

Indie Games

Starter:

1. How can we define 'indie games' ? What is special about them?
 - Indie games are so video games that are created by one or a few persons
2. Name a few indie games?
 - Minecraft, flappy bird, undertale, Outerwilds
3. Do you like playing video games ? Why ?
 - I like it because that emancipate me of anything else
4. Do you play any indie games? Which ones and why?
 - Not a lot but I've already played sometimes some of them

1. Listen to the clip about Steph Thirion and his game Eliss. Answer the questions below.

- a) How does Steph define code ?

As framework

- b) How old was he when he decided he wanted to make games ?

6 years old

- c) Was he encouraged to do so ?

He had bad marks so the teachers said he couldn't study computer science

- d) What was the turning point ?

To stumble = fall

to stumble on/up = to find something by mistake

to grind = to work hard

the golden age = the best time for something

the holy grail = a perfect/exceptional goal

turning point = big change of direction

When apple launched the app store, so steph could design a game and the app store would sell it

- e) Which game does he mention ? Why ?

tetris is a work of art and has a simplicity of rules

- f) Where does the name of his game come from ?

It come from a personn who was a graphic designer and artist named El Lizzitzky

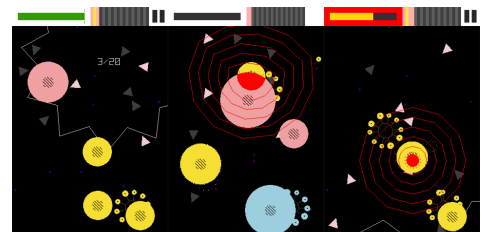
- g) How are the different shapes made ?

He uses code so the shapes are pixelated

- h) When did he submit it to Apple ?

On his 30th birthday

Winner of the Auteur award at Indigade in 2009
Released on May 2nd, 2009



Independent video games (commonly referred to as **Indie games**) are video games created by individuals or small teams generally without video game publisher financial support. Indie games often focus on innovation and rely on digital distribution. Indie gaming has seen a rise in the latter half of the 2000s decade, primarily due to new online distribution methods and development tools.

Some indie games have become very successful financially, such as *Braid*, *World of Goo*, and *Minecraft*.

Overview

There is no exact widely-accepted definition of what constitutes an "indie game". However, indie games generally share certain commonalities. Indie games are developed by individuals, small teams, or small independent companies. And, typically, indie games are smaller than mainstream titles. Indie game developers are generally not financially backed by video game publishers (as these are risk averse and prefer big budget games) and usually have little to no budget available. Being independent, indie developers do not have controlling interests or creative limitations and do not require publisher approval as mainstream game developers usually do. Design decisions are thus also not limited by the allocated budget. Furthermore, smaller team sizes increase individual involvement. Small teams, scope, and no creative restrictions have made indie games known for innovation, creativity, and artistic experimentation. Developers limited in ability to create graphics can rely on gameplay innovation. Both classic game genres and new gameplay innovation have been seen. However, being "indie" does not imply that the game focuses on innovation. In fact, many games attributed the "indie" label can be of poor quality and may not be made for profit.

Development

In order to fund the game, developers can rely on starting a crowd-funding campaign, finding a publisher, or building community support while in development. Without publisher support, developers generally rely on Internet digital distribution options. Most indie games do not make significant profit.

Indie game development should not be confused with hobbyist game development, as indie developers are generally more product-oriented than hobbyist game writers. Many hobbyist developers create mods of existing games, or work with specific technologies or game parts. Such hobbyists usually produce non-commercial products and may range from novices to industry veterans.

Industry

The indie game scene started on PCs, where it remains prominent. Indie games saw a rise via shareware distribution in the early 1990s. However, as technology advanced, requirements and high user expectations made indie gaming less prominent. Modern video games exceeded the ability of a single developer to produce.

