

# Mastering The Last of Us Part II Remastered: The Path to Maximum Weapon Upgrades

When I first booted up The Last of Us Part II Remastered on a fresh Grounded+ save, I knew I was in for a long, punishing ride. The game already demands careful resource management and precise combat on lower difficulties. On Grounded+, every bullet counts and every encounter can spiral into disaster with one wrong move. That is where the upgrade system becomes absolutely critical. Over the course of my No Damage Run, I learned that pursuing maximum weapon upgrades is not just about having the biggest arsenal. It is about tailoring your tools to survive the relentless pressure that Naughty Dog throws at you.

## Why Upgrades Matter More Than Ever

On standard difficulty levels, you can get by with a half-upgraded weapon and a few skill tree points. You might even find yourself hoarding upgrade parts for a weapon you never use. Grounded+ changes that calculus entirely. Enemies hit harder, spot you faster, and rarely miss. Ammo is scarce. The difference between a base Semiautomatic Pistol and one with a fully upgraded Stun Upgrade is the difference between a clean takedown and a desperate scramble. When you are aiming for a No Damage Run, even a single graze resets hours of progress. That pressure forces you to think about each upgrade decision as a life-or-death investment.

The upgrade system in The Last of Us Part II Remastered is deceptively deep. Each weapon has multiple upgrade slots, and every upgrade costs scarce upgrade parts. You find these parts scattered across Seattle, hidden in Toolbox caches and tucked away in side rooms. An All Collectibles run will naturally uncover most of them, but even then, you cannot upgrade everything. You have to choose. That choice is exactly where the concept of [maximum weapon upgrades](#) becomes a strategy rather than a checklist.

## The Upgrade Bench and Your Toolbox

Every Weapon Upgrade Bench you find is a moment of relief. These workbenches are scattered throughout the campaign, usually right before a major combat encounter. They let you spend your hard-earned parts and scrap. The menu shows every weapon you carry, with each upgrade slot clearly marked. You can see the stat improvements in real time: damage, rate of fire, reload speed, stability. The game does a good job of showing you what you are getting, but it never tells you what to prioritize. That is where experience comes in.

In my 4K Ultra gameplay walkthrough, I test every upgrade combination I can. The Tactical Shotgun, for example, benefits enormously from a rate of fire upgrade. Without it, the pump action is too slow against the infected. With it, you can clear a room before they close the

distance. The Hunting Pistol, on the other hand, is a precision tool. I found that upgrading its damage and stability first made it a reliable one-shot weapon against most human enemies. A maxed out weapon like that turns a risky shot into a sure thing. And when you are playing on Grounded+, sure things are precious.

## **Ellie vs. Abby: Different Priorities**

The game splits its runtime between Ellie and Abby, and their playstyles demand different upgrade paths. Ellie starts with a lighter toolkit. Her Semiautomatic Pistol is her bread and butter. I always push its fire rate and stun upgrade early. A stunned enemy is a free kill, and on Grounded+, you take every free kill you can get. Later in her campaign, you gain access to the Tactical Shotgun. That weapon wants damage and reload speed. The stun upgrade is less useful there because the shotgun already staggers on hit.

Abby, by contrast, is a muscle character. Her starting weapons hit harder but reload slower. The Hunting Pistol becomes her best friend. I put every upgrade part I could spare into its damage and fire rate. A maxed out Hunting Pistol in Abby's hands can drop a clicker in two shots. That is huge when ammo is tight. The skill tree also plays a role here. Abby has access to more brute-force skills, like increased melee damage and faster crafting. Those skills complement a high-damage weapon build. Ellie's skill tree leans into stealth and agility. Her weapon upgrades should reflect that. Maximum weapon upgrades for Ellie mean faster handling and stun potential. For Abby, they mean raw stopping power.

## **Chronological Mode and the Upgrade Flow**

One of the smartest additions to The Last of Us Part II Remastered is Chronological Mode. It reorders the campaign to follow the timeline linearly. This changes how upgrade parts flow into your inventory. In the original structure, you switch between Ellie and Abby at set points, and each character has their own upgrade pool. In Chronological Mode, the upgrade parts are redistributed. You get everything in sequence. That means you can plan your upgrade path with perfect knowledge of what is coming next. For a hardcore run, this is invaluable.

