

An In-Depth Guide to Back Up and Play Wii Games from USB

A user-friendly guide to jailbreak your Wii and play games without the disc

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Are you trying to download and play games on your Wii without a disc? As long as you have the classic Wii (and not the Wii U), you'll be able to play any of your available games on a USB flash drive. Playing a game from a USB drive requires you to install the Homebrew Channel on your Wii, which voids your Wii's warranty and violates Nintendo's terms of use. After you've installed all of the necessary items, you'll be able to burn a disc's contents onto your USB flash drive, making it playable without the disc. This wikiHow guide will show you how to play Wii games from a USB flash drive.

Things You Should Know

- Format a USB drive as FAT32 or MS-DOS (FAT), empty the Wii drive, and install Homebrew. Create a Wii flash drive.
- Download IOS236, cIOSX Rev20b, and USB Loader GX channel. Do not turn the Wii off while installing.
- Plug the USB in and run USB Loader GX. Insert a game to burn onto the USB, and then select "Install".

Part 1

Preparing to Install

1 **Make sure that you have the correct equipment.** You'll need the following items for this task:^[1]

- *SDHC card* - A large SD card of up to 8 gigabytes is needed to install Homebrew and perform other file-based tasks.

- *USB flash drive* - This is the drive on which you'll install and store the games.
- *Wii remote* - If you have a newer (non-white) model of Wii, you'll need a generic Wii remote to help with the installation.

2 Format your USB flash drive as FAT32. To do so plug in your flash drive. Open the **File Explorer**, right-click the drive, and click **Format**. Select **FAT32** (or **MS-DOS (FAT)** on a Mac) in the "File System" sections.

- Keep in mind that formatting a USB flash drive will erase its contents, so back up the contents to your computer or another USB flash drive if necessary.

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3 Empty the Wii's disc drive. If there is currently a disc in the Wii, eject it before proceeding.

4 Connect your Wii to the Internet. Your Wii will need a network connection in order to install the bulk of the USB tool's files.

- Open **Wii Settings** and select **Wii System Settings**.
- Click **Internet**.
- Click **Connection 1**.
- Select your network and enter the password.

5 Install Homebrew on your Wii. If you haven't yet installed the Homebrew Channel for your Wii, you'll need to do so before proceeding. The Homebrew Channel allows you to install custom modifications, one of which will let you play games off of a USB flash drive.

6 Format your SD card. Once you've installed Homebrew with the SD card, you'll need to wipe it clean so that you can use it for the USB installation files. The easiest way to do so is by formatting the SD card.

- As with the USB flash drive, choose **FAT32** (or **MS-DOS (FAT)** on a Mac) as the file system.

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Part
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Creating a Wii Flash Drive


1 Use a Windows computer for this part. Unfortunately, you cannot format correctly your USB flash drive for Wii use on a Mac. If you don't have

access to a Windows computer, try using one at a library or borrowing one from a friend.


2 Determine your Windows bit version. You'll need to know whether your version of Windows is a 64-bit system or a 32-bit system in order to know which file to download in a minute.

3 Go to the WBFS Manager download page. The following links are for the 64-bit and 32-bit versions of WBFS Manager for Windows:


- WBFS Manager 64-Bit Windows
- WBFS Manager 32-Bit Windows

4 Click . It's the green button in the upper-right corner.

- Watch out for any add pop-ups and be careful not to click any download links to software you didn't intend to download.

5 Click . It's the green button in the center of the page. Doing so will download a ZIP folder containing the setup file for WBFS Manager.

6 Open the ZIP folder. Double-click the downloaded ZIP folder to open it.

7 Double-click . It's in the ZIP folder. Doing so will open the setup window.

- Make sure you install Dotnet before you set up the program.

8 Install the program. Use the following steps to install WBFS Manager:

- Click **Next**.
- Click **Browse** to select an install location (optional).
- Click **Next**.
- Click **Next**.
- Click **Yes**.
- Click **Close**.


9 Plug your USB flash drive into your computer. The USB flash drive should fit into one of the rectangular USB ports on your computer.

10 Open WBFS Manager. Double-click the WBFS Manager app icon, which resembles a Wii on a blue background, to do so. You can find it in your Windows Start menu.

- The first time you open WBFS Manager, you will need to click **Yes** to allow it to access your system.

11 Select your USB flash drive. Click the "Drive" drop-down box in the upper-left corner of the window, then click your USB flash drive's letter (usually **F:**).

