

THE WORLD'S NUMBER ONE NINTENDO MAGAZINE

# NES-Bit<sup>®</sup>



## MAGAZINE SYSTEM

**VOL# 2**

### FEATURES



- 8BIT WARS
- THE NES STORY
- NES EMULATION

### NES-TIPS



- CAR BOOT TIPS
- EBAY GUIDE
- PERLER BEAD GUIDE

### REGULARS



- COLLECTORS CORNER
- LORFARIUS' PICKS
- BIG DAN'S CHEAT-O-RAMA



**ALSO IN THIS ISSUE**  
**ROB THE ROBOT**

**TOP 5 NES SHOOTERS**  
**ZELDA & MUCH MUCH MORE**





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# THE ED-Bit



## EVOLUTION

After months of work the team is (finally!) proud to present issue 2 which you see before your eyes! Issue 1 was a great success, owed mainly to NES fans the world over really helping to spread the word. It was the taster of great things to come as issue 2 debuts with a whole new professional design and a bigger offering of articles. We have had a few collectors from NES-Bit.com and our friends over at NintendoAge taking us on a tour of their NES collections, not to mention enough pictures to make any NES fan jealous.

For a system over 25 years old there's still plenty to explore and this issue we take you through some of the consoles best Shooters, an exploration of Xbox emulation and as ever much, much more! Again thanks to all for your help and I look forward to seeing you on the forums!

Handwritten signature of Keith (Lorfarius)

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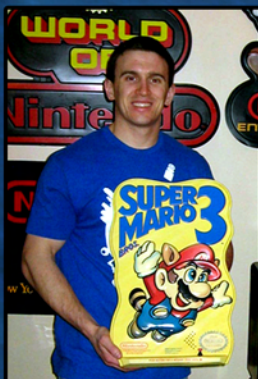


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# In THE YEAR ... 1994

In 1994 the 16-bit war reached its apex. Games like Sonic the Hedgehog 3, Final Fantasy III, Super Metroid, Donkey Kong Country, and Mortal Kombat II were dominating TV sets across the country. The 32-bit generation was also rapidly advancing. By the end of the year the Saturn and PlayStation were launched in Japan while Nintendo teased something called the "Ultra 64".

Alongside all this excitement the little NES was still breathing. A few publishers saw a glimmer of profit left in the 8-bit champion. Its glory days were gone but some unexpected gems were still on the way.

According to Nintendo's official release list, 12 licensed titles were produced in 1994. These weren't all late

life-cycle shovel ware games either; many showcased what the NES was capable of and gave it a dignified send-off.



**Bonk's Adventure (January 1994)**  
That's right, the mascot of the TurboGrafx-16 was down ported to the system it hoped to make obsolete.

By 1994 the TurboGrafx-16 garnered about as much shelf space as the NES so what harm was there in letting Bonk appear on a rival anyway?

It survived the conversion remarkably well. The levels, enemies, and control are more or less intact. It's one of the more graphically impressive NES games, the waterfall effects in particular are as good as you'll find on an 8-bit console. A turbo-fire controller is essential to surviving this game as the original design counted on it being a standard feature.

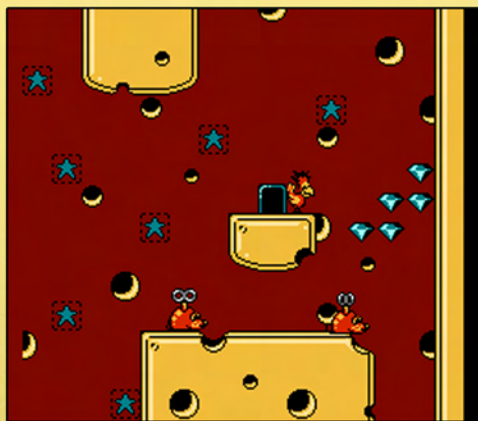
**"Nintendo teased something called the Ultra 64."**





### Chip 'N Dale: Rescue Rangers 2 (January 1994)

Anyone who shrugged off the Chip 'N Dale games as being for kids missed out on some insanely fun platformers. Sure they were incredibly easy but so were Super Mario Bros. 2 and a handful of other "must haves" for the NES. Easy games are perfectly fine if they're fun to play through over and over again. In most aspects this is a virtual clone of the original but with enhanced co-op features such as the ability for players to throw each other. The bosses also received an upgrade; they're larger and more difficult than the original. The letdown is that the levels are shorter than the first instalment which wasn't exactly known for its complex design. Still it's one of the most enjoyable games on the NES.



### Alfred Chicken (February 1994)

In this British developed title, players must navigate a chicken through a cheese maze while defending against wind-up mice. No this game isn't as weird as it sounds, it's even weirder. Put the tripiness aside and this is a fun little game filled with puzzling levels and a unique control scheme. A chicken may not seem like a plausible action hero but this one comes equipped with a dive bomb attack that obliterates enemies and is downright hilarious to watch.

The one negative is that the NES port of Alfred Chicken is the shortest one. It's capped at only five levels which inhibits the replay value. Maybe it was rushed to be available before the system was discontinued. There's really nothing else like it on the NES though so it's worth giving a try.

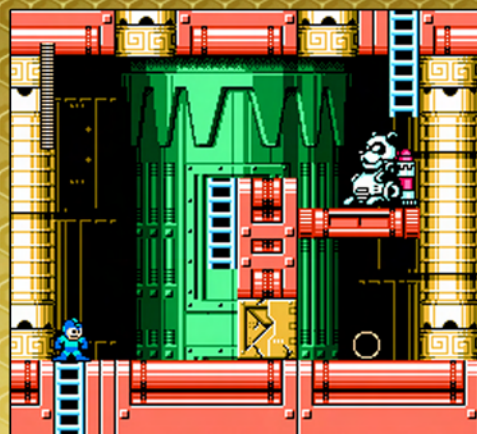


### Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Tournament Fighters (February 1994)

2D fighters ruled the arcades in the first half of the 90s. The Street Fighter and Mortal Kombat games consumed millions of quarters and spawned home versions that sold millions of copies. There of course were copycat games like Clayfighter, Eternal Champions, Blood Storm, and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Tournament Fighters. No, this doesn't compare to the 16-bit versions released at the same time but it could make a claim to the "best 8-bit 1:1 fighting game" title. The only game that really compares is the Brazilian Sega Master System port of Street Fighter II and that came out 3 years later.

**"No this game isn't as weird as it sounds, it's even weirder."**

For being limited to two buttons it manages a decent range of moves. Unfortunately this is one of the pricier games on this list to acquire so if you ever spot it at a thrift store grab it immediately.



### Mega Man 6 (March 1994)

Capcom passed on releasing Mega Man 6 to the American market so Nintendo decided to publish it themselves. It gives a box and label a Super Mario look to it which is an improvement over the rest of the series. That's about the only way this excels over the others though. It's not bad by any stretch but doesn't bring anything new to the table either. It's not remarkably different than Mega Man 5. Die-hard fans of the series will get some mileage out of this sixth instalment but most will find it to be more of the same.



### Mickey's Adventures in Numberland (March 1994)

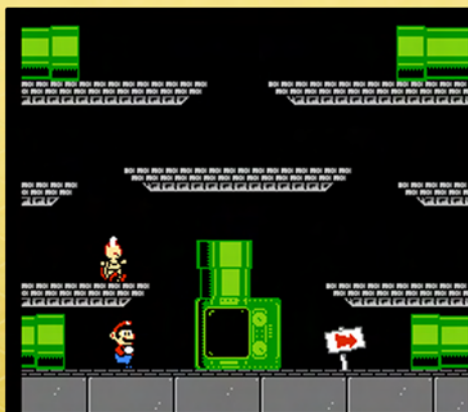
Previous generation consoles often end up as a hand-me-down to a younger sibling. They're doomed to spend the remainder of their miserable life connected to the cheapest TV in the house until their controllers finally wear out. It's a sad fate for many once beloved entertainment systems. Some publishers look to capitalize on this situation by releasing games targeted at younger gamers, or at least targeted at their parents. Mickey's Adventures in Numberland is one such game. Graphically it's not a bad NES at all. If it was a Castle of Illusion style platformer it would have downright great. Instead we have a short, only slightly educational, game that won't keep a youngster amused for long.





### Zoda's Revenge: StarTropics II (March 1994)

To many gamers this was the de facto final NES game. It was the last one that many retailers carried and was the last truly great title released. The original StarTropics can be faulted for its stiff four-directional controls; this was repaired in the sequel. With the controls corrected it's so much more enjoyable than the first. Another improvement over the original is the cut-scenes which have a detailed look to them. The over world and dungeons might look average but these intermissions are the best the NES can produce. The script is also outstanding and filled with many humorous moments. This is an easy game to play today since it's available on the Virtual Console. If the Wii's been collecting dust go ahead and drop \$5 to give this classic a whirl.



### Mario's Time Machine (June 1994)

In the early-mid 90s Nintendo got loose with the Mario license and let the folks at Software Toolworks publish an assortment of utterly non-educational games starring their mascot. There are educational games that are entertaining and actually teach something, this is not one of them. In Mario's Time Machine players must recover stolen artefacts by winning incredible simple rounds of the original Mario

Bros. and answering equally simple questions. The one bright spot in this game are the graphics. Mario looks great and so does his jumping animation. Too bad that couldn't have been applied to a proper Mario game



### The Flintstones: The Surprise at Dinosaur Peak (August 1994)

Now we enter the realm of the rarest NES games produced. This game was only available at Blockbuster Video so finding a copy in new condition is almost unheard of. Even a loose copy in average condition fetches \$300-\$500. Some guides rank it only below Stadium Events in rarity.

In terms of gameplay it's not worth the price of course but is definitely above average. Players alternate between Fred, equipped with a club, and Barney, equipped with a slingshot, on a quest across a brightly coloured rendition of the Stone Age. Released a couple years earlier it had the potential to be a sleeper hit. Instead it's a collector's dream that few will be able to play on the original console.



### The Incredible Crash Dummies (August 1994)

In the late 80s the US Department of Transportation addressed the burning

issue of seat belt unawareness by introducing us to Vince and Larry, the Incredible Crash Dummies. It's too bad cars don't come equipped with devices that beep and flash lights when the seat belts are disconnected. If there's one thing kid's demand its products based on car safety so a series of toys and cartoons followed the initial advertising campaign. LJN, masters of the misfit licensed game, brought a home version to every system they could think of. Their games were notoriously dreadful but this was one of their best efforts. In it players toggle between two dummies with different abilities as they battle the evil Junkman. The level design contends with some of the best NES games and will challenge veteran players. The Incredible Crash Test Dummies should be a terrible game but it defies all expectations.

**“it's not worth the price of course but is definitely above average.”**



### The Jungle Book (August 1994)

Disney released a live action remake of The Jungle Book for the 1994 holiday season. As part of the lead up they published several games based on the 1967 cartoon. We should be thankful they didn't try making a game using digitized actors, it's a cringe-worthy thought. Instead we received a game that shows off what the NES was capable of. The cut-scenes and animation outperform darn near everything else on the system. The controls are lacking a bit though. It's all too easy to get knocked off a ledge or vine and die a plummeting death. There are blind jumps scattered throughout the game that require a lot of trial and error.





For more totally rad NES nostalgia  
check out my web site

**huguesJOHNSON.COM**

(<http://HuguesJohnson.com/>)

and podcast

**THE RETRO LEAGUE**

<http://TheRetroLeague.com>

### Wario's Woods (December 1994)

So this is it, the last licensed NES game. It's a strange title to go out on, a puzzle game vaguely reminiscent of Puyo Puyo or Dr. Mario but without the charm. In this game Mario's occasional sidekick Toad must stack innocent-looking creatures so that Wario's bombs land on them, resulting in their explosive demise. Since these victims present no immediate threat to Toad it can only be speculated that he has turned evil and is aiding Wario in this woodland extermination.

Regardless of quality, this is a must-have title for NES collectors because of its place in gaming history, the last official game for the console that saved the industry and a eulogy for the 8-bit generation.





# Famicom Import Special

By Jerry Owens



**The Famicom was Japan's equivalent to the Nintendo Entertainment System we know and love. The NES may have saved home console gaming as we know it, but what the story on Japan's red and white marvel?**

## A History Lesson

Back in 1983, the U.K. and U.S. had largely moved away from console gaming for the greener pastures of home computing. The video game crash of 1983 in the U.S. had taken its toll on console gaming internationally, though Japan remained unaffected; the market hadn't reached the same level of over-saturation.

Nintendo, originally a manufacturer of hanafuda playing cards, had transitioned from toys to simple Pong clones in the 70's under the

leadership of Hiroshi Yamauchi. They had a few small successes in Japanese arcades, but didn't see their first big breaks until the release the Game & Watch series in 1980 and the release of Donkey Kong to arcades in 1981.



The success of Donkey Kong in arcades and the subsequent licensing gave Nintendo the profits



profits they needed to start moving on something they'd already been secretly working on; a project which would change the face of the home console industry forever: The Family Computer



Nintendo's Family Computer, generally known as the Famicom would be Nintendo's first console with interchangeable cartridges rather than hard-coded game data. Yamauchi had strict set of requirements: they were to design a system that could not be surpassed by competitors for at least a year and at a price that none of them could possibly beat. Given this difficult task, Masayuki Uemura, head of the research and development team, would need to get by with the bare minimum. It'd need to be a gaming-focused computer system with no keyboard or floppy disk, with cheap components but enough power to destroy the competition.



