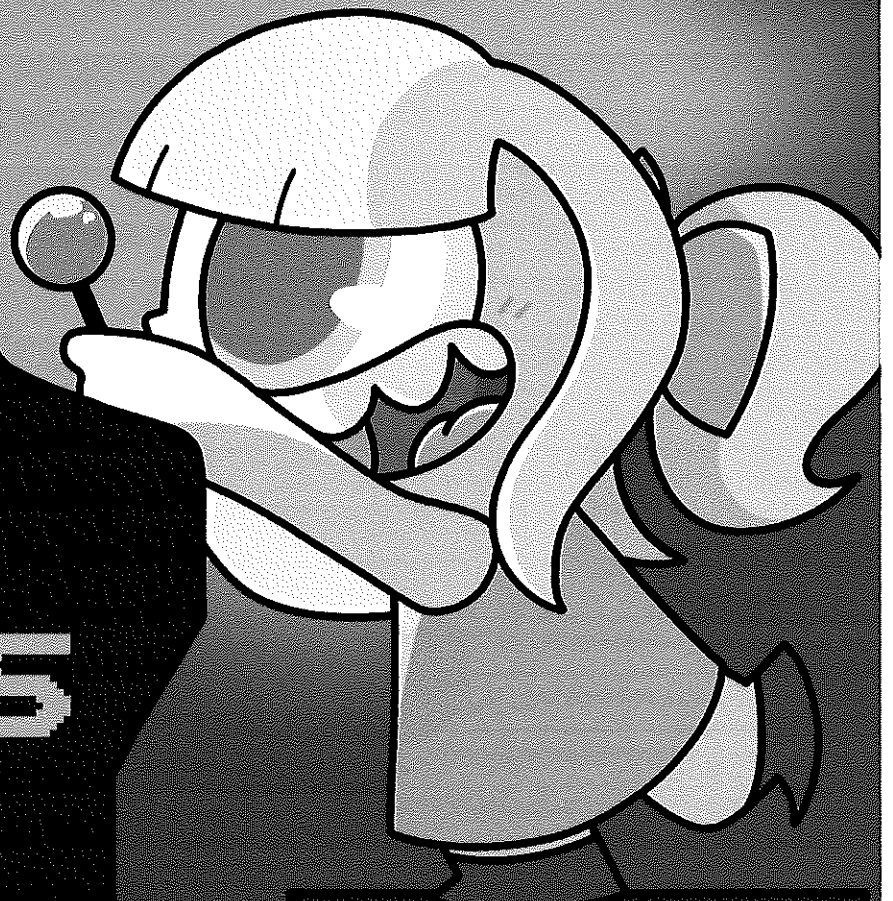
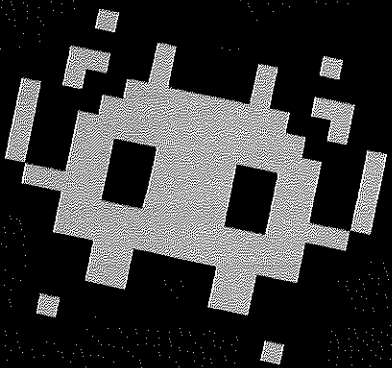


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Games



Mrs. Smith

Emma Keeping

ENJOSE

Definitions

Trailblazer

Something ahead of its time, usually charting new territory and setting an example for generations to come.

"The company is a leading trailblazer in VR technology."

✓

Influential

The ability to leave an impact on and inspire audiences, possibly for years to come.

"Doom and Half-Life were the most influential games of their time!"

✓

Indie

Short for 'independent,' created by a small group of people without reliable funding.

"Indie games are really popular right now."

✓

E3

The Electronic Entertainment Expo, often stylized as E3, is the biggest gaming conference in the world, where new games and software are revealed and showcased.

"Bethesda's E3 conference last year was embarrassing."

✓

Engine (Video Game)

The foundations upon which a game is built. Notable engines include Unreal, Source, and Unity.

"Valve only makes games using their Source engine."

✓

Video Game

A medium of entertainment requiring input from a 'player,' and often demonized for being too violent or addicting.

"My favorite video game is Animal Crossing."

