= Stealth game =

A stealth game is a type of video game that tasks the player with using stealth to avoid or overcome antagonists . Games in the genre typically allow the player to remain undetected by hiding , using disguises , and / or avoiding noise . Some games allow the player to choose between a stealthy approach or directly attacking antagonists , perhaps rewarding the player for greater levels of stealth . The genre has employed espionage , counter @-@ terrorism and rogue themes , with protagonists who have been identified as special forces operatives , spies , thieves , ninjas , and assassins . Some games have also combined stealth elements with other genres , such as first @-@ person shooters and even platformers .

Some of the early games emphasizing stealth include Manbiki Shounen (1979) , Lupin III (1980) , 005 (1981) , Castle Wolfenstein (1981) , Infiltrator (1986) , Metal Gear (1987) , and Metal Gear 2 : Solid Snake (1990) . The genre became popular in 1998 , with the mainstream success of Metal Gear Solid as well as Tenchu : Stealth Assassins and Thief : The Dark Project . Tenchu was the first 3D game in the genre , while Metal Gear Solid , released some months later , transformed the relatively obscure Metal Gear series into a highly acclaimed , profitable franchise with numerous sequels , while Thief pioneered 3D stealth games on the PC . These games were followed by other stealth series , such as Hitman and Splinter Cell . Later games in the genre have allowed the player to choose between , or combine , stealth tactics and direct confrontation .

= = Definition = =

Unlike most action games , stealth games challenge the player to avoid alerting enemies altogether . The core gameplay elements of the modern stealth game are to avoid combat , minimize noise , and strike enemies from the shadows . Completing objectives without being detected by any enemy , sometimes referred to as " ghosting " is a common approach to stealth games . Avoiding detection may be the only way to successfully complete a game , but there are usually multiple ways to achieve a goal with different pathways or styles of play . Players can hide behind objects or in shadows , and can strike or run past an enemy when the enemy is facing the other way . If the player attracts the attention of enemies , they usually must hide and wait until the enemies abandon their search . Thus , planning becomes important , as does trial @-@ and @-@ error . However , some stealth games put more emphasis on physical combat skill when the player is spotted . Some games offer a choice between killing or merely knocking out an enemy . When ghosting is optional , or even not well @-@ supported by a game , players may still attempt to avoid combat for moral reasons or as a demonstration of skill .

= = Game design = =

When hiding in the dark is a gameplay element , light and shadow become important parts of the level design . Usually the player is able to disable certain light sources . Stealth games also emphasize the audio design when players must be able to hear the subtle sound effects that may alert enemies to their actions ; noise will often vary as the player walks on different surfaces such as wood or metal . Players who move recklessly will make more noise and attract more attention .

In order for a game to include stealth gameplay , the knowledge of the artificial intelligence (AI) must be restricted to make it ignorant to parts of the game world . The AI in stealth games takes into specific consideration the enemies ' reactions to the effects of the player 's actions , such as turning off the lights , as opposed to merely reacting to the player directly . Enemies typically have a line of sight which the player can avoid by hiding behind objects , staying in the shadows or moving while the enemy is facing another direction . Enemies can also typically detect when the player touches them or moves within a small , fixed distance . Overall , stealth games vary in what player actions the AI will perceive and react to , with more recent games offering a wider range of enemy reactions . Often , the AI 's movements are predictable and regular , allowing the player to devise a strategy to overcome his adversaries . Players are often given limited methods of engaging opponents directly

in stealth games , either by restricting the player to ineffective or non @-@ lethal weapons , equipping adversaries with far superior equipment and numbers , or providing the player with a limited amount of health that makes most combat scenarios extremely dangerous . Stealth games sometimes overlap with the survival horror genre , in which players are forced to hide from and evade supernatural or occasionally mundane enemies as they attempt to track down the player . Examples of hybrid stealth / horror games include Amnesia : The Dark Descent , Outlast , and the Penumbra video game series .

= = History = =

= = = Early developments : 1979 ? 1997 = = =

The first stealth game was Manbiki Shounen (Shoplifting Boy) , a PET 2001 personal computer game developed by Hiroshi Suzuki , a 19 year @-@ old Tokyo University student , in October 1979 , and released in November 1979 . Inspired by a 7 / 11 store near his university , the game involves a boy entering a convenience store and attempting to shoplift by stealing " $ " symbols , while avoiding the line @-@ of @-@ sight detection of the owner ; if caught , the player is led away by the police . He presented the game to Space Invaders developer Taito , which used it as inspiration for their similar stealth arcade game , Lupin III (based on the manga and anime of the same name) , released in April 1980 . Suzuki developed a Manbiki Shounen sequel , Manbiki Shoujo (Shoplifting Girl) , released in November 1980 for the PET 2001 , requiring an installed PCG (Programmable Character Generator) module for improved tile map graphics and more realistic movement . The game also featured speech synthesis and joystick support . Manbiki Shounen was later ported to the PC @-@ 6001 in July 1982 . The game was then ported to the FM @-@ 7 in 1983 .

