

= The Legend of Zelda : Majora 's Mask =

The Legend of Zelda : Majora 's Mask ( Japanese : ?????? ?????? , Hepburn : Zeruda no Densetsu : Mujura no Kamen ) is an action @-@ adventure video game developed and published by Nintendo for the Nintendo 64 . It was released in Japan on April 27 , 2000 , in North America on October 26 , 2000 , and in Europe on November 17 , 2000 . Approximately 314 @,@ 000 copies of the game were sold during its first week in Japan , and three million copies were sold worldwide . The game was rereleased for the GameCube as part of The Legend of Zelda : Collector 's Edition in 2003 , and the Wii 's Virtual Console service in 2009 . It was released for the European Wii U Virtual Console on June 23 , 2016 . An enhanced remake for the Nintendo 3DS , titled The Legend of Zelda : Majora 's Mask 3D , was released in February 2015 .

Majora 's Mask is the sixth main installment in The Legend of Zelda series and the second using 3D graphics , the first being the game 's predecessor , The Legend of Zelda : Ocarina of Time . Considered by critics to be a " darker " entry in the Zelda games franchise , Majora 's Mask is set in Termina , an alternate version of the usual series setting of Hyrule , where the Skull Kid has stolen Majora 's Mask , a powerful ancient artifact . Under its influence , the Skull Kid causes the land 's moon to slowly fall towards Termina , where it crashes after three days . The protagonist Link repeatedly travels back in time to the beginning of the three days to find a way to stop the moon from destroying the world .

The gameplay is centered on the perpetually repeating three @-@ day cycle and the use of various masks , some of which allow Link to transform into different beings . Link learns to play several melodies on his ocarina , which have a variety of effects like controlling the flow of time or opening passages to four temples , which house challenges Link must overcome . Unlike Ocarina of Time , Majora 's Mask requires the Expansion Pak , which provides additional memory for enhanced graphics and more on @-@ screen characters . Majora 's Mask was acclaimed by critics , who praised the graphics and complex story .

= = Gameplay = =

The gameplay of Majora 's Mask expands on that of Ocarina of Time ; it retains the concept of dungeon puzzles and ocarina songs , and introduces character transformations and a three @-@ day cycle . As in previous installments , Link can perform basic actions such as walking , running and limited jumping , and must use items to battle enemies and solve puzzles . Link 's main weapon is the sword , which can be upgraded throughout the game . Other weapons and items are available ? Link can block or reflect attacks with a shield , stun enemies by throwing Deku Nuts , attack from a distance with a bow and arrows , destroy obstacles and damage enemies with bombs . He can also latch onto objects or paralyze enemies with the Hookshot . Magic power allows attacks such as magical arrows or spin attacks , and the use of special items .

= = Masks and transformations = =

While the masks in Ocarina of Time are limited to an optional side @-@ quest , they play a central role in Majora 's Mask , which has twenty @-@ four masks in total .

Link can transform at will into different creatures : the Deku Mask transforms Link into a Deku Scrub , the Goron Mask into a Goron , and the Zora Mask into a Zora . Each form features unique abilities : Deku Link can perform a spin attack , shoot bubbles from his mouth , skip on water , and fly for a short time by launching from Deku Flowers ; Goron Link can roll at high speeds ( and grow spikes at higher speeds ) , punch with deadly force , stomp the ground with his massive , rock @-@ like body , walk in lava without taking damage , and weigh down heavy switches ; Zora Link can swim rapidly , throw boomerang @-@ like fins from his arms , generate a force field , and walk on the bottoms of bodies of water . Many areas can be accessed only by use of these abilities .

Link and his three transformations receive different reactions from non @-@ player characters . For instance , the Goron and Zora are allowed to exit Clock Town at will , whereas the Deku Scrub is not

permitted to leave by reason of his childlike resemblance . Animals also interact differently with the four forms of Link . For example , Link 's normal form receives an indifferent response from dogs , Deku Link is attacked by them , Goron Link frightens them , and Zora Link makes them chase him happily .

The final mask to be gained in the game is the Fierce Deity 's Mask . Although the use of this mask is strictly limited to boss battles only , it is possible to wear it anywhere using a glitch . Upon donning this mask , Link grows to nearly two @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half times his normal height . His clothes turn white and his face appears with a type of war paint on it . The sword that Fierce Deity Link carries is a helix shape that uses magic power to blast fire at enemies .

