

Pokémon X and Y

Pokémon *X* and **Pokémon** *Y* are 2013 role-playing video games developed by Game Freak and published by The Pokémon Company and Nintendo for the Nintendo 3DS. They are the first installments in the sixth generation of the main *Pokémon* game series. First announced in January 2013 by Nintendo president Satoru Iwata through a Nintendo Direct, *Pokémon X* and *Pokémon Y* were released worldwide in October 2013, and they were the first <u>Pokémon</u> games to have a simultaneous global release.

As with previous installments, the games follow the journey of a young Pokémon Trainer as they train and battle Pokémon while thwarting schemes of the criminal organisation Team Flare. *X* and *Y* introduced 72 new Pokémon species, and added new features including the new Fairy-type, character customisation, updated battle and training mechanics such as "Mega Evolution", and completely rendered polygonal 3D graphics as opposed to the sprites used in previous generations. While the games are independent of each other and each can be played separately, trading Pokémon between the two games is necessary to complete the games' Pokédex.

X and *Y* received generally positive reviews; critics praised the games' visuals and transition to 3D models, though the games' story, characters and linearity drew criticism. The highly anticipated games were a commercial success, selling four million copies worldwide in the first weekend, beating their predecessors *Pokémon Black* and *White*'s record and making them the fastest-selling games on the 3DS. As of 31 March 2023, a combined total of 16.68 million copies have been sold worldwide, making *X* and *Y* the second best-selling games on the system after *Mario Kart 7*.

An upcoming related game, <u>Pokémon Legends: Z-A</u>, will feature the redevelopment of Lumiose City (the largest city in Kalos, inspired by Paris, France) and

Pokémon X Pokémon Y





North American box art for *Pokémon X* and *Pokémon Y*, depicting the <u>legendary Pokémon</u> Xerneas and Yveltal respectively

Developer(s)	Game Freak

Publisher(s) JP: The Pokémon

Company

WW: Nintendo

Director(s) Junichi Masuda

Producer(s) Hitoshi Yamagami

Shusaku Egami

Takato Utsunomiya

Junichi Masuda

Designer(s) Shigeru Ohmori

Programmer(s) Katsumi Ono

Artist(s) Ken Sugimori

Writer(s) Toshinobu Matsumiya

Composer(s) Shota Kageyama

Minako Adachi

Hitomi Sato

Junichi Masuda

Series Pokémon

Platform(s) Nintendo 3DS

Release WW: 12 October 2013

Genre(s) Role-playing

Mode(s) Single-player,

multiplayer

Gameplay

Pokémon X and Y are role-playing video games with adventure elements, presented in a third-person, overhead perspective. They are also the first Pokémon games to include 3D functions compatible with the consoles in the Nintendo 3DS family. The player controls a young trainer who goes on a quest to catch and train creatures known as Pokémon and win battles against other trainers. By defeating opposing Pokémon in turn-based battles, the player's Pokémon gain experience, allowing them to level up and increase their battle statistics, learn new moves, and in some cases, evolve into more powerful Pokémon. Alternatively, players can capture wild Pokémon found during random encounters by weakening them in battle and catching them with Poké Balls to be added to the player's party. Players are also able to battle and trade Pokémon with other human players using the Nintendo 3DS's internet features, which were enhanced in the sixth generation games. Like with previous games in the series, certain Pokémon are only obtainable in either X or Y, keeping players encouraged to trade with others in order to obtain all Pokémon.

New features

Pokémon X and *Y* are the first titles in the main series presented in fully 3D polygonal graphics, allowing for more interactivity with the overworld and more dynamic action during battles. [4] Players are also able to customise their Pokémon trainer's appearance, choosing gender, skin tone and hair colour at the start of the game, and can later acquire outfits and accessories in-game to change their character's look. Joining the previous generations of Pokémon are all new species, such as the new <u>starter Pokémon; Chespin, Fennekin</u> and <u>Froakie</u>, and the <u>legendary Pokémon Xerneas</u>, <u>Yveltal</u> and <u>Zygarde</u>. [5][6] The player can choose from one of the classic starter Pokémon from <u>Pokémon Red</u> and <u>Blue</u> later on in the game. [7] The new Fairy-type is introduced for both new and old Pokémon, and it is the first new type added to the series since <u>Pokémon Gold</u> and <u>Silver</u>. [8] The game's developers stated the addition was used to balance the Dragon-type.

