

Documentation on Bachelor's thesis

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1. What are pixels

A **pixel** is a very small element of graphic images—such as photographs, drawings, or any digital visual.

The word comes from English, derived from **PICTure ELeMents**.

It is commonly abbreviated as "**px**", and sometimes simply as "**p**".

When Did Pixels First Appear?

Origins in the 1930s

The **history of pixels** began in the **1930s**, when the concept started being used in **cinematography**.

Rise of Digital Devices

Pixels became truly **relevant** with the development of the **first screens and digital devices**.

While their origins can be traced back to **black-and-white television**, pixels gained importance with:

- the transition to **color television**
- the emergence of **early computer monitors**

The Birth of Pixel Art

The term “**pixel art**” was first coined in **1982** by **Adele Goldberg** and **Robert Flegal** at **Xerox Palo Alto Research Center (PARC)**.

But the concept itself dates back nearly a decade earlier — for instance, it was present in **Richard Shoup’s SuperPaint system** from **1972**, also developed at **Xerox PARC**.

Color Composition

Pixels are composed of three primary colors:

-  **Blue**

-  Green
-  Red

When these colors are mixed in different intensities, they can produce **all other colors** we see on a screen.

Evolution of *Pixels* in Devices

In the beginning, video games were represented using **large, visible pixels**, giving them a distinct blocky aesthetic. This was due to the limited graphical capabilities of the time, but it defined the retro gaming style we know today.

Early digital graphics had **low resolution**.

Examples include pixelated games like:

- *Pong*
 - *Space Invaders*
-

Console and Personal Computer Market (1980–1990)

With the **advancement of technology**, game consoles and personal computers emerged, offering **better graphics and resolution**. Pixels became **smaller and more detailed**, allowing for more complex visual experiences.

Key Examples:

- **Atari 2600**
- **Nintendo Entertainment System (NES)**
- **Sega Genesis**
- **Commodore 64**
- **Amiga**

3D Era and Technological Advancements (1990–Present)

With the rise of **3D gaming**, pixels became even smaller. This transition allowed games to move from **2D to 3D**. Despite this shift, pixels remain essential in defining image clarity and detail in modern games.

Even in 3D games, pixels continue to play a crucial role in image definition.

Pixel Styles

Types of Video Games Based on Pixels

Pixelated video games are games that use **pixels** to create their visual content.

These games can have various **resolutions**, which are determined by the number of pixels they use.

Some examples of resolutions for video games are as follows:

8x8 Pixels:

These games use a **low resolution** and are often associated with **retro games**, featuring simple and **nostalgic graphics**.

Examples:

- *Pac-Man*
- *Space Invaders*

16x16 Pixels:

A step up from 8x8 pixels, these games allow for **greater detail** and **graphical complexity**.

Examples:

- *Super Mario Bros.*
- *The Legend of Zelda*

32x32 Pixels:

This style offers the possibility for **more complex designs** and includes **animation elements** and **visual effects**.

Examples:

- *Final Fantasy*
- *Chrono Trigger*

64x64 Pixels:

Games using 64x64 pixels have **even higher potential** than 32x32 games, featuring **elaborate scenes and detailed characters**.

Examples:

- *Stardew Valley*
- *Undertale*

128x128 Pixels:

The **highest resolution** in pixel art, this style allows for the **most refined and detailed work** in the field of pixel art game development.

Examples:

- *Minecraft*
 - *Terraria*
-

2. Genres of video games



Timeline of Video Games

1950s–1960s:

The first **experiments** that led to the development of video games began in the **1950s**, with the advent of computers.

One of the first popular games was "**Tennis for Two**" (1958), a simple tennis game developed on an oscilloscope.

1970s:

Video games became popular in **arcade halls** in the **1970s**.

One of the earliest games was "**Pong**" (1972), a simple **table tennis** game.

Other notable games from this period include:

- *Space Invaders* (1978)
- *Pac-Man* (1980)

1980s:

The **golden age** of video games and the rise of **game consoles**.

Arcade games were extremely popular in the **1980s**, and companies like **Nintendo, Sega**, and **Atari** began releasing the first **game consoles**.

Popular games from this era include:

- *Super Mario Bros.* (1985)
 - *The Legend of Zelda* (1986)
-

1990s:

The introduction of **3D technology** made 3D games increasingly accessible.

Consoles like the **Sony PlayStation** and **Nintendo 64** brought **3D games** into households.

Examples of iconic games from this time:

- *Final Fantasy VII* (1997)
 - *Super Mario 64* (1996)
-

2000s:

The **online gaming revolution**: The **Internet** transformed the gaming industry by making multiplayer online games and **digital distribution** possible.

Notable games from this era include:

- *World of Warcraft* (2004)
 - *Counter-Strike* (1999)
-

2010s–2020s:

The advancement of **virtual reality** and the rise of **independent games**.

Technology enabled the development of **VR games**, while independent games provided **innovative experiences**.

Popular games include:

- *The Witcher 3* (2015)

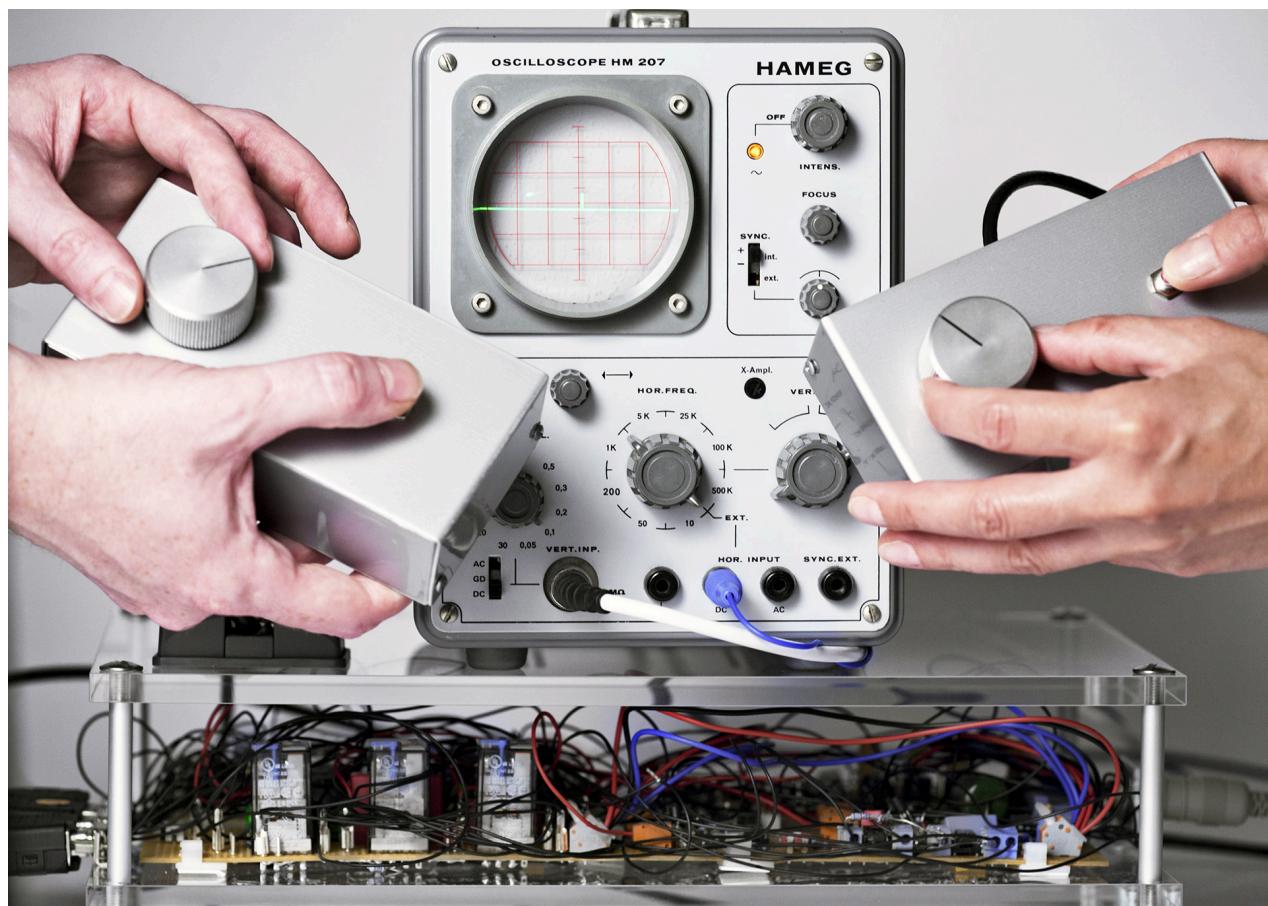
Tennis for Two (1958) - The First Video Game

