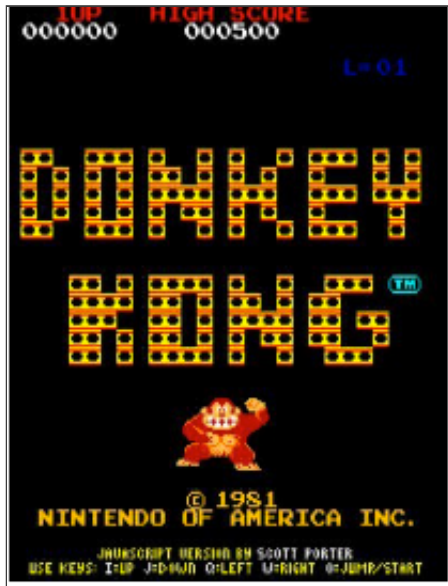


History of JavaScript Games

There is a wide-held belief that games that run in Web browsers without plugins are a relatively new phenomenon. This is not true: back in 1998, Donkey Kong ran in a browser (screenshot below, a game by Scott Porter, written only standard Web technologies such as HTML, JavaScript and CSS) .



Just a few years after the Web was born, there appeared JavaScript - a simple script language with C-like syntax for interacting and changing the structure of documents - together with HTML, the [HyperText Markup Language](#) used for describing text documents. For the first time, different elements could be moved across a browser's screen. This was noticed by Scott Porter ([read an interview here](#)) who, in 1998, created the first JavaScript game library with the very original name, 'Game Lib'. At this time, Porter focused largely on creating ports of old NES and Atari games using animated gifs, but he also developed a Video Pool game in which he emulated

rotation of a cue with [a sprite of 150 different positions](#)!

During the late 1990s and early 2000s, JavaScript increased in popularity, and the community coined the term 'DHTML' ([Dynamic HTML](#)), which was to be the first umbrella term describing a collection of technologies used together to create interactive and animated Web sites. Developers of the DHTML era hadn't forgotten about Porter's 'Game Lib', and in a couple of years [Brent Silby](#) presented 'Game Lib 2'. It is still possible to play many games created with that library on his Web site.

The DHTML era was a time when JavaScript games were as good as those made in Flash. Developers made many DOM libraries that were useful for game development, such as Peter Nederlof's Beehive with its outstanding [Rotatrix](#) (which, personally, I think is one of the best HTML games EVER). The first very polished browser games were also developed; Jacob Sidelin, creator of 14KB Mario (screenshot on the right), created [the very first page](#)

dedicated to JavaScript games.



And then came 2005: 'the year of [AJAX](#)'. Even though 'AJAX' just stands for 'Asynchronous JavaScript and XML', in practice it was another umbrella term describing methods, trends and technologies used to create a new kind of Web site - [Web 2.0](#).



Popularization of new JavaScript patterns introduced the ability to create multiplayer connections or even true emulators of old computers. The best examples of this time were '[Freeciv](#)' (screenshot on the left) by Andreas Rosdal - port of Sid Meier Civilization, and [Sarien.net](#) by Martin Kool, emulator of old Sierra games.

And then came a new era in the history of Internet: 'HTML5'!