✓

Important Events in Gaming History

October, 1958 - The very first video game, Pong, is created

November, 1971 - The first arcade game, Computer Space, is released

September, 1977 - The Atari 2600 console is released

November, 1985 - NES and Super Mario Bros. are released, signalling Nintendo's entrance to the gaming industry.

1991 - Sonic the Hedgehog is first released for the Sega Genesis to rival Nintendo's recent success with Super Mario Bros.

1992 - Wolfenstein 3D & Doom release, kicking off the era of the Doom clones and the birth of the FPS genre.

1994 - Sony releases the PlayStation.

May 11, 1995 - The first E3 conference is hosted in Los Angeles.

November, 1998 - Valve releases Half-Life and revolutionizes storytelling in video games.

2000 - The PlayStation 2 is released.

2001 - The Gamecube and Xbox are released.

November, 2001 - Halo is released.

2003 - The Source engine debuts and revolutionizes physics in video games.

2005 - The Xbox 360 is released and terrorizes players with hardware failure.

2006 - The PlayStation 3 and Wii release.

October, 2011 - Minecraft releases.

2013 - Playstation 4 and Xbox 1 are released. This is the first instance of Sony and Microsoft competing directly for sales in the console war.

March 28, 2016 - The Oculus Rift and HTC Vive release, introducing the general gaming public to Virtual Reality.

2017 - Nintendo releases their new portable console, the Nintendo Switch.

July, 2017 - Fortnite is released.

November 2018 - Fallout 76 releases and is the biggest embarrassment of the year

2019 - The Valve Index releases. Half-Life: Alyx is announced and is possibly the most highly anticipated game of all time.

November, 2019 - Shenmue 3, possibly the worst game of the year, is released and sets an example of how NOT to make a game.

November, 2020 - PlayStation 5 and Xbox X are released, once again competing for the title of best console.



Poetry - Gameboxes

25 cents for a single game

Bring a bag to your local arcade

Come with friends, bring the whole gang

Select your title, press start

Cabinets, console, handhelds, phones

All brands, builds, and now at home

Atari, NES, the Genesis

Take your pick, press start

8-bit, 16, 32

The pixels keep doubling

As do the gameboxes - look, all new!

Saturn, Dreamcast, the N64

The Sony Playstation! Greatness awaits.

Sega's left the industry, Nintendo's got a cube

The PS2 and XBox are fully at war

Pick a side and hold on tight

This one's gonna be a long fight

In the present day, wild gameboxes are rare

Most are domesticated - some forgotten

Advanced so far we can't believe

Our sweet little gameboxes, at 1080p.



Pixel Café Menu

Starters

Sandwich Edible Device

A tasty ham, lettuce, cheese, and tomato sandwich on white bread topped with a decorative olive. A favorite of firearms enthusiasts. Restores 300 HP.

Dragon Cheese Sandwich

The cheese in this sandwich apparently came from a dragon. Eyewitnesses say the dragon burst into hundreds of cheese roles, which rolled down a mountain and into a village below.

Soup and Salad

1-Up Mushroom Stew

A delicious stew made from mushrooms indigenous to the Mushroom Kingdom. The stew has been known to make those who eat it double in height for a short period of time.

Chorus Fruit Salad

A delicacy salad from the lands of Minecraft, made with a special fruit found only in the End realm. The purple color may be off putting, but rest assured, the taste is exquisite. The Pixel Cafe is not responsible for any guests teleporting as a side-effect of the chorus fruit. Restores 5 hunger.

Beverages

Nuka-Cola

A regular soft drink, produced in the Wastes. The caps can be quite valuable to collectors, so make sure to save yours once you're done! Restores 20 HP.

Lon-Lon Milk

An iconic brand of milk made on Lon-Lon Ranch, all the way in the faraway land of Hyrule. Restores 5 hearts.

Desert

Butterscotch Cinnamon Pie

Originally the Butterscotch or Cinnamon pie, the ingredients were combined after the chef expressed concern over the preferences of customers. Restores all HP.

Chocolate Cake

A fluffy and moist chocolate cake, topped with cherries and a fun little candle. Definitely not a lie. Recipe from Aperture Laboratories.