A new element in the series is Mega Evolution, in which fully evolved Pokémon, such as Mewtwo and Lucario, can use special items called "Mega Stones" to temporarily evolve further into Mega Evolved forms during battle, with some Pokémon having multiple possible Mega form available. Also introduced are Sky Battles, and Horde Encounters. The former are mid-air trainer battles that only airborne Pokémon can participate in; these were added to take advantage of the game's 3D-capabilities and provide a new perspective to battling. The latter being one-versus-five wild encounters designed to be more difficult than standard one-versus-one wild battles. The Pokémon-Amie mode allowed the player to interact with their Pokémon using the 3DS' touchscreen and camera, playing with them and giving them treats to strengthen their bonds between trainer and Pokémon, and ultimately influencing how Pokémon would act during battle. Super Training features various minigames that help build the base stats of the player's Pokémon, which in turn unlocks training bags that can help Pokémon to become stronger.

Connectivity to other devices

Along with the many additions that X and Y introduced, various improvements to the communication features were also implemented. Using the <u>Player Search System</u> (PSS), players can encounter and keep track of various online players, including strangers, allowing them to easily initiate battles or trades. The Holo Caster allows the player to receive messages and updates from <u>NPCs</u> via <u>StreetPass</u> and <u>SpotPass</u>. Wonder Trade is a new trading feature which allows players to trade one of their Pokémon in exchange for a random one from another player. Other features include O-Powers, temporary powers that can increase stats and can be exchanged with other players, and improvements to the Global Trade System, allowing players to request Pokémon they have not encountered. At certain points in the game, players will be able to take in-game screenshots, which they can then share on the Pokémon Global Link website.

Pokémon Bank is an optional paid <u>cloud storage</u> service that allows players to store up to 3,000 Pokémon online to be shared amongst whichever physical or downloaded copies of the games they own. Another application called *Poké Transporter* allows players to upload Pokémon owned in *Pokémon Black, White, Black 2*, and *White 2* to *Bank*, which can then be imported into X and Y. There are plans to use these applications for future games in the series. These applications, announced for release on 27 December 2013, were postponed to 5 February 2014, due to the volume of traffic on the <u>Nintendo Network</u> service. [17]

Plot

Setting

The games take place in the star-shaped Kalos region, are of many such regions across the fictional *Pokémon* world. Centered around beauty, the region is heavily inspired by Metropolitan France and, to a lesser extent, Europe as a whole. Many locations and landmarks across Kalos have real-world inspirations, including Prism Tower (Eiffel Tower), the Lumiose Art Museum (the Louvre) and the stones outside Geosenge Town (Carnac stones). Wild Pokémon inhabit every corner of the Kalos region, many of which are only known to appear in this area.

Story

Similar to previous *Pokémon* games, *X* and *Y* both follow a <u>linear</u> storyline whose main events occur in a fixed order. The <u>protagonist</u> of *Pokémon X* and *Y* has just moved to a small town called Vaniville Town with their mother Grace. They soon befriend four trainers—Shauna, Tierno, Trevor and their rival Calem or <u>Serena</u>, all of whom were called to meet Professor Augustine Sycamore who is the leading professor in the Kalos region in Lumiose City, the main city of Kalos. Receiving either Chespin, Fennekin or Froakie as their starter Pokémon from Tierno, the player begins their adventure. Along the way, they learn of <u>Pokémon Gyms</u> and receive their first badge for defeating Viola, the Santalune City Gym Leader. Thereafter, they encounter Sina and Dexio, assistants of Sycamore, who brings them to the professor himself; however, once in Lumiose City they discover the area to be suffering from a partial power outage. Upon meeting Sycamore in Lumiose City, the player is informed of Mega Evolution and he requests they travel across Kalos and uncover the mysteries behind it. He provides them with one of the Kanto region starter Pokémon and their respective Mega Stone. Before leaving Lumiose City, the player encounters an imposing man named Lysandre who desires a more beautiful world.



