



**TEN**

**The 30 best  
video games  
of all time**

# The 30 best video games of all time

Something brilliant happened around 20 years ago – video games stopped being toys for just children and became a pastime that was for everyone. In the last few years, this trend has increased further, and you're now likely to find the release of era-defining greats like Grand Theft Auto and Overwatch bigger news than any other entertainment release. Video games are universal. Video games are smarter than they've ever been. Video games are going to play more of a crucial role in our lives going forward. What better time than now, then, to compile a list of the 30 best video games that you can play now.

There's a mix of every genre in here, even a game in which you can play as an angry goose.

## About the author

James McMahon is a former Features Editor at British music institution NME and was the editor of Kerrang! magazine for six years. He likes the Ramones, lower league football and mashed potato, though his real passion is video games. Now freelance, he writes for The Guardian, The Independent, The Big Issue, GQ, The Spectator and more.

30.

## **Hollow Knight**

Nintendo Switch, PlayStation 4, and Xbox One

Like a fusion of eighties greats Metroid and Castlevania – but with insects! – this indie side-scroller is a lovingly assembled action adventure. **Age 7+.**

28.

## **Super Meat Boy**

Microsoft Windows, macOS, PlayStation 4 and Xbox 360

Imagine Super Mario Bros rebooted inside the set of horror movie Saw, indie classic Super Meat Boy is a game you only learn to play by dying. **Age 12+.**

26.

## **Control**

PlayStation 4, Xbox One, Microsoft Windows

You are employed by the Federal Bureau of Control (FBC), a secret U.S. government agency tasked with containing and studying paranormal phenomena. Stuff gets weird.

**Age 16+.**

24.

## **Stardew Valley**

Nintendo Switch, PlayStation 4, PlayStation Vita, Android, Xbox One, iOS, Microsoft Windows, Linux, macOS

Ever fancied fleeing the rat race, moving to the country and starting your own farm? With this game, you can do just that.

**Age 10+.**

29.

## **A Plague Tale: Innocence**

Microsoft Windows, PlayStation 4 and Xbox One

Underappreciated on its release in May of last year, this stealth based game, set in rural France during the Hundred Years' War, is one of the most affecting games in recent memory. **Age 18+.**

27.

## **Outer Wilds**

PlayStation 4, Xbox One, Microsoft Windows

A sci-fi mystery that owes as much to the movie Groundhog Day as it does any video game, the Outer Wilds deservedly topped many Game of The Year lists at the end of 2019. **Age 7+.**

25.

## **Oxenfree**

Nintendo Switch, PlayStation 4, Android, Xbox One, iOS, Microsoft Windows, Linux, macOS

Oxenfree owes just as much to eighties VHS culture as Netflix's Stranger Things series. And it arguably tells a better story. **Age 12+.**

23.

## **The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim**

Nintendo Switch, PlayStation 4, PlayStation 3, Android, Xbox One, Xbox 360, Microsoft Windows

Despite now being a decade old, Bethesda's fantasy classic is still just about the most absorbing fantasy RPG around. **Age 8+.**



**22.**

**Splatoon 2**

Nintendo Switch

Not very Nintendo to enter the first-person shooter market. Oh, it's visually adorable and sees combatants firing paint instead of bullets? Makes more sense...

**Age 10+.**

21.

## **Tetris Effect**

PlayStation 4, Microsoft Windows

An old classic given an updated twist – the result is enduring videogame perfection.

**Age 8+.**

19.

## **Resident Evil 2**

PlayStation 4, Xbox One, Microsoft Windows Remastered and rebooted last year,

Capcom's classic survival horror game is an even better game now than it was two decades ago.

**Age 18+.**

17.

## **Night In The Woods**

Nintendo Switch, PlayStation 4, Xbox One, iOS, Macintosh operating systems, Linux, Microsoft Windows

There's been a welcome trend of videogames commenting on mental health issues in recent years. Few have done so, and remained entertaining, quite like Night In The Woods. **Age 12+.**

20.

## **Braid**

PlayStation 3, Xbox 360, Android, Microsoft Windows, Linux

The greatest indie platform-puzzler of all time holds secrets that players are still discovering twelve years after its release.

**Age 12+.**

18.

## **The Witness**

PlayStation 4, Xbox One, Android, iOS, Macintosh operating systems, Microsoft Windows

From the mind of Jonathan Blow – the man who brought you Braid – comes a similarly intriguing third-person puzzler. **Age 11+.**

16.

## **Inside**

Xbox One, PlayStation 4, Nintendo Switch, Microsoft Windows, iOS, Macintosh operating systems, PlayStation 3

An extremely unnerving dystopian mystery that rewards multiple playthroughs. With that ending. The one that people are still talking about. **Age 12+.**

15.

## **Super Smash Bros. Ultimate**

Nintendo Switch

About as fun as multi-player gaming can be. This beat-em-up allows you pick a fighter from almost any videogame franchise.

**Age 12+.**



# The 30 best video games of all time



*Video games foster the mindset that allows creativity to grow.*

Nolan Bushnell



14.

