***Madden NFL*** (known as ***John Madden Football*** until 1993) is an [American football](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_football) [video game](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Video_game) series developed by [EA Tiburon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EA_Tiburon) for [EA Sports](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EA_Sports). The franchise, named after [Pro Football Hall of Fame](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pro_Football_Hall_of_Fame) coach and commentator [John Madden](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Madden), has sold more than 130 million copies as of 2018.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-1) Since 2004, it has been the only officially licensed [National Football League](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Football_League) (NFL) video game series, and has influenced many players and coaches of the physical sport. Among the series' features are detailed playbooks and player statistics and voice commentary in the style of a real [NFL television broadcast](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Football_League_on_television). As of 2013 the franchise has generated over $4 billion in sales, making it one of the most profitable video game franchises on the market.

[Electronic Arts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electronic_Arts) (EA) founder [Trip Hawkins](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trip_Hawkins) conceived the series and approached Madden in 1984 for his endorsement and expertise. Because of Madden's insistence that the game be as realistic as possible, the first version of *John Madden Football* did not appear until 1988. EA has released annual versions since 1990, and the series' name changed to *Madden NFL* in 1993 after EA acquired the rights to use NFL teams and players.

History[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=1)]

**1980s – Creation**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=2)]

The real reason that I founded Electronic Arts was because I wanted to make computerized versions of games like Strat-O-Matic.

— *Trip Hawkins*[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-lemire20110210-2)

[Trip Hawkins](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trip_Hawkins) created a clone of the [Strat-o-Matic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strat-o-Matic) paper and dice-based football simulation game as a teenager. The game was unsuccessful due to its complexity, and he hoped to one day delegate its rules to a computer. At [Harvard College](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harvard_College), where Hawkins played football for the [Crimson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harvard_Crimson_football), he wrote a football simulation for the [PDP-11](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PDP-11) minicomputer which, he later said, predicted that the [Miami Dolphins](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_Dolphins) would defeat the [Minnesota Vikings](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minnesota_Vikings) 23–6 (actually 24–7) in the [1974 Super Bowl](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1974_Super_Bowl).[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-thefranchise-3)[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-ferrell198805-4) After founding Electronic Arts in 1982[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-thefranchise-3)—"The real reason that I founded [it] was because I wanted to make computerized versions of games like Strat-O-Matic", Hawkins later said[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-lemire20110210-2)[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-suellentrop20100125-5)—the company began designing a microcomputer football game. Hawkins first approached his favorite player [Joe Montana](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joe_Montana) to endorse the proposed game but the quarterback already had an endorsement deal with [Atari Inc.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atari_Inc.), and his second choice, [Cal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California_Golden_Bears_football) coach [Joe Kapp](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joe_Kapp), demanded royalties.[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-thefranchise-3)

In 1984, Hawkins approached Madden. He and game producer [Joe Ybarra](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joe_Ybarra) arranged a follow-up meeting with the broadcaster during an [Amtrak](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amtrak) train trip over two days because of Madden's [fear of flying](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fear_of_flying).[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-thefranchise-3)[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-pham20090417-6)[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-IGN_History-7)[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-bissell20120117-8) The EA executives promised that the proposed game would be a sophisticated football simulation and they asked the retired Oakland Raiders coach for his endorsement and expertise. Madden knew nothing about computers beyond his [telestrator](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Telestrator) but agreed; he had taught a class at the [University of California, Berkeley](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_California,_Berkeley), called "Football for Fans", and envisioned the program as a tool for teaching and testing plays.[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-thefranchise-3)[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-markazi20090821-9)[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-30for30-10) (Madden would continue to see the game as an educational tool. When asked in 2012 to describe *Madden NFL*, he called it "a way for people to learn the game and participate in the game at a pretty sophisticated level".[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-bissell20120117-8)) Hawkins and Ybarra during the train trip learned football plays and strategies from Madden from sunrise to midnight.[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-thefranchise-3)

EA likely expected Madden to endorse the game without participating in its design. Early plans envisioned six or seven players per team because of technical limitations but Madden insisted on having 11 players,[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-thefranchise-3)[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-bissell20120117-8) stating "I'm not putting my name on it if it's not real".[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-IGN_History-7)[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-30for30-10) Ybarra, who had played [chess](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chess), not football, in high school, became an expert on the subject through his work, but found that 11 players overwhelmed contemporary home computers. Most projects that are as delayed as *Madden* are canceled; Ybarra and developer Robin Antonick needed three years, more than twice the length of the average development process. The project became known within the company as "Trip's Folly", and Madden—who had received $100,000 [advance against royalties](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Advance_against_royalties) that EA's outside auditors advised to [write off](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Write_off) because it would never be recouped—believed at times that EA had given up.[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-thefranchise-3)[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-30for30-10)