The Kalos region was heavily inspired by France, with the main city—Lumiose City—being a representation of <u>Paris</u> (pictured). The in-game city is crowned by the Prism Tower, a building inspired by the Eiffel Tower.

Continuing their journey, the player encounters villainous Team Flare, whose goals at first seem to be towards making geared money off of Pokémon. Later encounters with Team Flare reveal their true goal to be the annihilation of humanity to return the world to a pristine, beautiful state. more Shalour City, the player learns how to use Mega Evolution from the Mega Evolution guru Gurkinn and

granddaughter Korrina, who is the Gym Leader of Shalour City. Defeating Korrina in a special Mega Evolution battle using Lucario, the player is given the ability to freely use Mega Evolution. The player then continues their journey, defeating Gym Leaders and stopping various schemes carried out by Team Flare. In the Lumiose Badlands, the player defeats Team Flare during their attempt to steal energy from the region's power plant and restores power to all of Lumiose City. Once the player obtains their seventh badge, they, and the rest of Kalos, are addressed by Lysandre through the Holo Caster (a holographic communication device); Lysandre informs them of the fact that he is the leader of Team Flare and intends to destroy humanity.



X and Y take place in the Kalos region. The player begins their adventure in Vaniville Town, located in the lower right point of the star-shaped region. The large, circular city just north of center is Lumiose City.



Topographic image of <u>France</u>, which heavily inspired the design of the Kalos region

Following hints from friends and locals, the player discovers Team Flare's secret lab under a café in Lumiose City where they formally meet a 9-foot (2.7 m) tall man named AZ; he is revealed to be the 3,000-year-old king who once used the "ultimate weapon"—the same device and weapon of mass destruction Lysandre plans to use—which utilized energy from the legendary Pokémon Xerneas or Yveltal to end a war in Kalos. AZ's decision to use the ultimate weapon was motivated by his desire to revive the Pokémon he loved the most, a variant of the Pokémon Floette, although the Pokémon was disgusted with his choice to use the ultimate weapon and left him. This war 3,000 years ago set in motion the events necessary to create Mega Evolution by inadvertently infusing excessive energy into an asteroid. Alongside Shauna and Calem or Serena, the player sets out to stop Team Flare and Lysandre at their second base in Geosenge Town, the location of the ultimate weapon. Upon reaching the core of the weapon, the player discovers a dormant Xerneas or Yveltal which suddenly awakens with their appearance. They capture the legendary Pokémon and proceed to bring an end to Lysandre's plans after defeating him in battle one final time. After the battle, Lysandre will use the ultimate weapon to destroy the ultimate weapon. The player, Shauna, and Calem or Serena, make their escape from the base before this can happen.

With the defeat of Team Flare, the player resumes their journey and obtains their eighth and final Gym Badge, enabling them to challenge the <u>Elite Four</u>—the most powerful trainers in Kalos. They traverse Victory Road and reach the Kalos League to begin their final challenge. Once they overcome the Elite

Four, the player faces and defeats Kalos League Champion Diantha, making the player the new Kalos League Champion. A parade is organised by Professor Sycamore to celebrate the player's role in saving the Kalos region and becoming the new Kalos League Champion. AZ battles the player during the parade, recognising the player's strength and what it means to be a Pokémon Trainer. His Floette then returns to him and they are reunited for the first time in 3,000 years.

Development

Development of $Pok\acute{e}mon\ X$ and Y began in $2010.^{\boxed{[24]}}$ Director $\underline{Junichi}$ Masuda revealed the three main themes of X and Y to be beauty, bonds, and evolution. Beauty was the core focus and Masuda considered France to be a prime example of such; he sent a team to the country for study in $2011.^{\boxed{[18]}}$ Flowers were integrated into many routes across the game for visual aesthetics, something not done in previous iterations of $Pok\acute{e}mon$, and for unique wild Pokémon encounters. With the games taking place in a region based on France, design inspiration stemmed more from European culture. The legendary trio of Xerneas, Yveltal and Zygarde have their roots in Norse mythology, for example. More focus than usual was placed on giving new Pokémon unique elements for this generation. The titles X and Y, representing the X-axis and X-axis—also reflecting different forms of thinking were chosen early in development. Additionally, designers sought to make the Pokémon names the same in every country whenever possible. Masuda expressed that this effort proved exceptionally difficult as the names have to feel fitting to their physical appearance and not infringe upon any rights.