Tennis for Two is one of the first **video games** ever created, developed by **William Higinbotham** at the **Brookhaven National Laboratory** in **1958**.

It is considered a precursor to the modern video game industry and was one of the earliest examples of interactive entertainment.

As the game progresses:

- **Play a simple tennis simulation** on an oscilloscope screen, with players controlling paddles to hit a ball over a net
- **Two-player gameplay**, where players compete against each other using controllers to bounce the ball back and forth
- **Represents the first interactive game** developed for entertainment purposes and not just scientific experiments
- **Designed as a demonstration** to show the potential of computers in recreational settings
- **Set the foundation** for future video games, influencing the development of Pong and the entire gaming industry



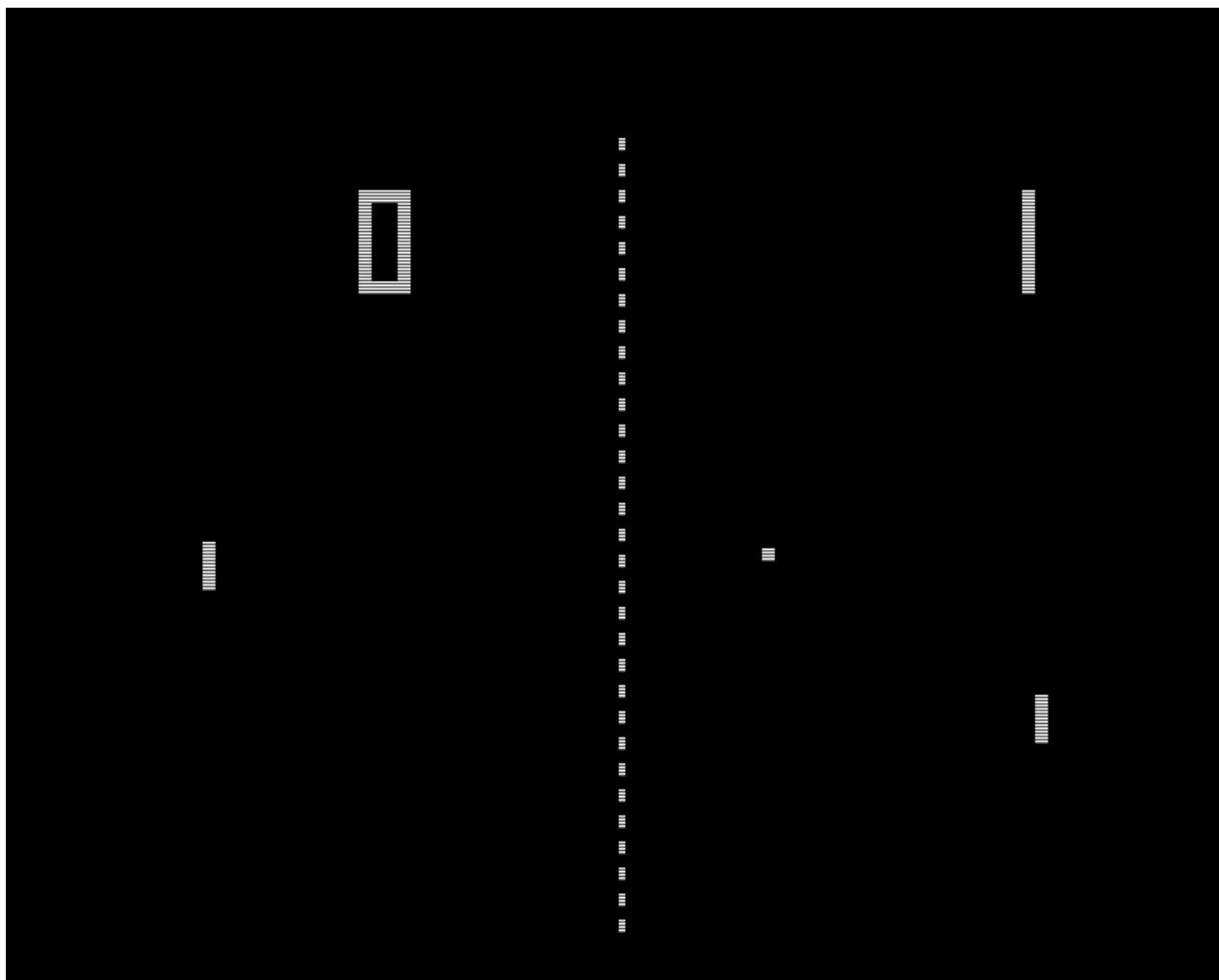
Pong (1972) - One of the Most Iconic Video Games

Pong is one of the first **arcade video games**, created by **Allan Alcorn** and released by **Atari** in **1972**.

It is considered one of the most iconic and influential video games in history, known for its simplicity and lasting impact on the gaming industry.

As the game progresses:

- **Control paddles** to hit a ball back and forth, similar to table tennis
- **Challenge another player** or compete against the computer in a one-on-one match
- **Earn points** by getting the ball past your opponent's paddle
- **Simple gameplay** with easy-to-understand mechanics, perfect for newcomers to gaming
- **Helped popularize video games** in arcades and set the stage for the video game industry's rapid growth



Space Invaders (1978)- A Classic Arcade Game

Space Invaders is a **fixed shooter** arcade game developed by **Taito** and released in **1978**.

It became one of the most influential video games of all time, helping to lay the foundation for the modern gaming industry.