The company hired [Bethesda Softworks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bethesda_Softworks) to finish the game, but this only got them partway to their goal. While EA used many of its designs, including contributions to their physics engine,[[11]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-escapist-11) within a year Bethesda stopped working on *Madden* and sued EA over EA's failure to publish new versions of Bethesda's *Gridiron!* football game. This added to the delay.[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-IGN_History-7) After a final development push, [*John Madden Football*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Madden_Football_(1988_video_game)) debuted in 1988 for the [Apple II series](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apple_II_series) of computers. Hawkins and an exhausted Ybarra ("All my memories are of pain") could move on to other projects.[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-thefranchise-3)

Contracted to provide plays,[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-30for30-10) Madden gave EA the [1980 Raiders](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1980_Oakland_Raiders_season) playbook, and EA hired [*San Francisco Chronicle*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Francisco_Chronicle) writer Frank Cooney, who had designed his own [figurine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miniature_figure_(gaming)) football game with numerical skill ratings. Although the company could not yet legally use NFL teams' or players' names, Cooney obtained real plays from NFL teams.[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-thefranchise-3) The back of the box called the game "The First Real Football Simulation" and quoted Madden: "Hey, if there aren't 11 players, it isn't real football." Documentation included diagrams of dozens of offensive and defensive plays with Madden's commentary on coaching strategies and philosophy.[[12]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-c64sets-12) The game sold moderately well[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-thefranchise-3) but given the sophisticated playbook its interface was complex, and Madden's insistence on 11 players caused the game to run slowly.[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-IGN_History-7)

During this period, Madden turned down the opportunity to buy an "unlimited" number of options for EA stock in its [initial public offering](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Initial_public_offering), a decision he later called "the dumbest thing I ever did in my life".[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-thefranchise-3)[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-bissell20120117-8)

**1990s**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=3)]

In early 1990, EA hired [Park Place Productions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Park_Place_Productions) to develop *Madden* for the [Sega Genesis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sega_Genesis) [video game console](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Video_game_console). Park Place had developed [*ABC Monday Night Football*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ABC_Monday_Night_Football_(video_game)) with "arcade-style, action-heavy" game play, and its *Madden* also emphasized [hyperreality](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hyperreality) compared to the computer version's focus on exact simulation.[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-thefranchise-3)[[13]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-horowitz20071123-13) Impressed with Park Place's work, EA chose it for the Genesis *Madden* instead of completing an in-house version by Antonick.[[14]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-harris201503-14)

EA [reverse engineered](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reverse_engineering) the console to sell the game without paying the standard $8 to $10 license fee per cartridge to Sega, then proposed a compromise of $2 per cartridge and a $2 million cap on the fee. The console maker agreed, afraid that EA would sell its reverse-engineered knowledge to other companies; the agreement saved EA $35 million over the next three years. As its own Joe Montana-endorsed football game would miss the 1990 [Christmas shopping season](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas_shopping_season), Sega asked EA to let it sell *Madden* with the Montana name. EA refused, but offered an inferior alternative that lacked *Madden'*s 3D graphics and most of its 113 plays.[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-thefranchise-3)[[13]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-horowitz20071123-13) [*Joe Montana Football*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joe_Montana_Football) sold well despite shipping after Christmas 1990, and it remained popular after [BlueSky Software](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BlueSky_Software) took over development.[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-IGN_History-7) [*John Madden Football*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Madden_Football_(1990_video_game)) for the Genesis, however, became both the first hugely successful *Madden* game—selling 400,000 copies when the company expected 75,000[[14]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-harris201503-14)—and the first [killer app](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Killer_application) for EA and Sega, helping the console gain market share against the [Super NES](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Super_Nintendo_Entertainment_System).[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-thefranchise-3)[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-IGN_History-7) From 1992 to 1994, [*Mega*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mega_(magazine)) placed the game at #1 in their monthly Top 100 Mega Drive Games of All Time.

In 1990, EA producer [Richard Hilleman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Hilleman) brought in veteran sports game designer [Scott Orr](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scott_Orr), who had founded the mid-1980s [Commodore 64](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commodore_64) game publisher GameStar and led the design of their best-selling sports games. The team of Orr and Hilleman designed and led the development of what is today still recognizable as the modern *Madden*. Early versions of *Madden* were created by external development studios such as Bethesda, [Visual Concepts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visual_Concepts), and [Stormfront Studios](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stormfront_Studios). *John Madden Football '92* also featured the ambulance which would run over any players in its path.

