

= Samus Aran =

Samus Aran (Japanese : サムス アラン , Hepburn : Samusu Aran) is the protagonist of the Metroid science fiction action @-@ adventure game series by Nintendo . She was introduced in the 1986 video game Metroid .

Samus Aran is an ex @-@ soldier of the Galactic Federation who turned into a Galactic bounty hunter , usually fitted with a powered exoskeleton with weapons that include directed @-@ energy weapons and missiles . Throughout the series , she executes missions given to her by the Galactic Federation while hunting the antagonistic Space Pirates and their leader Ridley along with the parasitic energy @-@ draining organisms called Metroids .

Samus has appeared in every Metroid video game and has also been featured in media outside of the series , including the comic book version of Captain N : The Game Master and the Super Smash Bros. series . She is well known as one of the earliest female protagonists in video game history and has remained a popular character over a quarter @-@ century after her first appearance .

= = Character = =

Super Metroid 's Player 's Guide describes Samus as an athletic woman who is 6 ft 3 in (1 @.@ 91 m) tall and weighs 198 pounds (90 kg) without her armor . She is mostly seen inside the Power Suit , a powered exoskeleton which protects her from most dangers she encounters and can be enhanced by power @-@ ups collected during gameplay . Typically , one of her suit 's arms carries a cannon , which can be charged to shoot an extra @-@ powerful blast , a limited number of missiles , and various beams . Samus 's suit can collapse into a sphere , a mode called the Morph Ball , allowing her to roll through tight areas such as tunnels . The suit can scan objects to learn more about them , and has a grapple beam used to cross large distances , such as chasms . Since Metroid II : Return of Samus , Samus has been accompanied by her Gunship , which is used in the games to save progress and restore health and ammunition . (While there are other rooms in the series containing devices that can be used to save progress , they may not necessarily provide all functions accessed inside the Gunship .) Appearances of Samus outside the Power Suit occur mostly in cutscenes , such as ending screens showing Samus in more revealing clothing . Metroid : Zero Mission also introduced the Zero Suit , a form @-@ fitting jumpsuit that she dons below the Power Suit .

The Metroid e @-@ manga covers Samus 's origins . She was born and raised on the mining planet K @-@ 2L , and when she was a child , the planet was raided by Space Pirates led by Ridley in an attack that killed both her parents and destroyed the planet . The orphaned Samus was then found by a bird @-@ like alien race known as the Chozo , who brought her to their home planet , Zebes . Samus was infused with Chozo DNA to give her a strong resistance to foreign environments , then trained as a warrior and given one of the alien race 's artifacts , the Power Suit . She enlisted in the Galactic Federation Police , but left for disagreements with her commanding officer , Adam Malkovich . Samus then started working as a freelance bounty hunter , and is called on by the Galactic Federation to execute missions " because of her superior skills and sense of justice " . Most of her missions revolve around the galaxy whilst getting rid of unsavory elements like the enigmatic organism known as Metroids , who can drain life energy and are frequently used as biological weapons .

= = = Conception and development = = =

The style for the original Metroid game was designed to be a cross between the side @-@ scrolling gameplay of the Super Mario games and the exploration and puzzle @-@ solving aspects of The Legend of Zelda series with inspiration from science fiction . The game 's characters were conceived by Makoto Kano , while Hiroji Kiyotake designed the main protagonist Samus Aran . Samus is able to collapse into a ball to travel through tight areas . The ability , called the Maru Mari (meaning " round ball " in Japanese) in the original Metroid (1986) , and later the more popular title of Morph

Ball in Super Metroid , was conceived by the developers because it required less effort to animate than " a cyborg crawling on all fours " , and the producer for Metroid , Gunpei Yokoi , took advantage of this shortcut .

The original game 's atmosphere was influenced by Ridley Scott 's film Alien . The series ' co @-@ creator Yoshio Sakamoto recalled , " We were partway through the development process when one of the staff members said ' Hey , wouldn 't that be kind of cool if it turned out that this person inside the suit was a woman ? ' " The developers voted on the concept , and it passed . The game 's instruction manual refers to Samus as if she were male to keep her true gender a secret until the end of the game . Sakamoto noted that during the course of the Metroid series , developers constantly try to express Samus 's femininity without turning her into a sex object . Samus 's image was based on actress Sigourney Weaver in her role as Ellen Ripley from Aliens , and actress Kim Basinger from 9 ½ Weeks and My Stepmother Is an Alien . Sakamoto and Kiyotake said that the character 's last name " Aran " was taken from Edson Arantes do Nascimento , the birth name of famous soccer player Pelé .