As the game progresses:

- **Control a spaceship** at the bottom of the screen to shoot down waves of alien invaders
- **Avoid alien fire** and destroy increasingly difficult waves of enemies
- **Earn points** by eliminating aliens, with each wave becoming progressively harder
- **Protect cities** with shields that gradually degrade as the game goes on
- **Set the stage for future space-themed shooters** and contributed to the rise of the arcade era



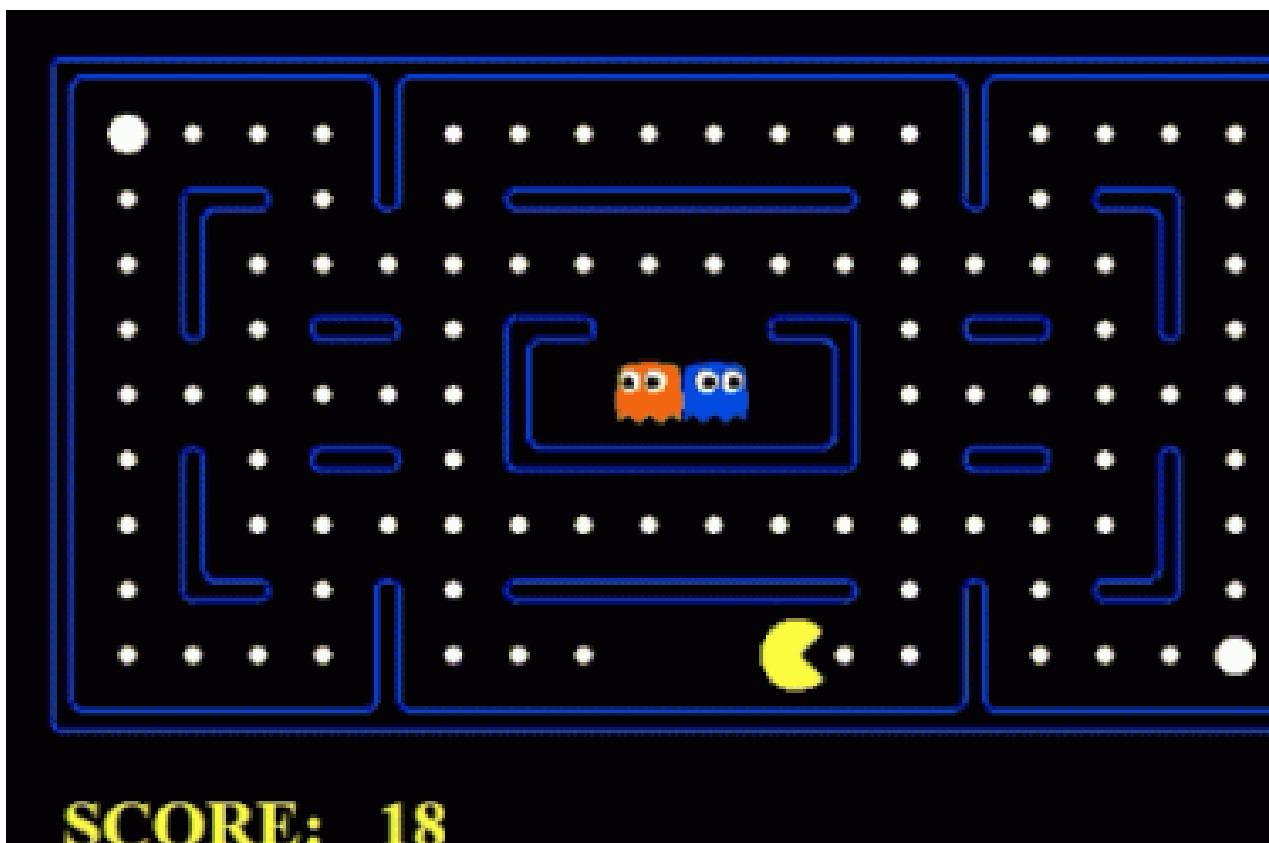
Pac-Man (1980) - A Cultural Phenomenon - 1980

In "Pac-Man," the player controls a character named **Pac-Man**, who must eat all the yellow pixels in a maze while avoiding four ghosts that chase him. The goal is to collect all the points and avoid the ghosts.

Pac-Man became a **cultural phenomenon** and inspired a variety of products and adaptations, including:

- Cartoons
- Board games
- Console games

It is considered one of the most influential video games of all time and played a significant role in the **global popularity** of video games.



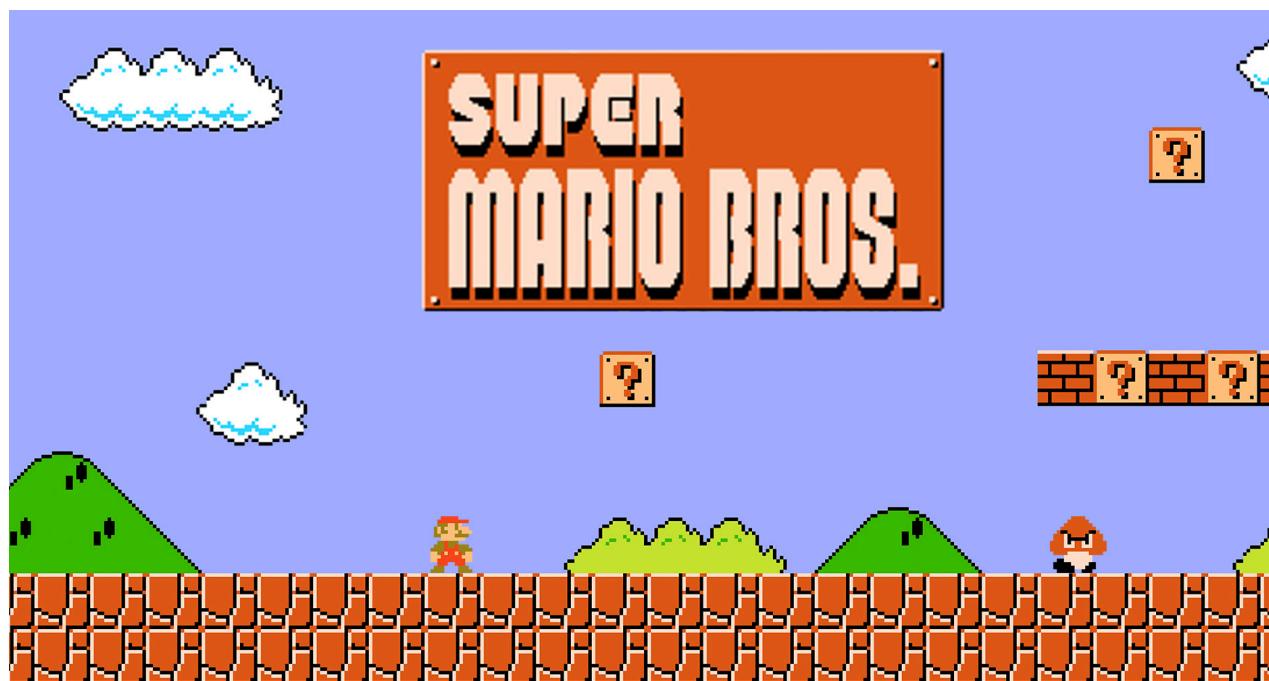
🍄 _Super Mario Bros._ (1985) - A Legendary Platformer

The first **Super Mario Bros.** game was released by **Nintendo** in **1985** for the **Nintendo Entertainment System (NES)**.

The game is based on a series of levels filled with **obstacles** and **enemies**, with the main goal being to rescue **Princess Peach** from the primary antagonist, **King Koopa**.