After Visual Concepts failed to deliver *Madden NFL '96* for the new [PlayStation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PlayStation_(console)) in 1995, EA hired Tiburon Entertainment for *Madden NFL '97*[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-IGN_History-7) and later acquired the company, centralizing development in-house.[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-thefranchise-3) It planned to release *John Madden Football* as its first sports-based [arcade game](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arcade_game), but the game was cancelled due to unenthusiastic reactions from [play testers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Game_testing).[[15]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-15) EA's refusal to release *Madden* and other sports titles for the [Dreamcast](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dreamcast) in 1999 contributed to the console's lack of success and Sega's exit from the hardware market.[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-IGN_History-7)

By 1996, *Madden* was the best-selling sports video game franchise, with more than eight million units sold up until then.[[16]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-16)

**Franchise Mode**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=4)]

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| [[icon]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Wiki_letter_w_cropped.svg) | This section **needs expansion**. You can help by [adding to it](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=). *(September 2012)* |

In 1998 Electronic Arts added "Franchise Mode" to *Madden*, giving players the ability to play multiple seasons, make off-season draft picks, and trade players.[[17]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-17) Within Franchise Mode, players take on the role of General Manager and manage all personnel matters, including contracts, free agency, draft picks, and hiring and firing coaches. The player also acts as a head coach-like character (although there is a head coach figure in-game), choosing which players to play, making substitutions, running practices, practicing gameplans, etc.

Players may play with any of the NFL's 32 franchises; they can choose whether or not to have trade deadlines and salary caps and if they want to start their Franchise with a 49-round fantasy draft of all active NFL players. Players can also upload created teams for use in the game.

Once in game, players run training camp (individual drills for improving players' attributes), play in preseason games and compete in a regular 16-game NFL season, including playoffs and the Super Bowl. The player has the option to play any game in the simulation, including those involving other teams if they so desire, or may simulate through the games as they choose. Most versions of *Madden* give a player 30 years with their franchise, sometimes with an opportunity to apply for the Hall of Fame at the end of the simulation.

**2000s**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=5)]

***Madden NFL 2000***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=6)]

[*Madden NFL 2000*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_2000) was the first Madden to have a play editor, arcade mode, and the Madden Challenge. The game was released on August 31, 1999, for Microsoft Windows, PlayStation, Game Boy, Nintendo 64, and Classic Mac OS. The cover athletes were former Raiders Coach John Madden and the Detroit Lions running back Barry Sanders in the background. This was the second Madden to have someone besides John Madden on the cover.

***Madden NFL 2001***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=7)]

[*Madden NFL 2001*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_2001) featured a segment called "Great Games" where one would be put in a situation where they control one team and would have to win the game with a set amount of time. If the player wins, they unlock either a new team or a stadium. Overall, there were more than 60 teams and over 80 stadiums in *Madden NFL 2001*. [Tennessee Titans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tennessee_Titans) running back [Eddie George](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eddie_George) is the cover athlete.

***Madden NFL 2002***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=8)]

[*Madden NFL 2002*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_2002) featured for the first time Create-A-Team where one would make a team and play with that team in either Play Now or Franchise mode. It also featured Create-A-League mode but it never caught on. Create-A-Team was not featured in *Madden NFL 13* and moving teams was first featured in *Madden NFL 2004* called "Stadium" in the Franchise mode of the game. *Madden NFL 2002* was the 2nd highest selling game in 2002. [Minnesota Vikings](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minnesota_Vikings) quarterback [Daunte Culpepper](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daunte_Culpepper) is the cover athlete.

***Madden NFL 2003***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=9)]

There are multiple modes of game play, from a quick head-to-head game to running a team for a whole season or even multiple seasons. Online play, which was a new feature for [*Madden NFL 2003*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_2003) (in this version there are also mini-camp challenges) was only available for users of the [PlayStation 2](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PlayStation_2) console, [Xbox](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xbox_(console)) console, or a [Microsoft Windows](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Microsoft_Windows) PC until early [2004](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2004_in_video_gaming). [St. Louis Rams](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Louis_Rams) running back [Marshall Faulk](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marshall_Faulk) is the cover athlete.

***Madden NFL 2004***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=10)]

Also, starting with [*Madden NFL 2004*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_2004), EA Sports created the new *Playmaker* tool, using the right analog joystick found on each of the adjustments previously unavailable in prior installments of the franchise.[[18]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-18) One such adjustment includes the ability to switch which direction a running play was going without changing the formation. Prior to the Playmaker tool, the Player could only call one of four available "hot routes." With Playmaker and the use of the right thumb stick, the player is given 4 additional Hot Route options. When the quarterback has the ball the Playmaker Tool can be used to make receivers alter their routes mid-play. When running the ball on offense, the runner can control the direction in which the blocker is going. Defensive alignment adjustments, however, were not available leading to obvious imbalance in favor of the Offensive player. [Atlanta Falcons](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atlanta_Falcons) quarterback [Michael Vick](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Vick) is the cover athlete.