A major design change for the franchise was the shift from two-dimensional sprites to three-dimensional polygons. This required a larger development team than previous games, with more than 500 people involved with the games' development, inclusive of localization teams. Emphasis was placed on retaining the iconic style of Pokémon art director Ken Sugimori who has been designing Pokémon and creating the franchise's official artwork since Red and Green in 1996. At the request of Masuda, the shapes "X" and "Y" were used as the framework for the boxart legendary Pokémon, Xerneas and Yveltal. Normally, Sugimori designs the legendary Pokémon by himself; however, he required assistance from designer Yusuke Ohmura to create Xerneas and Yveltal. Finalization of their designs took about 18 months, 3 times longer than normal. Manga artist Hitoshi Ariga was requested to assist in creating Pokémon for X and Y; Ariga ultimately designed ten species for the games.

Music

The game's score was composed by Shota Kageyama, Minako Adachi, Hitomi Sato, Junichi Masuda, Go Ichinose, and Morikazu Aoki. This was the first usage of the Nintendo 3DS's sound capabilities for the *Pokémon* series, and Masuda expressed delight over improved sound quality and expression. Similar to the theme of X and Y themselves, the soundtrack of the games were designed to emphasize beauty. Kageyama sought inspiration from the music of France as well; however, he indicated hesitation in making the music sound too French. During an interview with *Famitsu* magazine, Masuda stated that the Japanese harp was used in place of an accordion in certain situations to avoid giving off excessive French vibes. Additionally, Kageyama cited Masuda himself as inspiration for his work. Although working primarily as the director for X and Y, Masuda composed the games' battle themes. In discussing *Battle!* (*Gym.Leader*), Masuda stated he wanted to try a new approach and added techno themes. [36]

The official soundtrack consisting of 212 songs, titled *Nintendo 3DS Pokémon X-Y Super Music Collection*[b], was released on 13 November 2013. The album debuted at number 12 on "Top Albums Chart" and number 3 on the "Independent Albums Chart" of *Billboard-Japan*. The soundtrack was released digitally worldwide on November 20 through iTunes as *Pokémon X & Pokémon Y: Super Music Collection*. The soundtrack debuted at 104 on the *Billboard 200*, and peaked at number 5 on the *Billboard* soundtracks chart. Jim Sterling of *Destructoid* praised the music as "utterly lovely", noting "the quieter tunes are legitimately beautiful". [42]

Release

Pokémon X and *Y* were announced by <u>Satoru Iwata</u> through a <u>Nintendo Direct</u> on 8 January 2013. [43] A first for the main series of *Pokémon* titles, *X* and *Y* were released worldwide on 12 October 2013. [44][45] Following widespread selling of the titles prior to their



Junichi Masuda (pictured) returned as a composer for the battle themes of *X* and *Y* while also serving as the games' director.

release date in <u>Brazil</u>, [46] Nintendo warned game retailers that they would be penalized if they continued to break street date. [47] A store in <u>Bournemouth</u>, United Kingdom, reportedly started selling the games on October 11. [48] This initiated a domino effect and several other United Kingdom retailers began selling the game early. [46]

A special Nintendo 3DS XL depicting Xerneas and Yveltal in their Shiny forms was released in North America and Europe on 27 September 2013, and in Japan on 12 October 2013. Japan also received a premium gold version depicting Xerneas on the front, and Yveltal and the three starters on the back with either X or Y pre-installed. On 2 October 2013, [[The X Factor The X Factor series 9 semifinalists Union J revealed via their social media outlets that they would be involved in the British release of X and $X^{[51]}$ For a limited time starting from the game's release on 12 October 2013, until 15 January 2014, players could download a special Torchic, possessing its hidden ability "Speed Boost" and a Blazikenite that allows players to utilize the new Mega Evolution game mechanic to evolve Blaziken to Mega Blaziken. Between 1–31 March 2014, North American Club Nintendo members could get a free download code for X or X as long as they registered a Nintendo 2DS, 3DS or 3DS XL and one of six qualifying games. However, any products registered before this time were said to be ineligible.

