

# BATTLEFIELD

Welcome to Architectural Warfare • Words: Nick Pino

**E**very first-person shooter series has a gimmick. For Halo, it's the sci-fi weaponry and exclusivity to the Xbox platform. For Call of Duty, it's the quick-trigger kills and spectacularly cinematic action sequences. But for Battlefield, it's always been about the multiplayer, above everything else: the 12-on-12 matches (16-on-16 if you're a PC player), the ease of jumping in and out of a diverse fleet of vehicles, and the gorgeous, impossibly large maps.

These elements are taken to an even greater extreme with Battlefield 4's multiplayer. The map I recently sampled, "Siege of Shanghai," provided one of the most intense multiplayer matches I've ever had—a massive 32-on-32 Domination game set in a war-torn cityscape, skyscrapers and all. As in previous Battlefield games, you're

allowed to spawn at any base your team has captured or on any vehicle with an open slot. By choosing the latter, I condemned myself to an early death, landing in a Humvee that was stuck directly in an opposing tank's line of fire. However, it didn't need to go down this way. Battlefield 4 employs an improved spawning system that lets you "look before you leap," giving you a real-time view of the area where you'll appear before you make your pick.

In addition, the four main classes from Battlefield 3 make a return: Assault, the group's heavy lifter and combat unit; Recon, a solitary sniper-type unit; Support, the wildcard wielding a light-machine gun; and Engineer, the maintainers/destroyers of your/your enemy's vehicles. The three factions are China, Russia, and the United States.



Though these classes and other familiar mechanics remain the same, it's the second-screen integration of Commander Mode (see the "Eye in the Sky" sidebar at right) and the reality-emulating Frostbite 3 engine that bring Battlefield into the next generation of gaming. After my match commander directed us to seize and bring down the map's central building, we watched in soot-covered awe as the entire 400,000-ton destructible skyscraper—the same one I'd just been standing inside of—crumbled to the ground. Now that's an impressive gimmick. ☐