Other masks provide situational benefits . For example , the Great Fairy 's Mask helps retrieve stray fairies scattered throughout the four temples , the Bunny Hood allows Link to run faster , and the Stone Mask renders Link invisible to most non @-@ playable characters and enemies . Less valuable masks are usually involved only in optional side @-@ quests or specialized situations . Examples include the Postman 's Hat , which grants Link access to items in mailboxes , and Kafei 's Mask , which initiates a long side @-@ quest to receive the Couple 's Mask .

= = = Three @-@ day cycle and songs = = =

Majora 's Mask imposes a time limit of three days ( 72 hours ) game @-@ time , which is about 54 minutes in real time . An on @-@ screen clock tracks the day and time . Link can return to 6 : 00 am on the first day by playing the " Song of Time " on the Ocarina of Time . If he does not before the 72 hours expire , then the moon will destroy Clock Town , including all the surrounding regions of Termina and Link will lose everything he accomplished . A real @-@ time countdown will begin when only 6 hours remain . However , returning to the first day saves the player 's progress and major accomplishments permanently , such as the acquisition of maps , masks , songs , and weapons . Cleared puzzles , keys , and minor items will be lost , as well as any rupees not in the bank , and almost all characters will have no recollection of meeting Link . Link can slow down time or warp to the next morning or evening by playing two variations of the Song of Time . Owl statues scattered across certain major areas of the world allow the player to temporarily save their progress once they have been activated , and also provide warp points to quickly move around the world .

Other uses for songs include manipulating the weather , teleporting between owl statues spread throughout Termina , and unlocking the four temples . Each transformation mask uses a different instrument : Deku Link plays a multi @-@ horn instrument called the " Deku Pipes " , Goron Link plays a set of bongo drums tied around his waist , and Zora Link plays a guitar made from a large fish skeleton . Jackson Guitars created a limited edition 7 @-@ string replica of this guitar that was the grand prize in a contest in Nintendo Power , known as the " Jackson Zoraxe " . The game reuses three of Ocarina of Time 's ocarina songs : the " Song of Time " ; the " Song of Storms " , for aforementioned weather manipulation ; and " Epona 's Song " , which again summons Link 's horse .

During the three @-@ day cycle , many non @-@ player characters follow fixed schedules that Link can track using the Bomber 's Notebook . The notebook tracks the twenty characters in need of help , such as a soldier to whom Link delivers medicine , and an engaged couple whom Link reunites . Blue bars on the notebook 's timeline indicate when characters are available for interaction , and icons indicate that Link has received items , such as masks , from the characters .

= = Synopsis = =

= = = Setting and characters = = =

The Legend of Zelda : Majora 's Mask is set in Termina , a land parallel to Hyrule , the latter being the main setting of most games in the series . According to legend , Termina was split into four areas by four magical giants that live in four regions of the land . At the center of Termina lies Clock

Town , which features a large clock tower that counts down the days before the Carnival of Time ? a major festival where the people of Termina pray for good luck and harvests . Termina Field surrounds Clock Town ; beyond lie a swamp , mountain range , bay , and canyon in each of the four cardinal directions .

The Southern Swamp contains the Deku Palace and the Woodfall Temple , an ancient shrine containing monsters and a giant masked jungle warrior , Odolwa , who has been poisoning the swamp .

The Snowhead mountain range , north of Clock Town , is the site of the Goron village . Normally a lush pine forest region most of the year , the area has been experiencing an unusually long winter caused by a giant masked mechanical monster named Goht in Snowhead Temple .

Romani Ranch , southwest of Clock Town , is the site of a ranch which houses Romani , her older sister , Cremia , Grog , and Mamamu Yan . Before Link entered Termina , Skull Kid caused a huge boulder to block Romani Ranch . If you go to Milk Road on the dawn of the final day , The boulder disappears and you could go to Romani Ranch or you could use a Powder Keg after you defeated Goht .

The western area of Termina , the Great Bay , is the site of the Zora and Gerudo civilizations . A gargantuan masked fish , Gyorg , is generating storms and contaminating the water surrounding the Great Bay Temple .

The desolate Ikana Canyon , to the east of Clock Town , is the site of a former kingdom . It is inhabited mainly by the undead , except for a ghost researcher and his daughter Pamela , as well as a thief named Sakon . A pair of giant masked insectoid serpents known as Twinmold from their nest in Stone Tower Temple are casting a dark aura over the land , causing the dead bodies of former citizens and soldiers to come back to life as undead monsters .

At the end of the game , Link is transported to the moon , which is portrayed as a green field with a single , large tree in the centre with masked children playing underneath it .

