

= Crazy Taxi (series) =

Crazy Taxi is a series of score attack racing video games that was developed by Hitmaker and published by Sega . The first game appeared in arcades in 1999 and was very successful , prompting Sega to port the arcade version to their Dreamcast console in 2000 . It is the third best @-@ selling Dreamcast game in the United States , selling over a million copies . The game was later ported to the PlayStation 2 , Nintendo GameCube , and PC with sequels also appearing on the Xbox , Game Boy Advance , and PlayStation Portable systems .

Each game has the player assume the role of a taxi driver who must accumulate money by delivering passengers to their destinations in the fastest time possible , earning tips by performing " crazy stunts " before the time runs out . The franchise has been recognized for its innovative gameplay design which is easy to learn but difficult to master , its use of in @-@ game advertising , and its soundtrack music provided by the bands The Offspring and Bad Religion . The core gameplay mechanic has been patented by Sega , leading to at least one lawsuit over similar gameplay in The Simpsons : Road Rage , which has since been settled out of court .

= = Gameplay = =

Crazy Taxi and its sequels are score attack games that all employ the same fundamental rules and mechanics . The player controls one of several taxi drivers in a fictional city , looking for fares and then taking them to their destination in the fastest time possible . The player must perform this while time still remains on an overall gameplay clock . Passengers looking for rides are indicated by an overhead marker that is colored to represent the distance to their intended destination . The color marker ranges from red indicating short trips , to yellow for intermediate distances , and to green indicating long ones . When a passenger is picked up , the player is awarded additional time on the countdown time . Furthermore , a second countdown timer is started , representing how quickly the passenger needs to be at their destination . While a passenger is in the taxi , a large green arrow is shown on the player 's HUD that points in the general direction of the passenger 's destination to help guide the player through the map .

The player can use special " crazy stunt " moves such as drifts , jumps , and near @-@ misses , and consecutive combos of these , to earn extra money from the passenger during the trip . If the destination is reached in time , the player is paid based on distance driven with a possible time bonus based on how quickly the destination was reached . If the passenger 's countdown drops to zero , they will exit the taxi and the player will be required to look for another fare . The game continues in this mode as long as time remains on the clock . Once the clock reaches zero , the game is over , and the player is ranked and rated based on the total earned .

Unlike other arcade games , the player cannot continue from where the previous game ended . The game cannot be played indefinitely ; while there are hundreds of potential passengers to pick up and deliver , there are only a limited number of fares in the game . The various passengers scattered throughout the city will randomly appear and disappear throughout the game , but once one is picked up that passenger is unavailable for the rest of that game . The core gameplay in the series has been praised as being " deceptively complex " ; as stated by the IGN staff for their review of the Dreamcast version of Crazy Taxi :

As you progress through the game 's ratings scale by picking up and delivering passengers as quickly as possible , you will slowly but surely realize that there is much more to the game than getting from point a to b .

Starting with Crazy Taxi 2 , the gameplay included the ability to pick up a party of passengers , each having a different destination . The number of passengers in the car multiplies the tip bonuses earned from stunt driving , while the total fare can only be earned once the last passenger is dropped off in time . Additionally , Crazy Taxi 2 introduced a new stunt move called the " Crazy Hop " that allowed the player to make the taxi jump to clear some obstacles or reach higher drivable surfaces .

The console games have also featured a set of mini @-@ games that require the player to meet a

certain objective using one or more of the various " crazy stunts " within the game . Some of these test the player 's handling of a taxi , while others are more exaggerated , such as taxi bowling or pool . Some mini @-@ games require the completion of others before they can be accessed .

Prior to each game session , the player can pick one of several drivers and their associated cars ; each car / driver has slightly different performance relating to factors such as speed and turning , that impact the game .

= = Development = =

The original arcade game was developed by Hitmaker as a variation from then @-@ current arcade titles . Crazy Taxi producer Kenji Kanno noted that the time extension on gameplay was a breakaway of the current " 100 yen for 3 minutes " that persisted at the time for arcade games , and rewarded players with longer playing times by performing well in the game . In addition to providing a game that could be played in short sessions , Kanno wanted a game to explore the " daily life and routine " of a taxi driver . In the development of the Dreamcast version of the original arcade game , the developers included a larger map in addition to the arcade one , as to create a feeling of " being lost " and allowing home console players to have fun " learning the town " . Mini @-@ games were developed for this version as to " let the player play longer if he improve [d] skill " by offering challenges that were both fun and educational . Over one hundred different ideas for mini @-@ games were developed by the team but then pared down for the Crazy Box mini @-@ game challenges for the game . The addition of the Crazy Hop in Crazy Taxi 2 came about because the development team noted that " ... in New York ? where the basic landscape is quite flat ? we had to create 3D space by letting the player drive on the buildings " and " We added the Crazy Hop to let the player hop around the roofs of buildings to make short cuts " .