= = Appearances = =

= = = In Metroid games = = =

In Metroid , the Galactic Federation sends Samus to track down the Space Pirates on their home planet of Zebes . Deep within their base , she battles Mother Brain , the organism that controls the base 's defenses , and she escapes just as the base self @-@ destructs . In Metroid II : Return of Samus , the Galactic Federation commissions Samus to exterminate all Metroid creatures on the planet SR388 . She travels deep into the planet 's caverns . After dispatching a Metroid Queen , Samus discovers a small Metroid hatchling , which imprints on her , thinking she is its mother . She spares its life and takes it back to her gunship .

In Super Metroid , just after giving the hatchling to a Federation research station , Samus tracks the hatchling (stolen by Ridley) to a newly rebuilt Space Pirate base on Zebes . She travels deep underground , eventually finding the now @-@ fully @-@ grown Metroid , then battling a newly rebuilt and more powerful Mother Brain . The Metroid hatchling sacrifices itself to save Samus , and Samus in turn defeats Mother Brain and escapes as the entire planet is destroyed . In Metroid Fusion , Samus returns to SR388 , where a parasitic infection nearly kills her . Federation scientists surgically remove large sections of her corrupted Varia Suit and inject her with the Metroid hatchling 's DNA to save her . To prevent the parasites from spreading beyond SR388 and the space station orbiting above it , Samus sets the station to crash into the planet .

Metroid : Other M , which takes place between Super Metroid and Fusion , provides more information about Samus 's backstory and her emotional connection to both the Metroid hatchling and her former commander , Adam Malkovich , as well as her relation to all four Mother Brain designs , namely Zebes ' Mother Brains , Aurora Unit 313 and MB .

In Metroid Prime , Samus travels to the planet Tallon IV , which contains a Chozo colony in ruins and a Space Pirate base . There she learns of Phazon , a mysterious mutagen that can alter the genetic material of any organism . Samus is eventually able to access the source of the planet 's Phazon contamination , a meteor impact crater , where she defeats the Phazon @-@ infused creature Metroid Prime . In Metroid Prime 2 : Echoes , Samus is sent to the planet Aether , a Phazon meteor @-@ ravaged planet split into light and dark dimensions . There she battles the Ing , creatures that are able to possess other organisms , and Dark Samus , an evil doppelgänger of herself formed from the remains of Metroid Prime . In Metroid Prime Hunters , Samus competes against six rival bounty hunters in a race to recover an alien ultimate weapon . In Metroid Prime 3 : Corruption , Samus is infected by Phazon and is slowly corrupted by the mutagen while she works to prevent it from spreading to other planets . By the end of the game , she renders all Phazon inert by destroying its original source , the planet Phaaze , and destroys Dark Samus .

== Other appearances ==

Samus was featured in a series of comic books called *Captain N : The Game Master* , published by Valiant Comics in 1990 , based on the animated series of the same name , despite Samus never appearing in the cartoon version . In the comics , Samus is depicted as brash , money @-@ hungry , and fiercely independent . 1UP.com described Samus in the *Captain N* comics as " rambunctious , reckless , and gets into fighting contests with Lana over Kevin 's affections , which makes for some of the most entertaining situations in the series . " Comic book and manga adaptations of *Metroid* games were also developed .

Samus is a playable character in all four games in the *Super Smash Bros.* series of multiplayer fighting games , where she can use her array of weapons in combat against characters from other video games . *Super Smash Bros. Brawl* and the fourth *Super Smash Bros.* game also feature an alternate form of Samus called *Zero Suit Samus* , in which the heroine loses her *Power Suit* and has a different set of movements and attacks . She also stars in the *Subspace Emissary* fighting *Ridley* with *Pikachu* by her side . In the fourth *Super Smash Bros.* game , Samus in her power suit and her zero suit are listed as two separate characters , to avoid confusion with their move sets whereas in the previous game , Samus could access her zero suit by activating her final smash . Samus also receives a significant power upgrade with rocket powered boots which will work well for recovery .

Samus makes cameo appearances in the games *Galactic Pinball* (1995) , *Super Mario RPG* (1996) , *Kirby Super Star* (1996) , and *Kirby 's Dream Land 3* (1997) , and also makes a non @-@ playable appearance in *Dead or Alive : Dimensions* by *Metroid : Other M* co @-@ developers *Team Ninja* .

Many various figures based on the character were produced by various manufacturers . First 4 Figures built 2 @, @ 500 *Varia Suit Samus* figures , selling all of them . *Good Smile Company* produced a figma and a statue of Samus based on the *Other M* Samus . Samus also launched as one of the twelve original *Amiibo* in November 2014 .