= = = Plot = = =

Majora 's Mask takes place a few months after The Legend of Zelda : Ocarina of Time and begins with Link searching for his departed fairy , Navi . While riding through a forest in Hyrule on his horse Epona , Link is ambushed by the masked Skull Kid and his fairy accomplices Tatli and Tael , who steal both Epona and his musical instrument , the Ocarina of Time . Link follows them into Termina , where he confronts the Skull Kid , who curses him by turning him into a Deku Scrub . Tatli stops Link from going after the Skull Kid as the latter escapes with Tael through a door , but is then separated from them when the door closes behind them . Realizing she needs Link 's help to find them , Tatli insists that they work together . Link follows the Skull Kid into the inside of the Clock Tower in the land of Termina . There , he meets the Happy Mask Salesman , who seemed to have been following him . The salesman offers to help Link heal his curse , in exchange for which he must retrieve both the Ocarina of Time and the Majora 's Mask from the Skull Kid . The Skull Kid , having stolen the Majora 's Mask from the salesman , became possessed by its overwhelming power and transformed into an uncontrollable fiend who inflicts certain misfortune on others , the worst of which is an impending apocalypse : the moon is now set to collide with the world in approximately three days time .

From a gate inside Clock Tower , Link and Tatli enter Clock Town while its population prepares for the town 's annual Carnival of Time also scheduled to take place in three days . Together they learn that the Skull Kid is waiting at the top of the tower , which is only accessible during the eve of the carnival . After conditions are met , Link and Tatli arrive at the top of the Clock Tower to witness Tael hurriedly speak a riddle to them : " Swamp . Mountain . Ocean . Canyon ... hurry , the four who are there ... bring them here ! " Link is unable to fight the Skull Kid , nor does he have any means to take the mask from him , but manages to get the Ocarina of Time back from his hands . After playing the " Song of Time " on the ocarina , Link and Tatli are brought backwards through time three days earlier ? with the ocarina still in his possession and with both him and Tatli having complete memory of all that happened . Meeting with the Happy Mask Salesman again , he sees Link has retrieved his

ocarina , and hence teaches him the " Song of Healing " , which breaks the curse , returns Link to his human form and seals his Deku Scrub form into a mask which has the power to turn him back into a Deku Scrub if needed . After he finds out Link did not bring back the mask , he panics and explains that the mask conceals an evil , apocalyptic power that was once used by an ancient tribe in hexing rituals . The troubles caused by the mask were so great , that the ancient ones " sealed the mask in shadow forever " to prevent it from being misused . Link must then travel between the four cardinal regions of Termina : Woodfall , Snowhead , the Great Bay , and Ikana Canyon , for each region conceals one of the Four Giants who will be able , once reunited , to halt the moon 's crashing . At the same time , each region has been struck with a terrible curse by the Skull Kid which plagues its inhabitants and seals away its giant . To lift the curse and free the giants , Link must enter a dungeon in each region and defeat its boss . After doing so , he obtains the power to summon the giant he has set free .

With all four curses lifted , Link climbs on top of the Clock Tower at midnight on the third day to confront the Skull Kid again . There and then , he summons the Four Giants , who halt the moon 's descent toward Termina by holding it up with their arms . Now seeing the Skull Kid as a useless puppet , Majora 's Mask drops his grip on him and flies up to possess the moon instead . With Tatli at his side , Link follows the Majora 's Mask inside the moon and defeats him once and for all , returning the moon to its proper place in the sky . The Four Giants return to their sleep . Tatli and Tael reunite with the newly liberated Skull Kid . The Happy Mask Salesman takes Majora 's Mask , stating it has been purified of its evil power . Link rides away on Epona while the people of Termina celebrate the Carnival of Time and the dawn of a new day .

The game ends with a post @-@ credits scene depicting Link and Epona back in the mysterious forest , resuming Link 's search for his friend , as they ride off towards a mysterious light breaking through the thick forest . A drawing on a tree stump of Link , Tatli , Tael , the Skull Kid , and the Four Giants is shown after .

= = Development = =

Following the release of Link 's Awakening in 1993 , fans waited five years for Ocarina of Time , the active development of which took four years . By re @-@ using the game engine and graphics from Ocarina of Time , a smaller team required only one year to finish Majora 's Mask . According to director Eiji Aonuma , they were " faced with the very difficult question of just what kind of game could follow Ocarina of Time and its worldwide sales of seven million units " , and as a solution , came up with the three @-@ day system to " make the game data more compact while still providing deep gameplay " . Shigeru Miyamoto and Yoshiaki Koizumi came up with the story that served as the basis for the script written by Mitsuhiro Takano . The idea of the " Three @-@ Day System " came from Miyamoto and Koizumi .