In promoting the game's new Mega Evolution feature, Mega Mewtwo Y (then known as "Awakened Mewtwo") was featured in a special episode of the anime titled "Mewtwo: Prologue to Awakening" and then the film *ExtremeSpeed Genesect: Mewtwo Awakens*, released in Japan on 13 July 2013. Mega Evolution was also featured in the TV special *Pokémon Origins*, which was a re-telling of the original

<u>Pokémon Red</u> and <u>Blue</u> games, and included a surprise appearance of Mega Charizard X. The upcoming season of the <u>Pokémon anime</u> series based on these games, titled <u>Pokémon the Series: XY</u>, began airing in Japan on 17 October 2013, and was previewed in North America and Europe on 19 October 2013. [54]

Reception

Reception		
Aggregate scores		
Aggregator	Score	
GameRankings	87% (X) ^[57] 88% (Y) ^[58]	
Metacritic	87/100 (X) ^[55] 88/100 (Y) ^[56]	
Review scores		
Publication	Score	
Edge	8/10 ^[59]	
Eurogamer	9/10 ^[60]	
<u>Famitsu</u>	39/40 ^[61]	
Game Informer	8.75/10 ^[62]	
GameSpot	8.5/10 ^[63]	
IGN	9/10 ^[2]	
Joystiq	**** <mark>[64]</mark>	
Nintendo World Report	8/10 ^[65]	
Polygon	9.5/10 ^[66]	

Critical reception

Pokémon X and *Y* were released to positive reception, garnering "generally favorable reviews" according to review aggregator $\underline{\text{Metacritic}}$. $\underline{^{[55][56]}}$ The positive reception allowed *X* and *Y* to claim the 15th and 13th highest-rated games on the Nintendo 3DS, respectively. $\underline{^{[67]}}$ The Japanese magazine $\underline{\text{Weekly Famitsu}}$ awarded the game a near-perfect score, earning it the publication's Platinum Award. $\underline{^{[61]}}$ This made them the second-highest rated *Pokémon* titles by the magazine, behind only the perfect score awarded to *Pokémon Black* and *White*. $\underline{^{[61][68]}}$

The games received universal praise for the transition to 3D graphics, the enhanced visuals, and integration of online play. $\underline{^{[60][2][59]}}$ \underline{Edge} magazine reviewers described the visuals as "rich in detail and flavour, from the stately majesty of the affluent areas to a dilapidated, overgrown hotel whose only guests are squatting punks". $\underline{^{[59]}}$ Simon Parkin of $\underline{Eurogamer}$ similarly complimented the game's "smooth and natural" transition to 3D, declaring that " $\underline{Pok\acute{e}mon}$ X & Y is the finest expression of $\underline{Satoshi}$ \underline{Tajiri} 's obsessive vision yet." $\underline{^{[60]}}$ Matt Kamen of \underline{The} $\underline{Observer}$ praised the new gameplay mechanics and the graphical and audio improvements, and deemed the games to be "the series' zenith". $\underline{^{[69]}}$

IGN reviewer Jose Otero found that the game was "a successful transition to a 3D world", calling it "an even more social, beautiful, and strategic game" compared to its predecessors, adding that many of the new Pokémon's 3D models and animations complemented their individual species' personalities, and that the new Mega Evolutions were "similarly impressive". He also praised the faster pace of the early game, with X and Y providing a wide range of Pokémon to catch within the first hour of gameplay. [2] While Game Informer reviewer Kyle Hilliard found the title's gameplay additions to be mostly positive, " [making] everything more inviting, attractive, and fun", the magazine also felt that they ultimately did not "break the mold" of what players expected from the franchise. [62] Ernest Cavalli at *Joystig* and Griffin McElroy at *Polygon* both praised the gameplay, with Cavalli calling it "hands-down the best in the series", and that the game could be enjoyed equally by both veterans and newcomers to the franchise. [64][66] Daan Koopman from *Nintendo World Report* also gave positive reviews about the 3D graphics, music, characters, and the changes to battles, but criticized the inconsistencies in the presentation overall and found the new battle types not that exciting. [65] Parkin indicated that the original appeal of the series—catching every Pokémon—"remains resolutely undiminished after all this time." [60] Conversely, *Edge* claimed some of the series' "original magic had been lost across so many iterative updates" and criticized its unsteady framerate in 3D mode. [59]