Indie gaming industry has a constantly growing interest and popularity. Indie industry saw a steep rise in the latter half of the 2000s decade. The expansion of Internet allowed games to be distributed online moving beyond retail sales. This allowed for both developers to publish and players to download such games from platforms like Xbox Live Arcade, Steam, or OnLive. Similarly, developers have access to tools like Adobe Flash.

Like mainstream video game industry is comparable to mainstream film industry, so is indie gaming industry comparable to independent film industry. However game distribution is shifting towards online marketing. For developers, online marketing is much more profitable and more readily available than retail marketing. Although, distribution portals have been criticized for collecting a large portion the game revenue, in 2008 a developer could earn around 17% of game's retail price and around 85% if sold digitally. This also leads to appearance of more "risky" creative projects. Furthermore, expansion of social web-sites have introduced gaming to casual gamers. Nevertheless, there are few examples of games that have made large profits, and for many indie game-making serves as a career stepping stone, rather than a commercial opportunity.

It is argued as to how prominent indie gaming currently is in video game industry. Most games are not widely known or successful and mainstream media attention remains with mainstream titles. This can be attributed to lack of marketing for indie games. Indie games can be targeted at niche market.

Community

Indie game developers can be involved with various indie game trade shows such as Independent Games Festival and IndieCade. Indie Game Jam (IGJ) is an annual event that allows indie game developers to experiment and present ideas without publisher restrictions. IGJ was founded by Chris Hecker and Sean Barrett and first held in March 2002. Each year, IGJ poses different questions about innovation of new settings, genres, and controls. The IGJ was considered an inspiration for later game jams including the Nordic Game Jam and the Global Game Jam (GGJ). GGJ was first held in 2009 with 1650 participants in 53 locations.

2. Use the article to answer the following questions.

A/ What makes an 'indie game' according to the article?

B/ What has made indie games development increase?

C/ The article explains that indie game developers should not be confused with hobbyist developers who 'create mods of existing games'. What does this quote mean?

They creating addons for the game

D/ Why have indie games seen a decline in their recent success?

E/ Which industry does the article compare with the indie/video gaming industry and why?

F/ Why are indie games less well known than mainstream games?

G/ What is the purpose of the Independent Games Festival?

3. A. In small groups decide on 3 to 5 criteria that make a good video game.

Criteria → Games ↓	History	Optimisation	Gameplay	Graphism	Replayability
Minecraft	0	4	5	4	5
Overwatch	3	3	5	4	4
league of legends	3	5	3	4	5
Super Mario Galaxy	5	5	5	5	2
Call of duty	0	3	3	4	5
The last of us	5	4	5	5	1
Detroit Become Human	5	5	3	5	3
Elden ring	3	4	5	4	5
Journey	5	5	1	4	0
castle crasher	2	4	5	4	2

B. Decide on the top 10 video games of all time using your criteria. Are any of them indie games? Why?

There is some indie game in my top ten because even if I had never played for some of them, I choose them cause they are really different than casual games

C. If you have any indie games in your top ten write it on the board for voting. Vote on slido for the class' favourite.

Ext: Look at the top indie games of all time ranked. Are there any of your favourites there. Did anything surprise you?

<https://gamerant.com/best-indie-games/>

4. So You Want to be an Indie. Listen to the advice for new independent game developers. Summarise the advice.

Lesson #1 : Plan scope well

Think wise, think small = think of small idea/keep project small

Lesson #2 : Know what you're getting into

You do a different jobs/roles and you need team who ca, do more than just develop the game

PR = public relations

distribution

finance

marketing

Lesson #3 : Keep budget realistic

Fees = taxes

licences

legals fees

insurance

extra budget for set backs

Lesson #4 : Mechanics trump content

5. Group work. Present a game idea.

1. What's the game called and why ?
2. What will the player *do* to play your game?
3. What features or mechanics must exist to enable this to happen?
5. Who in your team will do what ? Think about their individual strengths and abilities.
6. Which tools will you use and why ?
7. How will it be financed and how long will it take ?