In order to keep costs low, a modern CPU was out of the question. Instead, Uemura's team settled on MOS Technology's 6502 processor, widely available and originally built back in 1975. To say it was weak for the time would be an understatement. By itself, this wasn't enough to push the kind of performance Yamauchi demanded, so it was paired with a secondary microprocessor which acted as a PPU, or Picture Processing Unit. An industry first, this dirt-cheap design was considerably more powerful than anything else on the market. With no production facilities of their own, Nintendo had to take a huge risk, ordering three million RP2C02 chips from Ricoh, the only company willing to manufacture them at the ridiculous profit margin Nintendo was requesting.

The final piece of the puzzle was the design. It needed to look like a toy, whereas initial prototypes looked like a computer. They rounded out the edges, added a case made of coloured plastic, and hard-wired two controllers to the system, abandoning the then-popular joystick design and opting instead for the directional pad they'd designed for the Game & Watch line.



The Famicom was released in Japan on July 15, 1983 for ¥14,800 alongside arcade successes Donkey Kong, Donkey Kong Junior, and Popeye



The system started out selling very well in its early months, though it was removed from the shelves when a faulty circuit was discovered. Nintendo, wanting to maintain good relationships with their customers, recalled every Famicom unit sold for repairs. This effort cost Nintendo millions, but when a corrected version of the system was reissued, systems began flying off the shelves again. Sega's SG-1000 was no match for the Famicom, it was already obsolete in comparison, and cost slightly more at ¥15,000.

1984 saw even more growth, as Nintendo opened their little box up to third-party developers, catching big-name arcade developers like Taito, Namco, Capcom and Konami. Seeing the enormous profits these early adopters were getting, third-party developers were knocking down Nintendo's doors for a piece of the pie. The Famicom sold 2.5 million units by the end of 1984.

**"It needed to look like a toy."**

Sega's 1985 Mark III system, known as the Master System in the U.S. and U.K., while moderately successful, still couldn't crack Nintendo's hold on the market. Even with less powerful hardware, Nintendo was the undisputed champion.



**Breathing New Life into Old Hardware**

The competition's technical superiority led Nintendo's R&D teams to come up with new ways to extend the life of the system. In February 21 of 1986, Nintendo released the Famicom Disk System, a floppy drive containing 8KB of RAM and an ASIC controller, which allowed for wavetable and FM synthesis. This allowed for larger games which could be saved to the disks. Several classics, such as The Legend of Zelda and Metroid, were originally released in disk format. The FDS versions of these games have better music and sound than the cartridge versions released later, thanks to the Famicom Disk System's additional sound hardware.





Games were even available cheaply in Japanese kiosks. You could bring in a rewritable floppy disk and walk away with a new game for only 500 yen, a huge savings compared to cartridge-based games.

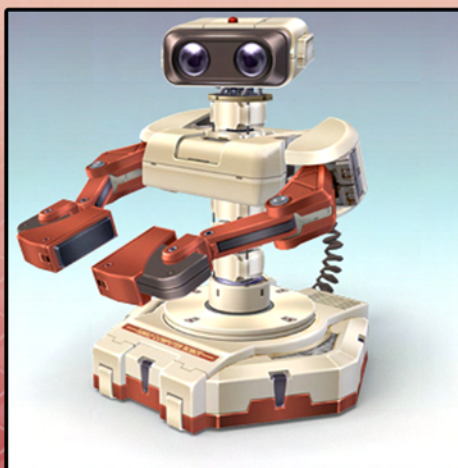


Despite being a step forward, the Famicom Disk System didn't quite pan out for Nintendo. Unreliable hardware, rampant piracy and slow load times eventually killed the system off in 1989, though Disk Writer kiosks could still be found and used for several years to come.

In the meantime, Nintendo's R&D created Memory Management Controllers, or MMC chips. When added to cartridges, these would allow developers to increase the amount of RAM and allow for more sprites to be shown on screen. They eventually allowed for Famicom Disk System games to be re-released in cartridge form, with RAM space dedicated to game saves. A battery installed on the cartridge allowed for the save games to be held in RAM for years to come.

## Differences between the Famicom and NES

Nintendo's Entertainment System was released to a particularly volatile market in the United States. After the game crash of 1983, retailers just wouldn't carry a dedicated game system like the Atari 2600, Colecovision or Intellivision, so there was no way Japan's runaway success could survive in the market as it was. The system managed to push through this adversity through a very clever marketing campaign: This wasn't a video game system; it was an "Entertainment System". Redesigned to look like a VCR or any other form of consumer electronics, the system itself was kept in the background while Nintendo's trump card, R.O.B. the Robot, took center stage. Billed as a toy rather than a video game, the system sneaked into stores and exploded into homes. The rest, as they say, is history.



The redesign didn't come without costs, however. The front-loading design required the cartridges to be longer, with 14 more pins than the Japanese version. Most of these were used for Nintendo's new lockout chip. Two pins were moved to the bottom, which in the original design allowed cartridges to use additional sound processors, like Castlevania 3. As a result, the U.K. and U.S. versions of these games don't sound nearly as good as the original Japanese releases.

The cartridge connector also tends to wear out with time due to repeatedly being inserted and pressed down, leading to the "flashing screen" errors we all so loathe.

As mentioned before, the controllers on the original system were hardwired, lacking the Start and Select buttons on the second controller, with a volume slider and microphone in their place. Also, the Zapper was originally an incredibly realistic-looking revolver, complete with a realistic hammer action. It was likely modified for other markets due to concerns that people might mistake it for a real gun.



## Recommendations

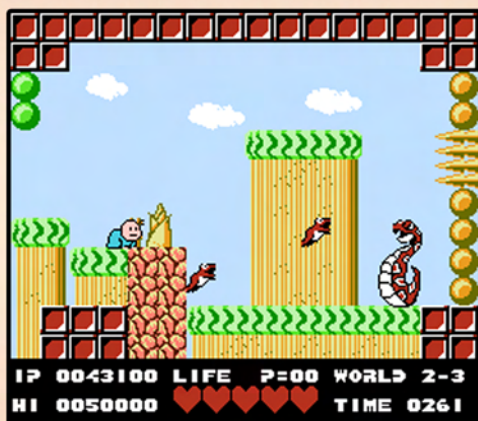
So, I've piqued your interest and you're ready to join the ranks of Famicom owners. Which games do you need to own? I've listed a few that require little to no knowledge of Japanese and would make a great starting point for a budding collector.





## Bio Miracle Bokutte Upa

Bio Miracle Bokutte Upa is a cute platformer in which you play a baby named Upa who crawls through stages and uses a rattle to attack enemies. Enemies struck by the rattle inflate, and then float away. Strange? Yes. Fun? Absolutely!



## Tower of Druaga

Tower of Druaga is a maze-based action game including some RPG elements. You play a hero named Gilgamesh who must climb a 60-story tower in order to save a maiden from a demon. You must collect hidden keys and treasures in each level in order to ascend.



## Dragon Buster

Dragon Buster is a dungeon-crawling action platformer with RPG elements. Another typical story here, you're a knight, storming a castle, saving a princess. Both this and its sequel are excellent games. Dragon Buster also happens to be the first video game to feature a life meter.

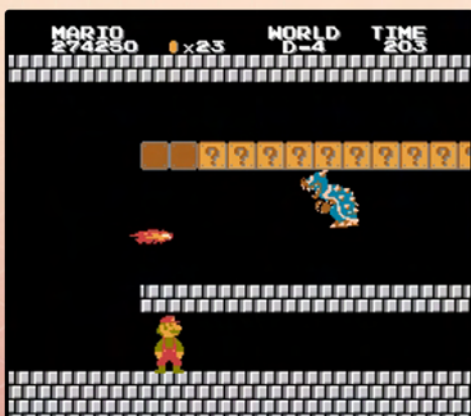






## Super Mario Bros. 2

Not the odd turnip-throwing US version, but the original Japanese version. This game was released as The Lost Levels in Super Mario All-Stars, and it is punishingly difficult. It'll chew you up and spit you out in under a minute. You have been warned.



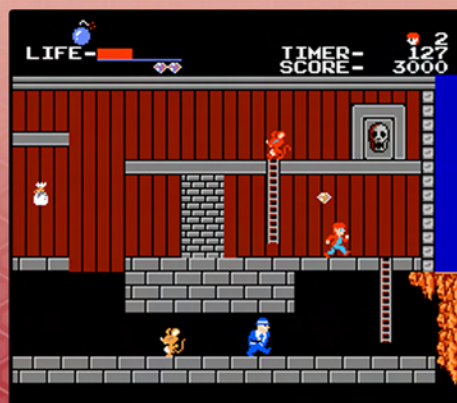
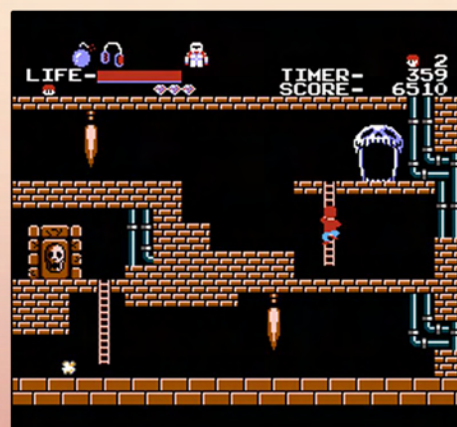
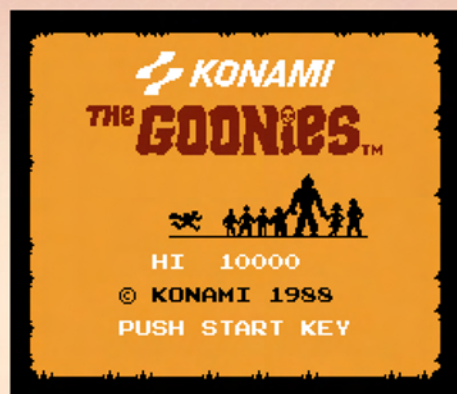
## Splatterhouse: Wanpaku Graffiti

This sequel to the original Splatterhouse is a Famicom exclusive, using "super-deformed" characters. The game is less focused on violence and gore, leaning more towards parodying movie monsters and horror in general.



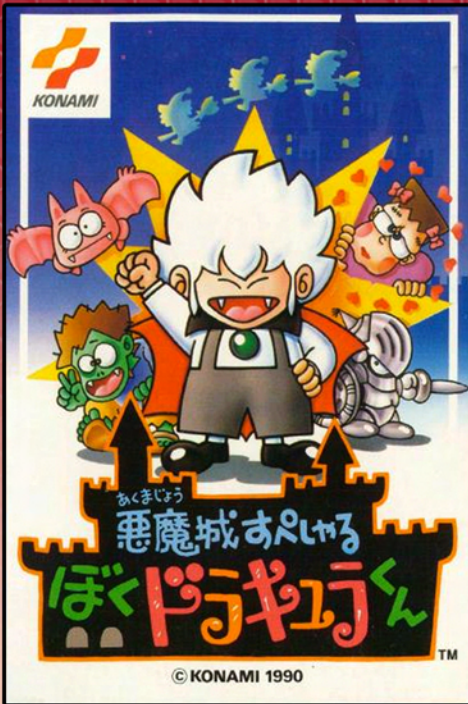
## The Goonies

The Goonies is, of course, based on the 1985 film of the same name. The Goonies is an action platformer in which you attack goons with a yo-yo. This game was never released out of Japan, though the sequel, The Goonies II, was.



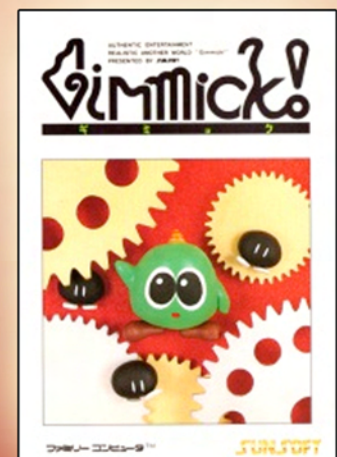
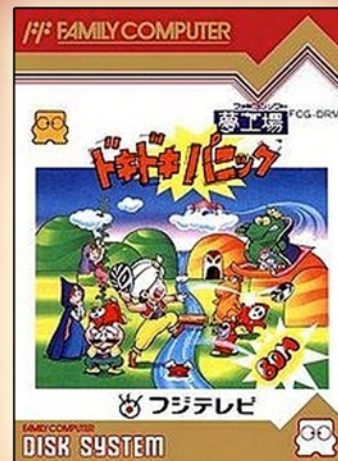


Also worth checking out  
the original releases of:



### Akumajō Special: Boku Dracula-kun

Akumajō Special: Boku Dracula-kun is a Castlevania spinoff in which you play Kid Dracula, who's been challenged by a dinosaur-like creature named Garamoth. Meant as a parody of the Castlevania series, this game did see a wide release for the Game Boy under the name Kid Dracula, but the Famicom version was never released outside of Japan.



Castlevania 3, Yume Kōjō: Doki Doki Panic (the game Super Mario 2 USA was based on), Metroid, The Legend of Zelda, and Gimmick!, for their higher-quality sound. Enjoy your newfound love!



# NES Emulation on the Original



By Casey Suou Layne

As time rolls by, and more classic console hardware bites the dust, emulation is an increasingly attractive option. Long gone are the days of ropey emulation and a scant choice of emulators. Emulation is now capable of flawlessly running many classic games, with many systems capable of running emulation software.



fool-proof, run the emulator in question, and away you go at the press of a button!