- If you don't know the USB flash drive's letter, look for it in the "Devices and drives" section of the This PC app.

12 Click . Doing so will format your USB flash drive for use with the Wii.

13 Eject the USB flash drive. Click on the USB flash drive's icon in the lower-right side of the screen, then click **Eject** in the pop-up menu and remove the USB flash drive from your computer.

- You may have to click the upward-facing arrow here to see the USB flash drive's icon.

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Part
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Downloading the Files

1 Plug your SD card into your computer. The SD card should fit into your computer's SD card slot angled-side-in, logo-side-up.

- If your computer doesn't have an SD card slot, you'll need to use a USB adapter for your SD card as well.

2 Open the file download site. Go to <https://app.box.com/s/zt15x4vlw56thgk1n4wlx147v8rsz6vt> in your browser.

3 Click . It's the button in the upper-right corner of the screen. Doing so downloads the USB Loader GX ZIP folder.

4 Extract the ZIP folder. This process will vary depending on your computer's operating system.

- *Windows* - Open the ZIP folder, click the **Extract** tab, click **Extract all**, and click **Extract** at the bottom of the window that appears. The extracted folder will open when the extraction finishes.
- *Mac* - Just double-click the ZIP folder to extract it. The extracted folder will open when the extraction finishes.

5 Open the "Files" folder. Double-click the **USB Loader GX** folder, then double-click the **Files** folder at the top of the next window.

- 6 Copy the all files in the Files folder.** Click on one file in the folder, press **Ctrl** + **A** (Windows) or **⌘ Command** + **A** (Mac) to select all of the files, and press **Ctrl** + **C** (Windows) or **⌘ Command** + **C** (Mac) to copy the files.
- 7 Click your SD card's name.** It's on the left side of the window in File Explorer on Windows or Finder on Mac.
- 8 Paste in the files.** Click a blank space in the SD card's window, then press **Ctrl** + **V** (Windows) or **⌘ Command** + **V** (Mac). The files will copy onto the SD card.
- 9 Eject the SD card.** Once your files finish copying, you can proceed with removing your SD card. To do so:
 - *Windows* - Right-click your SD card's name in the left-hand pane, then click **Eject**.
 - *Mac* - Click the upward-facing arrow to the right of your SD card's name in the left-hand pane.

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Part
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Installing IOS236

- 1 Plug your SD card into your Wii.** The SD card should fit into the Wii's SD card slot angled in, logo side up.
- 2 Turn on your Wii.** Press your Wii's power button, or use the power button on the remote to do so.
 - The Wii's remote will need to be on and synced as well.
- 3 Press **A** when prompted.** Doing so will take you to the Wii's main menu.
- 4 Start the Homebrew Channel.** Select the **Homebrew Channel** on your Wii's main menu, then select **Start** when prompted.
- 5 Select **IOS236 Installer**.** It's on the first page of the Homebrew Channel. A pop-up menu will appear.
- 6 Select **Load** when prompted.** You'll find this option in the bottom-middle of the pop-up menu.
- 7 Press the **1** button.** Doing so selects the **Install** option.

- If you're using a GameCube controller, press the **Y** button instead.

8 Select **<Download IOS from NUS>**. It's at the bottom of the page.

- If you don't see this option, select the text in brackets at the bottom of the screen and press **Right** until you see it appear.

9 Press **A** when prompted. Doing so will install the IOS236 base onto your Wii. This process can take up to 20 minutes, so be patient.

10 Press any button when prompted. Doing so will exit the setup and return you to the Homebrew Channel.

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Part
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Installing cIOSX Rev20b

1 Select **cIOSX rev20b Installer**. It's in the middle of the first page of the Homebrew Channel.

2 Select **Load** when prompted. The installation program will open.

3 Scroll left to the **"IOS236"** option. Doing so will select the IOS236 file that you installed earlier.

4 Press **A**. Doing so confirms your choice.

5 Agree to the terms of use. Press **A** on your controller to do so.

6 Select an IOS version. Press **Left** until you see "IOS56 v5661" appear between the brackets, then press **A**.

7 Select a custom IOS slot. Press **Left** until you see "IOS249" appear between the brackets, then press **A**.

8 Select an installation mode. Press **Left** until you see "Network installation" appear between the brackets.

9 Start the installation. Press **A** on your controller to do so.

10 Press any button when prompted. Doing so will move you to the next part of the installation.

- 11 Select another IOS version.** Press **Left** until you see "IOS38 v4123" appear between the brackets, then press **A**.
- 12 Select another slot.** Press **Left** until you see "IOS250" appear between the brackets, then press **A**.
- 13 Use the network installer.** Select "Network installation" and press **A** as you did with the last installer, then wait for the installation to complete.
- 14 Press any button when prompted, then press the button.**
Doing so will restart your Wii. When it finishes restarting, you'll be able to proceed.