***Madden NFL 2005***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=11)]

In [*Madden NFL 2005*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_2005), EA Sports ran a campaign with the Theme "Fear the D" emphasising their improvements on the "other side of the ball." In an attempt to re-balance the players experience, EA gave a Playmaker Tool to the defense. Similar to the offensive Playmaker Tool, the defensive Playmaker allows the player to make pre-snap defensive adjustments. EA Sports further utilized the right analog joystick on defense by creating the "Hit Stick", an option on defense that allows the controlled player to make big hits, with a simple flick, that increases the chances the ball carrier will fumble. Also introduced for the first time is the "Formation Shift." This new feature allowed players to shift their formation in the pre-snap audible menu without actually changing the play. For example, if you call a run play up the middle out of a goal line formation, you could then call a formation shift and make your players spread out into a four wide receiver formation while still in the same running play. The problem with this new function was that EA also added a fatigue penalty for the defense causing defensive players to get more tired each time there was a formation shift. This led to players on offense calling multiple formation shifts each play making the defensive players too exhausted to keep up and force them to substitute out of the game until they are fully rested. This led to more imbalance that could only be fixed by turning off fatigue. [Baltimore Ravens](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baltimore_Ravens) linebacker [Ray Lewis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ray_Lewis) is the cover athlete.

*2005* also added "EA Sports Radio", a fictional show that plays during the menu screen of Franchise mode to provide a greater sense of a storyline during gameplay. It features [Tony Bruno](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tony_Bruno) as the host, who often interviews players and coaches about how the season is going and also has quiz questions in which fake listeners call in to make attempts at answering football-related questions. It included mock interviews of famous NFL players and coaches throughout the in-game season. Some fans have criticized [EA Sports](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EA_Sports) for not including new features to the 'programming' as the radio became stale after only two seasons in franchise mode, but the feature drew acclaim for adding content to the Franchise menu. Also added was the Newspaper where the player could look at National News from licensed USA Today and Licensed Local papers for almost each of the 32 NFL teams. Lastly, 2005 also saw the introduction of multiple progressions during franchise mode. Previously NFL players in Madden would only progress or regress at the end of each season. Now at the end of Week 5, 11, and 17 the game would use a program to "progress" players based on their performance in addition to end of season progression.

***Madden NFL 06***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=12)]

In [*Madden NFL 06*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_06), the "Truck Stick" was introduced. This feature allows the offensive player to lower his shoulder and break a tackle, or back juke to avoid one. Another new feature is the [*Superstar Mode*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Be-a-pro_mode), which allows the player to take control of a rookie and progress through his career.[[19]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-19) This includes an IQ test, interviews, workouts, the NFL Draft, hiring an agent, and other aspects of a superstar's life. [Philadelphia Eagles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philadelphia_Eagles) quarterback [Donovan McNabb](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donovan_McNabb) is the cover athlete.

EA also introduced the *QB Vision* feature in the 2006 installment. With this feature, a cone of spotlight emits from the quarterback during passing plays, simulating his field of vision. To make an accurate pass, the quarterback must have his intended receiver in his field of vision. Passing to a receiver not in the cone reduces pass accuracy significantly. The size of the quarterback's vision cone is directly correlated to his Awareness and Passer Accuracy rating; [Brett Favre](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brett_Favre) and [Peyton Manning](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peyton_Manning) see nearly the entire field at once, whereas an inexperienced quarterback such as [J. P. Losman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._P._Losman) or [Kyle Boller](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kyle_Boller) sees only a sliver of the field.[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-thefranchise-3) This feature also allows for bigger plays and more interceptions.

Also, EA sports added the *Smart Route*. This means that when pressing a hot route to the corresponding receiver, you put the analog stick down and the receiver will run to the first down, and you can throw him the ball.

While current gen Madden remained the same with the exception of a "Smart Route" and "QB Vision", this was also the first year Madden was released on the next-gen Xbox 360. It was completely stripped down, almost every change made in the previous gen was wiped away.

***EA Sports Madden NFL Football***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=13)]

This is an arcade game developed by [Global VR](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Global_VR) and released in 2005. The game comes in standard and deluxe cabinets. It can be played with up to four players and includes five game modes: Exhibition, Training, Tournament, Competition, and Career. It features rosters from the 2004–2005 season.[[20]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-20)

***Madden NFL 07***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=14)]

In [*Madden NFL 07*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_07), EA introduced *Lead Blocker Controls* which allow users to control blockers during running plays. In addition, EA redefined the Truck Stick into the *Highlight Stick*. With the Highlight Stick, users can have their running backs perform different running moves and combos, instead of just bowling over defenders. Truck Stick features still exist for bigger backs, but not for smaller backs who would never realistically use them anyway. Instead, more agile backs perform acrobatic ducks and dodges to avoid tackles.[[21]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-21) [Seattle Seahawks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seattle_Seahawks) running back [Shaun Alexander](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shaun_Alexander) is the cover athlete.