The two NES emulators we'll be looking at are mednafenX NES and Nestopia, which I personally regard as the best available. Both emulators have slick front ends, simple menu systems and, most importantly,

There are plenty of reasons for modern gamers to choose emulation over original hardware. Over the past 5–6 years, many classic games systems and software have skyrocketed in value. What was once considered obsolete junk available free to a good home (or otherwise relegated to the local tip) can now be worth a modest fortune. Emulation negates the inflated eBay prices asked by opportunist traders, as emulators are freely downloadable, as are the games, which are commonly referred to as ROM images or simply ROMs. (It is worth noting that whilst emulation software itself is legal, it is only technically legal to download the ROMs if you own a physical copy of the software.)

Rarity is also another factor to consider: plenty of software titles are both hard to come by and demand a high price when they do appear for purchase. Emulation gives gamers the chance to sample games that may be practically impossible to obtain, giving an opportunity for gamers to appreciate otherwise undiscovered gems.

Storage space can also be an issue. It is not practical or even possible to physically own and store every classic games system. Once again emulation comes to the rescue, as

as the only storage space taken up is on a hard disk drive.

So, you might decide that you prefer emulation rather than buying a vintage NES console. But! Rather than running emulation on a PC or Mac, as is the tradition, why not choose to emulate the NES on the original Microsoft Xbox instead? No, really: I'm serious! Far from being a run-of-the-mill console, the Xbox is versatile enough to become a veritable emulation paradise, host to most classic games systems you could name, including the humble NES.

The Xbox will have to be modified (or "modded") in order to run emulation software, of course. However, once you do, it's just a case of transferring the emulators over. Once set up, it's virtually

can emulate nearly all known NES games (You might be adverse to the thought of playing NES games on an Xbox, as you may consider the controller to not be up to the job. There you would be quite wrong in my opinion: The D-pad on the original Xbox is actually pretty decent and precise, and should not be considered as incapable as the Xbox 360 joystick for such retro games.)

Both mednafenX NES and Nestopia are crammed with lots of tweakable settings and options. If you are finding that a game ROM isn't satisfactorily, the options to solve most problems are all there. Granted, many options may seem ambiguous to the uninitiated, but on the flip side, there are others that are useful and straightforward to understand and get to grips with. In particular, I have come to appreciate how video options can enhance the emulation experience. Both emulators are output a wide range of screen resolutions, from 480i (standard definition) on an Xbox hooked up to a television using a SCART or S-Video. However, using a Component cable, the emulator and games can run in high-definition resolutions of 720p to 1080i. I mention this as there are, unfortunately, emulators for the Xbox that will not work in high-





definition, either unable to load altogether, or present scrambled displays.

Users are also given the choice to set the Xbox's hardware and software graphical filtering, which I have found to be a most useful option.



Hardware filtering lets you choose between four different filters: Point, Bilinear, Trilinear and Anisotropic, with Point filtering as the default. You might not notice a difference in picture quality between Point filtering and the other three filters, depending on the game in which you are playing. However, the difference is noticeable especially when playing the more graphically accomplished NES games, for example the Castlevania series. I have to admit, there doesn't seem to be any noticeable difference in picture quality when changing between the Bilinear, Trilinear and Anisotropic filters, but switch between Point filtering and any of the others and you will see the difference. The picture quality in Point filtering is quite harsh and noisy on my HDTV, comparable to when you turn the sharpness setting up too high in photo editing software, making outlines blare out heavily. Bilinear filtering softens the picture, making the picture as a whole blend together, with less prominent outlines. I have tried filter settings with many different NES

games using many different emulators, just to be thorough, and any hardware filter other than Point filtering looks significantly better, and therefore much more preferable, in my opinion.

Some purist retro gamers regard smoothing or softening 8-bit games visuals as a big no-no in emulating classic videogames, and will argue that I shouldn't be playing old NES games emulated on an HDTV. Maybe the games will always

**"I shouldn't be playing old NES games emulated on an HDTV."**

look better on a traditional Cathode Ray Tube (CRT) television. However, I don't agree with the purists, especially when the results look comparatively decent. There is no arguing with the better results, however, and if there is an option to add softening to the picture, so don't be scared to try it out and leave it on if the game looks nicer for it.

Sometimes games ROMs refuse to run under emulation, or display graphical, sound or frame-rate glitches. Therefore, it is always useful to have two emulators set-up as a fall-back, as games that won't work with one emulator may work perfectly on another.

An example is Solar Jetman, a classic NES game which does not run smoothly under MadnafenX NES yet runs perfectly on NESTopia. However, if glitches still occur, you can always rummage around in both emulators' option screens and see if tweaking will resolve any problems. My first port of call is to try each and every software filter available for compatibility. Unfortunately, this may not always resolve the problems, but it is always worth a try.

Further advantageous features present in both MadnafenX and NESTopia are the ability to compile favourite lists of games, too add accompanying screenshots, and the ability to display information about each game, such as release date, publisher, developer, and genre. Both emulators also allow gamers to save any game at any time, as simply as bringing up a menu. This makes games that were once formidable to complete when played on original NES hardware more feasible to conquer, as lengthy games can now be played at sedate pace over multiple sittings

You must ask yourself, if you do want to emulate the NES, why wouldn't you want to emulate this classic system on the original Xbox, with near-perfect emulation and enhanced screen resolutions, from the comfort of your sofa? You would be mad to not want to try it; in my opinion, the original Xbox and MadnafenX NES and NESTopia emulators will bring you as close to the real thing as you can get without the actual NES hardware.





# 8BIT WARS

**NES VS. THE 8-BIT WORLD**  
**BY JEFF WITTENHAGEN**  
**EPISODE I**  
**COMPARING NES TO SMS**  
**HARDWARE**



Comparing the almighty Nintendo Entertainment System to any type of system may seem like a moot point as this is a NES-centric magazine. However just on the specs alone, you can easily see that other companies such as Sega brought in the big guns and always put forth their best effort to edge out the Big N via hardware. Ingeniously though Nintendo used the previous subpar gaming generation spearheaded by Atari to implement a quality and control standard to tie third party

developers to exclusive contracts. This binding prevented other systems, such as the Sega Master System, from getting conversions of many of the popular games that were showing up on the NES. Sega ended up being held back when it came to marketing the Master System software and this may be truly where the animosity began that ended up evolving into the 16-bit console wars. As most long-time gamers have come to learn, it's all about the games.

In this series of comparison articles you will see how and why Nintendo was such a dominating force in the 80s. Simply put, the sheer number of games released on Nintendo's console dwarfed the Master System almost 8 games to 1! This permeation of the market is partially why the NES dominated the market in the 8-bit generation; however was it really the better system? Let's find out!



## SYSTEM SPECS

Comparatively, the specifications for the Sega Master System blow the Nintendo Entertainment System out of the water. The CPU for the SMS is a 8-bit Zilog Z80 at 3.58 MHz compared to the NES's half speed Ricoh 2A03 1.76 MHz 8-bit processor. The on board "work" memory for the NES is 2KB with a maximum of 32KB available via cartridge chip compared to the SMS's 8KB on board and maximum of 64KB available via cart.



One would think that since the games on the Master System have the potential to run twice as good, that they would be twice as good. In future issues when we compare games head to head, we shall see if that is indeed the case.

**WINNER: SEGA**



## SYSTEM DESIGN - ORIGINAL RELEASE

The classic grey box may have a special place in the hearts of many a gamer; however its size and wasted space was due to a marketing ploy to sell the NES as a toy instead of a game system since most companies at the time were still scarred from the recent Atari video game crash. Due to

this unique design though, the system has become iconic over the years. One great "ahead of their time" bonus that Nintendo included on the system is A/V outs on the right side of the console, which was not even close to being a standard at the time as it would during the 90s. However despite its positives, the front loading cartridge system is a huge negative mark due to wear and tear issues that cause games to intermittently flash due to the lockout chip malfunctioning.



On the other side of the spectrum Sega looked like a rock star. I like to call the original Master System design the "Pyramid of Power" as it has a pretty classic unique shape to supplement the expanded power of the system. Overall, the system has everything you would want from the 8-bit era console, with a convenient reset button and, although no A/V outs, it had the typical RF out found on most game systems at the time. The biggest bonus is that the controller ports are the same as the Atari 2600 so you can interchange controllers which can add in a bit of nostalgia with some games and give you an extra controller for either system.

**WINNER: SEGA** - Close call but the fact that Sega games don't have the flashing problem edges them ahead of Nintendo.



## SYSTEM DESIGN - SECOND RELEASE

The second NES release brings in a lot of improvements over the original. The size is much slimmer and you now load the cartridges on the top instead of using that front loading mechanism. The only two drawbacks to the new system are the removal of the A/V out and the incompatibility with the third party Game Genie; however the latter could be remedied with an adapter. The fact that the flashing has become a lot less frequent with this model makes this the optimal one to get.



The Master System had a less stellar secondary launch with many people not even realizing that it existed. Gone is the pyramid shape in favour of a smaller forgettable rounded model. Besides, except for the addition a little tray that covers the cartridge slot, (which is prone to breaking, ) the Master System 2 is very similar in specs to the original. Even having a built in game onto the system didn't help it in most cases, very under-whelming indeed.

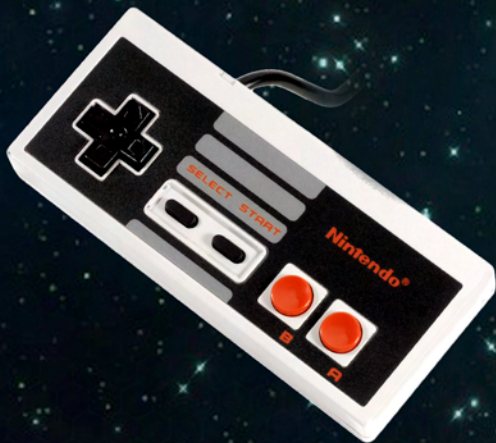
**WINNER: NINTENDO** - by a mile





## CONTROLLER DESIGN

Nintendo revolutionized the gaming industry with its cross shaped D-Pad design on its controller. It allowed for immediate response to your inputs and quickly switching directions no longer required a major muscle movement to pull off. (Anyone else remember doing the hundred meter dash in Summer Games on the Commodore 64?) The inclusion of four buttons was also used superbly with dedicated pause and select buttons for menus and two buttons for actions. This time tested design set the standard for things to come and Nintendo even went back to this configuration with the Nintendo Wii controller design which many games take advantage of to bring a retro style feel to their games.



With the second release, Nintendo rounded out their controller which made it much easier on the hands for extended play sessions.



The Sega Master System controller at first glance seems to be a direct replica of the NES controller. You would think that being released a year later would allow them to perfect the design and blow Nintendo out of the water right? Well, not so much. The cross pad is replaced with an indented square shaped button that can have a small joystick style peg screwed into it and is not nearly as responsive as the D-Pad. Maybe Sega initially thought that the D-Pad was going to fail so they included the peg for an arcade-like option? Either way the peg was more cumbersome than useful; most gamers unscrewed and subsequently lost the piece. Also, for some reason Sega decided to not include a pause button on their controllers and left it on the system, this small yet not-so-subtle change was another back step, as pausing on the fly without having to get up and go to the system was starting to become a



The second controller release removed the arcade stick add-on, but still didn't give gamers a pause button or more responsive controls. Luckily, you can use the Genesis controller with the system which is the way many gamers choose to play.

**WINNER: NINTENDO** again by a mile



## GUN ADD-ON DESIGN

The Nintendo Zapper is usually the first thing gamers think of when they think video game guns and maybe even peripherals in general. Besides for the classic "80s futuristic design" the gun is highly accurate and fun to use. Whether you are standing across your room, or being a cheating bastard and standing right next to the screen, the system will almost always register a hit correctly as long as your aim is true.



The Zapper came in two different colours, the original grey and the second release of orange. I guess Nintendo thought that a blood red style orange colour was less deadly then grey.



COMING NEXT ISSUE:

8BIT WARS

# EPISODE II

NES vs. SMS Game Face Off - Platformers



Sega released a gun add-on called the Light Phaser which was designed with the anime Zillion in mind. The Light Phaser was ironically not compatible with the Master System game Zillion or even its sequel Zillion II. Even though the Phaser was heavier than the Nintendo Zapper, it was not as responsive or accurate as the Zapper which leads to an overall diminished experience.



**WINNER: NINTENDO** as accuracy is the key



Overall, Nintendo nudges out Sega via hardware due to its better evolution to a second version, a much, much better controller, and an accurate zapper. Of course I could go into every other piece of hardware that was released for each system, however there is only so much time in the day. Plus who really wants to see a side by side comparison of each systems 3D glasses or garbage add-ons like the U-Force and the Power Glove? Ok, I guess some of us would actually like to see that and maybe it would be a nice capstone for the series.





"GENTLEMEN, WE HAVE THE TECHNOLOGY.  
WE HAVE THE CAPABILITY TO MAKE..."



