

# Nintendo Wii



## About

The Nintendo Wii, an electronic game console, was released by the Nintendo Company of Japan in 2006. Instead of directly competing with rival video consoles, such as the Microsoft Corporation's Xbox 360 and the Sony Corporation's PlayStation 3 (PS3). In terms of processing power and graphics display, Nintendo produced an innovative, low-cost console that featured multiplayer "party" games. While the Xbox 360 and the PS3 were fighting over the traditional, or "hard-core," gamers, the Wii broadened the entire video-game console market and in the process established the largest user base.

# History

The console was conceived in 2001, as the Nintendo GameCube was first released. According to an interview with Nintendo game designer Shigeru Miyamoto, the concept involved focusing on a new form of player interaction. “The consensus was that power isn’t everything for a console. Too many powerful consoles can’t coexist. It’s like having only ferocious dinosaurs. They might fight and hasten their own extinction.”

In 2003, game engineers and designers were brought together to develop the concept further. By 2005 the controller interface had taken form, but a public showing at that year’s Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) was canceled. Miyamoto stated that the company “had some troubleshooting to do. So we decided not to reveal the controller and instead we displayed just the console.” Nintendo president Satoru Iwata later unveiled and demonstrated the Wii Remote at the September Tokyo Game Show.

The Nintendo DS is said to have influenced the Wii’s design. Designer Ken’ichiro Ashida noted, “We had the DS on our minds as we worked on the Wii. We thought about copying the DS’s touch-panel interface and even came up with a prototype.” The idea was eventually rejected because of the notion that the two gaming systems would be identical. Miyamoto also stated, “if the DS had flopped, we might have taken the Wii back to the drawing board.” In June 2011 Nintendo unveiled the prototype of its successor to the Wii, to be known as the Wii U.

# Name

The console was known by the code name “Revolution” from May 11, 2004 when its codename was announced at Nintendo’s 2004 pre-Electronics Entertainment Expo press conference in Los Angeles, California until April 27, 2006, immediately before E3. Before the Wii’s codename was announced, the media referred to the console as “GCNext” or Gamecube Next and “N5” or Nintendo’s fifth major home console.

Nintendo’s spelling of “Wii” (with two lower-case “i” characters) is intended to resemble two people standing side-by-side (representing players gathering together) and to represent the Wii Remote and Nunchuk. One reason the company has given for this name choice since the announcement is: Wii sounds like ‘we’, which emphasizes that the console is for everyone. Wii can easily be remembered by people around the world, no matter what language they speak. No confusion. Some video game developers and members of the press stated that they preferred “Revolution” over “Wii”. Forbes expressed a fear “that the name would convey a continued sense of ‘kidiness’ to the console.” The BBC reported the day after the name was announced that “a long list of puerile jokes, based on the name,” had appeared on the Internet.

Nintendo of America’s Vice President of Corporate Affairs Perrin Kaplan defended the choice of “Wii” over “Revolution” and responded to critics of the name, stating “Live with it, sleep with it, eat with it, move along with it and hopefully they’ll arrive at the same place.” Nintendo of America’s president Reggie Fils-Aime acknowledged the initial reaction and further explained the change: Revolution as a name is not ideal; it’s long, and in some cultures, it’s hard to pronounce. So we wanted something that was short, to the point, easy to pronounce, and distinctive. That’s how ‘Wii,’ as a console name, was created. The Nintendo Style Guide refers to the console as “simply Wii, not Nintendo Wii”, making it the first home console Nintendo has marketed outside Japan without the company name in its trademark. The Wii’s successor, the Wii U, was also marketed without Nintendo in its name, although its successor, the Nintendo Switch, brought back the Nintendo name in marketing.

# Wii Remote

The Wii Remote is the primary controller for the console. It uses a combination of built-in accelerometers and infrared detection to sense its position in 3D space when pointed at the LEDs in the Sensor Bar. This design allows users to control the game with physical gestures as well as button-presses. The controller connects to the console using Bluetooth with an approximate 30 ft (9.1 m) range, and features rumble and an internal speaker. An attachable wrist strap can be used to prevent the player from unintentionally dropping (or throwing) the Wii Remote. Nintendo has since offered a stronger strap and the Wii Remote Jacket to provide extra grip and protection.