As the game progresses:

- Mario must **navigate complex platforms**
- Avoid **hazards** like pits and fire
- Collect **coins** for extra points
- Face powerful **boss battles** at the end of each world



_The Legend of Zelda (1986) - A Timeless Classic

The first **The Legend of Zelda** game was released by **Nintendo** in **1986** for the **NES console**.

In the game, you play as the character **Link**, on a quest to rescue **Princess Zelda**, who has been captured by the game's antagonist, **Ganon**.

The game was notable for its **non-linear design** and the freedom it offered players for exploration, becoming one of the most influential games in video game history.

As the game progresses:

- Explore vast, interconnected worlds
- Solve puzzles and overcome challenges
- Collect items and weapons to aid in your journey
- Face bosses guarding each dungeon



DOOM (1993) - A Groundbreaking Shooter

In **DOOM**, the player takes on the role of a **space marine** on an **alien research station** that has been invaded by demons.

The goal is to survive and kill all the demons using a variety of **weapons**, while exploring the complex mazes of the **alien base**.

As the game progresses:

- **Fight demons** using powerful weapons
- **Explore intricate levels** and hidden areas
- Collect **power-ups** to increase strength and health
- Face increasingly difficult **boss battles**



Super Mario 64 (1996) - A Revolutionary 3D Platformer

Super Mario 64 was released in **June 1996** in **Japan** by **Nintendo**.

The game is considered one of the **greatest and most important** video games in history, marking the transition from **2D to 3D** in the **Super Mario** series.

As the game progresses:

- **Explore vast 3D worlds**
- **Collect Power Stars** to unlock new areas
- **Overcome 3D platforming challenges**
- **Face boss battles** in creative environments



StarCraft (1998) - A Landmark RTS

The first **StarCraft** was released by **Blizzard Entertainment** on **March 31, 1998**.

It is a **real-time strategy (RTS)** game that achieved tremendous success and became a major title in the video game industry.

As the game progresses:

- Choose from **three unique factions**: Terran, Zerg, and Protoss
- **Gather resources** to build bases and armies
- **Strategize and manage units** in real-time battles
- **Compete in multiplayer modes** for global dominance
- Experience **an epic storyline** with multiple campaigns



The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time (1998) - A Timeless Adventure

The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time is an **action-adventure video game** created and published by **Nintendo** for their **Nintendo 64** console.

It was released on **November 21, 1998** in **Japan** and became one of the most beloved games in history.

As the game progresses:

- **Explore vast 3D worlds as Link**
- **Solve puzzles and uncover secrets**
- **Collect items like the Ocarina to unlock new abilities**
- **Face epic boss battles to save Princess Zelda**
- **Experience a rich storyline with time travel elements**



🌟 **Half-Life (1998) - A Groundbreaking FPS**

Half-Life is a **first-person shooter (FPS)** developed by **Valve Corporation** and released on **November 19, 1998**.

It is considered one of the most influential games in the FPS genre, known for its immersive storytelling and innovative gameplay.

As the game progresses:

- **Play as Gordon Freeman**, a scientist caught in a disaster at the Black Mesa Research Facility
- **Battle alien creatures** and military personnel as you try to escape the facility
- **Utilize various weapons and puzzles** to advance through the game
- **Experience real-time storytelling** without traditional cutscenes, keeping players fully immersed in the world
- **Set the foundation for Valve's future games**, including the Counter-Strike series and Portal



Halo: Combat Evolved (2001) - A Revolutionary Sci-Fi Shooter

Halo: Combat Evolved is a **first-person shooter (FPS)** developed by **Bungie** and published by **Microsoft**.

It was released on **November 15, 2001**, and became the flagship title for the **Xbox** console, revolutionizing both FPS games and console gaming as a whole.

As the game progresses:

- **Play as Master Chief**, a super soldier fighting to protect humanity from the alien Covenant
- **Battle in vast, open-world environments** filled with alien landscapes and mysterious ruins
- **Use a wide variety of weapons and vehicles**, including iconic ones like the **Warthog** and **Energy Sword**
- **Enjoy multiplayer modes** such as Capture the Flag and Team Slayer, making it a classic in the gaming community
- **Immerse in a rich sci-fi storyline**, laying the foundation for a massive franchise



Warcraft III: Reign of Chaos (2002) - A Legendary RTS

Warcraft III: Reign of Chaos is a real-time strategy (RTS) game published by **Blizzard Entertainment**.

It was released on **July 3, 2002**, and became one of the most highly praised games in its genre.

As the game progresses:

- **Control four distinct factions:** Humans, Orcs, Night Elves, and Undead
- **Gather resources** and build armies to dominate your enemies
- **Engage in epic battles** with strategic unit management
- **Experience a rich story** through multiple campaigns
- **Create custom maps** and mods for infinite replayability



World of Warcraft (2004) - A Global MMORPG Phenomenon

World of Warcraft (WoW) is one of the most well-known and popular **online multiplayer role-playing games (MMORPG)** created by **Blizzard Entertainment**.

It was released on **November 23, 2004**, and became a global phenomenon, attracting millions of players from around the world into a virtual world full of adventures.

As the game progresses:

- **Create and customize your character** from various races and classes
- **Explore vast, immersive worlds** full of quests and secrets
- **Join factions** and battle other players in PvP combat
- **Form guilds** and cooperate with others in large-scale raids
- **Complete dungeons** and earn epic loot



BioShock (2007) - A Story-Driven FPS

BioShock is a **first-person shooter (FPS)** developed by **Irrational Games** and published by **2K Games**.

It was released on **August 21, 2007**, and is known for its deep narrative, immersive environment, and philosophical themes.

As the game progresses:

- **Explore the underwater city of Rapture**, a dystopian world full of mystery and danger
- **Play as Jack**, a man stranded after a plane crash who must navigate through the ruins of Rapture
- **Use a combination of weapons and plasmids** (genetically modified powers) to fight off enemies
- **Engage with moral choices** that affect the outcome of the story, including deciding the fate of the Little Sisters
- **Delve into a unique narrative** that explores themes of objectivism, free will, and the consequences of unchecked ambition



Minecraft (2011) - The Sandbox Revolution

Minecraft is a **sandbox video game** developed by **Mojang Studios**.

It was released on **November 18, 2011**, and became a global phenomenon, known for its open-world creativity, exploration, and survival gameplay.

As the game progresses:

- **Build and explore infinite worlds** made of blocks, with no predefined objectives
- **Survive in a variety of modes**, including Survival, Creative, and Adventure
- **Craft tools, weapons, and structures** using resources found in the environment
- **Engage in combat** with mobs (enemies) like zombies, skeletons, and the infamous Ender Dragon
- **Create and share custom worlds** with friends, or participate in large multiplayer servers



Counter-Strike: Global Offensive (2012) - A Thrilling FPS

Counter-Strike: Global Offensive (CS:GO) is a **first-person shooter (FPS)** video game created by **Valve Corporation** and **Hidden Path Entertainment**.

It was released on **August 21, 2012**, and is a continuation of the popular **Counter-Strike** series.