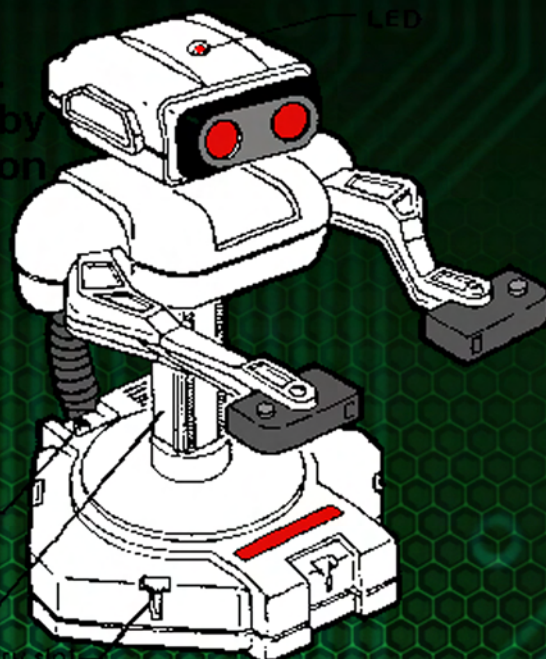
# THE WORLD'S FIRST VIDEO ROBOT

BY JARED WALDO

## R.O.B.

### TALE OF THE TAPE

- \*HEIGHT: 24 CM/9.6 INCHES
- \*RUNS ON 4 AA BATTERIES
- \*HEAD MOVEMENT RANGE: 45° TILT,  
HORIZONTALLY CENTRED
- \*ARM MOVEMENT RANGE: 240° LEFT/RIGHT
- \*(FIVE STOPPING POINTS), 7 CM/2.75IN UP/DOWN
- \*(SIX STOPPING POINTS), 7 CM/2.75IN BETWEEN HANDS WHEN OPEN
- \*FIVE ACCESSORY SLOTS AROUND THE HEXAGONAL BASE (NUMBERED  
CLOCKWISE, STARTING AT THE REAR-LEFT; FROM THE ROBOT'S  
POINT OF VIEW) AND NOTCHES ON THE HANDS ALLOW FOR  
SPECIALISED PARTS TO BE ATTACHED DEPENDING ON THE GAME.
- \*OPTIONAL TINTED FILTER COULD BE ATTACHED OVER THE EYES TO  
COMPENSATE FOR USE WITH BRIGHT TELEVISIONS.





Before the Wii remote, there was the Super Scope. Before the Super Scope, there was the NES Advantage and NES Max. However, even before Nintendo's later innovations with accessories for its games console, there was the original console accessory, which helped put an end to the North American video game crash of 1983: It was the Robotic Operating Buddy, or R.O.B.

R.O.B. was released as part of Nintendo's NES launch in North America in October of 1985, just three months after it debuted in Japan and almost a year prior to being unveiled in Europe. R.O.B. was advertised and marketed as a revolutionary experience 26 years ago, and continues to be (arguably) one of Nintendo's greatest accomplishments. Unfortunately, there are now more negative connotations associated with R.O.B. than positive.



The Nintendo Entertainment System was a risky gamble for the company. With American consumers and retailers having recently seen the video game industry crash, releasing a games system at that time could've been an absolute bust. But Nintendo and as anyone in business will tell you, marketing works if carried out properly.

The NES marketing strategy pitched the system as designed for 'video-games', but also supplying the machine with a 'toy' robot. Knowing that parents were already lamenting the effect videogames were having on youth, another new system was not something many people immediately wanted to sink money into. That's where good marketing came into play. Nintendo pushed R.O.B. as the biggest element of the

system and the 'robot toy' was the sole focus of their initial advertising.



The advertising seemed to have worked, with sales of nearly a million systems in its first year. R.O.B. was sold as part of the Nintendo Deluxe Set which included R.O.B. with the light zapper, two controllers and two games: Gyromite and Duck Hunt. However, despite the success enjoyed by Nintendo in the NES's first year, R.O.B.'s existence would only be short-lived.

**"THE LITTLE ROBOT DEFINITELY GRABBED PEOPLE'S ATTENTION."**

R.O.B. was unique in what it was capable of doing, offering something that gamers had never seen before. The Robotic Operating Buddy provided a second player of sorts, when no other physical operation of a human controller was possible. It's ability to move and respond to controls was not revolutionary, as it was very similar to any remote control vehicle of that era. Where R.O.B. offered something new was that the player could see the device moving alongside, with its actions reflecting on-screen activity. The little robot definitely grabbed people's attention.

That might be all that was good about Robert.

One of the biggest complaints about R.O.B. is that it was only compatible with two NES games, the aforementioned Gyromite, and Stack-Up, which had two sub-games involving stacking coloured blocks.

Another problem with R.O.B. is that, whether grabbing spinning tops in Gyromite or trying to balance and carry the blocks in Stack-Up, the robot is incredibly slow. Gyromite allows you only 999 seconds to get through the level. Unfortunately, it takes the player about 222 seconds to utilise R.O.B. and lower the first column in the game. It's not only dreadfully slow, but also painfully loud, due to the internal motors and mechanics. This makes any long-term Gyromiting an uncomfortable proposition.



**GYROMITE (Robot Gyro)**  
Included with each NES Deluxe Set with R.O.B., Gyromite was a slow game that required patience. As player one, you're in control of Professor Hector, whose life is in disarray thanks to dynamite and lovely lizard-type creatures called "Smicks", both of which are trying to kill you. The good news is that if you collect radishes (or turnips as some have claimed) and place them in front of the Smicks, they'll munch on the tasty root vegetable, rather than taking a peck at your beak, allowing the professor to walk on past.

The objective of this side-scroller is to collect all of the dynamite in the level, whilst avoiding Smicks. Throughout the levels, there are pillars and columns that stand in your way, which is where R.O.B. joins the action. As the first



player, you press the start button which activates R.O.B. The screen then turns blue and now you control the actions of the robot.



In order to lower the column and proceed through the level, you must have R.O.B. pick up a coloured gyro (spinning top) and place it on the pedestal of corresponding colour in front of him. It's a tedious process and (as mentioned previously) noisy and somewhat irritating. This continues throughout each of the 40 levels of the game, with your score based on how quickly you complete each level, receiving 100 points for each tens of seconds left on the clock, 10 points for each individual second, and 100 points for each bundle of dynamite you collect. Oh, and if you want to earn some big points, time it properly, and when you close one of the columns and squash a Smick in the process, you earn 500 big ones. (And, really, who doesn't enjoy squishing Smicks?)

**"IT'S A TEDIOUS PROCESS AND (AS MENTIONED PREVIOUSLY) NOISY AND SOMEWHAT IRRITATING."**

Interestingly, Gyromite could also be played with a second human player. Rather than going through the process of having R.O.B. slowly manipulate gyros, a second player could command another controller and lower each column for you or, if you're really nimble, you alone could handle both controllers and play the entire game solo. But, hey: That's R.O.B.'s job, so put him to work!



## STACK-UP (Robot Block)

Professor Hector returns in this NES Classic. While not quite as exciting as Gyromite, Stack-Up is more of a puzzle game where R.O.B. helps you to...guess what? Stack up blocks! There's also three different modes in Stack-Up: Direct, Memory and Bingo.



In Direct Mode, the player arranges coloured blocks (red, white, blue, yellow and green) from top to bottom on one tray, and is then required to rearrange the blocks based on a random pattern given. That's where R.O.B. comes into play.

Once the player matches up the pattern of blocks using R.O.B. to the pattern on the screen, the player presses Start to end the stage, and then a score is given based on the time remaining and number of moves taken. Every pattern thereafter becomes increasingly difficult to rearrange, and the player has to begin some patterns from the previous pattern's starting positions, offering further challenge. If the player drops a block, it's game over.

Memory Mode is a lot like Direct, but with a subtle difference. Memory Mode consists of the player entering every command at once, rather than consecutively. For example, in Direct, the player moves each block at a time until the desired pattern is assembled. In Memory, the player programmes a sequence of moves in advance, and then R.O.B. carries out the sequence. If the player is correct, play progresses to a further, more challenging levels. Mess up, and the player starts again from scratch.



Finally, there's Bingo Mode, which can be played in both single and multi-player modes. Playing solo, the goal is similar to Direct, arranging the blocks from one pattern to another, but this time it is all about the movement of R.O.B. Block colours are irrelevant in this mode, and the challenge is to have the Professor hop around on a 5x5 bingo board carrying out the command to move R.O.B. For example, if you complete a row, R.O.B. moves to the right, or arranges the block to the right. There's also enemies hopping around the player character, known as 'Spike' and 'Flipper'. Both antagonists attempt to get in the way of the player, forcing them to screw up your commands. As with the other game modes, the game ends if the player drops the blocks.

The two-player mode isn't much different, only that there's two Professors (Hector and Vector from Gyromite) and player one tries to stack more blocks to the left of R.O.B. while the second player hopes to do the same to R.O.B.'s right. When this mode begins, there are three blocks in the middle, and one on each side of the robot.



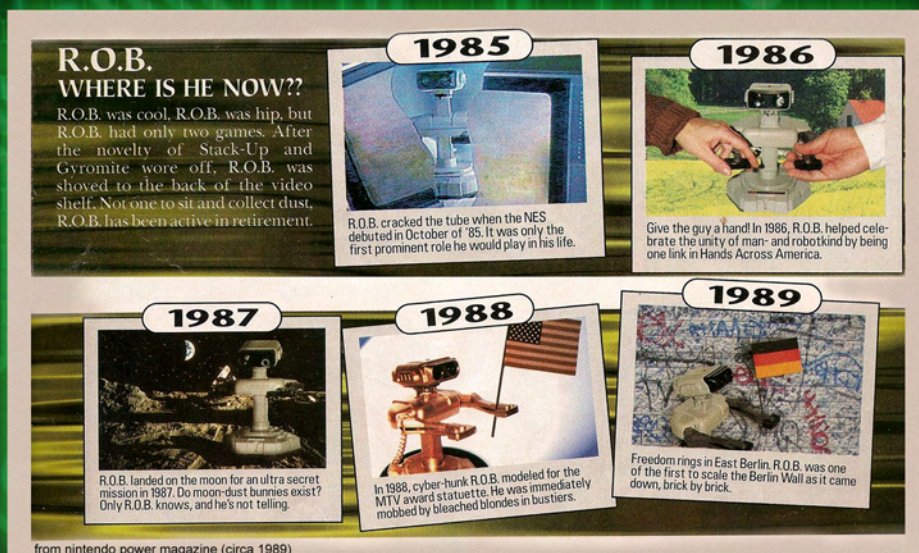
If Gyromite and Stack-Up sound somewhat confusing from their written descriptions, they're not when sitting next to a working R.O.B. in action. To explain the actions of R.O.B. and how it works is somewhat difficult, but if you're ever fortunate enough to get your hands on a fully functioning robot with accessories and games, you'll be able to experience the magic that is R.O.B. for yourself and appreciate what I'm talking about.

“IF YOU' RE EVER FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO GET YOUR HANDS ON A FULLY FUNCTIONING ROBOT...”

To get a Robotic Operating Buddy today on the secondary market, you're looking at spending between US\$350-\$500, or possibly even more. In my opinion it's worth it if you're looking to experience that collectible item which helped to relaunch videogaming in North America. However, if you're looking for R.O.B. to provide hours of fun and captivating gameplay, then I suggest sticking to Super Mario Bros 3 instead!

“...YOU' LL BE ABLE TO EXPERIENCE THE MAGIC THAT IS R. O. B.”

R.O.B. helped to launch the Nintendo Entertainment System, and for its part, helped to create a buzz and awareness around the then-new games console. Sadly, R.O.B. wasn't a big hit with gamers, and eventually Nintendo stopped marketing the accessory and sold the NES without the robot. However, despite its eventual commercial failure, to this day, R.O.B. left a mark on gamers that most will never forget, good or bad. (Oh, and he looked freakishly similar to a cybernetic E.T. )





# Castlevania

## Special

By Liam Champness

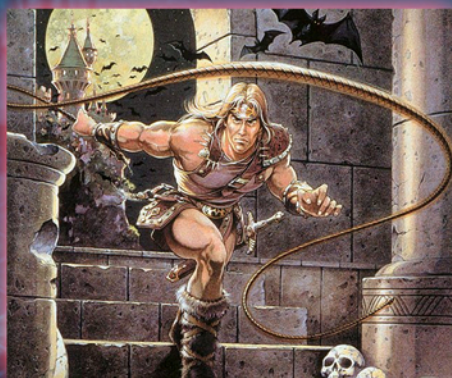
I probably don't have to tell you this what with it being an NES magazine you're currently reading but games on the system were really hard. The cartridges didn't have a lot of space on them so to compensate for the length of a game; developers would purposely create points to screw you over on a good run in order to keep it going. The earlier titles don't fall under this rule as they were ports of arcade games (made purposely hard to make sure you kept putting money in the machine) but that's beyond my point.



### Castlevania

In 1986 Castlevania was one of the first games to follow this rule of difficulty yet still feel completely fair, you see the controls feel clunky and if it was any other game this

would be out of place but Castlevania was created around this control method. Jumps couldn't be adjusted mid air, your whip would have a half second delay and whenever you got hit (except on a staircase) you would go into a stiff falling backwards animation that sometimes lead to a pit of doom. It all sounds horrible but when applied correctly you get one of the best NES games of all time.



The game is about taking things slow, if you try to run through it you're going to get screwed over. Enemies pop in with sporadic

patterns and the controls are not made for the fast reaction you need to plough through. If you take your time and learn the enemies then you will rarely feel cheated by the game. From the off you're aware that this is a hard game but almost every life lost is down to your own failings as a gamer.



Castlevania is one of the most frustrating and rewarding games you will ever play and it's all down to how well put together it all is. I could go on forever about the controls and design complimenting each other but let's move on to something else.

The credits to the first game are all references to famous horror icons and characters, resulting in a portion of the people who worked on the game to be largely unknown..



The game takes place in Transylvania, Draculas current place of residence. You play Simon Belmont a vampire hunter, roaming the halls of Draculas lair with his trusty whip the Vampire Killer fighting off countless enemies and bosses all based on classic horror fiction. You fight your way through six stages and bosses (Frankenstein's Monster, the Grim Reaper and Dracula of course) until the battle is won and you get that overriding sense of joy.