In 1981 , Sega released an arcade game called 005 in which the player 's mission is to take a briefcase of secret documents to a waiting helicopter while avoiding enemy flashlights and use boxes as hiding spots . 005 held the Guinness World Record for being the first stealth game . Castle Wolfenstein , originally available on the Apple II in 1981 , also employed stealth elements as a focus of the gameplay . Players were charged with traversing the levels of Castle Wolfenstein , stealing secret plans and escaping . Players could acquire uniforms to disguise themselves and walk by guards undetected . Beyond Castle Wolfenstein , released in 1984 , included some additions to its predecessor , such as a dagger for close @-@ range kills and a greater emphasis on disguising in enemy uniform. id Software 's technically updated 1992 remake Wolfenstein 3D was originally going to feature some of the original 's stealth gameplay , such as body hiding , but this was cut to make the game faster paced . This Wolfenstein game would ironically pave the way for quite a few later 3D action games , specifically first @-@ person shooters .

Mindscape 's Infiltrator , released in 1986 , combined a flight simulator with a stealth @-@ based " ground mission " . In this ground mission , the protagonist attempts to sneak into enemy territory using false IDs to avoid detection and knock @-@ out gas to incapacitate enemies . The goal of this mission is to photograph secret documents while avoiding alarms .

Hideo Kojima 's Metal Gear , released in 1987 for the MSX2 and the Nintendo Entertainment System in 1988 , utilized stealth elements within an action @-@ adventure framework , and was the first mainstream stealth game to be released on consoles . Since the MSX2 was not available in North America , only the NES version was released there . Metal Gear placed a greater emphasis on stealth than other games of its time , with the player character Solid Snake beginning without any weapons (requiring him to avoid confrontation until weapons are found) and having limited ammunition for each weapon . Enemies are able to see Snake from a distance (using a line @-@ of @-@ sight mechanic) and hear gunshots from non @-@ silenced weapons ; security cameras and sensors are placed at various locations , and a security alarm sounds whenever Snake is spotted and causes all enemies on screen to chase him . Snake could also disguise himself in enemy uniform or a cardboard box , and use his fists to fight enemies .

The sequel Metal Gear 2 : Solid Snake was released in 1990 for the MSX2 . It further evolved the

stealth gameplay of its predecessor and introduced most of the gameplay elements present in Metal Gear Solid , including the three @-@ dimensional element of height , allowing players to crouch and crawl into hiding spots and air ducts and underneath desks . The player could also distract guards by knocking on surfaces and use a radar to plan ahead . The enemies had improved AI , including a 45 @-@ degree field of vision , turning their heads left and right to see diagonally , the detection of various different noises , being able to move from screen to screen (they were limited to a single screen in earlier games) , and a three @-@ phase security alarm (where reinforcements are called in to chase the intruder , then remain on the lookout for some time after losing sight of the intruder , and then leave the area) . The game also had a complex storyline and improved graphics .

Establishing a genre : 1998 ? 2002

Although stealth gameplay had appeared in several games in the 1980s and 1990s , 1998 is seen as a turning point in gaming history because of the release of Metal Gear Solid , Tenchu : Stealth Assassins , and Thief : The Dark Project . The ninja @-@ themed game Tenchu : Stealth Assassins was released several months before Metal Gear Solid , making it the first 3D stealth based @-@ game . The highly anticipated Metal Gear Solid transformed its modestly successful franchise into a large mainstream success . The increased power of the PlayStation console over previous platforms allowed for greater immersion in terms of both story and game environment . Metal Gear Solid has been credited with popularizing the stealth genre . Thief : The Dark Project is also credited as a pioneer of the genre . It was the first stealth game using the first @-@ person perspective , dubbed a " first @-@ person sneaker " , or " sneak @-@ em @-@ up " , and the first to use darkness and shadows as the mode of concealment . Another of Thief 's most noteworthy contributions to the genre was the heavy use of audio cues and ambiance to determine the player 's level of stealth and establish a tense , foreboding atmosphere .
With further releases , many games in the genre have drifted towards action by allowing the option of direct confrontations . The Hitman series , the first installment of which was released in 2000 , allowed this play style , but rewarded the player for stealthy and elaborate assassination of antagonists . Hitman : Codename 47 was also the first 3D game to employ the genre 's device of disguises . No One Lives Forever , an espionage themed parody also released in 2000 , again allowed the player to combine or choose between stealth and overt violence . In 2000 , the first @-@ person action role @-@ playing game Deus Ex also incorporated stealth elements in its gameplay . A USA Today reviewer found " At the easiest difficulty setting , your character is pureed again and again by an onslaught of human and robotic terrorists until you learn the value of stealth . "
The acclaimed Metal Gear series continued with Metal Gear Solid 2 : Sons of Liberty (PlayStation 2 ; 2001) which further evolved the stealth gameplay . It featured an array of new abilities , including " leaping over and hanging off of railings , opening and hiding in storage lockers , " and sneaking up behind enemies to " hold them at gunpoint for items and ammunition . " Metal Gear Solid 2 : Sons of Liberty became the genre 's best selling game with 7 million in sales , followed by Metal Gear Solid with 6 million in sales .

