

Need to make multiple items? No problem! You don't need to make one at a time anymore. Throw on multiple resources, and you can just keep clicking on the cog to make those recipes.

Opening the handbook allows you to craft structures and shows you two methods of crafting. There's a quick way you can make structures, fires, and shelter, and a method that's similar to *The Forest*, which allows you to put down pre-built structures and simply find the resources needed to complete them.





Quick Crafting

Use this method when you need to quickly set up a tarp as a shelter, or create a fire to roast some meat. Your guidebook will give you step-by-step diagrams to show you how to quickly create structures.

Creating a fire, for example, now only requires you to equip a stick, and then point it at the ground. You'll then see a little outline of where the sticks will be placed for a fire, and you'll simply snap them and throw them on the ground. You can add sticks to the fire, but be careful where you place them as fire can spread in this game.

This method is also what you'll need to use to free build. You can equip a log, for example, then lay it on the ground to start building a foundation for your base. Change the orientation by clicking the right mouse button, and you can start to craft a wall. Turn it into a spiked fence by simply chopping away at the top of the logs. Or create a door, by building a wall of logs, and then cutting away at the middle section. There's plenty to play with in this crafting mode, to get your base exactly how you want it.

For some structures, like flooring, you'll need half logs or smaller. Luckily, you just need to gather logs for this and they'll automatically be cut down to size, depending on where you place them. If you use them for flooring, the logs will automatically be cut in two. If you don't like what you've made or you've made a mistake, just press C to dismantle your creation.

Pre-Built Structures

If you've played The Forest, or you're just not a fan of free building, you can switch the crafting mode to pre-built structures. These include shelter, fires, traps, and storage. When you're in this mode, just find the place you want to place your structure, and the outline will appear. You'll then have the number of resources required displayed on the left side of the HUD. Remember to use your AI companion here to help you gather items quickly.



Cooking & Health

You no longer need to cycle through loads of options to cook! When you've set up a fire, all you have to do is press E to open the pack that will show you everything you can throw onto the fire. Have some meat that's rotten and want to get rid of it? Open your crafting mat and right-click to drop these items.

When the cannibals start to show up and follow you around, you'll want to dispose of them on the fire as well. This will give you bones that will allow you to craft bone armour, amongst other things.

You'll find meds along the way, but you'll want to be conservative with them. Instead, take the time to replenish your health with food. Some food will rot, so you'll want to use this first and keep the noodles, cereals, and energy bars for when you're really desperate. Plus, it's easier to get armour in this game, particularly from the mutants who can be skinned for creepy armour.

Combat

You'll encounter plenty of cannibals and mutants in the underground caves, but eventually, the cannibals will start to come and find you and emerge from below. Around the day 4 mark, you can expect more and more cannibals to start stalking you through the forest.

Take the first few days as exploration days, and spend time building your base. During the initial day or two, the cannibals will tend to leave you alone, and just watch you. Don't engage with them at this point, to keep them from attacking for longer.

As the first week draws to a close, it'll be essential to start putting down defences and laying traps. They'll begin to attack you and your base, doing significant damage quickly. At this point, you'll want a repair tool, and your storage racks full to keep your base in good condition.

Environment



Across the map, there is an array of items waiting to be discovered. The nice thing about *Sons of the Forest* is that you start off with a GPS tracker, which comes with a few key areas of interest already highlighted. Open the GPS tracker by pressing M, to see the map. Then press the middle mouse button to zoom in and out and see these points of interest.

- The green pulsing points show points of interest
- The white icons show you where the caves are
- Purple icons are where you can find GPS trackers and key items from team members

Visit all of these points and you'll be well-equipped in no time. We'd recommend beginning with the green pulsing points of interest and the purple icons before you venture off into the caves. These caves can be long and full of mutants and cannibals - you'll want to make sure you're properly equipped before you dive into these.

Below we'll explain each of the major points of interest in more detail, and why it's important for players to complete them in the order shown above.

Spawn Points

As you may know by now, there are three different possible spawn points in *Sons of the Forest*, so when you start a new game, you may not always begin in the same location. Of the three possible spawns, the beach spawn is probably the worst because it's the farthest away from the starting items which you should prioritise collecting in your first day or two. But otherwise, there's not much difference between the three spawns.



Modern Axe

The first thing you should do in most playthroughs of *Sons of the Forest* is to collect the Modern Axe. It's unguarded by enemies, and is a significant step up from the Tactical Axe you start with, both in tree-chopping and mutant-chopping effectiveness. Follow our guide to find exactly how to get the Modern Axe in *Sons of the Forest*.

Flashlight

The Flashlight is another entirely unguarded and excellent early item, and it's not far from the Modern Axe so you should consider picking it up on your first day. The location is already marked on your map by one of the three purple markers, so it's easy to find, and once you cut down the corpse hanging from the cliff there, you'll be able to light up caves much more easily with your newfound torch.

Machete

A fantastic early weapon, the Machete can be found on the north coast of the island - just about the only plus point that the northern beach spawn has going for it. Once again, it's undefended, which means you can beeline straight to the Machete on day one, and end the day with an excellent weapon that will serve you well into the mid-game.