**“Castlevania is one of the most frustrating and rewarding games you will ever play.”**

The colour pallet for the game is something worth noting as its way more colourful than you would ever expect a game based around horror icons to be. Bright Orange and Blue being the main leads that really draw your attention to the screen. Carefully selected colours I might add as they both complement each other finely.



## Castlevania 2: Simon's Quest

Another common thing for games from back in the day was change. Companies were under the impression that people wouldn't want to pay for a game so similar to the one before it so often times

a sequel would be drastically different. This explains Zelda 2, Mario Bros 2 and now, Castlevania 2.



Castlevania 2 is where things go a little downhill, the controls stay the same but the world becomes open ended and that's kind of why it fails. The original Castlevania was built around the difficulty but when two went for an open world style it had



to compensate for all the backtracking, thus they made it a lot easier. This lead to the controls themselves being a major issue, they made no adjustments. What was now a game that you could swiftly run through was hindered by how stiff the character handled. Bosses had

It's believed that the Japanese version of Castlevania 2 purposely had characters give bad advice to throw you off; it was written in a way that the player would understand what was happening. When the game was translated overseas this edge was lost, leading to a lot of confusion from gamers.

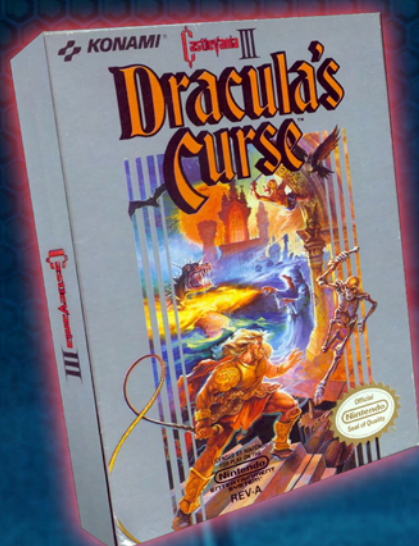
no big place here due to how easy they had become from your new inventory items and the clues towns people gave were so cryptic that it essentially became a game you needed to have a guide for in order have any idea of where to go. Hearts had been swapped to a means of currency, resulting in grinding and a new Day and Night cycle was constantly getting in the way despite it being a pretty cool idea.



Despite all of this, you can still get a lot of fun from the title. The Day as Night cycle as said before was an annoyance due to slow crawl text appearing every time it made the transition but overall it was a really good concept. The open world gave it a sense of exploration the first title was missing and because its difficulty was scaled down it became an easier game to pick up and play. Castlevania 2 is considered the black sheep of the NES trilogy but if you like the series then it's not one that should be missed.







Counting all of the Ports, Re-releases and Recreations, the original Castlevania game has been released over ten times.

## Castlevania 3: Dracula's Curse

Castlevania 3 is where I put most of my NES Castlevania days; they took the idea of an open world and decided hey, that's not really working out. The inventory, Day and Night cycle and other aspects were thrown out to return to its roots. Castlevania sported 15 levels this time around and up to four playable characters (Including the hero (Trevor Belmont) with varying abilities.



If there's one Castlevania game you pick up from reading this feature I recommend this one.

The open world element is semi there with a new branching paths system, after key levels you get a choice of two roads to go down, each leading to different themed stages. At the end of some of these lies a new hero you can obtain and

once they're on your side it only takes one hit of a button to swap your game play style entirely.

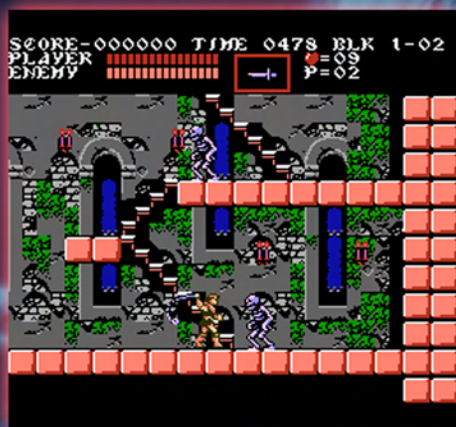


**"They took the idea of an open world and decided hey, that's not really working out."**



Only one companion can be on your team at a time so you will need to find someone that suits your way of play best. The varying paths and companions also lent itself nicely to multiple endings, each one playing out differently depending on the choices you made. As was with the first game the difficulty got

shot back up and now you had the ability to change direction in mid air; a move I am grateful for but hate due to the enemies being adapted to such a trick. But again, the companion you bring with you has their own way of movement giving you new abilities, such as, running along walls, turning into a



bat and casting spells. Each play style also accounted for in the levels you traversed, so don't expect an easier ride. When it comes down to it the first and second Castlevania games are great, but three is where they really hit the nail on the head and created the perfect end to the NES trilogy.

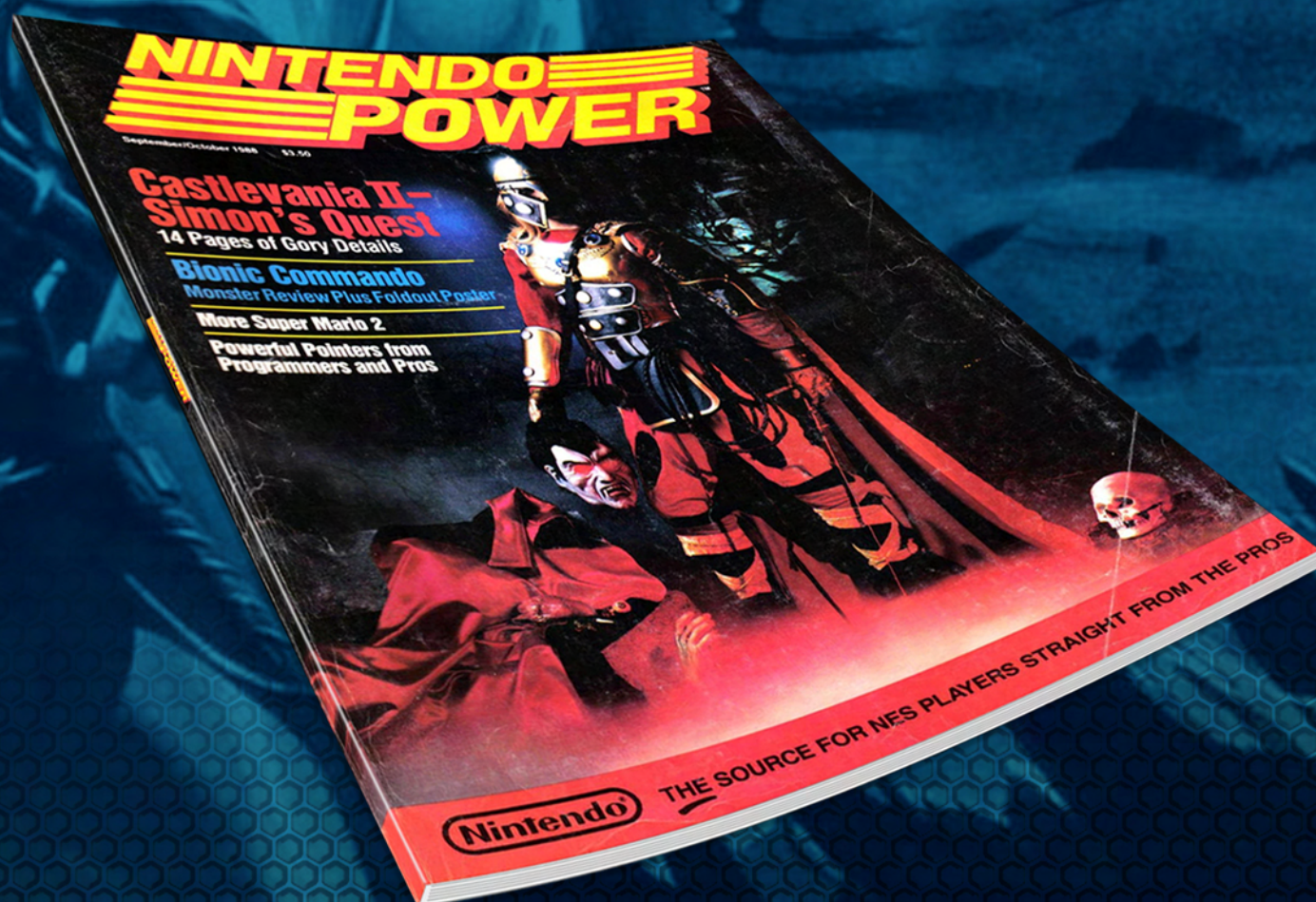




The Castlevania series would eventually move on to greater recognition. Super Castlevania four is where they took the play style of one and three and really made it into its best. Multiple direction whipping and enhanced controls mixed with the graphical power of the SNES made it a hit and it became the swan song for that classic style. Beyond this the series moved into a more open ended style like two, keeping the difficulty of the first and adding level ups to lure people in. While some of the future games in the series may be higher rated and more praised (Symphony of the Night) I love going back to the NES and seeing where it all came from. Almost every idea used in the Castlevania franchise after the NES days can be seen coming to life on this system. They may not be as loved by others, but you will be proud to make them a part of your collection.



The second issue of Nintendo Power has a Castlevania 2 cover depicting a man holding the head of Dracula, this caused many people to call in and complain due to their children getting nightmares from seeing it





LORFARIUS IS FACED WITH AN EVEN TOUGHER DECISION THIS ISSUE AS HE SIFTS THROUGH THE VAST COLLECTION OF NES CARTS AND PICKS THE BEST FOR REVIEW IN...

## LORFARIUS' PICKS



run 'n gun *Isolated Warrior*, mainly because it was a lot of fun to play and an interesting take on the genre. This time I decided to dig a little deeper into the collection for a title that never seemed to receive much applause for its US release, *Elite*. Yet in the UK its designers Ian Braben and David Bell, famous in the UK for effectively creating a universe out of a small amount of RAM, *Elite* was their first game and gained a high amount of national praise. Not to mention coverage in press, media eventually finding it's way to every home system.

**“The main point of *Elite* is to become the best of the best.”**

With close to 300 games for the UK NES collector, it's never easy picking through the best titles worth a mention in Lorfs Picks. The easiest choice would always seem to be the likes of the *Mega Man* or *Super Mario* games, really popular games and incredibly recognizable icons. Last issue I went with the strange

LIVE MARKET PRICES			
PRODUCT	UNIT	PRICE	QUANTITY
Food	t	3.6	16t
Textiles	t	20.00	15t
Radioactives	t	26.00	17t
Robot Slaves	t	23.42	3t
Beverages	t	94.4	28t
Luxuries	t	49.6	14t
Rare Species	t	89.6	-
Computers	t	58.8	-
Machinery	t	33.2	10t
Alloys	t	15.6	-
Firearms	t	52.4	17t
Furs	t	10.8	58t
Minerals	t	36.8	7kg
Gold	kg	64.4	9kg
Platinum	kg	16.0	8g
Gem-Stones	g	51.2	-
Alien Items	t	-	-

The game was eventually ported to the NES but sadly never received the same novella (*The Dark Wheel*) included with so many other versions. A story of how you, the pilot, came about owning the games ship, a *Cobra MK III*. The main point of *Elite* is to become the best of the best, being ranked as the elusive *Elite* rating so for the



NES adventure it's the only plot we can have. At its core the game centers round a mix of 3D space shooter and station trading. With a whole galaxy of worlds to explore it pretty much offers the player the opportunity to go off on their own, whether you want to be a righteous pilot obeying the laws, a space pirate to give Han Solo a run for his money or even a simple merchant. Elite offers a career for all RPG enthusiasts; the rest of us can have fun in the many dogfights the 3D world provides.



The first thing the player will notice when starting (besides the obvious yellow scrolling Star Wars text, a neat reference) is how the playing field is entirely in 3D wireframe. Space shooters of the time were the usual 2D affairs but even with its humble processor, Elite is done proud with gorgeous 3D graphics. Taking on the look of the Star Wars arcade cabinet the NES really does the visuals justice. Visiting space stations or planets offers a text based system in bold, big font repeated throughout for the ship inventory, star maps, planetary info etc. The game offers lots of brightly coloured visual pictures as well, all adding to the real feel you are exploring the galaxy.

Gone are the silent stars from the classic BBC Micro, a catchy title tune and music plays throughout your space fairing journey. Although this could become tiresome after awhile it's fetching enough that it doesn't end up a chore to listen to. Various sounds can be heard throughout battles from lasers to explosions so the gamer is presented to a real audio treat. A game like this can live or die on its control scheme but thankfully the ship handles well, being able to spin and turn with ease. A firing cursor is provided to help with difficult shots all adding to the simulated feel. Being a simulator at heart



the first panic might be an overloaded interface, but Elite runs a simple icon bar (accessible with the Select or pressing the B button) with full access to weapons, inventory, maps and charts. It might seem over whelming at first but within minutes of skimming through the choices it soon becomes second nature.

**"They tend to be quick to pick up and play, yet with a battery backup included."**

Using the Cobra MK III's auto docking (something that was only a purchasable add on in other ports) it won't take players long to land on a space port, buy up lots of goods before firing off into the wild unknown. Building your ship, trading and deciding your own path, I'm not sure if this is a simulator or an adventure game as it sure feels like that at times.



