# *Snake* (video game)

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**Snake** is a game where the player maneuvers a line which grows in length, with the line itself being a primary obstacle. There is no standard version of the game. The concept originated in the 1976 arcade game *Blockade*, and its simplicity has led to many implementations (some of which have the word *snake* or *worm* in the title). After a variant was preloaded on Nokia mobile phones in 1998, there was a resurgence of interest in the Snake concept as it found a larger audience.

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*Snake* on a TRS-80



*Snake* on a PC with a Color Graphics Adapter
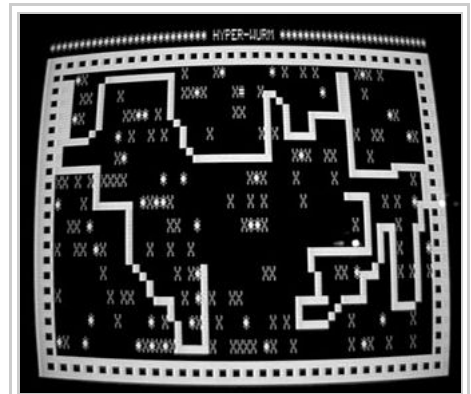
## Gameplay

The player controls a dot, square, or object on a bordered plane. As it moves forward, it leaves a trail behind, resembling a moving snake. In some games, the end of the trail is in a fixed position, so the snake continually gets longer as it moves. In another common scheme, the snake has a specific length, so there is a moving tail a fixed number of units away from the head. The player loses when the snake runs into the screen border, a trail, or another obstacle.

The Snake concept comes in two major variants:



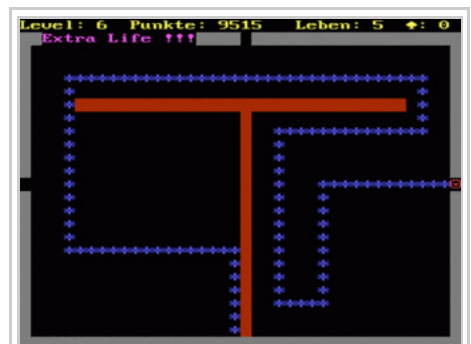Snake[Telmac 1800], CHIP-8, published 1978 [1]

1. In the first, which is most often a two-player game, there are multiple snakes on the playfield. Each player attempts to block the other so he or she runs into an existing trail and loses. *Surround* for the Atari 2600 is an example of this type. The Light Cycles segment of the *Tron* arcade game is a single-player version where the other "snakes" are AI controlled.
2. In the second variant, a sole player attempts to eat items by running into them with the head of the snake. Each item eaten makes the snake longer, so controlling is progressively more difficult. Examples: *Nibbler*, *Snake Byte*.

## History

The *Snake* design dates back to the arcade game *Blockade*,[2][3] developed and published by Gremlin in 1976.[4] It was cloned as *Bigfoot Bonkers* the same year. In 1977, Atari released two *Blockade*-inspired titles: the arcade game *Dominos* and Atari 2600 game *Surround*.[5] *Surround* was one of the nine Atari 2600

(VCS) launch titles in the United States and was also sold by Sears under the name *Chase*. That same year, a similar game was launched for the Bally Astrocade as *Checkmate*.[6]

The first known personal computer version, titled *Worm*, was programmed in 1978 by Peter Trefonas of the US on the TRS-80,[2] and published by *CLOAD* magazine in the same year. This was followed shortly afterwards with versions from the same author for the Commodore PET and Apple II. A microcomputer clone of the *Hustle* arcade game, itself a clone of *Blockade*, was written by Peter Trefonas in 1979 and published by *CLOAD*.[7] An authorized version of *Hustle* was published by Milton Bradley for the TI-99/4A in 1980.[8] In 1982's *Snake* for the BBC Micro, by Dave Bresnen, the snake is controlled using the left and right arrow keys relative to the direction it is heading in. The snake increases in speed as it gets longer, and there's only one life; one mistake means starting from the beginning.