Accessories can be connected to a Wii Remote through a proprietary port at the base of the controller, such as the bundled Nunchuk — a handheld unit with an accelerometer, analog stick, and two trigger buttons. An expansion accessory known as Wii MotionPlus augments the Wii Remote’s existing sensors with gyroscopes to allow for finer motion detection; the MotionPlus functionality was later incorporated into a revision of the controller known as Wii Remote Plus. At E3 2009, Nintendo also presented a “Vitality Sensor” accessory that could be used to measure a player’s pulse. In a 2013 Q&A, Satoru Iwata revealed that the Vitality Sensor had been shelved, as internal testing found that the device did not work with all users, and its use cases were too narrow.



## Wii Menu

The Wii Menu interface is designed to emulate television channels. Separate channels are graphically displayed in a grid, and are navigated using the pointer capability of the Wii Remote. Except for the Disc Channel, it is possible to change the arrangement by holding down the A and B buttons to “grab” channels and move them around. There are six primary channels: the Disc Channel, Mii Channel, Photo Channel, Wii Shop Channel, Forecast Channel and News Channel. The latter two were initially unavailable at launch, but were later activated in updates. The Wii + Internet Video Channel was installed in consoles manufactured after September 2008.[180] Additional channels are available for download from the Wii Shop Channel through WiiWare, and appear with each Virtual Console title; these include the Everybody Votes Channel, Internet Channel, Check Mii Out Channel and the Nintendo Channel.



## Demographic

Nintendo has hoped to target a wider demographic with its console than that of others in the seventh generation. At a press conference for the then-upcoming Nintendo DS game Dragon Quest IX: Sentinels of the Starry Skies in December 2006, Satoru Iwata insisted “We’re not thinking about fighting Sony, but about how many people we can get to play games. The thing we’re thinking about most is not portable systems, consoles, and so forth, but that we want to get new people playing games.” This is reflected in Nintendo’s series of television advertisements in North America (directed by Academy Award winner Stephen Gaghan) and its Internet ads. The advertising slogans were “Wii would like to play” and “Experience a new way to play”; the ads began November 15, 2006, and had a total budget of over US \$200 million for the year. The productions were Nintendo’s first broad-based advertising strategy and included a two-minute video clip showing an assortment of people enjoying the Wii system: urban apartment-dwellers, ranchers, grandparents, and parents with their children. The music in the ads was from the song “Kodo (Inside the Sun Remix)” by the Yoshida Brothers. The marketing campaign was successful; pensioners as old as 103 were reported to be playing the Wii in the United Kingdom. A report by the British newspaper The People also stated that Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom has used the console.



## Launch

On September 14, 2006 Nintendo announced release information for Japan, North and South America, Oceania, Asia and Europe including dates, prices, and projected unit-distribution figures. It was announced that the majority of the 2006 shipments would be allotted to the Americas, and 33 titles would be available at its launch. The Wii was launched in the United States on November 19, 2006 for \$249.99, and was later launched in the United Kingdom on December 8, 2006 for £179.

The United Kingdom experienced a widespread shortage of Wii units in many High-Street and online stores, and was unable to fulfill all pre-orders at its release. The Wii was launched in South Korea on April 26, 2008, Taiwan on July 12, 2008, and Hong Kong on December 12, 2009.

## Reception

The Wii has received generally positive reviews. The system was well received after its exhibition at E3 2006. At the event, Nintendo's console won the Game Critics Awards for Best of Show and Best Hardware. In the December 2006 issue of Popular Science, the console was named a Grand Award Winner in home entertainment. Spike TV's Video Games Award cited the Wii's breakthrough technology. The system was also chosen as one of PC World magazine's 20 Most Innovative Products of the Year. In 2009, IGN named the Wii the 10th greatest console of all time (out of 25).

The Wii's success caught third-party developers by surprise, leading to apologies for the quality of their early games. At the same time, criticism of the Wii Remote and Wii hardware specifications had surfaced.