The nature of NES titles means they tend to be quick to pick up and play yet with a battery backup included the universe really is yours to explore. Offering incredible depth for a humble NES game, the visuals, playability and graphics mean Elite is a must for any serious NES gamer. For those worried about a simulator without a joystick then I'd recommend tracking down a QuickShot as it really does work well with this type of game. If it's not obvious by now, Elite is a must buy so stop by eBay and I'll see you round the galaxy.







# TOP 5 NES SHOOTERS

By Matt Dawson (Encore Interactive)

Shooters, Shmups, Shoot 'em ups blasters or just damn right fun. This massive genre has been about for years on the arcades and also on our beloved NES. In this edition I take a look my top 5 of this fast paced, button bashing, on land or in space genre of madness. Some may be classics, some may be completely new to you, but all should be played... LOTS.



**Silver Surfer** (released 1990)  
Software Creations

## History

One of the toughest games known to man, but every NES owner needs to have given this a blast at some point!





## Game Play

So then... This game is hard... and I'm talking damn hard. 1 hit deaths, chaotic enemies, no rapid fire and some completely invincible enemies... But... and this is a big but. It's all worth it, because, if it's not challenging... then what's the point? The one highlight for me is the music... It's actually amazing!!!!!! Make sure you check it out, the Follin Brothers at their very best!

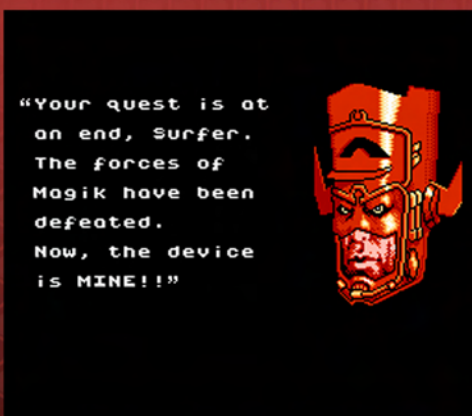


## Graphics

Some of the level design wouldn't look out of place on Castlevania, with dark mysterious backdrops and flying skulls and bats. Others, like the top down levels are very reminiscent of other shooters with tanks and fortresses becoming your opponents. All are nicely animated and great to look at. (And you will have plenty of time to look as your lives disappear)

## Overall

A ridiculously difficult game that will make you want to throw your controller at the screen, but one I feel everyone should give a few (hundred) hours to playing. Its still loads of fun and even if just for the music you need to give ever level a blast!



Over Horizon (released 1991)  
Hot-B

## History

A game that should have been massive, but it didn't receive a North American release. Over Horizon is a ground breaking take on this classic Genre.



## Game Play

This game is just crazy! All weapons can be fired forwards and backwards. There are countless power-ups and add ons and it also comes with an edit mode to create your own homing lasers or bombs. It's a quick, highly playable game, which is challenging, fun and addictive.



## Graphics

Easily above average for the NES, there isn't loads of detail but everything is easily distinguishable and easy on the eye. Great colours and lots of different looking enemies to keep you occupied.

## Overall

A great addition to anyone's collection, Over Horizon has great controls, good graphics and really does need to be played.... A lot!



Gun Nac (Released 1991)  
Compile / Nexoft

## History

A very tongue in cheek shooter where in the not-to-distant-future you are part of the elite Galactic Federation. You have to use your weapons and upgrades to fight off err... Giant space Rabbits?



## Game Play

This is where it really shines for me. Mega fast, great weapons, lots of different enemies over 8



levels and you can't help but laugh when you are being attacked by umbrellas or killer space rabbits throwing carrots. EVIL BUNNIES!



A CONFERENCE OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE SEVEN PLANETS REQUESTS THE SPACE POLICE TO SOLVE THE MATTER.

### Graphics

Smooth, but only really using the same basic colours throughout. Lots of browns and greens on the backgrounds. With your space ship changing between white and blue. Basic, but does the job.



### Overall

A great game, which is easy to play and perfect for people who may be new to the genre on the NES and most importantly, its just great fun!



YOU NOW HAVE \$ 42  
YOUR WEAPON IS NUMBER 3.  
WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO BUY?  
1 2 3 4 5 WING  
PRESS BUTTON-A TO PROCEED  
OR BUTTON-B TO CANCEL.



Contra (Released 1987 Arcade)  
(Released 1988 NES)  
Konami

### History

If you've never heard about this game you must have been living under a rock for the past 22 years. The story of Bill "Mad Dog" Rizer and Lance "Scorpion" Bean will for ever be held as a top shelf classic in the eyes of gamers.



### Game Play

Great power ups, fast scrolling levels, smooth controls and challenging enemies. This game does have it all. So good that is spawned plenty of sequels and imitations but none would be as well renowned as the original.

### Graphics

With beautiful surroundings and fantastic animations this game oozes quality. Whether it's the standard side scrolling levels or the 3rd person special levels, Contra looks fantastic and shows that the NES could certainly hold its own when it came to graphics.



### Overall

A game that defines the 8 Bit generation. One that needs to be in everyone's collection and can be played for hours still to this day.



Crisis Force (Released 1991)  
Konami

### History

Released in the very late days of this ground breaking consoles life, and sadly only over in Japan, this game had a lot of factors going against it. Not only did it need to contend with the release of the Mega Drive and the PC Engine, which was providing 16 bit arcade quality sound and graphics. It also had to go against its big brother the SNES.

With a lot of the big studios already moving on to the 16 bit consoles and starting to forget about their predecessors, the future was looking dark for the NES. Luckily companies like Kanomi and Capcom were still producing titles for the 8 bit grey box of joy, including this shining example of a shooter.





## Game play

Based in 199X and supporting simultaneous 2 player fun, it's your job to defend Tokyo over 7 levels of laser blazing madness. With weapon and speed upgrades, super bombs, your ship turning into a blue diamond of power, combining with player 2s ship as well as plenty of enemies, this game offers it all. Super fast game play easy smooth controls and complete mayhem all adds up to a game that really leads the way in this genre.



## Graphics

Crisis Force is one of those games that the second you've pressed the start button it takes your breath away. The visuals wouldn't look out of place on a 16 bit system and the colours are bright and vibrant and are a joy to look at, let alone play. Konami really pushed the power of the NES and showed that it could produce smooth well-animated graphics as well as fantastic game play.



## Overall

A game with few drawbacks, this classic will be one that I will carry on playing for a long time to come. I honestly believe that if it had received a UK & US release we would have seen many sequels. This is one game you need to track down and get in your collection as it is a fantastic example of a genre that basically no longer exists.



So there you have it... 5 Shooters that you need in your life, no doubt some you may have expected to see in there, but I'm hoping there a couple you want to get your hands on now!



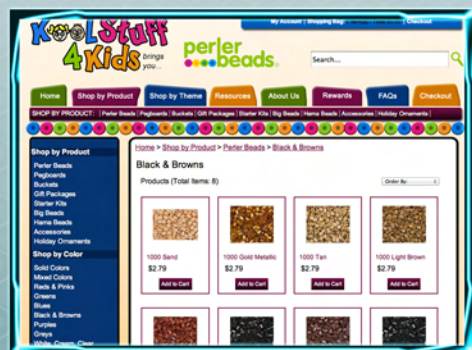




# NES Sprite Perler Bead Guide

By Matt Hosley

Merchandise for retro systems can be hard to come by in this day and age, Matt Hosley decided to take it one step further... creating his own NES sprite characters. Follow his guide for some rather interesting results, his step by step for Mega Man shouldn't take longer than 50 minutes.



1. I purchased all of my Perler beads online as I had a hard time finding separated colours in local stores. <http://www.koolstuff4kids.com> has everything you need at great prices. Search Google for coupon codes and promotions.

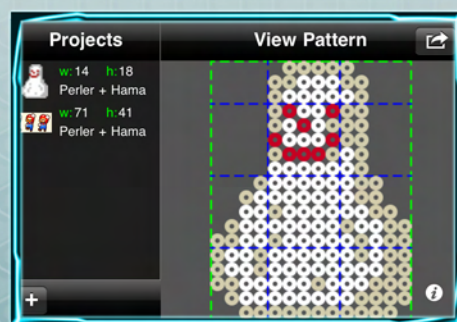


2. Once you have all the materials you need search for the sprite you would like to make. I find [www.nes-snes-sprites.com](http://www.nes-snes-sprites.com) to have a large database of sprites. Find the character you want to create and take a screenshot or download the image. Google Images is another great place to look.



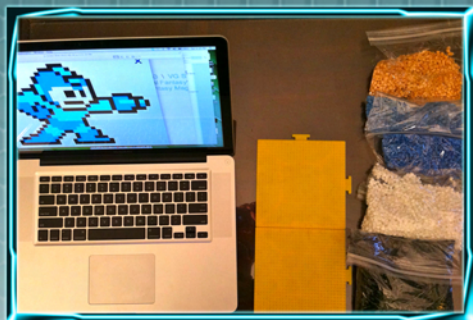
3. Materials:

Pegboard  
Beads  
Ironing paper or wax paper  
Iron



4. If you have an iPhone or iPad there is a great app called iBeadIt, available for just a few bucks. Load your image and select how large you want your bead art to be and the app creates a template which will list how many of each color you need to create your art.

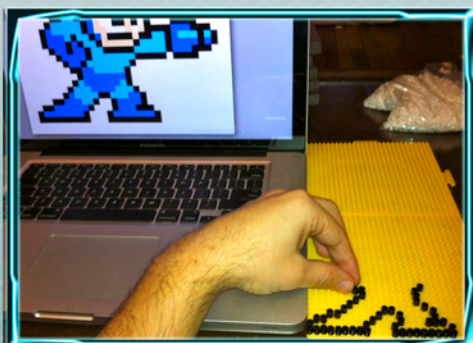




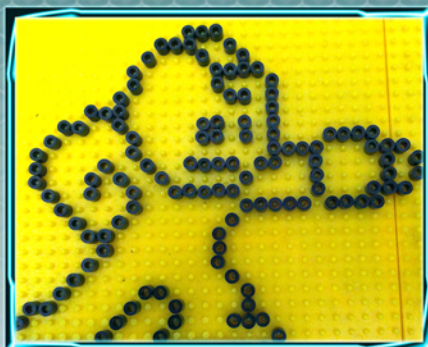
5. I decided to use my laptop as a guide to create Mega Man. I laid out the colors I needed and was ready to begin



6. The easiest way to begin is with an outline. Most NES Sprites have a black outline which makes black a great color to start with. Pour your beads into a bowl and begin with either the far left or far right pixel to ensure you don't run out of pegboard



7. Once you begin it moves pretty fast. Be sure to keep double checking your work as you go along. Even having a single bead in the wrong place can create a headache later on to fix once you have laid out hundreds of beads.



8. The outline is now complete and you can see the character begin to come to life. This outline took around 15 minutes to complete.



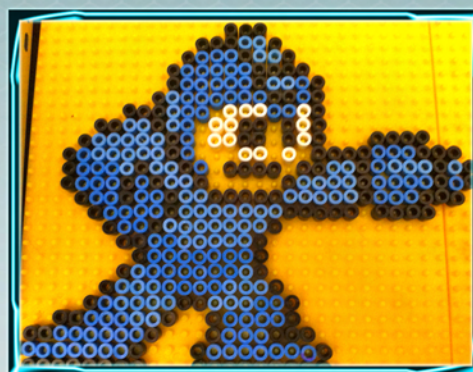
9. The beads are small and the pegs aren't very tall making it easy to knock beads out of their spot. Be careful, there is nothing more frustrating than having to replace dozens of beads that you knocked out of their place.



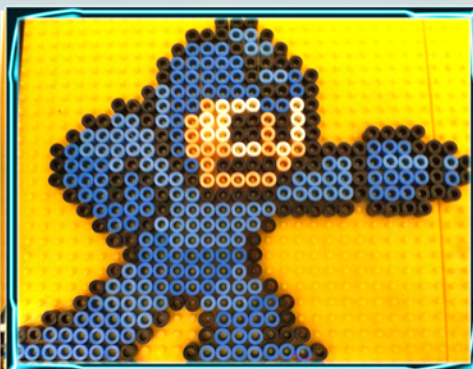
10. The darker shade of blue is complete.



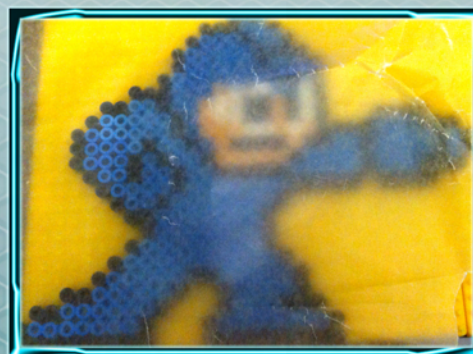
11. The lighter shade of blue is complete



12. Finished with the whites of his eyes



13. The finishing touches of Mega Man's face



14. There is special iron on paper that can be purchased for Perler beads but I typically use wax paper from the baking section of the grocery. It is much cheaper and seems to work just as well.



Matt wasn't content with a simple Mega Man sprite, speznding many hours with his beads here's a few other examples of what he created.



15. Let the iron warm up and begin ironing. This is the most difficult step as it is easy to knock beads out of place.



17. Once the beads have all fused together slowly remove the paper from the pegboard. This is the moment of truth, you will know quickly if you have ironed for too long (pegs melted to board), or not long enough (they fall apart when the paper is lifted). I still make mistakes when ironing sometimes as it is easy to get the iron too hot or not hot enough. A few practice runs and you will get the hang of it.