***EA Sports Madden NFL Football: Season 2***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=15)]

This game is the sequel to EA Sports Madden NFL Football. Like the original, it was also developed by [Global VR](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Global_VR). It was released in 2006 only in arcades. This version adds QB Vision, the Hit Stick, and the Truck Stick. The rosters are also updated for the 2006–2007 season.[[22]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-22)

***Madden NFL 08***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=16)]

In [*Madden NFL 08*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_08), the *Weapons* feature was added, allowing superstar players to be noticed. [Randy Moss](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Randy_Moss), for example, is a Go-To-Guy, allowing him to make amazing one-handed grabs. [Peyton Manning](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peyton_Manning) is a Franchise QB. It also includes new skill drills, Hit Stick 2.0, and Ring of a Champion features. [Tennessee Titans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tennessee_Titans) quarterback [Vince Young](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vince_Young) is on the cover. *Madden NFL 08* was also the last [GameCube](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GameCube) game ever released. The 2008 edition was the last to appear on PC until *Madden NFL 19* in 2018.

***Madden NFL 09***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=17)]

[*Madden NFL 09*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_09) was released on August 12, 2008. Citing business concerns, EA chose not to release it on the PC platform.[[23]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-23) The game features quarterback [Brett Favre](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brett_Favre) on the front cover, initially in a [Green Bay Packers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Green_Bay_Packers) uniform, but also with a downloadable cover featuring Favre in a [New York Jets](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_York_Jets) uniform.[[24]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-24) Favre had retired before the start of the season as a member of the Packers, but came out of retirement late in the summer and was traded to the Jets.[[25]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-25) [*Madden NFL 09*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_09) was the first of the series to offer online, league game play, allowing up to 32 players to compete in an online, simulated NFL season. EA Sports Senior Producer Phil Frazier, up to 32 players were able to participate in competitive games, the NFL Draft and conduct trades between their teams. The game was also the first of the series to incorporate a Madden IQ. The Madden IQ is used to automatically gauge your skills through a series of mini-games consisting of run offense, pass offense, run defense, and pass defense. At the end of each of the drills, the player receives a score ranging from rookie to all-Madden. The final Madden IQ is a mixture of those scores which is used to control the game's difficulty.[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-thefranchise-3)[[26]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-26)[[27]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-27)

***Madden NFL 10***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=18)]

[*Madden NFL 10*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_10) was released on August 14, 2009. It features [Arizona Cardinals](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arizona_Cardinals) wide receiver [Larry Fitzgerald](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Larry_Fitzgerald) and [Pittsburgh Steelers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pittsburgh_Steelers) strong safety [Troy Polamalu](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Troy_Polamalu).[[28]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-28) Compared to previous iterations, Madden NFL 10 has been extremely transparent with its development efforts, maintaining a weekly blog updates as well as a constant presence on various message boards. A new design team has also taken over the game, including members from NFL Head Coach 09. The direction of Madden NFL 10 has been shifted to much more of a realistic and simulation focus, with info already released including Procedural Awareness (a robust head tracking system), a new philosophy on player ratings, and big improvements to realism in QB play, WR/DB play, and other areas across the game. Madden 10 has several new features including the PRO-TAK animation technology, which allows up to nine man gang tackles and fumble pile-ups to help players 'fight for every yard', in this year's tagline. Madden 10 also features an in-game weekly recap show called The Extra Point. Madden 10 offers a series of multiple play packages. This allows for more options to score. This version features a completely overhauled rating system for players, featuring new categories such as throw on the run and specific ratings for short, medium, and deep passes.[[29]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-29) The game's soundtrack features rap, alternative rock, rap metal and hard rock bands such as [Nirvana](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nirvana_(band)), [Pantera](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pantera), [System of a Down](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/System_of_a_Down), and [Kid Rock](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kid_Rock).

**2010s**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=19)]

***Madden NFL 11***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=20)]

[*Madden NFL 11*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_11) was released on July 27, 2010 (moved up from its original release date of August 10, 2010 for promotional reasons[[30]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-30)), and features [New Orleans Saints](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Orleans_Saints) quarterback [Drew Brees](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drew_Brees) on the cover. It features several new additions to the franchise, such as Online Team Play,[[31]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-31) Online Scouting[[32]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-32) and online attribute boosts for co-op play.[[33]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-33) Along with these new game additions is a new rating (sponsored by Old Spice) known as Swagger.[[34]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-34) Although early speculation was that this new rating would be reflective of "confidence" or "composure," it was quickly confirmed to be directly tied to a player's personality for celebrations.[[35]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-35)

***Madden NFL 12***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=21)]

[*Madden NFL 12*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_12) was released on August 25, 2011. The release was delayed by two weeks due to the [NFL lockout](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2011_NFL_lockout),[[36]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-36) and features [Cleveland Browns](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cleveland_Browns) [running back](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Running_back) [Peyton Hillis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peyton_Hillis) on the cover. However, there is a limited edition in which the cover features [St. Louis Rams](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Louis_Rams) running back [Marshall Faulk](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marshall_Faulk).