Hitmaker had tried to develop an on @-@ line version of Crazy Taxi , to be called Crazy Taxi Next exclusively for the Xbox , which , besides multiplayer game modes , would have included night and day cycles , each with a different set of passengers and destinations , while reusing and graphically updating the maps from Crazy Taxi and Crazy Taxi 2 . Ultimately , both multiplayer and day / night cycles were dropped and work on Crazy Taxi Next was transferred to Crazy Taxi 3 : High Roller , which included some of the nighttime driving concepts suggested by Next .

Kenji Kanno has noted that the gameplay in the Crazy Taxi series has otherwise not " evolved " with each new game " because basically the whole point of the game is to have a lot of fun in a short period of time , and it 's a very concentrated game . So instead of trying to evolve the series necessarily , it 's more like taking that concept and putting it in different places ? seeing how it works . " Kanno is considering bringing the title to newer consoles , but would want to be able to include multiplayer features and having a time cycle within the game that would affect passengers ' attitudes and the environment of the game .

= = = Setting = = =

Through the series , the cities used within the Crazy Taxi games have been influenced by real @-@ world cities , including San Francisco , Los Angeles , New York City , and Las Vegas . Certain versions of the Crazy Taxi game include in @-@ game counterparts of real @-@ world businesses , including Pizza Hut , Kentucky Fried Chicken , FILA , and Tower Records ; these were often destination targets for the passengers . Although this is one of the most prominent examples of product placement in video gaming history , it is generally looked upon relatively favorably amongst gamers , perhaps because it gives a sense of realism to the fictional cities in the game . These establishments have been replaced with generic businesses in later games due to licensing difficulties .

= = = Soundtrack = = =

The soundtrack of the Crazy Taxi series has typically been licensed hard rock and punk rock music

. The arcade and initial home console versions include selections from punk rock bands The Offspring and Bad Religion , though these have been removed in both the Game Boy Advance and the PlayStation Portable remakes because of licensing issues . In the case of the Game Boy Advance Catch a Ride , the game uses instrumental music instead of recorded songs .

= = = Legalities = = =

Sega applied for and was awarded U.S. Patent 6 @, @ 200 @, @ 138 ? " Game display method , moving direction indicating method , game apparatus and drive simulating apparatus " ? in 2001 . The mechanics in the " 138 patent " describe an arcade cabinet similar to Sega 's previous arcade game Harley @-@ Davidson & L.A. Riders (1997) , but also describe the arrow navigation system and pedestrian avoidance aspects that were used in Crazy Taxi .

In 2001 , Electronic Arts and Fox Entertainment released The Simpsons : Road Rage , which has been labelled a rip @-@ off of the Crazy Taxi formula by game reviewers . In this game , the player controlled one of The Simpsons characters as they drive about Springfield , taking passengers to their destinations in the same manner as Crazy Taxi . Sega sued Fox Entertainment , Electronic Arts , and developer Radical Games Ltd. over infringement of the 138 patent . The case , Sega of America , Inc. v. Fox Interactive , et al . , was settled in private for an unknown amount . The 138 patent itself remains valid , and is considered to be one of the most important patents in video game development today .

= = Games = =

= = = Crazy Taxi (arcade) = = =

The arcade version of Crazy Taxi was released in 1999 , and featured only the San Francisco @-@ inspired map (known as " Arcade " in the first console game , and later as " West Coast " in sequels) . The " Standard Version " arcade cabinet included a cockpit seat , steering wheel , a gear shift lever (for forward and reverse gear) and a brake and acceleration pedal ; a more compact " Naomi Cabinet Version " also existed without the cockpit seat . The arcade game was one of the first to use the Sega NAOMI hardware processor , which is based on the Sega Dreamcast and was unveiled as part of Sega 's exhibition at the 1999 Amusement Operators Union exposition in Japan .