Majora 's Mask first appeared in the media in May 1999 , when Famitsu stated that a long @-@ planned Zelda expansion for the 64DD was underway in Japan . This project was tentatively titled " Ura Zelda " ( " ura " translates roughly to " hidden " or " behind " ) . This expansion would take Ocarina of Time and alter the level designs , similar to how the " master quest " expanded upon the original Legend of Zelda . In June , Nintendo announced that " Zelda : Gaiden " , which roughly translates to " Zelda : Side Story " , would appear as a playable demo at the Nintendo Space World exhibition on August 27 , 1999 . The media assumed that Zelda : Gaiden was the new working title for Ura Zelda .

Screenshots of Zelda : Gaiden released in August 1999 show unmistakable elements of the final version of Majora 's Mask , such as the large clock that dominates the center of Clock Town , the timer at the bottom of the screen , and the Goron Mask . Story and gameplay details revealed later that month show that the story concept as well as the use of transformation masks were already in place .

That same month , Miyamoto confirmed that Ura Zelda and Zelda : Gaiden were separate projects . It was unclear if Zelda : Gaiden was an offshoot of Ura Zelda or if the two were always separate . Ura Zelda might have become Ocarina of Time Master Quest outside Japan , and was released on

a bonus disc for the GameCube given to those who pre @-@ ordered The Wind Waker in the US and bundled with the GameCube game in Europe .

In November , Nintendo announced a " Holiday 2000 " release date for Zelda : Gaiden . By March 2000 , what ultimately became the final titles were announced : Zelda no Densetsu Mujura no Kamen in Japan and The Legend of Zelda : Majora 's Mask elsewhere .

= = = Technical differences from Ocarina of Time = = =

The Legend of Zelda : Majora 's Mask runs on an upgraded version of the engine used in Ocarina of Time and requires the use of the 4 MB Expansion Pak . IGN theorizes this requirement is due to Majora 's Mask 's possible origin as a Nintendo 64DD game , which would necessitate an extra 4 MB of RAM . The use of the Expansion Pak allows for greater draw distances , more accurate dynamic lighting , more detailed texture mapping and animation , complex framebuffer effects such as motion blur , and more characters displayed on @-@ screen . This expanded draw distance allows the player to see much farther and eliminates the need for the fog effect and " cardboard panorama " seen in Ocarina of Time , which were used to obscure distant areas . IGN considered the texture design to be one of the best created for the Nintendo 64 , saying that although some textures have a low resolution , they are " colorful and diverse " , which gives each area " its own unique look " . Lastly , building interiors are rendered in real @-@ time , unlike the fixed 3D display featured in Ocarina of Time .

= = = Music = = =

The music was composed by Koji Kondo and Toru Minegishi , and largely consists of reworked music from Ocarina of Time , complemented with other traditional Zelda music such as the " Overworld Theme " and new material . Kondo describes the music as having " an exotic Chinese @-@ opera sound " . As the three @-@ day cycle progresses , the theme song of Clock Town changes between three variations , one for each day . IGN relates the shift in music to a shift in the game 's atmosphere , saying that the quickened tempo of the Clock Town music on the second day conveys a sense of time passing quickly . The soundtrack was released on June 23 , 2000 , featuring 112 tracks from the game over two compact discs . All music was composed by Kondo except three battles tracks , which were written by Minegishi .

= = = Nintendo 3DS version = = =

After the release of The Legend of Zelda : Ocarina of Time 3D , a remake of Ocarina of Time for the Nintendo 3DS , director Eiji Aonuma suggested that a Majora 's Mask remake was " not an impossibility " , depending on interest and demand . Following this news , a fan campaign called " Operation Moonfall " was launched to promote the remake of Majora 's Mask on the 3DS . The campaign name is a reference to a similar fan @-@ based movement , Operation Rainfall , set up to persuade Nintendo of America to release a trio of role @-@ playing video games for the Wii . The petition reached 10 @,@ 000 signatures within five days . In response to the feedback , Nintendo of America released a statement : " At the risk of dampening the excitement you feel , I must be clear that no official announcements have been made regarding a remake of The Legend of Zelda : Majora 's Mask for the Nintendo 3DS . However , we like hearing what our consumers find important . " In an interview with GamesRadar in November 2011 , Zelda producer Eiji Aonuma acknowledged Operation Moonfall and told fans that he hopes to respond to their request sometime in the future . At E3 2012 , Miyamoto stated that a 3D remake was still under consideration . Once again , shortly after E3 2013 , Miyamoto commented that the fans supporting a Majora 's Mask 3D remake were " still in his memory " .