***Madden NFL 13***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=22)]

[*Madden NFL 13*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_13) was released on August 28, 2012, and features [Detroit Lions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Detroit_Lions) [wide receiver](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wide_receiver) [Calvin Johnson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calvin_Johnson) as the cover athlete. *Madden NFL 13* is the first *Madden* game to be released on the [PlayStation Vita](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PlayStation_Vita), and it is also the first game in the series to have [Kinect](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kinect) support as well as a new physics engine promoting real in game physics.[[37]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-37)

*Madden NFL 13* included a complete revamp to online franchise mode which became known as Connected Careers Mode (CCM). Some of the new CCM features included player contracts, the ability to trade draft picks, a salary cap, and up to 30 seasons worth of gameplay.[[38]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-38)

***Madden NFL 25***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=23)]

*Main article:*[*Madden NFL 25*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_25)

In early 2013, EA Sports announced that the next installment of the Madden series would be released on August 27, 2013. As this installment is the 25th anniversary of the series,[[39]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-39) the game is called *Madden NFL 25*, instead of *Madden NFL 14* with the year like the previous versions.[[40]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-Madden_25_confirmed-40) The cover vote consisted of two brackets containing past players ("Old School") and active players ("New School").[[41]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-41)

"Old School" player and [Pro Football Hall of Famer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pro_Football_Hall_of_Fame) [Barry Sanders](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barry_Sanders) was chosen as the cover athlete for *Madden NFL 25* on the April 24, 2013, episode of [ESPN](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ESPN)'s [*SportsNation*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SportsNation_(TV_series)). The "New School" finalist was [Adrian Peterson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adrian_Peterson).[[42]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-42)

***Madden NFL 15***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=24)]

*Main article:*[*Madden NFL 15*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_15)

On March 13, 2014 [EA Sports](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EA_Sports) posted on its website that user would be able to design and submit uniforms for Connected Careers by March 17, 2014, for "the next Madden NFL."[[43]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-43) On April 28, 2014, EA announced the release of Madden 15 pre-ordering in a release video with NFL linebacker and 2013 Defensive Player of the Year [Luke Kuechly](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luke_Kuechly). The game was released August 26 in North America and on August 29 in the EU for Xbox One, PlayStation 4, Xbox 360 and the PlayStation 3. The game featured "dramatic all-new camera angles, as well as dynamic pre-game and halftime features."[[44]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-44) During the Detroit Lions 10th pick of the [2014 NFL Draft](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2014_NFL_Draft), Barry Sanders announced fans again would be able to vote for the cover athlete.[[45]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-45) On June 6, [Seattle Seahawks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seattle_Seahawks) [cornerback](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cornerback) [Richard Sherman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Sherman_(American_football)) was announced as the cover athlete.[[46]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-46)

***Madden NFL 16***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=25)]

*Main article:*[*Madden NFL 16*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_16)

EA decided not to have players vote for the cover athlete through a traditional bracket, but rather through collectible cards in [*Madden NFL Mobile*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_Mobile), or through Ultimate Team on the console devices. On May 4, 2015, the four finalists were announced for the 2016 game cover: [New England Patriots](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_England_Patriots) tight end [Rob Gronkowski](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rob_Gronkowski), [Arizona Cardinals](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arizona_Cardinals) cornerback [Patrick Peterson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patrick_Peterson), [New York Giants](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_York_Giants) wide receiver [Odell Beckham Jr.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Odell_Beckham_Jr.) and [Pittsburgh Steelers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pittsburgh_Steelers) wide receiver [Antonio Brown](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antonio_Brown). On May 13, Beckham Jr. beat out Gronkowski in a fan vote for the cover of *Madden 16*. It was released on August 25, 2015.[[47]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-47)

***Madden NFL 17***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=26)]

*Main article:*[*Madden NFL 17*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_17)

[*Madden NFL 17*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_17) was released on August 23, 2016. The features in the game include an upgrade of the Ground Game, a redesigned and better Franchise Mode, "Madden 365", new Ball Carrier UI Prompts, the new Path Assist and more.[[48]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-48) [New England Patriots](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_England_Patriots) tight end [Rob Gronkowski](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rob_Gronkowski) serves as the cover athlete.[[49]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-49)

***Madden NFL 18***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=27)]

*Main article:*[*Madden NFL 18*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_18)

[*Madden NFL 18*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_18) was released on August 25, 2017.[[50]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-50) The game is the first in the series to be developed in the [Frostbite Engine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frostbite_(game_engine)), and it incorporates a story mode titled Longshot Mode, akin to *The Journey* in [FIFA 17](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/FIFA_17).[[51]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-51) It was announced that [New England Patriots](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_England_Patriots) quarterback [Tom Brady](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom_Brady) would be on the cover, marking the second consecutive year where a Patriot will be on the cover.[[52]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-52) Furthermore, an enhanced **G.O.A.T.** edition was also announced.[[53]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-53)

***Madden NFL 19***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=28)]

*Main article:*[*Madden NFL 19*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_19)

[*Madden NFL 19*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_19) was announced with [Pittsburgh Steelers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pittsburgh_Steelers) wide receiver [Antonio Brown](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antonio_Brown) as the cover athlete.[[54]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-54) It was released on August 10, 2018. The game was released to the PC in addition to the console versions, the first one to do so since *Madden NFL 08* in 2007.