As the game progresses:

- **Play as Terrorists or Counter-Terrorists** in competitive multiplayer battles
- **Complete objectives** like planting/defusing bombs or rescuing hostages
- **Earn money** from victories to buy better weapons and equipment
- **Engage in tactical team-based combat** with real-time strategy and reflexes
- **Compete in various game modes**, from casual to ranked matches



The Last of Us (2013) - A Masterpiece of Storytelling

The Last of Us is an **action-adventure** and **survival horror** game developed by **Naughty Dog** and released on **June 14, 2013** for the **PlayStation 3**.

It is renowned for its emotional storytelling, deep characters, and tense gameplay, setting a new standard for narrative-driven video games.

As the game progresses:

- **Play as Joel**, a grizzled survivor, and **Ellie**, a young girl, in a post-apocalyptic world ravaged by a fungal infection that turns humans into zombie-like creatures
- **Navigate through abandoned cities**, forests, and dangerous environments, scavenging for supplies and weapons
- **Engage in stealth and combat**, facing both infected creatures and hostile human enemies
- **Experience a deeply emotional story**, with themes of survival, loss, and hope
- **Widely praised for its gameplay mechanics**, emotional depth, and character development, becoming one of the most beloved games of all time



The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild (2017) - Redefining Open-World Adventure

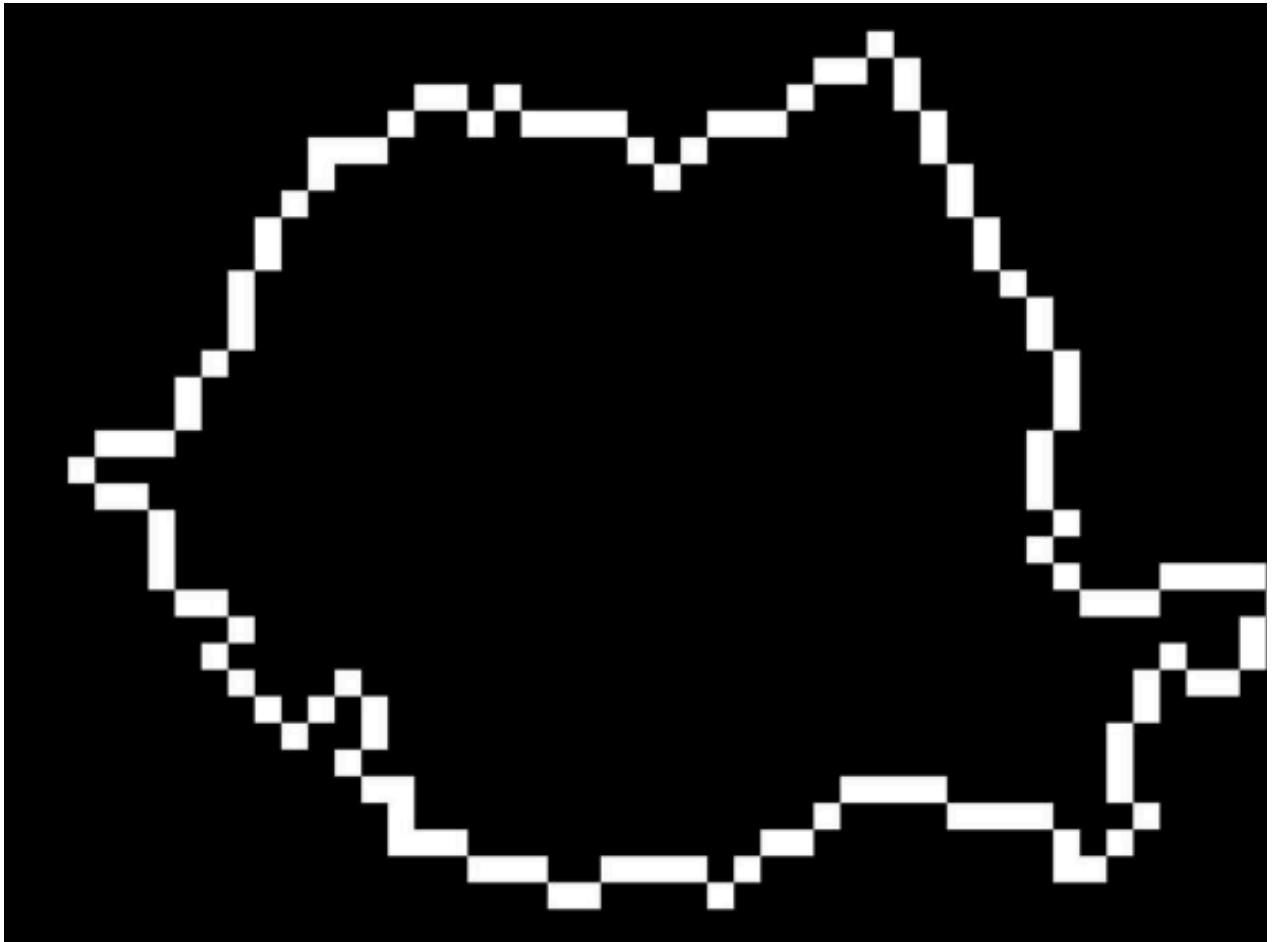
The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild is an **action-adventure** game developed by **Nintendo** and released on **March 3, 2017** for the **Nintendo Switch** and **Wii U**.

It revolutionized the **Zelda** series and the open-world genre, offering a massive, immersive world full of exploration and freedom.

As the game progresses:

- **Play as Link**, waking up from a long slumber to a world in ruins, with the task of defeating **Calamity Ganon** and saving **Princess Zelda**
- **Explore a vast open world**, filled with forests, mountains, lakes, and ancient ruins, without many boundaries or restrictions
- **Solve puzzles**, complete challenges, and discover hidden secrets across the expansive Hyrule Kingdom
- **Use a variety of weapons**, shields, and abilities, including elemental powers and a dynamic weather system
- **Master the art of survival**, with crafting, cooking, and managing resources for health and stamina
- **Redefine the Zelda franchise**, with a more nonlinear, freedom-focused gameplay experience that is praised by critics and players alike





Gibbous: A Cthulhu Adventure (2019) - Lovecraftian Humor Meets Point-and-Click Adventure

Gibbous: A Cthulhu Adventure is a **point-and-click adventure game** developed by **Stuck In Attic** and released on **July 7, 2019**.

The game combines Lovecraftian horror with dark humor, inspired by the works of **H.P. Lovecraft** and classic adventure games.

As the game progresses:

- **Play as a private investigator, Don R.** who gets caught in a weird and twisted series of events involving a **book of ancient powers**, **Cthulhu**, and **talking cats**
- **Explore various hand-painted environments**, from the eerie streets of **Lakeside**, to a creepy mansion, filled with hidden objects, puzzles, and clever dialogue
- **Interact with quirky characters**, including a sarcastic, talking cat who plays a significant role in the story
- **Solve puzzles** and unravel mysteries in a world steeped in both **Lovecraftian mythos** and **comedic absurdity**
- **Engage with Lovecraftian lore** while experiencing the whimsical side of horror through humor and wit
- **Admired for its engaging story**, striking art style, and unique combination of horror and humor



Unbound: Worlds Apart (2021) - A Portal-Driven Puzzle-Platformer

Unbound: Worlds Apart is a **puzzle-platformer** developed by **Alien Pixel Studios**. It was released on **July 28, 2021**, for **Microsoft Windows, macOS, Linux, and Nintendo Switch**.