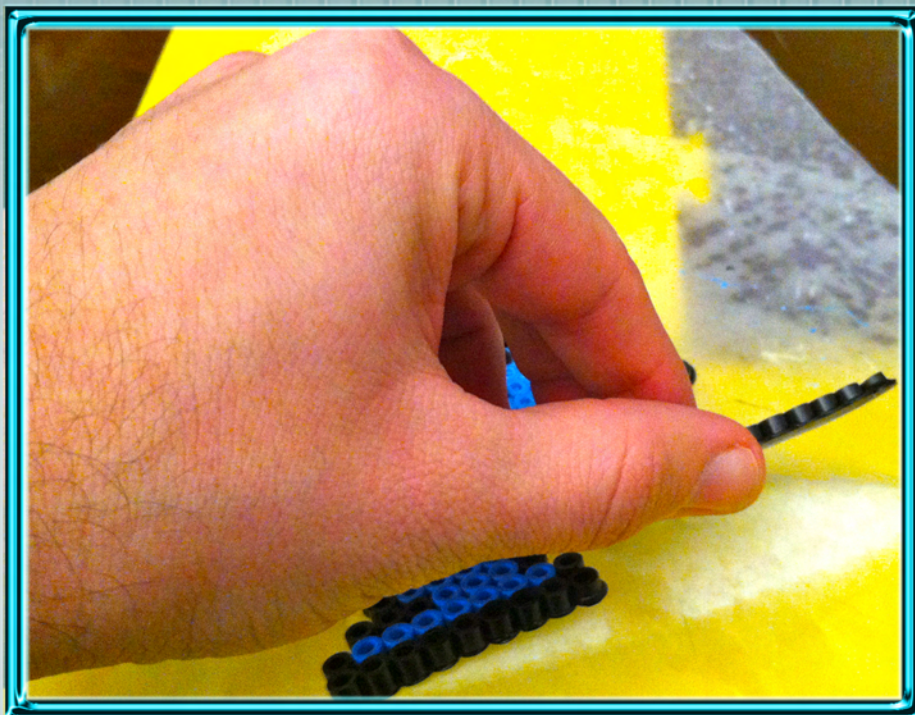
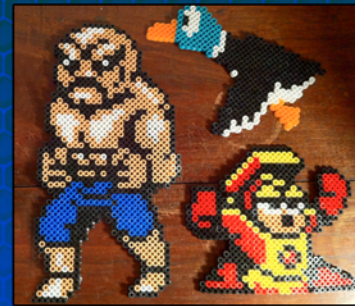
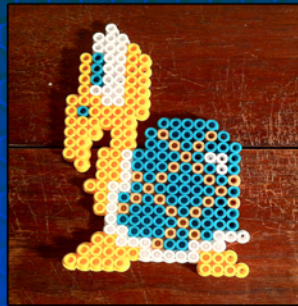
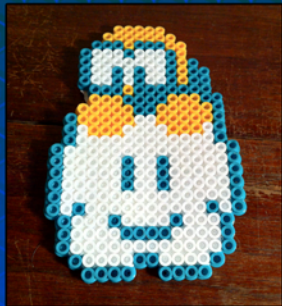


16. Keep removing the iron to check the progress. The beads should be melting together. Don't iron for too long or the beads will melt to the board and ruin the project. Notice Mega Man's gun is not completely melted together and needs a bit more ironing.

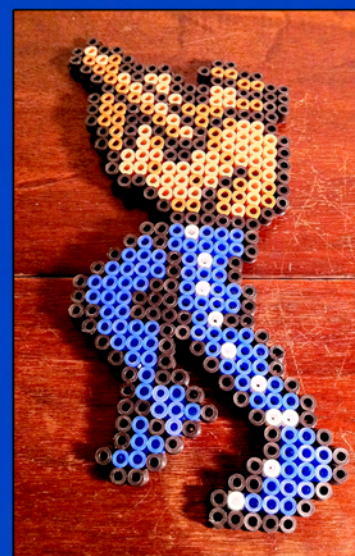


18. Flip the wax paper over to see the completed creation. Notice Mega Man's elbow has a bead that is a little out of place and looks like the iron was held on a little too long as some of the blue beads are beginning to melt. But, other than that he is looking pretty good.





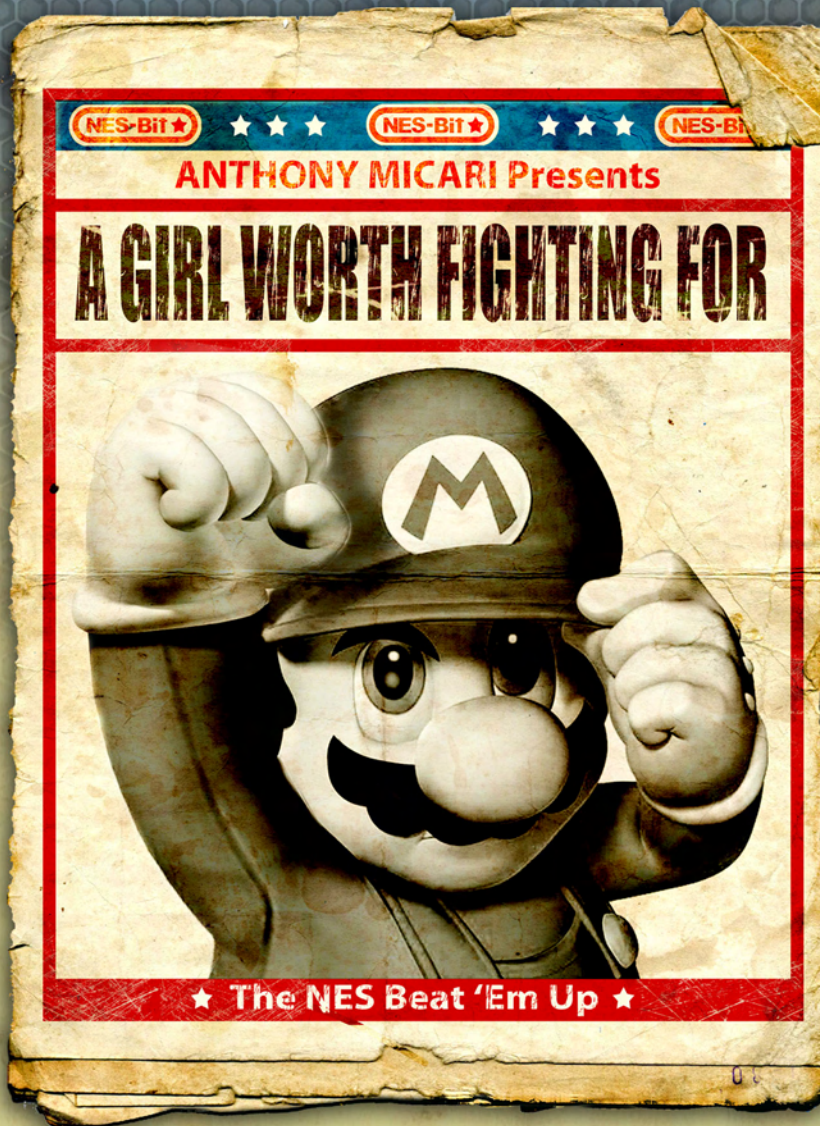
19. Wait a few minutes before peeling off of the wax paper. The figure will be very hot. You want to remove while it is still warm so the wax paper doesn't stick to the back side.



20. Show off your creation however you wish.



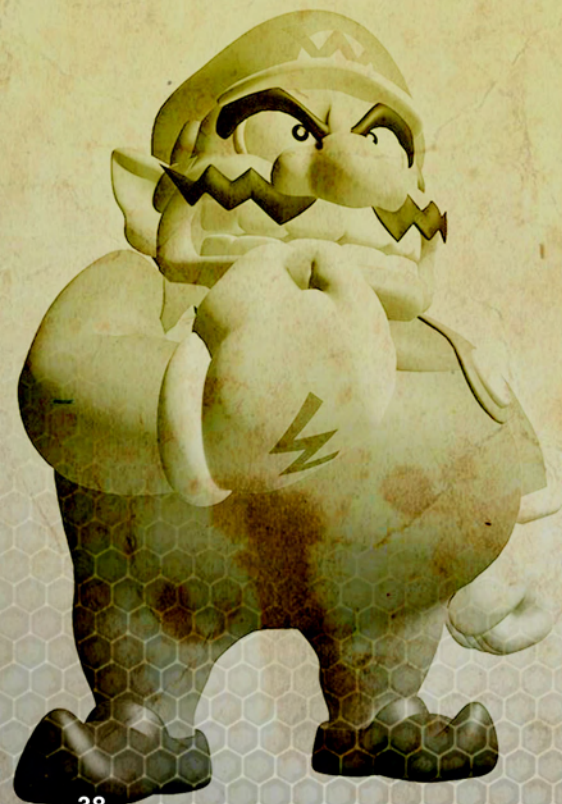




# WARIO

# VS

# MARIO



In the 80's and early 90's, movies about the depravity of cities were all the rage. Robocop had to clean up a futuristic Detroit plagued by criminals and the Ghostbusters had to deal with a river of slime produced by the negative emotions of New Yorkers. With the rise of crime in the 1970's another theme became more popular in media - the Vigilante who dealt with these citywide threats. The Punisher was introduced to comics, Death Wish had four sequels, and even the love story, Ghost, saw Patrick Swayze come back to bring justice to his killers. But even this very different group of vigilantes had something in common - they were protecting, or avenging the murder of, someone close to them.





So what were your favorite NES beat 'em up vigilantes kicking and punching for in their games? It's so easy to get caught up in the moves and strategies that we forget that at the center is a story of fighting for the one you love. Ok, so it's not Shakespeare, but you need something to justify putting several hundred thugs in the hospital.



## Double Dragon

One of the most popular beat 'em ups on the NES saw brothers Billy and Jimmy Lee fighting their way through the Black Warriors gang to rescue Marian. The brief intro sees her unceremoniously punched in the gut by a gang member, and then slung over his shoulder like a sack of potatoes. Talk about a bunch of jerks. This has to be the first instance of brutality to women on the NES. Of course, two characters fighting for the same girl can't end well, but NES players missed out on the sibling rivalry due to the lack of a two player mode.



The Arcade version saw Billy and Jimmy duke it out for Marian's affection after beating the final boss (so much for brotherly love). Alas, the sequel saw Marian get gunned down by the same gang, poor thing!

**"This has to be the first instance of brutality to women on the NES.."**



**Street Gangs/River City Ransom**  
Talk about stepping up! This classic beat 'em up (by the same developer as Double Dragon) sees Alex and Ryan fight through no less than nine gangs to rescue Ryan's girlfriend Cyndi. Forget about the fact that this is an extreme amount of violence for high schoolers to engage in, but Cyndi must have been kept waiting as players fooled around with the incredibly fun combat and lite RPG elements.



Fighting stats could be improved by visiting shopping districts and buying all manner of cool books and food items. Nothing gets you prepared for slamming a garbage can over someone's head like a sushi roll



## Adventures of Bayou Billy

This Cajun avenger, obviously capitalizing on the success of the film Crocodile Dundee, has to rescue his girlfriend Annabelle from the clutches of Gordo, who deserves a kick to the face for that name alone! The game incorporated driving and shooting gallery elements into the standard beat 'em up action as well. Anyone that tussles with crocodiles for their girlfriend definitely gets brownie points!



**"Cyndi must have been kept waiting as players fooled around.."**





## Battletoads

Reptilian revenge was in full force in the NES days with the popularity of Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. So the NES was graced with another trio – the Battletoads! Although instead of being named after Italian Renaissance Masters, they were named after gross skin blemishes – Rash, Zitz, and Pimple. Angelica, a princess, is captured along with Pimple by the Dark Queen while out on a joy ride. Grab your Proactiv solution and get to rescuing!



## Kung Fu

One of the first of the system's beat 'em ups, this saw you face an incessant stream of enemy combatants to rescue your girlfriend Sylvia from Mr. X. When you rescue Sylvia, she is kidnapped again and you go back to the beginning – like the movie Groundhog Day, but with more kicks to the balls.



Sure there are other beat 'em ups on the NES that see you rescuing the President or saving the world but I'd much rather be motivated by feminine wiles. If there is one lesson these villains should have learned, it is that if you are going to kidnap a girlfriend, make sure her boyfriend is not an insanely powerful karate master – and is preferably an only child.





# COLLECTORS CORNER



**Name:** Keith/imanerd0011. **Location:** Upstate NY



**Why did you start collecting for the NES and do you have a goal in mind:**

I've always loved the NES, as it was my first system, and some of my earliest memories are playing Super Mario Bros. and Kung Fu. When I was in High School EB Games was closing out on all of their NES games, so I figured I might as well buy all of them. I then started hitting up all the local pawn shops and shortly after this I started buying on eBay. I don't really have a goal in mind, although someday I hope to have a complete loose licensed set. Other than that, I try to buy all the rare items I can, as long as they are reasonably priced.



**Rarest NES item in your collection:**

The rarest NES game I have is Flintstones: Surprise at Dinosaur Peak, but the rarest item in my collection is either my talking Super Mario Bros 3 sign, my Mike Tyson's Punch Out 6 ft. Standee, or my 4 ft. World of Nintendo Neon Sign.



**What's the story behind you finding it:**

Well, it's not much of a story really. I just bought the copy of Flintstones: Surprise at Dinosaur Peak on eBay in 2004. Luckily for me the prices back then weren't anywhere near as crazy as they are now, and I only paid \$40 for it.



I guess the craziest story I have is that I went on a 6 hour (one way) road trip with my mom to pick up a World of Nintendo Neon sign. I won an auction on eBay for it, and the seller wouldn't ship it. This was before gas prices had skyrocketed, so the cost of gas wasn't much of a concern. She thought I was completely nuts for wanting to go get it, but didn't trust me driving that far by myself, as I had just graduated high school and had never been on a long trip by myself.