Later developments : 2002 ? present

Due to the success of Metal Gear Solid , and to an extent Tenchu and Thief , stealth elements have become increasingly incorporated by a wide range of video games , with numerous action games since then using stealth elements in some way or another . 2002 saw the first installment of the Tom Clancy licensed Splinter Cell series , an attempt at a more realistic game in the vein of Metal Gear . As with Metal Gear , if the player is discovered in Splinter Cell , the guards will often raise a general alarm . This can cause a difficulty spike or even result in automatic mission failure . Splinter Cell was notable for its state of the art graphics , including dynamic lighting and shadows . These effects not only contributed to the atmosphere of the game , but dynamically affected in which areas the player could hide . The 2004 sequel , Tom Clancy 's Splinter Cell : Pandora Tomorrow , added a

multiplier component to the stealth genre .

As the genre developed and progressed , stealth gameplay was combined with other genres . Sly Cooper , a cel @-@ shaded game released in 2002 , was a " stealth platformer " , while 2003 's Siren combined the survival horror genre with the stealth genre . In the same year , Manhunt employed a snuff movie theme and allowed the player to kill antagonists with varying levels of violence , dependent on how much time was spent sneaking behind them . It was the first to show visual executions in the genre . The following year , Konami 's Metal Gear Acid combined the stealth gameplay of the Metal Gear series with turn @-@ based strategy and tactical role @-@ playing game elements as well as card battle elements from Konami 's own Yu @-@ Gi @-@ Oh ! games .

In 2004 , Metal Gear Solid 3 : Snake Eater (PlayStation 2) introduced camouflage to the genre . Set in a jungle , the game emphasized infiltration in a natural environment , along with survival aspects such as food capture , healing and close @-@ quarters combat . The following year , the updated version Metal Gear Solid 3 : Subsistence introduced an online multiplayer element to the genre . Another 2004 release was The Chronicles of Riddick : Escape From Butcher Bay , based on the Chronicles of Riddick series of movies . The game follows the character of Riddick as he attempts to escape from prison . Action and stealth gaming are combined seamlessly by allowing the character to hide , sneak , or fight his way past most situations . The game was critically acclaimed , and was followed with The Chronicles of Riddick : Assault on Dark Athena in 2009 .

In 2007 , Assassin 's Creed employed a social element to the stealth game , where the player is able to hide among crowds of civilians by taking care to blend in . The same year , Crytek 's open world first @-@ person shooter Crysis incorporated stealth elements within its gameplay , as did the multiplayer first @-@ person shooter Team Fortress 2 the same year and the first @-@ person role @-@ playing game Fallout 3 the following year . In 2008 , Metal Gear Solid 4 : Guns of the Patriots (PlayStation 3) introduced a battlezone element , where the stealth gameplay is incorporated into a battlefield fought between two armies , both of which can be infiltrated by Solid Snake . In 2009 , Assassin 's Creed II broadened its predecessor 's elements of stealth by allowing the player to blend among any group of civilians , rather than specific ones . Assassin 's Creed II also allowed the player to distract guards by tossing coins or by hiring thieves and courtesans , and also featured a notoriety level , which made the player more recognizable until they paid off officials or tore down wanted posters . The same year , Uncharted 2 : Among Thieves and Batman : Arkham Asylum incorporated stealth elements in different segments of the games . The multiplayer modes of Aliens vs. Predator in 2010 and Killzone 3 in 2011 also incorporated stealth elements .

The 2012 game Dishonored tried to incorporate stealth elements that were influenced by Thief , such as the importance of lighting and shadows . The developers later abandoned that system citing realism as a factor . The game instead relies on a system of " occlusion @-@ based " stealth , using the vision cones of the enemies , obstacles , and special abilities which determines whether or not the character is visible . Forbes called Dishonored one of the best stealth games of 2012 , along with Hitman Absolution and Mark of the Ninja . Mark of the Ninja puts a twist on the stealth genre in that it is a 2D side @-@ scroller . This posed some unique factors , such as the lack of corners for the character to hide behind , and the visibility presented in a side @-@ scroller ; the developers overcame this by adding ' fog ' that prevents the player from seeing things that the character can not see , visually representing enemy line @-@ of @-@ sight and even visualizing the noise made by the character , including how far that noise travels . After the completion of the game , the player has access to a harder difficulty called " New Game Plus " , which further decreases visibility by adding fog behind the player and removes noise visualizations and enemy line of sight indicators .