The PlayStation 4 and PlayStation 5 versions were released on **February 9, 2022**, followed by Xbox One and Xbox Series X/S versions on **February 11, 2022**.

Physical copies for PlayStation versions are available through **Perp Games**.

As the game progresses:

- **Play as Soli**, a young mage with the ability to open portals to alternate realities, each altering the environment in unique ways.
- **Explore diverse, hand-drawn worlds**, each with distinct challenges and secrets to uncover.
- **Utilize various portal mechanics**, such as time manipulation, gravity inversion, and transformation abilities, to solve intricate puzzles and navigate complex platforming sequences.
- **Encounter a rich narrative** involving Soli's quest to uncover the truth behind his world's collapse, meeting various characters with deep backstories along the way.
- **Face challenging puzzles, traps, monsters, and bosses**, testing your reflexes and problem-solving skills throughout the journey.
- **Discover hidden secrets, quests, and collectibles**, encouraging exploration and replayability.



Move or Die (2016) - A Dynamic Party Game

Move or Die is a fast-paced, competitive party game developed by Romanian indie studio **Those Awesome Guys**. It was released on **January 21, 2016**, for **Microsoft Windows**, and later for **PlayStation 4** on **March 5, 2019**.

Key Features:

- **Fast-Paced Gameplay:** Each round lasts approximately 20 seconds, featuring rapidly changing mechanics that require players to adapt quickly.
- **Multiplayer Modes:** Supports up to 4 players locally and online, with both competitive and cooperative modes.
- **Diverse Game Modes:** Offers a variety of mini-games, each with unique rules and challenges, ensuring a fresh experience with every match.
- **Constant Movement Mechanic:** Players must keep moving to survive; standing still causes health to drain rapidly, adding a unique twist to traditional gameplay.
- **Regular Content Updates:** The game receives free updates, introducing new characters, game modes, and features to keep the community engaged.
- **Mod-Friendly:** Includes a level editor and Steam Workshop support, allowing players to create and share custom content.



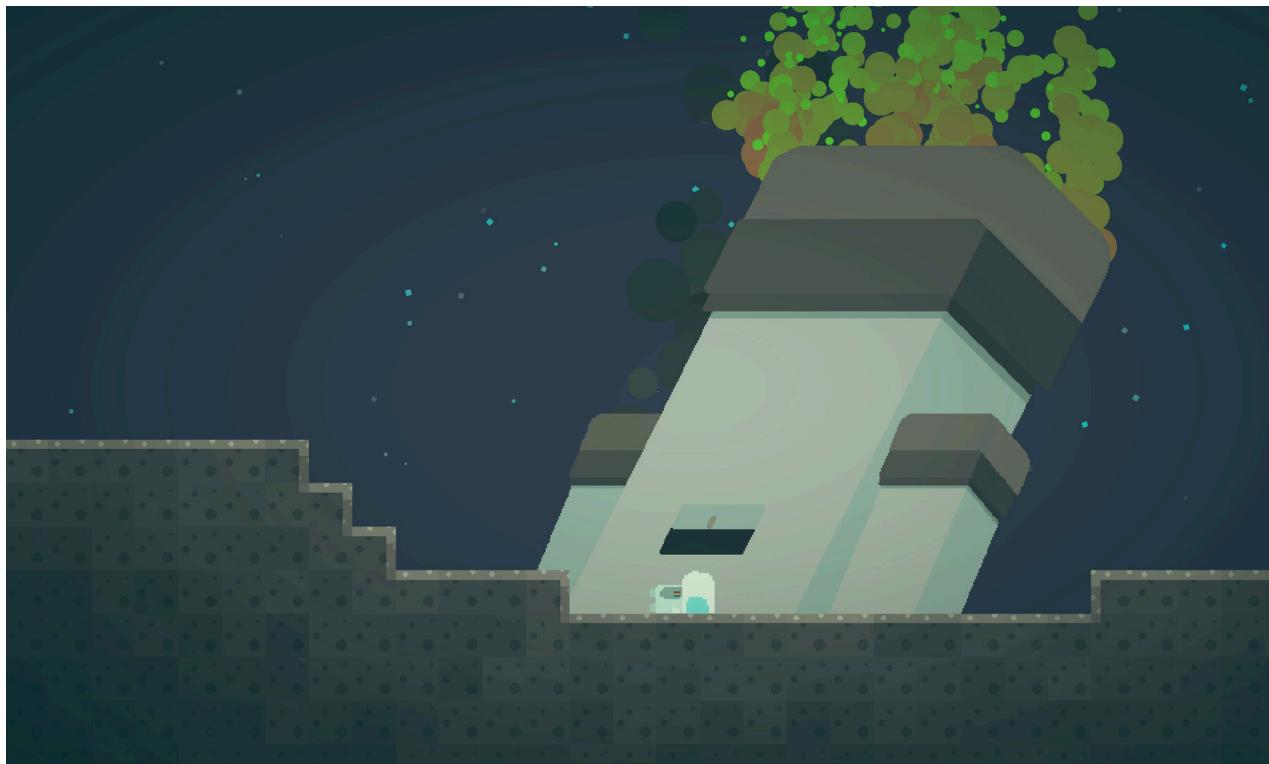
Low Oxygen (2022) - A Thrilling Puzzle-Adventure into the Unknown

Low Oxygen is an atmospheric indie puzzle-adventure game created by Alex Neagu, released in 2022. The game immerses players in a gripping narrative set in a world where oxygen is running out, and players must navigate through increasingly complex puzzles and challenges in a visually unique environment.

As the game progresses:

- **Control a lone protagonist** who must traverse desolate, oxygen-deprived environments, solving puzzles to progress while managing limited resources
- **Explore eerie, dystopian landscapes**, where every decision and action could have life-or-death consequences, emphasizing survival in a harsh, unforgiving world
- **Solve challenging environmental puzzles**, using your limited supply of oxygen strategically to stay alive and uncover hidden areas and resources
- **Experience a gripping atmosphere**, with a minimalistic but atmospheric soundtrack and tense, suspenseful moments that keep you on edge
- **Unveil the story**, which is slowly revealed through environmental storytelling and small narrative clues scattered across the world, adding depth to the experience

Low Oxygen stands out for its intense, cerebral gameplay, offering a unique twist on the survival genre, where every breath counts and every decision has weight.



4. Competitive analysis (Pixel-art Games)

I. Europe



Dead Cells (2018) - A Masterpiece of Roguelike Action-Platforming

Dead Cells is a roguelike Metroidvania action-platformer developed by Motion Twin and released on August 7, 2018, for PC and consoles, later expanding to mobile platforms. It combines tight, responsive combat with exploration in a procedurally generated world.

As the game progresses:

- **Take control of a nameless protagonist** as they navigate a sprawling, ever-changing world filled with deadly enemies and challenging bosses
- **Explore procedurally generated levels**, each offering unique layouts and challenges with every run
- **Master the fluid combat system**, using a variety of weapons, from swords and bows to traps and bombs
- **Uncover powerful upgrades**, such as new abilities and permanent enhancements, that persist across runs
- **Face fierce bosses**, each with distinct patterns and mechanics, requiring quick reflexes and strategy to overcome
- **Embrace the challenge of permadeath**, with each death resetting progress but offering new opportunities for growth and discovery



Katana ZERO (2019) - A Neo-Noir Action-Thriller

Katana ZERO is a neo-noir action-platformer developed by Askiisoft and released on April 18, 2019, for PC and Nintendo Switch. Known for its sleek, fast-paced combat and deep narrative, the game blends intense action with psychological storytelling.

