



Video Game Design

Case Study: Stardew Valley

CS 415: Game Development

Star Dew Valley history is taken *from Blood, Sweat, and Pixels* by Jason Schreier

Stardew Valley



Stardew Valley

Video game

10/10

Steam

4.6/5

Google Play

4.9/5

App Store -
Apple

Stardew Valley is a simulation role-playing video game developed by Eric "ConcernedApe" Barone. Players take the role of a character who takes over their deceased grandfather's dilapidated farm in a place known as Stardew Valley. [Wikipedia](#)

Initial release date: February 26, 2016

Designer: [Eric Barone](#)

Developer: [ConcernedApe](#)

Platforms: Nintendo Switch, Android, PlayStation 4, macOS, [MORE](#)

Genres: Indie game, Role-playing video game, Adventure game, [MORE](#)

Stardew Valley is open-ended, allowing players to take on activities such as growing crops, raising livestock, fishing, cooking, mining and foraging, and socializing with the townspeople, including the ability to marry and have children. It also allows up to four players to play online together.

Stardew Valley was praised by critics, who highlighted the game's music, characters, and relaxing qualities, with it later being cited as one of the greatest video games of all time. Yasuhiro Wada, the creator of Harvest Moon, also praised the game for retaining the freedom that later entries of his series had lost. The game was also a commercial success, selling over 20 million copies by 2022.

- Wikipedia

Stardew Valley Fun Facts

- Created by Eric Barone
 - Financial and emotional support and design help from his partner Amber Hagemen
- Barone did all the art, programming, music composition on his own
 - Took 5 years
- Designed to mimic previous farm game Harvest Moon
 - ..but allow more
- Art mimicked old Nintendo Art
 - Barone had to learn to do art on his own...2D sprites are easier than 3D models
- Multiplayer was the hardest part to get working
 - Something to keep in mind whe you design your game

Stardew Valley Fun Facts

- Started the project to learn better programming skills
- Learned he hated developing for mobile devices
- 2 years into the project he rewrote huge parts of it

"There were points when I was depressed and just thinking, 'What am I doing?'" Barone said. "I have a degree in computer science and I'm working a minimum-wage job as an usher at the theater. People would ask me, 'Do you do anything else?' And I [said], 'I'm making a video game.' I just felt embarrassed about it. They must have thought, 'Oh, this guy is a loser.' "

- In case you are curious he is a millionaire now
 - He did not expect that would happen
 - Keep in mind it was a lot of work and most games are not successful
 - Trying hard stuff is important but being realistic is important as well



**It's possible to break
up the core elements
into categories.**

- **Space**
- **Goals**
- **Actors**
- **Mechanics**
- **Rules**

Space



I need your help with these...people who have played the game...how would we describe the space?

Actors



What are some of the actors?
Let's just concentrate on the
farming aspects...

Mechanics



What are some of the mechanics? Let's just concentrate on the farming aspects...

Goals

This is straightforward for a lot of games, but with Stardew Valley though, **there is no 'end'**. As you play on your farm, you will come across various milestones and progress trackers, but there is no end to the game. Players can continue farming for years in the game without growing bored. Aug 16, 2021

<https://www.thegamer.com/how-long-beat-stardew-valley>

How Long Does It Take To Beat Stardew Valley? - TheGamer



BUT there are several score systems. Does anyone know how progress is measured?

Rules



There are a lot...and one of the features of the game is experimenting to find out what the rules are...like a puzzle game.

Anyone have any examples?