*Nibbler* (1982) is a single-player arcade game where the snake fits tightly into a maze, and the gameplay is faster than most snake designs. Another single-player version is part of the 1982 *Tron* arcade game, themed with light cycles. It created new interest in the snake concept, and many subsequent games borrowed the light cycle theme.

Starting in 1991, *Nibbles* was included with MS-DOS for a period of time as a QBasic sample program. In 1992 *Rattler Race* was released as part of the second *Microsoft Entertainment Pack*. It adds enemy snakes to the familiar apple-eating gameplay.

# Nokia phones

Nokia is well known for putting *Snake* on the majority of their phones. Versions include:



*Snake II* screenshot from a Nokia 3310, showing level 4 and maze 2.

- *Snake* - The original, for monochrome phones. Graphics consisted of black squares, and it had 4 directions. It was programmed in 1997 by Taneli Armanto, a design engineer in Nokia[9] and introduced on the Nokia 6110.[10]
- *Snake II* - Included on monochrome phones. *Snake* improved to a snake pattern, introduction of bonus bugs, a 'Circumnavigate play area' and mazes (obstacle walls placed within the play area). An example of a phone with it installed is the Nokia 3310 from 2000.
- *Snake Xenzia* - Included on later-model monochrome phones (and some cheaper color phones, such as the Nokia 1600). An example of a phone with it installed is the Nokia 1112 from 2006.
- *Snake EX* - Included on color phones. First introduced with the Nokia 9290 Communicator in 2002. Graphics improved to SNES quality. It supports multiplayer through Bluetooth and Infra-Red. An example of a phone with it installed is the Nokia 6260 from 2004.
- *Snake EX2* - Introduced with the Nokia 3100 in 2003. This is included in several Series 40 handsets by Nokia.
- *Snakes* - A 3D version. This game was designed for the N-Gage in 2005, developed by IOMO (published by Nokia). It featured multiplayer through Bluetooth. Graphics improved to basic PlayStation quality. Introduction of hex levels, etc. Later Nokia started giving this game pre-installed (without multiplayer feature) in some Nseries smartphones like N70, N73, N80, etc. *Snakes* can be downloaded from the Nokia support page's Games section (http://europe.nokia.com/support/product-support/nokia-5700-xpressmusic/phone-software/games) and played on any S60 device.[11]
- *Snake III* - A 3D version, different from *Snakes*. *Snake III* takes a more living snake approach, rather than the abstract feel of *Snakes*. An example of a phone with it installed is the Nokia 3250 from 2005. It is also available on the Nokia 5310, Nokia 5610, Nokia 2700 classic,[12] Nokia 2730 classic and the Nokia 6300, and it supports multiplayer modes via Bluetooth.
- *Snakes Subsonic* - Sequel to *Snakes*, released on May 22, 2008 on the N-Gage platform.
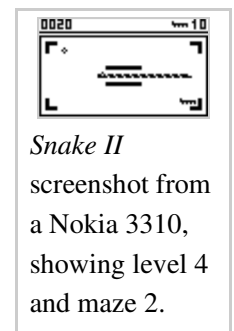
On November 29, 2012, the Museum of Modern Art in New York City announced that the Nokia port of Snake was one of 40 games that the curators wished to add to the museum's collection in the future.[13]

*Snake* is still included on some new low-end phones from Nokia, such as the Nokia 108 from 2013.

# References

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# External links

- List of snake-like games at Mobygames (http://www.mobygames.com/game-group/snake-variants)
- List of 300+ snake-like games on iOS (as of March 2016) (http://www.golmium.com/snakegamesios.html#other_snake_games)

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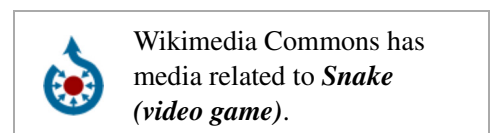
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