## **The Outer Worlds**

Xbox One, PlayStation 4, Nintendo Switch, Microsoft Windows

From the geniuses that brought you the early Fallout games, this first-person sci-fi RPG features some of the best – and frequently hilarious – writing ever seen in videogames. **Age 18+.**

12.

## **God Of War**

PlayStation 4

Sony's signature slash-em-up series was looking a bit jaded before the release of this fantastic 2018 franchise refresh. Nordic mythology is in. As is single parenting. **Age 11+.**

10.

## **Super Mario Odyssey**

Nintendo Switch

It's been 39 years since the mustachioed plumber's first appearance – in the 1981 arcade classic Donkey Kong – and having the word Mario on a video game remains a hallmark of quality. Even so, our hero's most recent adventure is one of the best, most innovative, most ambitious games he's ever put his name to. **Age 10+.**

08.

## **Grand Theft Auto V**

PlayStation 3, Xbox 360, PlayStation 4, Xbox One

When Rockstar's new GTA game launched in 2013 it felt like the most impressive use of sandbox technologies ever seen. That's a claim that, understandably, doesn't ring as true now as it did then – but it's still a brilliant world to lose yourself in. So much to do. So much to see. So much chaos to create! **Age 18+.**

13.

## **Minecraft**

Windows, macOS

A game that will need no explanation to any parent of a child under fifteen, this world building simulator is a modern phenomenon. **Age 7+.**

11.

## **Overwatch**

Xbox One, PlayStation 4, Nintendo Switch, Microsoft Windows

We could have picked Fortnite here. It and Overwatch are the two FPS that have proved most popular in recent years. For our money, Overwatch is the game with more depth. **Age 12+.**

09.

## **Portal 2**

PlayStation 3, Xbox 360, Macintosh operating systems, Microsoft Windows  
It's showing its age a bit now, but Valve's 2011 puzzler not only remains a great idea, executed brilliantly, but tells a story that's still worth hearing all this time on. Stephen Merchant guests. You're the last human on earth. You're trapped in a research laboratory with a crazed, genocidal testing robot. What's not to love? **Age 10+.**

07.

## **Untitled Goose Game**

Nintendo Switch, PlayStation 4, Xbox One, Microsoft Windows

It's a lovely morning in the village, and you are the horrible goose. Untitled Goose Game pretty much does exactly what it says on the tin; it's a game in which you play a goose. You must terrorize the locals. This might mean stealing the gardener's flat cap. Or the local nerd's spectacles. Then running away honking. You're sold, right? **Age 5+.**

## 06.

### What Remains Of Edith Finch

PlayStation 4, Nintendo Switch, Xbox One, Microsoft Windows

Games are increasingly becoming not just something you do - but something you experience. Edith Finch is maybe the most notable game to be released within this trend. This game tells the story of a strange family, who live in a strange house in Washington state. It's essentially a visual novel – low in risk, high in reward. It's unlikely you'll make it to the end without shedding a tear or two. **Age 16+.**



## 05.

### Red Dead Redemption 2

PlayStation 4, Xbox One,  
Microsoft Windows

With Rockstar at the helm of the cowboy themed RPG, it was unlikely that the sequel to 2004's Red Dead Redemption would be anything other than a quality release. And yet what arrived was beyond anything players could have ever visualised. It's no exaggeration to say that Red Dead Redemption 2 is the most extraordinary open world that videogames have ever created... **Age 18+.**



## 04.

### The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt

PlayStation 4, Xbox One, Microsoft Windows, Nintendo Switch

Based on the novels of Polish fantasy writer Andrzej Sapkowski, this RPG puts you in the avatar of Geralt of Rivia, a genetically modified mutant-cum-monster hunter for hire. Considered by many the greatest videogame of all time, there's certainly an argument for it; superb writing, top draw production and a rich, nuanced world you can lose yourself in. **Age 18+.**

## 02.

### The Legend Of Zelda: Breath Of The Wild

Nintendo Switch, Wii U

This incredible open world adventure takes one of Nintendo's signature series and updates the premise for modern times. Breath Of The Wild is a beautiful game. An enormous one. Non-linear and often experimental. Like all of the Japanese company's best games, it delivers an experience that in its very best moments captures the very essence of wonder. **Age 10+.**

## 03.

### The Last Of Us

PlayStation 4, PlayStation 3

Fans of videogames – for so long a much-misunderstood medium – are fond of crowing about their place at the top table of global entertainment; both in terms of units sold and engagement achieved. And yet the number of videogames with plots and writing that can rival a great movie or novel is still disappointingly small. Naughty Dog's apocalyptic adventure is a rare exception. **Age 18+.**



## 01.

### Mario Kart 8 Deluxe

Nintendo Switch

Speaking of wonder – this 2017 release is the definitive version of Nintendo's classic kart racer. Is there more fun you can have with a videogame than MK8D offers? We certainly haven't found one. Featuring every classic track and a bunch soon to become favourites, whatever you do, just keep your eye out for those red shells... **Age 5+.**