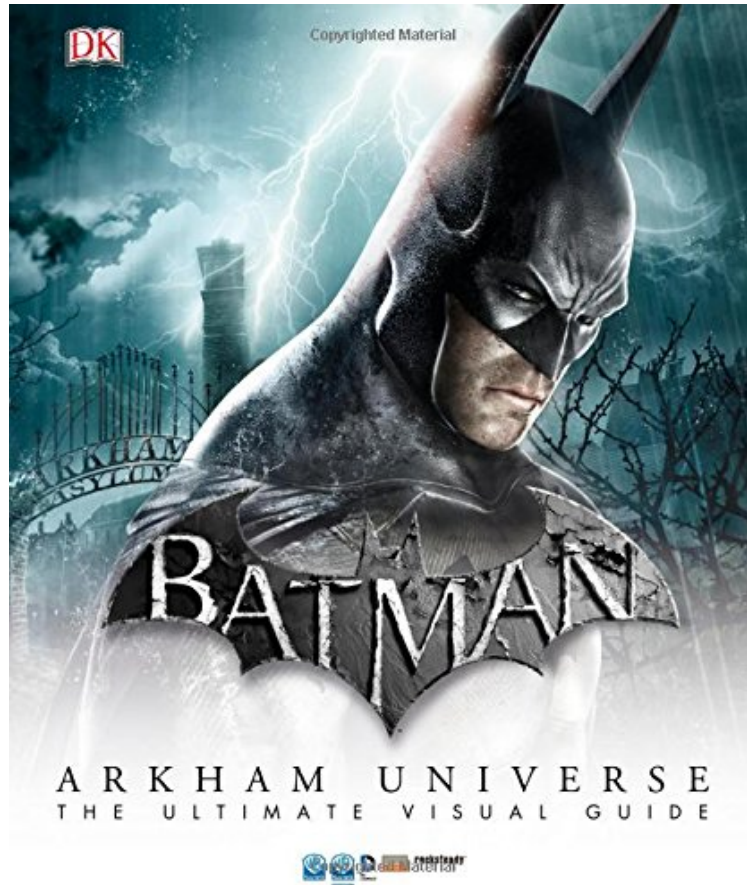


## Batman: Arkham Universe: The Ultimate Visual Guide

*Matthew K. Manning*

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**Matthew K. Manning : Batman: Arkham Universe: The Ultimate Visual Guide** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Batman: Arkham Universe: The Ultimate Visual Guide:

11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Adequate, but Certainly NOT "Ultimate" By Customer I've been a big fan of the 'Batman: Arkham' games since 'Asylum' was first released in 2009, and have followed the story of the series very closely. I was looking forward to this book, hoping it would give me some insight into the world of the games that I could not glean simply from playing them multiple times. Alas, I was disappointed. As another reviewer has already noted, the book is filled with low-quality in-game pictures and promo art, and limits itself to briefly summarizing the stories of the four games, hitting all the main points but not elaborating on anything interesting. The book features little to none of the amazing concept art for the games, and fails to reveal anything that anyone who has played the games doesn't already know. For example, both 'City' and 'Knight' feature short stories, unlocked by solving the Riddler's riddles, that give background information about the characters, the world, and the story of the games; very little of these stories make into the Guide. It is also important to note that the Guide totally avoids major