My Top Ten Favorite Video Games (and why I love them)

10. Pokemon Sword & Shield

A journey to become the very best, like no one ever was. Simple premise, less than stellar execution. Pokemon Sword and Shield is the eighth generation of the Pokemon series, and regarded as its worst. I know it's not the greatest, and the story is seriously lacking, but I've never really cared about those elements in a Pokemon game. I just really enjoy catching and growing a bond with the Pokemon themselves, and this game delivers on that premise wonderfully.

9. Persona 5

Although I've never played any game from the Persona series, the fifth installment of the series is something I've found myself constantly coming back to. A tale of a ragtag group of friends, fighting against the system with the power of friendship and demons. The game can get dark, and handles a lot of heavy topics: sexual and physical abuse, murder, suicide. Rebellion against the system that protects those heinous acts and encourages the freedom of everyone is an indulgent pleasure.

8. Animal Crossing: New Horizons

The ultimate comfort game, one I use to unwind after a long day that got too stressful. Some would argue that a game isn't good unless you're shooting at someone, but you can have a lot of fun in Animal Crossing, just by building your town and interacting with the villagers. The villagers themselves are kind and serve to make your day just a little bit better, which makes



Animal Crossing a great depression game. It's charming, pleasant, and just brings a smile to your face.

7. Crash Bandicoot 4: It's About Time

This game is gorgeous. I had never played a Crash Bandicoot game before this, but the artstyle of the game completely sold me. It's crisp, cartoony, and absolutely bursting with vibrant color. I was pleasantly surprised to find the game quite challenging, and the difficulty curve towards the latter half of the game, although frustrating, was strangely addicting and made for a satisfying experience after completing a tough challenge. The replayability of the game is great, considering how short it is, although I'd be lying if I said I didn't want to scream into a pillow at least once throughout my playthrough.

6. Salmon Run (Splatoon 2)

People used to call Splatoon a kids game; then Nintendo added Salmon Run mode. I could play Salmon Run for hours, it's a great way to get outside my comfort zone and put my skills to the limit. There's usually not much time to think during a match, so you need to make split-second decisions that will keep you alive long enough to complete your objective. If I had a nickel for every time I was being rushed by multiple enemies while my entire team was dead, I'd have a lot of nickels. It's so, so fun, despite the difficulty.

5. Bendy and the Ink Machine

Horror, art... what *doesn't* this game have? Bendy and the Ink Machine was one of my first real ventures into the horror genre and was the game to get me passionate about learning about old Disney cartoons and the rubber hose animation style. The way the story itself is told is a bit lackluster, but the premise is strangely intriguing and sometimes feels like an abyss staring



back at you. The feeling of being chased by the Ink Demon is one I don't think I'll ever truly forget.

4. Undertale

Can a bad looking game be saved by a great story? That is the question, and the answer is Undertale. A modest game created by a musician of all people, Undertale almost instantly became an internet hit and has one of the biggest followings of any indie game of all time. The characters are endearing, the jokes are absurd and hilarious, the music is phenomenal, and the moments where the game gets serious are emotional, memorable, and stick with you long after they occur. Your choices have consequences, and even after you reset the game, Undertale won't let you forget it.

3. Ratchet & Clank: A Crack in Time

My first third-person shooter, and what a good game to start out with. The weapons are fun to use, the characters are cartoony and fun, and the animation in the cutscenes looks like it's from a Pixar movie. Considering this game released in 2009, it's remarkable the graphics still hold up! I have memories of sitting beside my dad and watching him play this game, making jokes about the world and having fun. I will always cherish this game because of those nostalgic experiences; the characters are close to my heart for all the fun I had with them and with my dad.

2. Minecraft

A true classic, possibly the greatest and most influential game of all time. It's hard to describe Minecraft other than just saying it's a game made of blocks. At surface value, that's what the game is, because player input is very important in Minecraft. You create the story, you define the world, you make your mark. There are no limits except for your imagination, which is



part of what makes the game so timeless. You can be anything or anyone, unlike other survival games that force you into a role.

1. Portal 2

Originally at number 3 on this list, Portal 2 is what you find if you look up the definition of my childhood. There's just a picture of me, five years old, holding the box and smiling toothily at the camera. There's no other game that I've come back to as much as the Portal series. Every year I find myself coming back to this game, listening to the soundtrack, playing it again and again. I can still remember the first time I experienced the twists and the emotions I felt. It's a game I will never forget, and I look forward to experiencing it again.