As the game progresses:

- **Play as a skilled assassin** equipped with a katana and the ability to slow down time, taking out targets with surgical precision
- **Navigate through a dark, neon-lit city**, solving puzzles and facing off against dangerous foes in quick, precise combat sequences
- **Unravel the mystery** behind your character's past, with fragmented memories and cryptic conversations that piece together a deeply personal story
- **Plan your strategy carefully**, as each level requires one-hit kills and flawless execution, with enemies reacting to your every move
- **Experience a gripping, narrative-driven plot** with themes of trauma, time manipulation, and moral ambiguity, all wrapped in a stylish 80s-inspired aesthetic
- **Master a unique combat mechanic**, using a blend of sword slashes, throwing weapons, and time manipulation to defeat enemies and avoid deadly traps



II. America

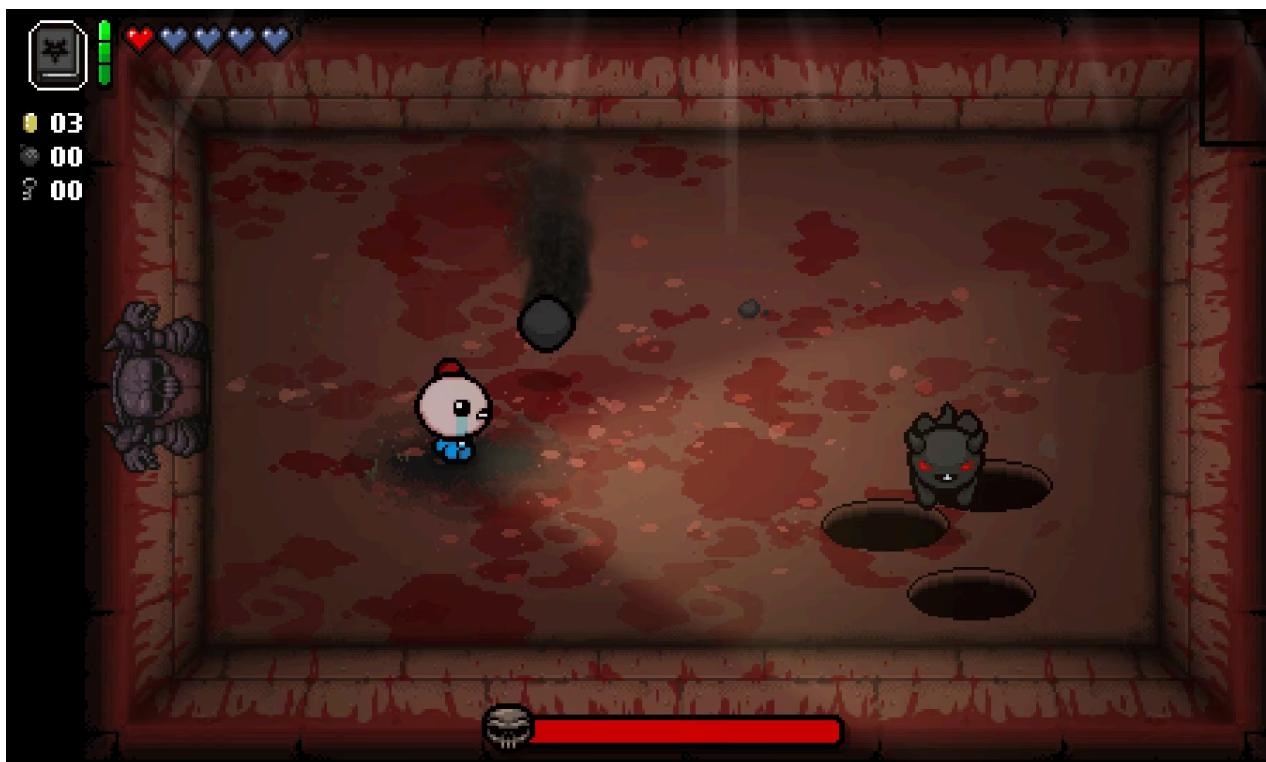


The Binding of Isaac (2011) - A Roguelike Adventure with Dark Themes

The Binding of Isaac is a roguelike dungeon crawler developed by Edmund McMillen and Florian Himsl, released on September 28, 2011, for PC. The game features randomly generated levels, strategic combat, and deep item synergies within a dark, twisted narrative.

As the game progresses:

- **Play as Isaac**, a young boy who flees into the basement after his mother receives a divine command to sacrifice him
- **Navigate procedurally generated levels**, each filled with monsters, traps, and powerful bosses that change with each run
- **Collect a wide range of items**, from bombs and potions to powerful transformations, which dramatically alter your abilities and gameplay
- **Experience brutal difficulty**, with permadeath and randomization making each playthrough unique and challenging
- **Defeat grotesque enemies** and bosses that range from horrifying mutants to demonic creatures, all with distinct attack patterns and weaknesses
- **Unlock new characters and items**, expanding gameplay variety, offering multiple endings, and encouraging replayability

