

THE HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF VIDEO GAMES

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The purpose of this paper is to report about the emergence, evolution and possible development of video games.

Since its commercial birth in the 1950s as a technological oddity at a science fair, gaming has blossomed into one of the most profitable entertainment industries in the world.

The term video game has evolved over the decades from a purely technical definition to a general concept defining a new class of interactive entertainment. From a technical standpoint, these would more properly be called "electronic games" or "computer games."

The computer games of the 1950s can generally be divided into three categories:

- training and instructional programs;
- research programs in fields such as artificial intelligence;
- demonstration programs intended to impress or entertain the public.

The earliest known chess computer program was developed by David Champernowne and Alan Turing and called "Turochamp". The first electronic computer games actually implemented were two custom built machines called "Bertie the Brain" and "Nimrod", which played tic-tac-toe and the game of Nim, respectively.

Perhaps the first game created solely for entertainment rather than to demonstrate the power of some technology, train personnel, or aid in research was "Tennis for Two", designed and built in 1958. "Tennis for Two", was developed in 1958 in a lab by a government nuclear research scientist with the fabulously improbable name of Wally Higginbotham. As computing resources continued to expand over the remainder of the decade through the adoption of time sharing and the development of simpler high-level programming languages like BASIC, an increasing number of college students began programming and sharing simple sports, puzzle, card, logic, and board games as the decade progressed.

Sega and *Taito* were the first companies to pique the public's interest in arcade gaming, in 1972 *Atari* became the first one to really set the benchmark for a large-scale gaming community. Atari began to sell the first real electronic video game Pong. This was the first arcade game to ever receive universal acclaim.

By 1978, video games were well established in the U.S. coin-operated amusement industry, but their popularity was secondary to the industry stalwarts of pool and pinball. That changed with the introduction of a new game developed in Japan. "Space Invaders" became a national phenomenon and the biggest hit the industry ever seen.

The video game boom caused by "Space Invaders" saw a huge number of new companies and consoles pop up, resulting in a period of market saturation. Too many gaming consoles, and too few interesting, engaging new games to play on them, eventually led to the 1983 North American video games crash.

At more or less the same time that consoles started getting bad press, home computers started to grow in popularity. These new home computer systems were affordable for the average and were advertised as the "sensible" option for the whole family. They had much more powerful processors than the previous generation of consoles; this opened the door to a new level of gaming, with more complex, less linear games. They also offered the technology needed for gamers to create their own ones with BASIC code.

The real revolution in gaming came when LAN networks, and later the Internet, opened up multiplayer gaming.

In 1995 Nintendo released "Satellaview", a satellite modem peripheral for Nintendo's Super Famicom console. The technology allowed users to download games, news and cheats hints directly to their console using satellites. Broadcasts continued until 2000, but the technology never made it out of Japan to the global market.

Since the early 2000s, the cost of technology, servers and the Internet has dropped so far that Internet at lightning speeds is now accessible and commonplace, and 3.2 billion people across the globe have access to it.

Rapid developments in mobile technology over the last decade have created an explosion of mobile gaming. The gaming industry was previously monopolized by a handful of companies, but in recent years, companies such as Apple and Google have been sneaking their way up the rankings due to their games sales earnings from their app stores.

Throughout its progression, gaming has seen multiple trends wane and tide, then be totally replaced by another technology. If the changes that have occurred over the last century are anything to go by, it appears that gaming in 2025 will be almost unrecognizable to how it is today.

The next chapter for gaming is still unclear, but whatever happens, it is sure to be entertaining.

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