Review of Portal 2

Portal 2 is not a good game. It is not even a great game. It is a *phenomenal* game, featuring an engaging story featuring endearing and memorable characters and intuitive gameplay.

Developed by industry superstar Valve and released in 2011, Portal 2 was yet another of Valve's hits, and was later considered to be one of the greatest video games of all time. The premise is simple, you need to solve escape room puzzles using a device called the portal gun. The gun shoots two connected portals that allow you to manipulate various elements of the puzzles via teleportation. Use of portals is essential to find any solution. Valve builds on the idea wonderfully in the second installment.

The story of Portal 2 is exceptionally immersive, with no cutscenes to interrupt the flow of gameplay and a small yet colorful cast of characters to keep the attention of players throughout the 6-10 hour duration. The voice acting of the aforementioned characters is superb, leaving a lasting impression for years to come. Stephen Merchant's improv rambling as Wheatley is nothing short of perfection, and it's hard to imagine the game without him yakking away beside you. On the other hand, Ellen McLain's performance as GLaDOS is wonderfully deadpan but somehow dripping with unspoken emotion, cold and robotic yet so unmistakably human. Ellen also features on the credits theme for the game, 'Want You Gone', which is second only to her performance on the theme from Portal 1.

This story is aided wonderfully by the masterfully made soundtrack. Some highlights include 'You Know Her?', 'An Accent Beyond', 'Don't Do It', 'Omg, What Has He Done?', 'Your Precious Moon', and 'Cara Mia Addio'. The highlight of the entire soundtrack, and the



most powerful scene in the game, comes courtesy of 'I Am Not a Moron!', which I highly recommend listening to in order to understand what I'm trying to convey. The track begins with an uplifting and peppy tune, slowly ascending into a triumphant theme before rapidly (albeit absolutely BEAUTIFULLY) descending into malicious bass, synth, and strings, and finishes by ramping the villain theme up to an eleven, hints of betrayal layered under robotic synth that blares under the melancholic orchestra. The track brings the entire scene together and is *masterfully* composed, and I really can't do it enough justice.

Graphically, the game hasn't aged a day, and I would believe you if you told me it was released in 2017. The facility of Aperture Science is claustrophobic, cold and bleak. The palette of the walls is dull, helping to draw your eyes to important objects which have more bright and vibrant colors: the blue accents of a cube, the overpowering red glow of a laser, or even your portals, simply sitting on the wall.


In terms of mechanics, the game eases the player into the world seamlessly. First it introduces the rules of movement, then basic puzzle elements, and only then does it give you a portal gun; although after that, there will be no further help, and you're expected to solve puzzles by yourself. Additional puzzle mechanics such as lasers, light bridges, or gels are introduced in simple tutorial rooms that don't take much effort to solve on the behalf of the player, but allow them to gain an understanding of how to use the mechanic in later puzzles. Because of this, Portal 2's puzzles never feel unfair or impossible. The player always has every piece they need to solve any challenge that comes their way, and the game trusts them to do so.

The multiplayer mode of the game is just as enjoyable. The player avatars, Atlas and P-Body, are endlessly expressive and bursting with personality during both gameplay and the cutscenes they appear in. Although the co-op campaign does not explain mechanics as well as



the base game, it seems to trust that players would already have played the single-player campaign and does not waste their time re-explaining what it has already taught them; the only things explained are new mechanics exclusive to the co-op mode, such as the ping tool.

Portal 2 is a game that anyone who has any level of interest in video games should play. The story, gameplay, voice acting, animation, sound design, and graphic design are all outstanding. The puzzles are intuitive, never unfair, but never too easy. Finding the solution to a challenge after staring at it perplexed is an incredible feeling. The writing of the game is top-notch, every joke lands and the voice actors breathe a remarkable life and personality into their characters that leave an impression on you long after the end credits roll. It is one of the greatest games I have and will ever play. My only complaint is that it wasn't longer. 10/10



Valve Fanclub Website

<https://vhlptfmgek.weebly.com>