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**8chan,** also called **Infinitechan,** is an [English-language](/wiki/English_language) [imageboard](/wiki/Imageboard) website composed of user-created [boards](/wiki/Internet_forum). Each board is moderated by its respective creator, with minimal interaction from other site administration.[[1]](#cite_note-1) The site allows any content to be posted, so long as it adheres to United States law.

Several of the site's boards have played an active role in the [Gamergate controversy](/wiki/Gamergate_controversy), encouraging Gamergate affiliates to frequent 8chan after the topic was banned on the unaffiliated imageboard [4chan](/wiki/4chan). As of August 2015, the site was the 10,204th most visited site in the world,[[2]](#cite_note-2) and in November 2014, it was receiving an average of 35,000 unique visitors per day and 400,000 posts per week when it was at a higher rank.[[3]](#cite_note-3)

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## History[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

8chan was created in October 2013 by computer programmer [Fredrick Brennan](/wiki/Fredrick_Brennan),[[3]](#cite_note-3)[[4]](#cite_note-4) also known by the nickname "Hotwheels."[[5]](#cite_note-5) Brennan created the website after he observed what he perceived to be rapidly escalating [surveillance](/wiki/Surveillance) and a loss of [free speech](/wiki/Free_speech) on the Internet.[[3]](#cite_note-3) Brennan, who considers the imageboard [4chan](/wiki/4chan) to have grown into authoritarianism, describes 8chan as a "free-speech-friendly" alternative,[[3]](#cite_note-3) and had originally conceptualized the site while experiencing a [psychedelic mushrooms trip](/wiki/Psychedelic_experience).[[5]](#cite_note-5)[[6]](#cite_note-6) No experience or programming knowledge is necessary for users to create their own boards.[[1]](#cite_note-1) Since as early as March 2014, its [FAQ](/wiki/FAQ) has stated only one rule that is to be globally enforced: "Do not post, request, or link to any content illegal in the United States of America. Do not create boards with the sole purpose of posting or spreading such content."[[1]](#cite_note-1) Brennan has claimed that, while he finds some of the content posted by users to be "reprehensible," he feels personally obligated to uphold the site's integrity by tolerating discussion he does not necessarily support regardless of his moral stance.[[3]](#cite_note-3) Brennan agreed to partner 8chan with the Japanese message board [2channel](/wiki/2channel),[[5]](#cite_note-5) and subsequently relocated to the [Philippines](/wiki/Philippines) in October 2014.[[7]](#cite_note-7) In January 2015, the site changed its [domain](/wiki/Domain_name) 8chan.co to 8ch.net after multiple people filed reports complaining to 8chan’s [registrar](/wiki/Domain_name_registrar) that the message board hosted [child pornography](/wiki/Child_pornography). Despite subsequently regaining the domain, the site remained at 8ch.net, with the old domain redirecting to it.[[6]](#cite_note-6) Numerous bugs in the Infinity software led to the funding and development of a successor platform dubbed "Infinity Next". After a several-month-long testing period, a migration to the new software was attempted in December 2015, but failed.[[8]](#cite_note-8)[Template:Clarify](/wiki/Template:Clarify) Eventually, development was halted, and the main developer, Joshua Moon, fired by Brennan.[[9]](#cite_note-9)

## Controversies[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

### Child pornography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

[*The Washington Post*](/wiki/The_Washington_Post) described it as "the more-lawless, more-libertarian, more 'free' follow-up to 4chan."[[6]](#cite_note-6) Boards have been created to discuss controversial topics, including [pedophilia](/wiki/Pedophilia). While the sharing of illegal content is against site rules, [*The Daily Dot*](/wiki/The_Daily_Dot) wrote that boards do exist to share sexualized images of minors in provocative poses, and that some users of those boards do post links to explicit child pornography hosted elsewhere.[[3]](#cite_note-3) When asked whether such boards were an inevitable result of free speech, Brennan responded, "Unfortunately, yes. I don’t support the content on the boards you mentioned, but it is simply the cost of free speech and being the only active site to not impose more 'laws' than those that were passed in [Washington, D.C.](/wiki/Washington,_D.C.)"[[3]](#cite_note-3) In August 2015, for a brief period, 8chan was blacklisted from [Google Search](/wiki/Google_Search) for containing content constituting "suspected child abuse content."<ref name=ars-8chancensor>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> It was later restored to the search engine's listings without explanation.[[10]](#cite_note-10)

### Gamergate[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) On September 18, 2014, the website gained prominence in the [Gamergate controversy](/wiki/Gamergate_controversy) after 4chan banned discussion of Gamergate,[[3]](#cite_note-3)[[7]](#cite_note-7)[[11]](#cite_note-11) whereupon 8chan became one of several hubs of Gamergate activity.[[3]](#cite_note-3)[[7]](#cite_note-7)[[12]](#cite_note-12)[[13]](#cite_note-13) "/gg/," 8chan's initial Gamergate-oriented board, also gained attention after being compromised by members of the internet troll group [Gay Nigger Association of America](/wiki/Gay_Nigger_Association_of_America), forcing Gamergate activists to migrate to "/gamergate/." This replacement quickly became the site's second most populous board.[[12]](#cite_note-12)

### Swatting incidents[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

In January 2015 the site was used as a base for [swatting](/wiki/Swatting) exploits in [Portland](/wiki/Portland,_Oregon), [Seattle](/wiki/Seattle), and [Burnaby, British Columbia](/wiki/Burnaby), most of them tied to the victims' criticism of Gamergate and 8chan's association with it;[[14]](#cite_note-14) the attacks were coordinated on a [board](/wiki/Internet_forum) on the website called "/baphomet/."[[13]](#cite_note-13) One of the victims of a swatting attack said that she was singled out because she had followed someone on [Twitter](/wiki/Twitter).[[15]](#cite_note-15)[[16]](#cite_note-16)[[17]](#cite_note-17) On February 9, 2015, contents on the "/baphomet/" subboard were wiped after [personal information](/wiki/Doxxing) of [Katherine Forrest](/wiki/Katherine_B._Forrest), the presiding judge in the [Silk Road](/wiki/Silk_Road_(marketplace)) case, had been posted there.[[18]](#cite_note-18)

## References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

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## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

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