== Reception and cultural impact ==

Samus was one of the first major female protagonists in a video game . Although *Toby Masuyo* (" *Kissy* ") from *Namco 's Alien Sector (Baraduke)* predates her by one year as a female protagonist , 2013 's *Guinness World Records Gamer 's Edition* declared Samus as " the first playable human female character in a mainstream videogame " , and as being " enduringly " popular , noting that sales of the *Metroid* series has exceeded 17 @. @ 44 million copies as of September 2012 . As a woman in a male @-@ dominated role , Samus has been widely considered a breakthrough for female characters in video games .

In 2009 , *GameDaily* called Samus the video game industry 's " first dominant female , a *femme de force* that didn 't rely on a man to save her , " also ranking her number one on a list of the top Nintendo characters of all time . In 2010 , *James Hawkins* of *Joystick Division* ranked her as number one top " *badass lady* " in video games , adding that she " made every other character on this list possible , " while *UGO.com* ranked her as 20th in a list of top heroes of all @-@ time . In 2011 , *Nintendo Power* listed Samus as their third favourite hero , citing her bravery in the face of dangerous situations , while *UGO.com* also included her on the list of video game characters who need their own movies . That same year , *Empire* ranked her as the 26th greatest video game character , adding , " whether you see her as a breakthrough for feminism or just another faceless sci @-@ fi warrior , 1986 's unexpected reveal that showed women could be more in gaming lore than eye candy for geeky boys was a refreshing and unforgettable moment . " In 2012 , *GamesRadar* ranked her as the fifth " most memorable , influential , and badass " protagonist in video games , adding : " Whether she 's 2D or 3D , in a sidescroller or FPS , her strength and determination always shine through , allowing her the power to defeat floating aliens and space pirates alike . " In 2013 , *Complex* ranked her as the 11th " most badass " video game character of all time , as well as the number one greatest heroine in video game history , and the third greatest soldier in video games .

Samus ' reveal in the original Metroid , which UGO.com called the original " jaw @-@ dropping moment " in gaming , was named as the greatest twist in video games by Game Informer in 2007 and as the greatest moment in Nintendo 's history by GameDaily in 2008 . The Irish Times found it refreshing to learn that the series ' protagonist , who is " well disguised under the suit of heavy armour " , is female , but Rupert Goodwins of The Independent wrote that the " Transformer @-@ like suit she wears could just as easily contain a large centipede ; it 's hardly a breakthrough for feminism . " According to the 2007 book Gaming Lives in the Twenty @-@ First Century : Literate Connections , Samus was perhaps the most nonsexualized female video @-@ game character ever , a belief shared by Steve Rabin in Introduction to Game Development , which also considered Samus as one of Nintendo 's most popular video game mascots . In 2002 , Justin Hoeger of The Sacramento Bee opined that " unlike most other female video game characters , Samus isn 't some husky @-@ voiced bimbo in tight leather included only for sex appeal . Samus is tough , silent , heavily armed and spends most of her time in a bulky suit of high @-@ tech Power Armor . " That same year , however , an article in Toronto Star retorted that the " sexual politics " surrounding Samus and the Metroid series needed to stop , arguing that the original " big crazy shock to the gaming public " was " some seriously misspent energy " as she " is not a woman for the benefit of the sweaty / excited crowd , and neither is she a standard @-@ bearer nor a courageous leader in the struggle for video game civil rights . She is a supremely talented action figure , and in the closeups on her helmet you can kind of see that she wears mascara , but that is all . " UGO.com included Samus ' one @-@ piece bathing swimsuit on the list of the best alternate costumes and IGN chose " Dude (Looks Like a Lady) " by Aerosmith as Samus ' theme song because she " spends her time running around in a manly battle suit blasting first and taking names later . " Featuring her in their 2004 list of " top ten forces of good " (one section on their list of top 50 " retro " game characters) , Retro Gamer opined she has remained " a distinct female character , not relying on cheap thrills to capture the attention of gamers , which is more than can be said for some . "

