

## Review: Shark 360 mouse offers added precision

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This Jan. 3, 2012 photo, shows the FragFX Shark 360, a console gaming accessory from SpiltFish AG, in Atlanta. The game controller allows the player to use a precision wireless mouse instead of the standard cotroller to play popular games on Xbox 360, such as "Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3" and "Halo." (AP Photo/Ron Harris)

Console gaming occasionally gets a boost from add-ons that can make the standard controller more efficient to hold and operate. A new wireless mouse looks to replace the standard Xbox 360 controller altogether in hopes of giving fans of first-person shooters added precision and control.

The FragFX Shark 360 (\$89.99 from SplitFish AG) gives a new feel to popular [shooter games](#) such as "[Call of Duty](#)," "Halo" and "[Gears of War](#) ." It features the familiar colored A-B-X-Y control buttons akin to those

on the Xbox controller. What's new is a start/pause button just under the scroll wheel to freeze the action when needed.

The package also comes with a USB device that plugs into the Xbox and communicates wirelessly with the controller mouse.

Finally, there's an analog controller stick, dubbed a FragChuck, that is held in the non-mousing hand. The FragChuck has three triggers, various buttons and a thumbstick to walk or run the player's character through the game, while the mouse handles the aiming, shooting and other tasks.

The FragChuck also sports an up-down-left-right directional pad that can quickly toggle the player through an array of weapons in shooter games. The directional pad can be programmed to handle other tasks as well by adjusting the settings from in-game options menus.

This rethinking of the controller changes the gaming experience much more than the add-ons I've tried, such as small extenders for the thumbsticks that give gamers a new feel and range of motion.

One thing to note is that the configuration is not completely wireless. I discovered that when I tried the Shark 360 out for the first time.

The USB device that I plugged into the front of my Xbox 360 had to be connected to a standard wired [Xbox 360](#) controller as well. The Shark 360 won't function without that. I had to dig through more than a dozen boxes in my attic to find one because wireless controllers have been the norm for some time now.

The rest of the operation is wireless, however, and you are not tethered to the console.

With that slightly cumbersome configuration out of the way, I was soon

up and running, blasting my way through a few levels of "Turok." I swiveled left to right too fast early on when panning the horizon, looking for enemies. My performance improved once I got accustomed to the sensitivity and speed of the mouse.

The bottom of the three trigger buttons on the FragChuck allowed me to zoom in with my rifle scope, while a click on the left mouse button on the other hand took the shot. During my gaming sessions, the top two triggers had no duties to handle, but I could have assigned something to them had I wanted.

And so it went with "Call of Duty 3" and a few other shooters. It felt a bit more like PC gaming and a little less like the standard console approach, which for shooter titles isn't a bad trade-off.

Overall, I noticed improved performance when strafing opponents. It was easier to center on targets by using my entire mousing hand and all of its muscles, rather than just a few in my thumbs with a standard controller.

The aforementioned thumbstick extenders can snap off if you handle them too aggressively, but this mouse approach to console gaming doesn't depend on extra plastic bits you snap on to your existing controller.

I use a mouse daily, so extending that use to my console gaming sessions offered a quick feel of familiarity.

Your own level of enjoyment with the Shark 360 really depends on personal choice and muscle memory. If you commit to using it consistently for some select shooter titles, you'll quickly get accustomed to the button layout and may find your traditional controller gathering a bit of dust on the shelf.

It's not the best solution for all games, but it's a welcome bit of kit for some titles, particularly the first-person shooters.

**More information:** SplitFish AG: <http://www.splitfish.com>

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