= = = Crazy Taxi (console) = = =

The console / home version of Crazy Taxi was released for the Dreamcast on January 24 , 2000 . The Dreamcast and the cabinet arcade version share nearly identical processing hardware , and porting the game to the home console was only made difficult due to the limited internal memory size on the Dreamcast . Sega used Crazy Taxi to show the power of the Dreamcast 's graphical processor , capable of maintaining 60 frame / s throughout play . In addition to the arcade map , this version included the San Francisco @-@ themed city (entitled " Original ") , as well as additional mini @-@ games (" Crazy Box ") that can be used to hone the player 's taxi handling skills . The new map , much larger than the arcade version , was designed to let the player experience the feeling of " being lost " and allow for exploration , something that could not be done on the arcade version , as well letting " the player enjoy all 3 dimensions . "

Once Sega left the hardware market , other companies began to take up some of the franchises , including Crazy Taxi . Acclaim brought the game to the PlayStation on May 21 , 2001 and GameCube on November 18 , 2001 , while Activision and Strangelite ported the game to the PC in 2002 ; only the PlayStation 2 port was more successful than the Dreamcast version , and the rest didn 't do as well . Currently , the Dreamcast version of Crazy Taxi can be played through emulation via Gametap on PC systems .

== Crazy Taxi 2 ==

Crazy Taxi 2 was released for the Dreamcast on May 28 , 2001 . The game introduced four cab drivers as well as two new maps inspired based on New York City (" Around Apple " and " Small Apple ") , and added two gameplay features : the mechanics of collecting multiple passengers from a single spot , and the " Crazy Hop " , allowing the taxi to clear traffic and certain obstacles with short jumps . Additionally , the " Crazy Box " mode in the first game was expanded into a " Crazy Pyramid " mode .

== Crazy Taxi 3 : High Roller ==

Crazy Taxi 3 : High Roller was released for the Xbox on July 23 , 2002 , and later released as a PC title in 2004 . The game reuses the original arcade map modified to allow the use of the " Crazy Hop " introduced in Crazy Taxi 2 , one of the maps from Crazy Taxi 2 , and a new map based on Las Vegas (" Glitter Oasis ") . The game adds an additional four characters to select from . The game allows the player to unlock other modes of transport besides the taxi , including a stroller , a pedal bike and a carriage . The mini @-@ games in Crazy Taxi 3 are featured in a " Crazy X " arrangement . An arcade version , entitled Crazy Taxi : High Roller was created in 2003 using the same three maps as the home console version .

== Crazy Taxi : Catch a Ride ==

Crazy Taxi : Catch a Ride was ported to the Game Boy Advance by Graphics State and distributed by THQ , and released on April 8 , 2003 . This version is fundamentally the same as the Crazy Taxi console versions , featuring the San Francisco and Los Angeles @-@ themed maps but with a smaller selection of mini @-@ games , adapted to play on the portable device using the Graphics State " Rush " engine . Specifically , while the city and streets are rendered using 3D graphics , the taxi , passengers , and other traffic are represented by sprites in order to work on the limited GBA hardware . Richard Whittall , creative director for Graphics State , noted that Catch A Ride was " about the most technically challenging game you could do on a handheld machine " at the time of its release .

== Crazy Taxi : Fare Wars ==

Crazy Taxi : Fare Wars was developed by Sniper Studios with support from members of the original Hitmaker Crazy Taxi design team in Japan and released for the PlayStation Portable on August 7 , 2007 . The game effectively is a port of both Crazy Taxi and Crazy Taxi 2 to this system without any changes to the gameplay , but lacking the in @-@ game advertising and the original soundtracks . While the game includes its own soundtrack , the player can use their own music stored on the PSP ; as noted by Jeff Hasson of Sniper Studios , " for those hard core fans that must have The Offspring playing , they have that option with the Custom Music Player . " The player can also record up to a minute of gameplay footage that can then be shared with friends . The game includes a multiplayer feature over the PSP 's ad @-@ hoc wireless system , allowing players to vie for fares within the same map , including the ability to steal passengers from another player . Multiplayer games such as time trials or " C @-@ R @-@ A @-@ Z @-@ Y " runs (a variation of the game " Horse ") can also be played sharing a common PSP , with each player taking turns within the game .

== Crazy Taxi City Rush ==

Crazy Taxi City Rush was announced by Sega in March 2014 as a free @-@ to @-@ play mobile title for iOS and Android systems . City Rush is a game similar in concept to Temple Run , where the player does not have direct control of the speed of the taxi but can use touch motions to swerve in traffic and make turns .