Nevertheless , much of her media reception came from her sex appeal . GameTrailers named Samus number one on a 2006 list of the top ten women of gaming , and number three among top ten " gamer babes " in 2007 . GameDaily ranked Samus seventh on a list of the top " hottest game babes " , describing her as " a refreshing change of pace , a tough , no nonsense warrior that isn 't afraid to remove her famous orange and yellow power suit and let her hair down , especially to reveal her skin tight clothing . " She was also listed on GameDaily 's list of " hottest " blondes in video games , described as both one of Nintendo 's most famous protagonists as well as a " curvaceous , drop @-@ dead @-@ gorgeous woman , " and used to illustrate the " smart and sexy heroine " concept on their list of top video game archetypes . In 2008 , Spike placed Samus on the top of their list of " video game vixen " as " a foxy broad that conceals her curves inside a weapon of death and destruction , " while MSN India listed her as one of " the best @-@ looking game characters with perfect figures . " In 2009 , UGO.com ranked Samus as 11th on a list of the top " girls of gaming " and as the eighth " hottest sci @-@ fi girl " , also including her in the 2011 list of 50 video game " hotties " . Her Zero Suit was ranked by ScrewAttack as fourth on their 2010 list of the sexiest outfits in games on GameTrailers , while Sarah Warn of AfterEllen ranked Samus as the tenth " hottest " female video game character . In 2011 , GameFront featured her twice on the list of the " best boobs in video game history " , at 40th spot for her reveal in the original game and at sixth place for her modern appearance in " a ridiculously form @-@ fitting jumpsuit . " That same year , Lisa Foiles of The Escapist ranked the Zero Suit Samus as number one " hottest blonde chick " in video games . In 2012 , Complex ranked her as the 24th " hottest " video game character , also ranking her as the fourth top " hot female killer " from video games , while Nixie Pixel from Revision3 placed Samus on top of her sexiest " game girls " list . In 2013 , Steve Jenkins of CheatCodes.com declared Samus the tenth " hottest video game girl " of all time . Thanh Niên ranked her as the tenth most sexy female character in 2015 , in particular for her Zero Suit .

Samus has been well received by the video game community . In 2001 , IGN remarked that Samus has a cult following greater than most other female video game characters . She was chosen by the users of IGN as the most requested character who should have her own movie franchise by the

website's users, the staff remarking that her tragic past makes her a perfect candidate for a movie, especially the loss of both her parents to the Space Pirates. Among their list of voted characters, IGN considered Samus to be the video game character that "could lead the pack of video game adaptations that actually manage to live up to the source material." Samus appeared in multiple GameFAQs "Character Battle" contests, winning the "Character Battle V" in 2006. In 2009, GameSpot featured her in their poll "All Time Greatest Game Hero", in which she lost to Mario in the semi-finals. Paul O'Connor, the lead game designer for Sammy Studios and a fan of the Metroid series, remarked that players empathize and identify with Samus because she is often rewarded for indulging in her curiosity. The book Videogames and Art noted that in the original Metroid the player is not briefed on Samus's past or future; the only interaction that they have with the character is by being her through gameplay, while bits of information can be gleaned from the handbook and through concept art, adding, "Samus is very rare for the character intimacy gained solely through game play and for her stasis and then drastic change," referring to the revelation that she is a woman. MMA and actress Ronda Rousey told GameSpot in a 2016 interview that she "always wanted to be Samus" if a live-action Metroid film is made.

In his review of Super Smash Bros., GameSpot's Jeff Gerstmann called Samus one of the characters that made Nintendo "what it is today." Samus was ranked fifth on GameDaily's 2009 list of top characters in the Smash Bros. series, while IGN ranked her as the third best character for Super Smash Bros. Her controversial portrayal in Metroid: Other M received mixed reactions. Unlike other Metroid games, where Samus took full advantage of weapons and abilities available, she deactivated most of them until Commander Adam Malkovich authorized their use, despite obvious uses for them. G4 TV considered the portrayal of Samus as "sexist", stating that as she "cannot possibly wield the amount of power she possesses unless directed to by a man" and that her anxiety attack cannot be reconciled with her previous portrayals. The A.V. Club echoed the misgivings about Samus's immaturity, petulant behavior, and misguided loyalty. According to GamePro, while the story and Samus's monologues did not compel them, "it helped contextualize her entire existence" which developed the character to "an actual human being who's using the vastness of space to try and put some distance between herself and the past." 1UP.com's Justin Hayward found the portrayal "lifeless and boring" and "nonsensical". GamesRadar wrote that Other M painted Samus, widely considered a strong female lead character, as "an unsure, insecure woman who desperately wants the approval of her former [male] commanding officer." Game Informer listed her 1st on their list of the top ten "dorks" of 2010, citing her "lame backstory" in Other M. On the other hand, Bob "Moviebob" Chipman from ScrewAttack applauded the elaboration on Samus's character, arguing that her breakdown is an accurate depiction of posttraumatic stress disorder and that she is portrayed as a three-dimensional character, a step up from the fans' long-standing misconceptions of Samus as "pathologically emotionless man-hating ice queen," while "supposedly enlightened gamers and game commentators" are making gender assumptions that are "all in [their heads]."