

Link (*The Legend of Zelda*)

Link^[a] is a [character](#) and the [protagonist](#) of [Nintendo's](#) video game franchise [The Legend of Zelda](#). He was created by Japanese video game designer [Shigeru Miyamoto](#). Link was introduced as the hero of the original [The Legend of Zelda](#) video game in 1986 and has appeared in a total of [21 entries](#) in the series, as well as a number of spin-offs. Common elements in the series include Link travelling through [Hyrule](#) whilst exploring dungeons, battling creatures, and solving puzzles until he eventually defeats the series' primary antagonist, [Ganon](#), and saves [Princess Zelda](#).



Throughout the series, Link has made multiple appearances in a variety of incarnations, but has been traditionally depicted in his signature green cap and tunic wielding a sword and shield. He has appeared as both a child and young adult of the [elf-like Hylian](#) race. Within *Zelda* mythology, Link is the soul of a legendary hero that throughout history is reincarnated within a seemingly ordinary boy or young man whenever evil arises. To defeat Ganon, Link usually obtains the mystical [Master Sword](#) or a similar legendary weapon obtained after completing many trials.

In addition to the main series, Link has appeared in other Nintendo media, including merchandise, [comics and manga](#), and an [animated television series](#). He is a prominent character in various spin-off games, including [Hyrule Warriors](#), [Cadence of Hyrule](#) and [Hyrule Warriors: Age of Calamity](#). He has appeared in several other game franchises, including the [Super Smash Bros.](#) series, [SoulCalibur II](#) and [Mario Kart 8](#), and has also been referenced in other games, such as [The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim](#).

Alongside fellow Nintendo character [Mario](#), Link is one of the most recognisable characters in the video game industry. He has been instrumental in the establishment of the [role-playing video game](#) genre as the protagonist of the series, which has influenced numerous other video games with its concepts of [open world](#) and [nonlinear gameplay](#). According to [Guinness World Records](#), Link is the most critically acclaimed video game playable character and the most ubiquitous action-adventure video game character. He was recognised by the [Guinness World Records Gamer's Edition](#) as the second best video game character after Mario. Critics have named him as one of the greatest and most influential video game characters of all time.