On November 5 , 2014 , Nintendo announced in its Nintendo Direct presentation that The Legend of Zelda : Majora 's Mask 3D would be released for the Nintendo 3DS in the Northern Hemisphere in spring 2015 . Like Ocarina of Time 3D , the remake features improved character models and

stereoscopic 3D graphics , along with altered boss battles and an additional fishing minigame . A special edition featuring a pin badge , double @-@ sided poster , and steelbook , will be released in Europe .

= = Reception = =

Approximately 314 @, @ 000 copies of The Legend of Zelda : Majora 's Mask were sold during its first week on sale in Japan , ultimately with 3 @. @ 36 million copies sold worldwide .

Like its predecessor , the game garnered universal acclaim . Game Informer called the three @-@ day cycle " one of the most inventive premises in all of gaming , " and also stated that " [ w ] ithout question , Majora 's Mask is the finest adventure the Nintendo 64 has to offer . " It is often regarded as the darkest and most original game in The Legend of Zelda series . Edge magazine referred to Majora 's Mask as " the oddest , darkest and saddest of all Zelda games . " Opinions were favorable regarding how the game compares with predecessor Ocarina of Time , often cited as one of greatest video games of all time . N64 Magazine ended their review by saying , " it was told that Majora 's Mask should cower in the shadow of Ocarina of Time . Instead , it shines just as brightly , " awarding the game 96 % . GameSpot said the game was much more difficult than its predecessor . IGN described Majora 's Mask as " The Empire Strikes Back of Nintendo 64 ... it 's the same franchise , but it 's more intelligent , darker , and tells a much better storyline . " GamePro characterized the story as " surreal and spooky , deep , and intriguing " and the game as " living proof that the N64 still has its magic . " It has been ranked the seventh @-@ greatest game by Electronic Gaming Monthly , whereas Ocarina of Time was ranked eighth . Majora 's Mask placed 68th on Game Informer 's " Top 100 Games of All Time " in 2001 and 63rd on their " Top 200 Games of All Time " in 2009 . Nintendo Power rated it the fifteenth @-@ best game on a Nintendo console . The game placed 45th in Official Nintendo Magazine 's 100 greatest Nintendo games of all time . GameFAQs users ranked Majora 's Mask 47th in a list of 100 best games of all @-@ time in 2005 .

A common criticism of Majora 's Mask is that it is not as accessible as Ocarina of Time . GameSpot , which awarded Ocarina of Time a 10 / 10 , gave Majora 's Mask an 8 @. @ 3 / 10 , writing that some might " find the focus on minigames and side quests tedious and slightly out of place . " Game Revolution wrote that it " takes a little longer to get into this Zelda " , but also that " there are moments when the game really hits you with all its intricacies and mysteries , and that makes it all worthwhile . "

On December 24 , 2010 , Majora 's Mask was voted as the Game of the Decade ( 2000 ? 2009 ) by GameFAQs , beating out Super Smash Bros. Brawl , which had beaten The Legend of Zelda : Twilight Princess two rounds prior .

On May 19 , 2011 , in a tournament style competition hosted by IGN , Majora 's Mask was voted the second best Zelda game of all time , behind only Ocarina of Time . It beat Four Swords Adventures in Round 1 , A Link to the Past in Round 2 , and Twilight Princess in Round 3 before losing to Ocarina of Time in the final round .

= = Legacy = =

In 2003 , Nintendo rereleased Majora 's Mask on the GameCube as part of The Legend of Zelda : Collector 's Edition , a special promotional disc which also contained three other The Legend of Zelda games and a twenty @-@ minute demo of The Legend of Zelda : The Wind Waker . This disc came bundled with a GameCube console , as part of a subscription offer to Nintendo Power magazine , or through Nintendo 's official website . The offer expired in early 2004 .

Similar to other GameCube rereleases , the games are emulations of the originals by the GameCube hardware . The only differences are minor adjustments to button icons to conform to the GameCube 's controller . Majora 's Mask also boots with a disclaimer that some of the original sounds from the game may cause problems due to their emulation . Aside from these deliberate changes , GameSpot 's Ricardo Torres found that the frame rate " appears choppy " and notes inconstant audio . The GameCube version also features a slightly higher native resolution than its

Nintendo 64 counterpart , as well as progressive scan .

Majora 's Mask was released on the Wii 's Virtual Console service in Europe and Australia on April 3 , 2009 , and Japan on April 7 , 2009 . It was later released in North America on May 18 , 2009 , and commemorated as the 300th Virtual Console game available for purchase in the region . During January 2012 , Club Nintendo members could download Majora 's Mask onto the Wii Console for 150 coins . A similar deal was offered at the end of Club Nintendo .

The 2001 GameCube game Super Smash Bros. Melee features a Majora 's Mask @-@ themed stage , titled " Termina : Great Bay " .