

Handheld emperor

Nintendo, a Japanese electronics company, started as a [hanafuda cards](#) manufacturer in 1889. In the mid-1970s, they entered the early video games market and became famous for their home video and handheld game consoles. Nintendo introduced consoles like the **NES**, **SNES**, and **Wii**. But the most revolutionary was for sure the **Game Boy**.

A countdown of Nintendo handhelds

- Game & Watch** was Nintendo's first product offering out-of-home gaming. From 1980 to 1991, over a hundred games were released, gaining great popularity.
- In 1989, the original **Game Boy** was released. The new amazing machine utilized a cartridge system, allowing the users to play a multitude of games of all kinds. This was **a historical game-changer**.
 - It was followed by a number of versions, such as Game Boy Color or Game Boy Advance.
- In 2004, Nintendo introduced a new console family called the **Nintendo DS**. It sported a dual LCD screen in a folded shell, with the lower one being a touchscreen.
 - The most prominent development was Nintendo 3DS, which offered a 3D display.
- 2017 brought the hybrid experience for both couch-preferring gamers and handheld enthusiasts with the release of the **Nintendo Switch**. It offers both a TV mode with high-definition graphics and a handheld mode using the built-in 6.2" display.



Handheld consoles' popularity

While the most recent Switch is a prevalent choice nowadays, the 2DS and 3DS consoles are still popular. The king, however, is none other than the original wonder — the Game Boy.

Console	Production dates	Pieces sold (2021)
Game & Watch	1980-1991, 2020-2021	44 million
Game Boy	1989-2010	201 million ¹
Nintendo DS	2011-2020	76 million ²
Switch	since 2017	140 million ³
¹ 119 million Game Boy and Game Boy Color variants, 82 million Game Boy Advance variants.		
² Including all versions: DS, DSi, 2DS, 3DS, and New 2DS/3DS variants.		
³ As of early 2024.		

Handheld gaming experience

Games offered by Nintendo include multiple genres, out of which the famous platformer arcade *Super Mario* 🍄 and the adventure role-play *Legend of Zelda* 🗡️ series are probably the most iconic.

Games that can be played on the handheld family include (examples of games listed):

- Action & adventure games
 - The *Legend of Zelda* series
 - Chrono Trigger*
- First-person action games
 - Splatoon*
- Role-playing games (RPG)
 - The *Pokémon* series
 - The *Final Fantasy* series

“*It's dangerous to go alone!
Take this.*”
The Legend of Zelda, 1986