SOFTWARE & TECH

Metal Gear Solid 2 Substance Walkthrough

Published: November 20, 2026 | Index ID: #-

Mastering the Big Shell: A Complete Metal Gear Solid 2 Substance Walkthrough

Metal Gear Solid 2: Substance stands as one of the most celebrated expansions in gaming history. Building on the original *Sons of Liberty*, this version introduced a wealth of content, including the challenging Snake Tales, the deep VR Missions, and a refined main campaign. For both newcomers and veterans, a thorough **Metal Gear Solid 2 Substance walkthrough**is essential for navigating its intricate narrative, stealth mechanics, and boss encounters. This guide breaks down every critical section of the game, offering strategies, item locations, and survival tips to help you achieve full stealth mastery.

Understanding the Expanded Content

Before diving into the main story, it helps to know what *Substance*adds. Alongside the core campaign (the Tanker and Big Shell chapters), you get over 350 VR Missions, 5 unique Snake Tales, and the rollerblading minigame. This walkthrough focuses primarily on the main story but integrates advice that applies to the special modes, ensuring you get the most out of the package. Whether you're aiming for a Big Boss emblem or just want to survive on Extreme difficulty, the principles here will guide you.

Prologue: The Tanker Chapter (Raiden's Training)

Though you play as Raiden for most of the game, the Tanker Chapter serves as an introductory mission with Solid Snake. This section provides essential stealth tutorials and sets up the plot. For a complete **Metal Gear Solid 2 Substance walkthrough**, mastering the Tanker is crucial, as it teaches mechanics you'll rely on later.

- Stay hidden: Avoid guards by using first-person peeking around corners. Crouch under tables and inside lockers.
- Listen for conversations: Many codec conversations provide hints. Press the select button to activate the codec frequency list when needed.
- Defeat Olga Gurlukovich: Use choke holds or tranquilizers. Shooting her alerts reinforcements. The key is patience—wait for her to turn and fire a tranq dart to the head.
- Acquire the Sneaking Suit: Found in a locker near the start of the Tanker. It reduces noise and protects against heat, but watch for guard patrols.

Pro tip: The Tanker has several M9 tranquilizer gun ammo caches. Always stock up, as non-lethal takedowns yield better rankings and fewer alerts.

Chapter One: The Big Shell – Arrival and Strut A

The main body of the game takes place on the Big Shell, an offshore cleanup facility that conceals a sinister secret. As Raiden, you begin on Strut A after a dramatic opening. This area is relatively safe but introduces the core loop: infiltrate, gather intel, and avoid detection.

1. M9 Tranquilizer Gun: Located in a locker in Strut A's locker room. Prioritize this weapon for non-lethal stealth.
2. Thermal Goggles: Found in a toolbox in the same area. These help you see guards' heat signatures through walls and in darkness.
3. Rations: Collect every ration you find—they restore health and are needed for healing wounds.

Your first real challenge is navigating the struts without setting off alarms. Use the radar (L2 button) to track guard cones of vision. Move only when their backs are turned, and stay in crawl spaces when possible. This section of the **Metal Gear Solid 2 Substance walkthrough** emphasizes patience—rushing leads to alert phases.

Strut B and the First Boss: Fortune

After meeting Otacon and learning about Metal Gear, you'll face Fortune in the hangar. She possesses a "lucky" ability that deflects bullets. A standard **walkthrough**approach is to simply survive—shoot at her to make her stagger, then plant C4 on the floor panels. When she stands on a panel, detonate it. Do not try to shoot her directly; it's fruitless. Instead, use the environment. After dropping her, the fight ends and the story advances.

Strut C – The Shell 1 Core: Avoiding Snipers

Moving to Strut C introduces a sniper section. Guards on upper walkways will fire at you. The trick is to use the box trick: equip a cardboard box and move slowly. Alternatively, use the Nikita missile launcher (found later) from a safe angle. But for a pure stealth run, equip the stealth camouflage if you have it from VR Missions, or simply crawl between cover points. The key is to never run in open areas. This segment tests your use of the first-person aiming and patience.