Game designer and The Sims creator Will Wright shared his thoughts on the Wii in the context of the seventh console generation: "The only next gen system I've seen is the Wii – the PS3 and the Xbox 360 feel like better versions of the last, but pretty much the same game with incremental improvement. But the Wii feels like a major jump – not that the graphics are more powerful, but that it hits a completely different demographic."

The Wii is seen as more physically demanding than other game consoles. Some Wii players have experienced a form of tennis elbow, known as "Wiiitis". A study published in the British Medical Journal stated that Wii players use more energy than they do playing sedentary computer games. While this energy increase may be beneficial to weight management, it was not an adequate replacement for regular exercise. A case study published in the American Physical Therapy Association's journal, Physical Therapy, focused on use of the Wii for rehabilitation in a teenager with cerebral palsy. It is believed to be the first published research demonstrating physical-therapy benefits from use of the gaming system.

By 2008, two years after the Wii's release, Nintendo acknowledged several limitations and challenges with the system (such as the perception that the system catered primarily to a "casual" audience and was unpopular among "core" gamers). The Globe and Mail, in suggesting why Nintendo posted a record loss of \$926 million for the initial six months of its 2011–2012 fiscal year, blamed the Wii's design for being "short-sighted". The Wii initially enjoyed phenomenal success because it was inexpensive (due to its being less sophisticated than its competitors) and introduced a "gaming gimmick". However, this approach meant that the Wii's hardware soon became outdated and could not keep up long-term.

## Sales

As of March 31, 2016, the Wii has sold 101.63 million consoles worldwide. Since its launch, monthly sales numbers of the console were generally higher than its competitors around the globe. On November 28, 2006, Nintendo reported that it had sold over 600,000 consoles in the first eight days of launch in the Americas, making it Nintendo's largest console launch until the release of the Nintendo Switch in 2017. Japan initially received 400,000 Wii consoles, and sold an estimated 372,000 units in two days, with Wii Sports and Wii Play being the best-selling games. Nintendo announced on December 13, 2006 that the Wii had sold 325,000 units across Europe in its first two days of availability and had sold 33,000 units in Australia in its first six days of availability, making it the fastest selling console across the entire European continent and the largest launch of a video game system in Australia. By the end of 2006, the Wii had sold 3.19 million units worldwide.

On September 12, 2007, the Financial Times reported that the Wii had surpassed the Xbox 360 (released a year earlier) and had become market leader in home-console sales for the seventh generation, based on sales figures from Enterbrain, NPD Group and GfK. This was the first time a Nintendo console led its generation in sales since the Super Nintendo Entertainment System.

According to the NPD Group the Wii surpassed the Xbox 360 to become the best-selling "next-generation" home video-game console in Canada (with 813,000 units sold by April 1, 2008), and was the best-selling home console for 13 of the previous 17 months. According to the NPD Group the Wii had sold a total of 1,060,000 units in Canada by August 2008, making it the first seventh generation home console to surpass the million-unit mark in that country.

On September 23, 2009, Nintendo announced its first price reductions for the console. Nintendo sold more than three million Wii consoles in the U.S. in December 2009 (setting a regional record for the month and ending nine months of declining sales), due to the price cut and software releases such as New Super Mario Bros. Wii. On January 31, 2010 the Wii became the best-selling home video-game console produced by Nintendo, with sales of over 67 million units (surpassing those of the original Nintendo Entertainment System).

In 2010, sales of the Wii began to decline, falling by 21 percent from the previous year. The Wii continued to decline in 2011, with Nintendo's quarterly revenue dropping by 41 percent. Despite a slowdown in sales, Nintendo reported that on Black Friday in 2011, over 500,000 Wii consoles were sold, making it the most successful Black Friday in the Wii's history. Wii sales declined even further in 2012, having decreased by half from 2011. The Wii Mini sold 35,700 units in its first two months of availability in Canada after being released on December 7, 2012. The Wii surpassed 100 million units sold on June 30, 2013, selling 210,000 units between March and June of 2013.

# Sources

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wii>