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**Part
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Installing the USB Loader GX Channel

- 1 Navigate to the next page of the Homebrew Channel.** Press the **Right** arrow on your Wii remote's D-pad to do so.
 - You can also press the **+** button.
- 2 Select .** It's the second option on this page.
- 3 Select when prompted.** Doing so will start up the WAD Manager.
- 4 Agree to the terms of use.** Press **A** on your controller to do so.
- 5 Select "IOS249" to load.** Press **Left** until you see "IOS249" appear between the brackets, then press **A**.
- 6 Disable the emulator.** Press **Left** until you see "Disable" appear between the brackets, then press **A**.
- 7 Select your SD card.** Press **Left** until you see "Wii SD Slot" appear between the brackets, then press **A**. Doing so brings up a list of the files on the SD card that you plugged in earlier.
- 8 Scroll down and select .** It's near the bottom of the screen.
- 9 Select the USB loader.** Scroll down to select **USB Loader GX-UNEO_Forwarder.wad** and press **A**.

10 Install the WAD. Press **A** on your controller to do so.

11 Press any button when prompted, then press the **B** button and then the Home button. Doing so will restart the Wii. Once the Wii finishes restarting, you'll be back on the second page of the Homebrew Channel.

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Part
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Playing Games

1 Press the Home button again. Doing so brings up the Home menu.

2 Select **Shutdown**. It's at the bottom of the menu. Your Wii will power down.

- It's best to wait until your Wii fully powers down before proceeding.

3 Plug your USB flash drive into your Wii. The USB flash drive should fit into one of the rectangular USB ports at the back of the Wii.

4 Turn back on your Wii. Press your Wii's power button to do so.

5 Press **A** when prompted. Doing so will take you to the Wii's main menu, where you should now see a **USB Loader GX** channel to the right of the Homebrew Channel.

6 Select **USB Loader GX**. It's next to the Homebrew Channel.

7 Select **Start** when prompted. Doing so will load the USB Loader GX program.

- This process will take several minutes, especially the first time you run the program.
- If you see a "Waiting for your slow USB" message, try plugging the USB flash drive into a different port on the back of the Wii.

8 Insert a game. Place in the Wii the disc for a game that you want to back up to the USB flash drive.

9 Select **Install** when prompted. The program will begin reading the contents of the disc.

10 Select when prompted. Doing so will prompt your Wii to begin burning the disc onto the USB flash drive.

- This process will take quite some time, and the burning progress bar may appear to freeze at multiple points. *Do not* remove your USB flash drive or restart your Wii if this happens.

11 Select when prompted. Doing so will complete the burning process.

- At this point, you can eject the game disc from the Wii.

12 **Play your game.** Click the game's name, then click the spinning disc icon in the middle of the window. Doing so will launch the game.

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Community Q&A

Question

How do I play games from my USB drive when the screen goes black?

Community Answer

If the Wii is stuck on the black screen, your console may have crashed. If you cannot force a shutdown, the only way is to unplug the Wii's power. If the screen goes black and returns to the Wii menu, you'll need to install a cIOS.

Question

What if I have already 'hacked' my Wii? Do I just skip home-brewing again?

Community Answer

Yes, you should skip that step as you already hacked it and already can install homebrew apps.

Question

How do I format my hard drive to play Wii games?

Community Answer

Use a tool such as WBFS manager or WiiBackup Manager to format your hard or USB drive to be used for Wii games.

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Tips

- Consider using an external hard drive for better storage capacity.
- Wii games tend to take up around 2 GB per title, so plan accordingly when buying a USB flash drive.
- When on the main page for USB Loader GX, you can press the **1** button to update the cover art for each game on the USB flash drive.

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Warnings

- Pirating games is both against Nintendo's terms of use and against the law in general. This article is for educational purposes only.
- Do not shut down the Wii while installing anything mentioned in this article.

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References

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JWDNDjHf67o>

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