

## MUSIC & COMPOSING

Video games started with Pong, a table tennis themed arcade game manufactured by Atari in 1972. In this game, there were only beeps to represent when the ball hit a surface. Five years later in 1979, the Major League Baseball game is the first to use a computer-generated voice with a limited vocabulary such as “strike,” “ball,” and “out,” etc, ([A History of Video Game Music](#)). As video games evolved, so did the sounds and music that came with it. Earlier iconic game music such as the Pac Man and the Super Mario Bros themes were simple, using electronic melodies, and were more in the background yet still very catchy. Games later started to use music in various ways to add to the game or act as a form of communication with the player. Space invaders took a musical pattern and made it go faster and faster as ships started to come down. Studies showed that this caused people to panic more, and react to their panic and the game, ([The Evolution of Video Game Music](#)). Other games used this music technique as well such as Dig Dug (1982) which had music play while characters moved. Games also used/mimicked other music such as the iconic Tetris theme which derived from a Russian folk song, “[Korobeiniki](#).”

Earlier on, video game music was limited by game systems and PCs in which most of the processing power went towards the game, not the music. Over a few years in the early 1990s, 16 bit game systems were developed that were more channels for sound including Sega’s Genesis system. Later, CD-ROMS (compact discs with read-only memory) allowed for more detailed video, animated scenes, and better developed music ([A History of Video Game Music](#)). Music was often used as a guiding factor in games, providing clues like hidden instructions such as changing when a player went to a certain location showing they needed to do something, or playing the same music every time enemies were nearby. Now, voice acting is in video games along with music that is symphonic, often taking inspiration from classical music heard in symphonies. Some are even played by symphony orchestras today.



### [The Greatest Video Game Music played by London Philharmonic Orchestra](#)

Some popular video game music composers include Nobuo Uematsu who worked on Final Fantasy, Koji Kondo who worked on Mario and Zelda games, and Akira Yamaoka who worked on the Silent Hill series. Becoming a video game composer starts with education and training in music theory and going to various schools that allow you to continue your path as a composer, along with private lessons. Video game composers can make anywhere from 30,000 to 75,000+ a year depending on your education, experience, and job title. There are many job opportunities for AAA or indie developers all across the world. It is important for a video game composer to know their market, network, and be able to work well with a sound team, ([Get To Know These Great Composers You Need To Add To Your Next Playlist](#)).

Various roles of music in video games overall include to help tell the story of a game and bring on emotions, to help communicate with the player by driving them in the right direction or warning them, and to add another fun element to the game for greater enjoyment.

[Here is a video of the evolution](#) of some of the most iconic songs in video game history from the 1980s to the 2010s.