Stun Baton

While the Machete is great for killing ordinary mutants, it's not ideal for taking on the bigger club-wielding cannibals or the more dangerous cave-dwelling mutants. That's why your next stop should be next to the marked waterfall on the map, where you'll find the Stun Baton sticking out of a pile of skulls. It's not great at actually killing enemies, but by holding left-click it can deliver a shock that paralyzes targets, allowing you to quickly switch to another more lethal weapon and finish them off safely.



Slingshot & Shovel

Head to the next cave near the mountaintop spawn, and interact with one of the corpses outside the entrance to get the Slingshot - a weak but reliable ranged weapon that uses pebbles instead of ammo to inflict damage. Then enter the cave, and you'll need to use both the Rope Gun and the Rebreather to navigate its depths until you reach the very end and come across the all-important Shovel. Don't bother trying to progress beyond this point without picking up the Shovel, because you'll need it for nearly everything that follows.

Shotgun

It's finally time to tackle that third purple marker. Now that you have the Shovel, head to this location and dig up the body buried underground next to the cross. It's well worth doing this, because you'll find probably the strongest weapon in the game - the old reliable Shotgun. You can either keep it with you for messy cave encounters, or hand it over to Virginia to turn her into the ultimate base defender.

Maintenance Keycard & Firefighter's Axe

The next few markers involve picking up the unique *Sons of the Forest* Keycards dotted about the northwest of the island, and you have to do it in this order, because the first card unlocks the second, and the second unlocks the third. Use your Shovel to dig down and reveal the hatch entrance to this underground complex. A quick jaunt through the complex will reward you with the Maintenance Keycard, and the Firefighter's Axe - the largest, slowest, and strongest of all the axes in the game.

VIP Keycard & Crossbow

With the Maintenance Keycard, you can finally return to an area you may have come across already - the green dot which marks a short cave that leads down into a pantry filled with food items. Unlock the door leading out from this pantry and you'll enter a more dangerous area which rewards you at the end with the VIP Keycard and the Crossbow - a powerful ranged weapon which you can use when you want to conserve bullets.

Guest Keycard, Guitar & Chainsaw

Now you can obtain the final Keycard in the game by heading to the location marked "13" on the map above, which incidentally is the same place you found the 3D Printer way back when. With the VIP Keycard you can unlock a much larger section of this underground area, and by slowly fighting your way through the enemies there you'll be able to find the Guest Keycard. You'll also find two new weapons (technically) down here: the Guitar, and the Chainsaw.

Compound Bow

This marker isn't essential, but if you're looking to round off your list of bulletless ranged weapons then the Compound Bow represents a significant step up from the basic crafted bow. It's a fair trek south to reach Maintenance Hatch B where the Compound Bow is kept - but there's also another 3D Printer here for you to help sweeten the deal.

Revolver

The most fun ranged weapon in the game in my opinion, the Revolver is a late-game, uber-powerful handgun that you'll have to travel far to the East to obtain. Technically all you need in order to get the Revolver is the Shovel, but it makes sense to do all of the tasks on this side of the island at once. It's a very easy item to get, too - just dig up the hatch, head inside, and you'll find it waiting for you in the first room.

Katana + Golden Armor

Things are starting to heat up now story-wise. Head to this cave on the southeast of the map, and you'll get to enjoy your first story cutscene since your crash at the beginning of the game. Fight your way through the mutants in this complex, and you'll be well rewarded with the Katana - an excellent late-game melee weapon - and the Golden Armor and Golden Helmet, both of which are required to complete the final marker.

Final Bunker

And here we are, at the *Sons of the Forest* ending. Head to this location after obtaining the Golden Armor (and preferably the Cross too, from marker #8), and you'll be able to reach the current end of the game. We won't spoil it here, so click the link to learn more about what happens here if you're interested!



TIPS & TRICKS



Loot the crash site

Just like *The Forest*, the helicopter's crash site in *Sons of the Forest* is scattered with belongings and items that were also up in the air with you. Before moving on and finding food or the perfect space for your base, be sure to loot everything here. Have a good rummage across the snow to be sure you don't miss anything; you can find food and water to keep you going until you've built your base, medicine, crafting materials, ammo, and more. Either way, search it all now so you need not waste time later; this stuff will come in handy.

Set up camp near a river

If you want an easily-accessible water source at all times so you and the crew never go thirsty, build nearby a river. Players can drink fresh water and stave off their thirst by drinking water from rivers. Use your GPS tracker to find a river if you're already getting lost around the island.

Keep Kelvin around

Kelvin is a little strange. As our only friend on the island right now, he can't actually hear us or speak to us, but he will gladly accept our hand-written orders and help us out. As tempting as it might be to kill him off, he isn't bothering anyone, so consider having a little mercy on Kelvin. He can collect wood for you, fish away for food, and all the other boring stuff you don't actually want to do yourself. You'll meet other companions later, if you aren't the biggest fan of Kelvin. We just don't recommend killing him off because once he's gone, he's gone for good.



CONCLUSION

Sons of the Forest doesn't hold your hand, nor does it give you much guidance on what you should be doing. This is part of what makes it, and its predecessor, *The Forest*, so great. That said, if you're looking to survive, you'll want to bear a few things in mind.