Strut D and the Fatman Bomb Disposal

One of the most memorably intense sequences involves disarming explosives planted by the flamboyant terrorist, Fatman. You must defuse four bombs within a time limit. Use the Bomb Disposal Manual (found in Strut D) to learn the frequency for the bomb-detection device. Equip the device and scan each strut. Bombs are located on walls, ceilings, and hidden corners. Fatman himself will appear and skate around, placing remote bombs. Use the M9 to tranq him, then quickly defuse the remaining bombs. If you fail, the game ends. This is a pressure cooker, but staying calm and using the map (L2) to plan your route is vital. For any **Metal Gear Solid 2 Substance walkthrough**, this section demands precision.

Strut E and the Harrier Fight

After a series of codec conversations that deepen the plot (and confuse even veteran players), you face a Harrier jet flown by Vamp. This boss fight is one of the hardest on harder difficulties. Surface-to-air missiles are your best friend—found in the hangar's ammo boxes. Lock onto the Harrier with the Stinger missile launcher, fire, and immediately run to avoid its gunfire. When the Harrier hovers low, shoot it with assault rifles or grenades. The key is mobility—never stop moving. This fight tests your reflexes more than stealth, but a good **walkthrough**will remind you to bring plenty of rations.

The Arsenal Gear Infiltration

Late-game, the Big Shell itself transforms, and you penetrate Arsenal Gear—a massive underwater fortress. This is a linear corridor section with deadly enemies known as the Tengu soldiers. They are heavily armored but have a weak point at the back of their heads. Use the shotgun or the PSG1 sniper rifle if you have it. Or, use stun grenades to blind them and run past. Many players struggle here due to limited ammo. The **Metal Gear Solid 2 Substance walkthrough**recommends conserving grenades and using the environment: shoot pipes to create steam clouds, then sneak past. This area also contains many codec calls that advance the philosophical themes, but don't let the dialogue distract you from immediate threats.

Final Boss Battle: Solidus Snake

The climax is a one-on-one sword fight against Solidus Snake atop Federal Hall. This is a pure test of your melee combat skills. You have your High-Frequency Blade. The battle has two phases:

- Phase 1: Solidus attacks with his own blade. Block and counter. Watch for his charge attack—dodge and strike his back. Use the roll (R2 + direction) to avoid his combos.
- Phase 2: He pulls out a machine gun. Stay behind pillars to block bullets. When he reloads, rush in and slash. He also throws grenades—kick them back by pressing the attack button at the right moment.

Patience is key. Do not get greedy; land two hits then retreat. The fight ends with a dramatic cutscene that wraps up the story. Afterward, you can save and continue exploring for dog tags or start VR Missions.

VR Missions and Snake Tales: Expanding Your Skills

No **Metal Gear Solid 2 Substance walkthrough**would be complete without addressing the extra content. VR Missions are short stealth and combat puzzles. They are perfect for honing skills like quick aiming, box use, and grenade throws. For those aiming for 100% completion, focus on the Variety and Sneaking categories first. Snake Tales are five alternate story missions starring Solid Snake. Each has unique objectives, often more challenging than the main game. They require separate strategies, but the core tactics—stealth, patience, and environmental awareness—remain the same.

Tips for Achieving the Big Boss Emblem

For the ultimate challenge, aim for the Big Boss rank. This requires: no alerts, no kills, no continues, no recovery items used, and a completion time under 3 hours. Use these advanced tactics from our **walkthrough**:

1. Memorize guard patrol patterns. Use the digital camera (on Substance) to tag enemies.
2. Equip the stealth camo from the start (unlocked by completing all VR missions).
3. Skip cutscenes (hold the action button) to save time.
4. Use the M9 and CQC exclusively. Never use lethal weapons.
5. Forced boss fights: Tranq everyone. Fortune can be dropped with C4 without shooting. Harrier can be defeated with Stinger missiles—just avoid its attacks.

Conclusion

Metal Gear Solid 2: Substance remains a landmark title that rewards careful planning, sharp reflexes, and a love for the bizarre. Whether you're exploring the main narrative for the first time or diving into the deep VR Missions, this **Metal Gear Solid 2 Substance walkthrough**has provided the foundational strategies to conquer every challenge. From the Tanker to Federal Hall, the key is to stay quiet, think ahead, and never underestimate the power of a well-placed cardboard box. Keep these tips in your codec, soldier, and the Big Shell will hold no secrets from you.

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