= = Reception = =

The original Dreamcast version of Crazy Taxi was one of the best @-@ selling games for the console . The game was the second largest selling Dreamcast game in the United States in 2000 , selling nearly 750 @,@ 000 units , and is the third best @-@ selling Dreamcast game in the United States with over a million units sold . The game was praised for capturing the arcade flavor , and possibly exceeding it by making the controls and execution of the crazy stunts easier to perform . The game did suffer from " pop @-@ up " due to limited draw distances , and loss of frame rate when a large number of cars were on the screen . Critics noted the lack of depth given that it was a port of an arcade game , some difficulties with the destination arrow , and the poor " Wolfman Jack " impersonation of the in @-@ game announcer .

Crazy Taxi 2 was well received by reviewers with the new features helping to expand play from the original game , though some thought that more drastic changes could have been made in the sequel . Despite the addition of new maps , the lack of new gameplay elements caused Crazy Taxi 3 to be panned by reviewers . IGN noted in its review for Crazy Taxi 3 that " It 's clear that the creative vibrancy that first imagined the Taxi series has waned considerably . "

The ports of the original game to the PS2 and GameCube platforms are not considered as strong as the Dreamcast game . Both were noted to suffer from more " pop @-@ up " than the Dreamcast version , as well as poorer controls , despite having the same gameplay features . Graphic problems plagued the Crazy Taxi : Catch a Ride port to the Game Boy Advance ; as IGN stated , " it 's painfully obvious that the hardware just was never meant to push so much . " Both PC ports for Crazy Taxi and Crazy Taxi 3 also suffered from graphics problems .

The PSP ports of Crazy Taxi : Fare Wars have had a somewhat better reception than other ports . Reviews have complimented the game on the multiplayer additions and the ability to add a custom soundtrack ? which led IGN to comment that " Including this should be a no @-@ brainer , but many PSP titles don 't " ? but have noted some graphical glitches , the long loading times , and the lack of the original soundtracks for the games . The reviews of the controls of the game have mixed , with some praising the scheme on the PSP , while others have stated that the controls feel stiff and inconsistent . GameSpot 's review noted that the gameplay in Crazy Taxi does not hold up well compared to more recent racing games across various platforms .

A Crazy Taxi segment is featured in the " Sega Carnival " track in Sonic Riders , including a hidden shortcut allowing racers to receive a ride from taxi driver Axel ; a Crazy Taxi extreme gear can be unlocked as well . There is also a minigame based on Crazy Taxi in the EyeToy game , Sega Superstars , in which players move around and shout to call one of the taxi drivers . B.D. Joe , who has appeared in most games in the series , appears as a playable character in the cross @-@ series racing game , Sonic & Sega All @-@ Stars Racing . Sumo Digital 's Steve " S0L " Lycett had to get approval from SEGA AM3 in order to use B.D. Joe in the game . He also appeared in the sequel , Sonic & All @-@ Stars Racing Transformed .

= = Beyond video games = =

Sega has attempted to branch the Crazy Taxi franchise beyond the realm of video games , with varied results .

In addition to the video arcade games , Sega Enterprises , Inc . (USA) created a Crazy Taxi themed redemption game which was released in 2003 . The player had to roll their coin or token down the sloped playing surface past a moving taxi model in the center of the playing field in order to hit one of eight targets (representing passengers) at the far end . Passengers were worth different points , from which the operator would then set the amount of tickets to be won . The game incorporated music and sounds from the video games .

There have been two attempts to create a movie based on the Crazy Taxi franchise . In 2001 , Goodman @-@ Rosen Productions acquired the rights for the movie , with Richard Donner lined up to direct the film . Donner had stated " I loved playing ' Crazy Taxi , ' and I realized immediately that

it had the potential to be a big summer event movie . " The movie would have been tied with other merchandise items such as T @-@ shirts and toys , according to Jane Thompson , director of licensing for Sega of America . However , this initial attempt stalled due to an " absence of plot elements " according to Movie Insider . After this option expired , Mindfire Entertainment acquired the rights to a Crazy Taxi movie based on the game franchise in 2002 , with an expected release date in mid @-@ 2003 . However , since then , no further news on the film has been forthcoming .

In 2003 , Sega entered a contract with DSI Toys to produce a remote controlled car in their " GearHead " line based on the Crazy Taxi franchise , but DSI filed for chapter 7 bankruptcy later that year . Sega has formed the production company Stories International and teaming up with Evan Cholfin for film and TV projects based on theirs games with Crazy Taxi as an animated project .