I used Chronological Mode during my walkthrough to test a full upgrade strategy. I knew exactly when I would find the Tactical Shotgun and when I would need to have its upgrades ready. That foreknowledge let me hoard parts for the right weapons. I did not waste a single upgrade part on a weapon I would replace later. That discipline is what separates a casual playthrough from a serious run. When you are chasing maximum weapon upgrades, every part matters.

## **Trade-Offs You Cannot Ignore**

Even on a completionist All Collectibles run, you never have enough upgrade parts to max out every weapon. The game is designed that way on purpose. You have to make hard choices. Do you invest in the Semiautomatic Pistol now, or save for the Hunting Pistol later? Do you upgrade the rate of fire on your shotgun, or put those parts into a stun upgrade for your revolver? There is no single correct answer. It depends on your playstyle.



In my experience, the best approach is to pick two or three core weapons and pour everything into them. For me, that was the Semiautomatic Pistol, the Hunting Pistol, and the Tactical Shotgun. Those three cover every range and situation. I left the rest of my arsenal at base level. It hurt a little when I picked up a rare weapon and could not upgrade it, but the consistency paid off. Having a maxed out weapon in each slot meant I never felt underpowered. That feeling of confidence is what you need for a No Damage Run. You cannot afford to hesitate because your gun might jam or miss.

## Practical Tips from the Trenches

Here are a few concrete things I learned from spending dozens of hours in the upgrade menus:

- Always check every Toolbox. They respawn in some areas and often hold rare upgrade parts. Missing one can set you back an entire upgrade tier.
- Prioritize stun upgrades on weapons you use against human enemies. Stun locks them and opens them to melee finishers, saving ammo.

- Rate of fire upgrades are almost always worth it. They increase your damage per second more than raw damage alone, especially against the infected.
- Do not upgrade a weapon you plan to replace. The game gives you better versions later. Save your parts for the final versions.
- Use the skill tree to complement your weapon upgrades. If you invest in faster reload, you can skip that upgrade on a weapon and put the parts elsewhere.

These tips sound simple, but in the heat of a Grounded+ encounter, they save your run. I cannot count how many times a fully upgraded stun on my Semiautomatic Pistol gave me the opening I needed to escape a tight spot. That is the real value of maximum weapon upgrades. It is not about raw numbers. It is about creating options when you have none.

## **The Reward of Preparation**

There is a moment late in Ellie's campaign where you face a wave of infected in a dark office building. On Grounded+, that room is a nightmare. I had my Tactical Shotgun fully upgraded with damage and rate of fire. I also had the Hunting Pistol with a damage upgrade. I stepped into that room, and for the first time, I felt ready. The infected came in waves, and I handled each one with a clean headshot or a swift shotgun blast. No damage taken. That moment felt earned. It was not luck. It was the result of every upgrade part I had collected and every choice I had made at the bench.

The Last of Us Part II Remastered rewards preparation more than raw skill. Anyone can learn the enemy patterns. But knowing exactly which weapon to pull out and knowing that it will perform exactly as you need it to, that is the difference between surviving and thriving. That is why I obsess over maximum weapon upgrades. They turn a brutal fight into a controlled execution.

## **Final Thoughts**

If you are planning your own hardcore run or just want to experience the game at its most polished, take the time to understand the upgrade system. Do not just spend parts on whatever weapon you are holding. Plan ahead. Know which weapons you will use in the final act and invest in those. The game gives you enough parts to max out a handful of guns. Choose wisely. And if you are watching a 4K Ultra gameplay walkthrough, pay close attention to the upgrade decisions. They reveal as much about the player's strategy as the combat itself.

Naughty Dog designed a system that forces you to commit. That commitment makes every upgrade feel meaningful. When you finally hold a maxed out weapon in your hands, you know exactly what it cost you to get there. And that makes every kill count.