***Madden NFL 20***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=29)]

*Main article:*[*Madden NFL 20*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_20)

[*Madden NFL 20*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_20) was announced with [Kansas City Chiefs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kansas_City_Chiefs) quarterback [Patrick Mahomes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patrick_Mahomes) as the cover athlete.[[55]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-55) It was released on August 2, 2019.

**2020s**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=30)]

***Madden NFL 21***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=31)]

*Main article:*[*Madden NFL 21*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_21)

[*Madden NFL 21*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_21) was announced with [Baltimore Ravens](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baltimore_Ravens) quarterback [Lamar Jackson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lamar_Jackson) as the cover athlete.[[56]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-56) It was released on August 28, 2020.[[57]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-57)

Due to the [Washington Redskins](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington_Redskins) announcing the retirement of the team's [controversial moniker](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington_Redskins_name_controversy) on July 13, 2020, EA announced on July 17 that it would be doing an update on *Madden NFL 21* to remove the team's logo and name and replacing them with a generic Washington logo and name pending further developments.[[58]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-58)[[59]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-59)

***Madden NFL 22***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=32)]

*Main article:*[*Madden NFL 22*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_22)

[*Madden NFL 22*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_22) was announced with both [Tampa Bay Buccaneers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tampa_Bay_Buccaneers) quarterback [Tom Brady](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom_Brady) and [Kansas City Chiefs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kansas_City_Chiefs) quarterback [Patrick Mahomes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patrick_Mahomes) as the cover athletes. It was the second cover appearance for both players.[[60]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-60)

***Madden NFL 23***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=33)]

*Main article:*[*Madden NFL 23*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_23)

[*Madden NFL 23*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_23) was announced with head coach [John Madden](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Madden) as the cover star on Madden Day (June 1, 2022, the same day the series' first installment, *John Madden Football*, was released) in honor of his death on December 28, 2021. The cover of the next gen version is a picture of Madden celebrating his victory as the head coach of the [Oakland Raiders](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Las_Vegas_Raiders) at [Super Bowl XI](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Super_Bowl_XI). The All Madden Edition is based on the cover of the series' 1st installment, *John Madden Football*, made by Chuck Styles.

**License history and spinoffs**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=34)]

**Licensing**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=35)]

Until 1993, the Madden series did not have official licenses from the [National Football League](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Football_League) (NFL) or [National Football League Players Association](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Football_League_Players_Association) (NFLPA). [*Madden NFL '94*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_%2794) was the first game in the series to include real NFL teams, and [*Madden NFL '95*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_%2795) added an NFLPA license for real players through the [National Football League Players Incorporated](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Football_League_Players_Incorporated) (NFLPI).[[61]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-61) The licenses restrict EA from including certain content in current *Madden* games, such as the humorous ambulance that picks up injured players in 1991's [*John Madden Football II*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Madden_Football_II).[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-thefranchise-3) The NFL Coaches Association sold the rights to have NFL coaches' names appear in the *Madden NFL* games; [*Madden NFL 2001*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_2001) was the first game in the series to feature this license.[[62]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-62) Neither [New England Patriots](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_England_Patriots) coach [Bill Belichick](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bill_Belichick) nor [Bill Parcells](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bill_Parcells) appeared in the game as they are not members of the NFL Coaches Association. Likewise, non-NFLPA players (such as [Thurman Thomas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thurman_Thomas) during his playing career) do not appear in the game, instead being replaced with generic placeholders.

**Exclusivity**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=36)]

In 2004, EA signed an exclusive licensing rights agreement through 2009 with the NFL and the NFLPA to give the company the exclusive rights to use the NFL's teams, stadiums, and players in a video game.[[63]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-63) Mike Mika, who was working on *NFL 2K*, described the agreement as "like a nuclear bomb going off in the game industry", canceling rival NFL projects.[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-30for30-10) This exclusive license prevents other rival video game developers from producing official NFL video games. The deal, reportedly worth $300 million and later extended to 2013,[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-thefranchise-3) has been widely criticized. Some competitors, such as the [*Blitz: The League*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blitz:_The_League) series, have elected to continue, seeking to distinguish themselves through innovative gameplay while others, such as the [*NFL 2K*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NFL_2K_(series)) series, have ceased production. In 2007, [2K Sports](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2K_(company)) released [*All Pro Football 2K8*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/All_Pro_Football_2K8), which used former NFL stars.