With the updated Player Search System (PSS) present at all times on the touchscreen, providing a seamless transition from solo play to player-to-player battles and trades, integration of online play was praised as "masterly" by Parkin. [60] McElroy described it as "completely interconnected experience, which is exactly how *Pokémon* is meant to be played". [66] Otero proclaimed the PSS "makes *Pokémon X* and *Y* feel dramatically new and more modern". [2] The optional aspects of Pokémon-Amie and Super Training had mixed reception. Hilliard described the minigames of Super Training as forgettable. [62] McElroy viewed these aspects as positively reinforcing bonds between trainers and their Pokémon, with Pokémon-Amie making them seem more like pets. [66] Otero praised Super Training for making competitive training more accessible to players. [2]

In contrast to the praise for the games' visuals, the story was poorly received. Otero described the story and character personalities as "pretty disappointing for a predominantly single-player RPG." $^{[2]}$ McElroy described the campaign as "rigidly formulaic". $^{[66]}$ However, Hilliard called some of the interactions with non-playable characters "bizarre... and often entertaining". $^{[62]}$ Parkin criticized it as "thin and melodramatic" and "sometimes jarringly preachy". They also considered some of the games' puzzles to be clumsy. $^{[60]}$ The layout of the Kalos region itself was described as disappointingly straightforward for players who enjoy exploring but inviting to new players in the franchise. $^{[62]}$ This ease of access was exemplified through subtle additions and changes to gaining experience. More readily available experience allowed players to use more Pokémon throughout the campaign and rotate through a team greater than six. $^{[66]}$

Pokémon X and *Y* were nominated for Best RPG and Best Handheld Game at the 2013 <u>VGX Awards</u>. [70] In 2014 it won the <u>Golden Joystick Award</u> for Handheld Game of the Year. During the <u>17th Annual D.I.C.E. Awards</u>, the <u>Academy of Interactive Arts & Sciences nominated *Pokémon X and Y* for "<u>Handheld Game of the Year</u>" and "Role-Playing/Massively Multiplayer Game of the Year". [72]</u>

Sales

According to Media Create sales data, over 1.26 million copies of *Pokémon X* and *Y* were pre-ordered in Japan, not including copies bundled with Nintendo 3DS hardware, making it the most reserved Nintendo 3DS title to date in the region. [73] Within three days of release, the games sold a record 2.09 million retail copies in Japan. [74] Over 4 million copies of the games were sold worldwide in the first weekend, making *X* and *Y* the fastest–selling game on the 3DS. [75][76] At the time, they were the fastest-selling 3DS titles in the Americas, but were later surpassed by *Pokémon Sun* and *Moon*. [77] Within three months of release, by December 2013, the games were the best-selling titles for the 3DS with 11.61 million copies sold worldwide. [78][79] They remained at the top through at least 2016, [80] before being outsold by *Mario Kart* 7 in 2017. As of 31 March 2023, the games have sold 16.68 million units worldwide, making them the second best-selling games for the Nintendo 3DS behind *Mario Kart* 7 and just ahead of *Pokémon Sun* and *Moon*. [81]

Notes

- 1. Calem and Serena are the standard names given to the male and female player characters, respectively. The character chosen by the player may be freely named. The character not chosen by the player appears in-game as a rival.
- 2. The legendary Pokémon used in the story and which later appears in front of the player is dependent upon the game. Xerneas appears in *X* while Yveltal appears in *Y*.
- a. Kalos region (カロス地方, Karosu-chihō)
- b. <u>Japanese</u>: ニンテンドー3DS ポケモン エックス・ワイ スーパーミュージックコレクション, Hepburn: *Nintendō Surī Dī Esu Pokemon Ekkusu Wai Sūpā Myūjikku Korekushon*

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External links

Official website (http://www.pokemonxy.com/)