spoilers from 'Knight', including the true identity of the Arkham Knight himself, and the final fate of Batman and other major characters. This just doesn't make any sense to me. Not only has 'Knight' been released long enough for many people to have played it and for major spoilers from the game to circulate, but I feel that anyone willing to buy this book should be expecting major spoilers. It is, after all, called the 'Ultimate Visual Guide'; the definition of "ultimate" is "final, total". How can it be final or total if it's missing important information from the final game in the series? This last point may simply be my opinion, but one of the biggest flaws of the Guide is that it fails to acknowledge the source material. The 'Arkhamverse', as it is sometimes called, is not based on any one particular Batman comic storyline, but on the Batman mythos as a whole, much like the original, critically-acclaimed animated series from the '90s. The Guide, however, does not acknowledge any influence from the comics or movies or animated series. Instead, it treats the Arkhamverse as a totally self-contained universe. This is most apparent in a series of pages showing off the various batsuits that are available in the games; the description for each suit treats said it as though it actually exists in the world of the game, and that there's a story-based reason for its existence. Anyone who has played the games knows this is simply not true. The suits are there simply to allow the player to change Batman's appearance to match their particular favorite incarnations. While this isn't necessarily a bad thing, I feel that the book could have been better if it would have acknowledged the influence of the comics, the movies, and the animated series that inspired this particular take on Batman. For example, 'Asylum' was heavily inspired by Grant Morrison's 1989 graphic novel, 'Arkham Asylum: A Serious House on a Serious Earth'; 'City' was inspired by the 'No Man's Land' storyline; Mr. Freeze's origin story in 'Origins' is exactly the same as in the original animated series episode 'Heart of Ice'; the armored batsuit looks remarkably similar to the one from Christopher Nolan's 'Dark Knight' trilogy. By acknowledging these influences, the book could pay homage to the character's 75-year history, and open up whole new worlds for fans to explore. I feel this was a missed opportunity. In the end, the book manages to be satisfactory, if only barely. I would have rated it higher if it had better imagery and featured everything from the games, including background stories and major spoilers. As it is, it's certainly not the "ultimate" anything. I'd recommend it only to hardcore Batman fans or fans of the games who aren't expecting too much.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great book, lots of insight into the games, characters, weapons and gadgets. Interesting reading material too. Lots of full page CG art and some double page spreads. No concept art in this book, it's all finished fully rendered.

4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. ~Another very satisfying way to enjoy The Dark Knight~ By ~K.I.S.S`E.S.S~ don't lie~ Now what are you doing here right now? Huh?! Oh, you haven't decided to purchase this yet? Alright, I'll give you a pass this time, just don't let it happen again, ya hear? ;~) With the release of Arkham Knight, Warner Bros, DC, and Rocksteady Studios have put on us Batman overload, and yet I still want more! I seriously doubt I need to say much to convince you to buy this, but if you are somehow straddling the fence, I will hit a few points to hopefully make you salivate without giving much away. With the foreword by Kevin Conroy, that alone makes it clear the importance of this book. A very nice touch to the book is the time line provided from Asylum to the Knight, so a concerted effort has been made to leave no stone unturned. All of the Batsuits are listed for each game, with perhaps one that has not been announced. Long time readers of the comic books may recognize it, but its colorful nature was very new to me. All of your major players are given 2 pages of examination, with images text so there's plenty to enjoy of the villains. Henchmen get brief explanations, but it doesn't necessarily leave their roles feeling scarce. The Batmobile gets the treatment of love it so richly deserves, taking up just as many reading pages as Bruce Wayne/Batman himself. Even his gadgets get broken down! As for the book itself, the binding is very tight and while nowhere near the size of The Art of Rocksteady, it is still substantial in its weight, considering the slim nature of it. So to answer the reason you're reading this: indeed, you should get this. Only in a few places did the text seem a little small, but once you get into it, you'll forget all about that. If you find yourself squinting to a paragraph or two like me, just use your Cryptographic Sequencer to decode it. If Batman juuuuust so happens, to leave it nearby. No diggity, no doubt.

Batman: Arkham Universe: The Ultimate Visual Guide details the key storylines, characters, locations, weapons, gadgets, and equipment of these award-winning, action-adventure games. The book is created in collaboration with Warner Bros. Interactive Entertainment and RockSteady (the game's creators), and features many of the timeless characters from DC's Batman comics, such as the Joker, Catwoman, Robin, the Penguin, Harley Quinn, and the Riddler. Copyright 2015 DC Comics. BATMAN and all related characters and elements are trademarks of and DC Comics. WB SHIELD: TM Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. (s15)

"This book rises to the standard created in the game." GeekDad About the Author Matthew K. Manning has written numerous comics for a variety of publishers, including Marvel and DC. His work has appeared in the pages of The Batman Strikes!, Legion of Super-Heroes in the 31st Century and Spider-Man Unlimited. For DK, he has contributed to many books on comic book Super Heroes, including DC Comics: A Visual History, DC Comics: Year by Year and most recently Batman: A Visual History.