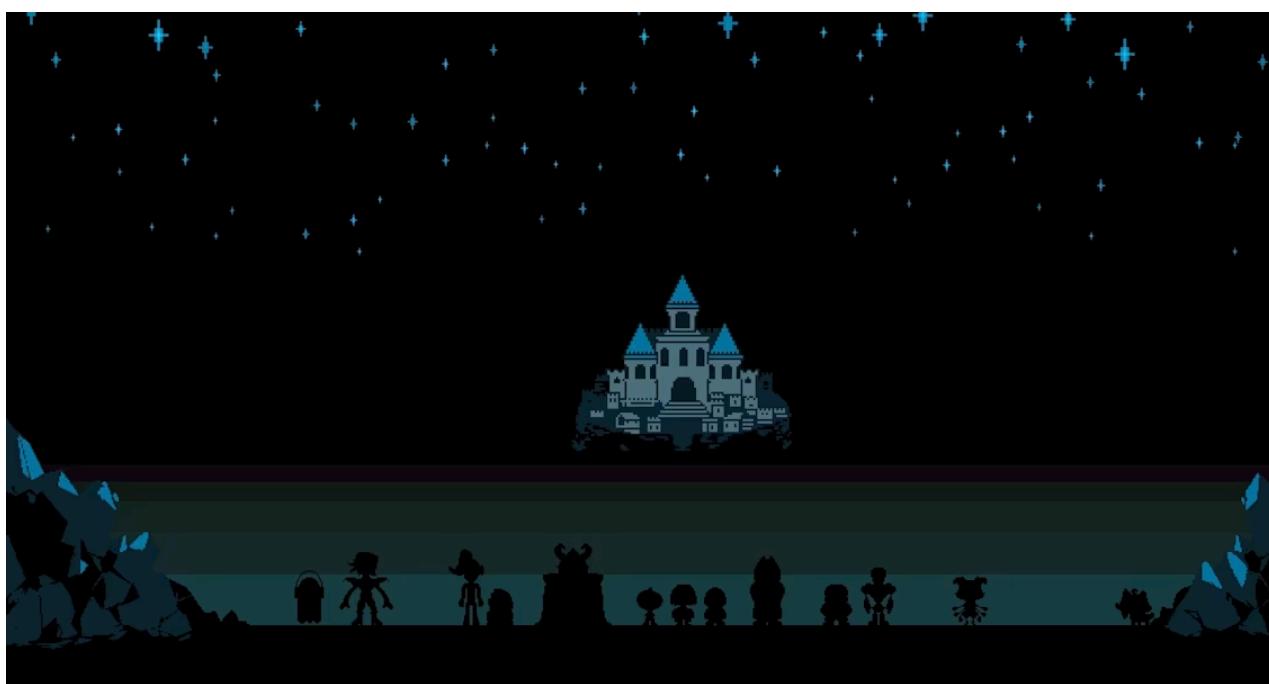


Undertale (2015) - A Unique RPG with Choices that Matter

Undertale is an indie RPG developed by Toby Fox and released on September 15, 2015, for PC. The game stands out for its unique combat system, deep storytelling, and the ability to choose between pacifist, neutral, and genocide routes, all affecting the outcome of the game.

As the game progresses:

- **Play as a human child** who falls into the Underground, a world inhabited by monsters, and must navigate its dangers while interacting with its inhabitants
- **Choose your approach to combat:** either fight monsters in traditional RPG battles or use the "ACT" system to spare or interact with them peacefully
- **Make impactful choices**, where your decisions—whether sparing or killing monsters—shape the story and lead to different endings
- **Encounter quirky characters** like Sans, Papyrus, Toriel, and others, each with their own personalities, backstories, and unique battle mechanics
- **Experience a captivating soundtrack** that enhances the emotional depth of the game, with music that has become iconic among fans
- **Explore a world filled with humor, charm, and sadness**, creating a perfect balance of lighthearted moments and deeper emotional themes



III. Asia

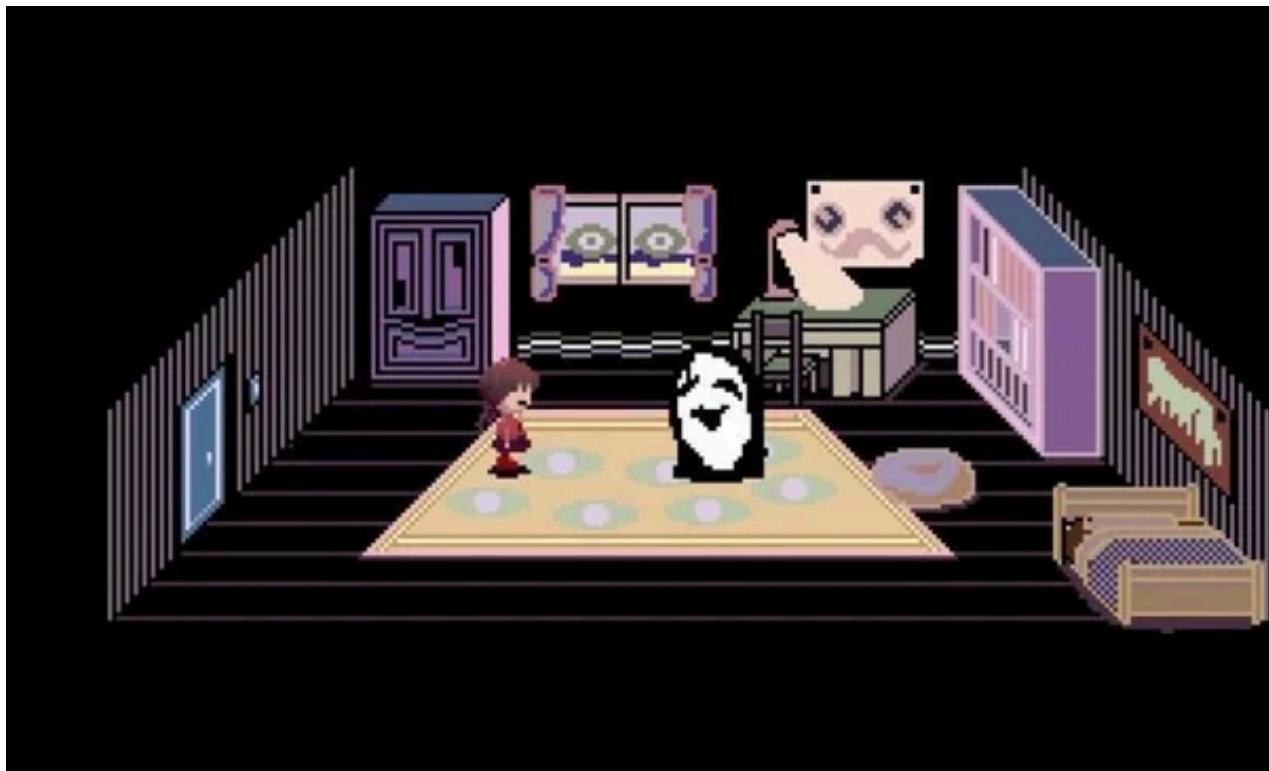


Yume Nikki (2004) - A Surreal Exploration into Dreamscapes

Yume Nikki is a surreal exploration game developed by Kenji "KIKIYAMA" in 2004. It gained a cult following for its atmospheric and cryptic world, where players explore a dreamlike universe with no clear objectives, uncovering strange and eerie environments.

As the game progresses:

- **Play as Madotsuki**, a young girl who explores the bizarre and ever-changing landscapes of her dreams while navigating through mysterious, surreal realms
- **Explore strange and unsettling dream worlds**, each filled with bizarre creatures, haunting visuals, and cryptic symbolism
- **Collect various items**, such as effects, which grant Madotsuki unique abilities, affecting how she interacts with the dream world
- **Solve minimalistic puzzles** and unlock new areas to explore, piecing together a fragmented narrative with no direct guidance
- **Face surreal, disturbing environments**, with a haunting soundtrack and eerie atmosphere that leaves the interpretation open to the player's imagination
- **Experience the game's non-linear progression**, where players can choose how they explore the dreams and make their own connections between the strange happenings



Cave Story (2004) - A Classic Indie Metroidvania

Cave Story is an indie platformer and Metroidvania-style game developed by Daisuke "Pixel" Amaya and released in 2004. It gained immense popularity for its tight gameplay mechanics, engaging story, and retro-inspired graphics, becoming one of the most influential indie games of all time.

As the game progresses:

- **Play as Quote**, a robot who wakes up in a mysterious cave with no memory, tasked with uncovering the secrets of the underground world and saving the Mimiga, a peaceful rabbit-like species
- **Explore a large, interconnected world** filled with secret areas, puzzles, and powerful enemies, reminiscent of classic Metroid and Castlevania games
- **Engage in fast-paced combat**, using a variety of weapons like guns, missiles, and bombs to defeat monsters and bosses
- **Uncover a compelling narrative**, exploring themes of identity, freedom, and sacrifice as you interact with colorful characters and discover the truth about the world
- **Unlock different endings** based on the player's choices, including a true ending that ties together the story's many elements
- **Enjoy a nostalgic soundtrack** that complements the retro pixel art and fast-paced action, adding depth to the game's atmosphere