In 2020 2K gained the rights for "non-simulation football game experiences" from the NFL. The deal is said to not impact Madden which will remain the only "simulation" football game.[[64]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-64)

In 2020 the NFL extended its exclusive rights with EA which were due to expire in 2022, which changed to until 2026 for a reported $1.5 billion, with a provision for an additional year of exclusivity if EA hits revenue targets.[[65]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-65)[[66]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-66)[[67]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-67)[[68]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-68)

***Head Coach* series**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=37)]

*Main article:*[*NFL Head Coach*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NFL_Head_Coach)

In August 2006, [EA Sports](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EA_Sports) debuted [*NFL Head Coach*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NFL_Head_Coach), which utilized the *Madden* engine to create a football management simulation. The game was criticized as buggy and unrealistic. EA Tiburon rebuilt the game from the ground up, addressing flaws and creating a proprietary engine, over the course of three years. [*NFL Head Coach 09*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NFL_Head_Coach_09) was released on August 12, 2008, bundled with the special edition of *Madden NFL 09* and as a standalone game on September 2, 2008.

***Madden NFL Social***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=38)]

*Madden NFL Social* was an early version of [*Madden NFL Mobile*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_Mobile) for [Facebook](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Facebook) and [iOS](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IOS) that was released November 1, 2012 and shut down September 2, 2013.

***Madden Arcade***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=39)]

Released on November 24, 2009,[[69]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-69) the game is 5-on-5 and takes the best 10 players from each of the 32 NFL teams.[[70]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-70)

***Madden NFL Mobile***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=40)]

[*Madden NFL Mobile*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_Mobile) was released on August 26, 2014, and is only the third Madden game on mobile devices. The game is very similar to the Madden Ultimate Team (MUT) game mode, and the game is currently on its 9th season.

***Madden NFL Football***[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=41)]

[*Madden NFL Football*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_Football) was released as a launch title for the [Nintendo 3DS](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nintendo_3DS) on March 27, 2011.[[71]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-71)

**Voice commentary**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Madden_NFL&action=edit&section=42)]

Voice commentary in *Madden* allows players or watchers to hear the game being called as if it were a real game on [TV](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Television).[[72]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-72) For early versions of the game, this commentary was performed by Madden himself and his play-by-play partner. Initially, this was [Pat Summerall](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pat_Summerall), his partner during their days at [CBS](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NFL_on_CBS) and [Fox](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NFL_on_Fox) from the early 1980s to the early 2000s until Summerall retired; the role was then filled by [Al Michaels](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al_Michaels), John's broadcast partner on [*Monday Night Football*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monday_Night_Football) ([2002](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2002_NFL_season)–[2005](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2005_NFL_season)) and [*NBC Sunday Night Football*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NBC_Sunday_Night_Football) ([2006](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2006_NFL_season)–[2008](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2008_NFL_season)). For the first Madden games on the [Xbox 360](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xbox_360) and [PS3](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PlayStation_3), they featured a generic EA Sports radio announcer doing play-by-play. This started with [*Madden 06*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_06) and ended with [*Madden 08*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_08).[[73]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-73) Other versions of those games still featured Madden's commentary.

Madden recorded thousands of lines for each *Madden* game.[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-30for30-10) [*Madden NFL 09*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_09) was the last version to feature Madden's commentary, albeit in a reduced role. By that time, he felt that reciting a script covering every single scenario in the game was boring and tedious[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-markazi20090821-9)—Madden recalled the long hours spent alone in the recording studio as "the most difficult part of any part that I've ever had in the game and the least amount of fun"[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-bissell20120117-8)—but said that in the decision to remove him from game commentary, "I feel that something is being taken away from me".[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-thefranchise-3)

Madden and Michaels were replaced by [Cris Collinsworth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cris_Collinsworth) as color commentator and [Tom Hammond](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom_Hammond) on play-by-play in [*Madden NFL 09*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_09) and [*Madden NFL 10*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_10). [Gus Johnson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gus_Johnson_(sportscaster)) replaced Hammond in [*Madden NFL 11*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_11) and [*Madden NFL 12*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_12), with Collinsworth handling color commentary in both games.[[74]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-74) [*Madden NFL 13*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_13) marked the debut of real-life announcing team [Jim Nantz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jim_Nantz) and [Phil Simms](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phil_Simms), including them appearing in an in-booth cutscene before the game.[[75]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-75) Nantz and Simms stayed until [*Madden NFL 16*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_16), when they were replaced by [Fox](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NFL_on_Fox)'s [Brandon Gaudin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brandon_Gaudin) and [Charles Davis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Davis_(defensive_back)) for [*Madden NFL 17*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL_17). Nantz continued to work as the primary play-by-play announcer for [CBS](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NFL_on_CBS), while Simms later left the CBS broadcast booth to work on [*The NFL Today*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_NFL_Today). Gaudin and Davis returned to the studio throughout the [2016 NFL season](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2016_NFL_season) to add new commentary relevant to each week of the season.[[76]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-76)

In addition, *Madden NFL 08* and *Madden NFL 09* were also released in Spanish, featuring [ESPN Deportes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ESPN_Deportes) announcer [Álvaro Martín](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%81lvaro_Mart%C3%ADn_(sports_announcer)) providing both play-by-play and analysis.[[77]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madden_NFL#cite_note-77)