We pretty much just drove there, picked up the sign, and turned around. One of the longest days of my life, but I will never sell the sign, just because of the story behind it.



**Why is it so rare:** The reason Flintstones: Surprise at Dinosaur Peak is so rare is because it was a rental only game and was distributed at the end of the NES lifespan. Some collectors say that it was made specifically for Blockbuster, but others say that it was available to all video game rental stores. The reason my promo items are so rare is because they were never sold to the public and many of them were simply thrown away.





# ZELDA

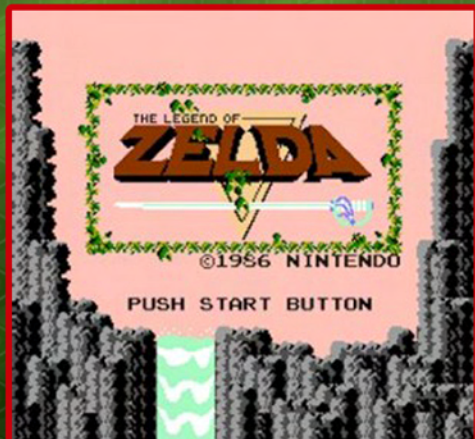
## THE LEGENDS COMPARISON

The Zelda games have defined the action adventure RPG for many years, Dan Stephenson takes a look at one of arguably the best Zelda games to see how it compares to its humble NES beginnings.

### PART ONE

#### THE LEGEND OF ZELDA - NES

In 1987 Europe was first introduced to the adventures of a boy called Link as he battled his way through several dungeons to rescue the Princess Zelda from the Evil Ganon and save the land of Hyrule. It's a simple enough story, one that has been around for years, but a story that captured the hearts of gamers and that spawned a series that is now 25 years old.



As well as the aforementioned characters and place there were other things that appeared in the first game that are still appearing



all these years later, the Triforce being the most obvious, but people may not remember or realise that staples of the franchise like the boomerang, the bow and arrow and the bombs were also introduced in the first game.

For The Legend of Zelda players were presented with an overhead perspective as they controlled Link through the Overworld, talking to Villagers and receiving clues on how to proceed. This view was kept throughout the many Dungeons that were in the game.



one difference to a lot of games at the time was the non-linear approach that was used for the



dungeons. Though it was easier to have completed the dungeon previous due to receiving an item that would be useful for the next it wasn't always imperative as due to the nature of the game it was possible to complete some of the dungeons in any order, except for the final dungeon which can only be accessed once the previous eight have been completed. It is in fact possible to reach Ganon without even collecting the sword at the very beginning of the game, though not possible to actually defeat him.

the game Animal Crossing in 2001, again for the GameCube.



Despite being a huge seller on release these days when discussing the Zelda series The Legend of Zelda tends to get overlooked due to the difficulty and due to the simplicity of the game compared to the later games in the series. Yes, it's more difficult compared to the later games and yes compared to modern games it's quite simplistic but that doesn't mean that it's a bad game, far from it. If you put in the time and dedication what you will find is a great game that thoroughly deserves a play



Once players had defeated Ganon they could access the Second Quest, a new and harder quest where enemies were stronger and dungeons and locations of items were different.



Such was the success of the game that it has been released several times since across numerous systems. It was released in 2003 for the GameCube on the Legend of Zelda: Collector's Edition, for the Game Boy Advance in 2002 as part of the Classic NES series and again for the Wii's Virtual Console in 2006. Another release was within





# ZELDA

## THE LEGENDS COMPARISON

It would be just one year later that a NES sequel was released but another five years until the Zelda series really exploded.

### PART TWO

## LEGEND OF ZELDA: A LINK TO THE PAST - SNES

In 1992 A Link to the Past was released in Europe for the Super Nintendo.



Considered by some to be the best game of the series, beating even Ocarina of Time, ALTP saw the series revert back to the overhead look of the first game, after Link's Adventure took on the side-scrolling perspective, ALTP not only took the view of the first game it also took the story and characters

and massively expanded on it. Players still had to find and conquer dungeons but this time round there was a lot more to the game.



The previously mentioned items like the boomerang returned and so did the use of magic from the second game but introduced were two more staples of the series, namely the legendary Master Sword and the ability to travel

between parallel worlds, this time between the light and dark worlds. Travelling between parallel worlds is something that has appeared since in the Zelda franchise but it was expertly done in ALTP. When Agahnim is first defeated it feels like the it should be the end of the game when in reality it is barely the beginning because as soon as you have defeated him, Link is warped to the dark world where the game really opens up and the adventure really begins.





Using a magic mirror and warp points players had to move between the two worlds to find items and to solve puzzles allowing entrance to the games many dungeons, again which there were many. Alongside the introduction of the magic mirror ALTP also introduced new items such as the Pegasus boots, the Hookshot (another staple of the series) and the magic hammer. To list each and everything that was new to the series in ALTP would result in a very long article but one major new addition to the series was the ability to upgrade certain items like the Boomerang by finding hidden locations.

There is not much that can really be said about A Link to the Past that hasn't been said before. It's an absolutely brilliant game that any fan of the series really should play and really does deserve the acclaim that is thrown its way. Not only is it a brilliant game in the Zelda series, it's a brilliant SNES game and a classic game overall.



Like the first game ALTP has since been released on other formats, again on the Wii's Virtual Console in 2007 and previously for the Game Boy Advance in 2002, though this time slightly differently to the original NES game. Whereas The Legend of Zelda was pretty much just straight ported to the GBA A Link to the Past was released with a new game that was developed by Capcom, the game being Four Swords.





# eBay

## Collectors Guide



By n-g-m

Place bid

Make offer

### Description

Approximately nine years ago, one of my friends told me about a website known as eBay. His mission was to collect G1 Transformer toys! Upon closer inspection I quickly realised that you could buy or sell pretty much anything and typed "Snake Rattle N Roll" into the search box. Amazed that you could still buy these games (and at a fairly cheap price at the time), my childhood spirit was rekindled and NES collecting became an instant hobby. In the nine years since, I have purchased and sold many games on EBay and have amassed a wealth of experience in this area.

This article is intended to help you – the NES enthusiast – build your own collection.

There are two main ways that people may decide to collect video games. One is to go for the complete collection of a specific format; the other is to focus on a particular franchise and related paraphernalia. You need to decide which one you prefer and how feasible your goal is in the long term. Personally, I think going after complete collections is both extremely costly and hard work (not stopped me trying though)! However, everyone has their own preferences.

Once you have decided which route to go there is another question that will need to be answered – Do you wish to purchase items complete in boxes or just unboxed? Again, the first one will administer a much larger beating to you available funds! Me? I have approximately 120 boxed NES games and the intention was to go for the complete set, but more on that later! Your ethos of collecting may also have a big impact here. True gamers will want to actually play the games. Therefore I suggest that this type of collector goes for a unboxed set; whereas others will just sit them on a pretty looking shelf to show off in all its glory.



OK – So now we are at the point where we can begin our journey into NES collecting on EBay. First of all, my best general tip to anyone wishing to start a collection is this:

**“Look for auctions only with bulk collections and then sell off what you don’t want”**

You can quickly amass a sizeable collection this way and selling off what you don’t want provides funds for new purchases. In some cases if you are lucky, you can even make a profit whilst still retaining items for your collection!

I will spend the rest of this article highlighting rarities; popular franchises; how collecting can change and, most importantly, what to look for in order to avoid being disappointed.

## WHAT TO LOOK FOR TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT

Those of you who are going for boxed collections will need to be very careful to avoid being ripped off by sellers. Unfortunately EBay can be a place where sellers are dishonest for one reason or another.

Hopefully this will help you avoid being one disappointed buyer. For additional information, NES-Bit has some excellent information on game codes etc

**“Personally, I hardly ever use the word as to not disappoint buyers.”**

First of all there are NO sealed UK PAL NES games. They didn’t come in cellophane wrapping; just the black Nintendo tab at the top. Games may have been sealed in Europe but they will not work on a UK NES without modification. Secondly, beware of games that are described as MINT.

Personally, I hardly ever use the word as to not disappoint buyers as I’m sure each of us has separate definitions of the word. MINT games cost a lot of money generally and you do not want to be ripped off.

**“EBay can be a place where sellers are dishonest for one reason or another.”**

Even more worrying is that recently, dishonest sellers are selling “reproduction” boxes as MINT. Be sure to ask for plenty of photos before splashing out. Lastly, I would also ask for the code at the bottom to check it is a UK game. NES-Bit has a pretty extensive list of all these and their variants.

## EXTRA’S

Some games came with little extra’s that add to the value. Nearly everyone knows about the map that came with the first Legend of Zelda but there are others. One example is a map which came with Metal Gear and Mike Tyson’s Punch-Out Had a certificate signed by Mike himself!



## RARITIES

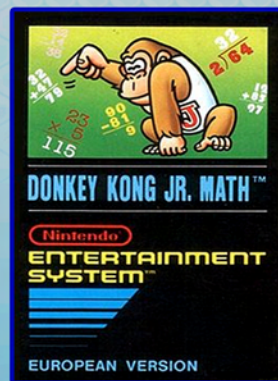
There are countless threads on internet forums that discuss the rarest games for a particular console. Rare games are usually the more expensive, but not always. Here are some of the rarest UK NES games to find:



Bartman VS Radioactive Man



Castlevania 3



Donkey Kong Jr Math



Lee Trevino's Fighting Golf  
(still 100% unconfirmed as even existing!)



## FRANCHISES

The NES saw the birth of some of the world most famous video game franchises today, the largest one of all being Mario. However many others made their first appearance on the NES too. A fitting tribute to this fantastic machine!

A few examples: Zelda, Mega Man, Castlevania, Metroid, Donkey Kong, Metal Gear, Double Dragon, Gadius, Probotector, Final Fantasy (US) and Wizards and Warriors.

Collecting Franchises, as I mentioned earlier, can be a preferred method of collection. But trying to collect complete series can be expensive, especially if you are after complete editions. The following is a UK NES release list of these series:

Castlevania, Simon's Quest & Castlevania 3: Dracula's Curse  
Donkey Kong, DK Junior (both black box),  
DK Junior Math, DK 3, Donkey Kong Classic (Orange box)  
Metal Gear & Snakes Revenge  
Double Dragon 1, 2 and 3  
Gadius & Life Force  
Salamander  
Mega Man 1, 2, 3 and 4 (5 & 6 were released in European format but not UK)  
Probotector & Probotector 2: Return of Evil Forces  
The Legend of Zelda & Zelda 2: The Adventure of Link  
Wizards and Warriors: Wizards and Warriors, Iron Sword & Wizards and Warriors 3.

Although some of the games in the aforementioned franchises can be considered rare, many people will use this word in the item description to encourage bids even if the game isn't. In my opinion games such as Mega Man 2, Simon's Quest and both Zelda's aren't particularly rare. However, they still cost quite a lot!

In addition to the franchises there is a whole series of "Black Box" games. These games were among the earliest NES games released dating back to the early-mid Eighties. These games are highly

sought after by collectors and do not appear very often. As a result, they usually command premium prices when they appear such as £70+ for a copy of Clu Clu Land.

## NES COLLECTING: The Changing Scene

Only recently, (within the past year or so) has NES collecting seemed to become much more expensive! Those of us who were lucky enough to start collecting early enough will have been able to pick up games much cheaper. An example would be my boxed series of Mega Man games, which cost me £70 about four years ago. They will fetch at least double this now! Providing reproduction boxes do not cause the CIB game prices to crash; I can see these games only increasing in value in the future.

One thing that is worth mentioning is to try and avoid buying games after there has been a great deal of publicity about the franchise (in the likes of Retro Gamer or Pixel Nation). Prices will rocket for a short period of time and then usually revert to normal. An example of this currently is the 25th Anniversary of The Legend of Zelda; prices have risen dramatically but should (hopefully) settle in the future. In contrast to buying however, this can be a perfect time to sell games for inflated prices and then rebuy them cheaper once the market steadies. More funds for you to buy new things!

## FINAL THOUGHTS

As I write this article, the nostalgia grows and I can feel an itching to either play NES games or go bargain hunting on eBay. Although it can be very addictive and satisfying to go for collections it is worth mentioning that you should only spend what you can afford. Snagging MINT games or bargains on eBay can be very addictive, but also expensive! If sensible financial restrictions are not adhered to, collecting can get you into trouble. Buy and sell sensibly and good luck on the collecting journey;

I only need another 200+ boxed games or so for the lot. Wish me luck and hope I don't go broke!

## RARITIES (continued)



M82 Shop Demo Unit



Miracle Piano Teaching System



Stack-Up  
(THE rarest UK NES game)

There are quite a few other games that are considered RARE but not mentioned here as it would be quite an extensive list.



**Name: Matt Hosley. Location: Lexington, KY**



**Why did you start collecting for the NES and do you have a goal in mind:** I started collecting games when PS1 was released and most of my friends had their NES in the closet and gave me the games for free. This was around the time I got the internet and I wanted to create my own webpage.

**“It was always more of a hobby than an obsession.”**



I created 'Hoz's 8-bit Nintendo Page' and traded emails with people around the world who also collected games. It was always more of a hobby than an obsession.

Once I had 40+ games I decided to try and get them all not realizing how hard that would be. That was 16 years ago and I've now acquired around 550 games.



That was 16 years ago and I now acquired around 550 games. I didn't really have a goal in mind initially, I just liked the idea of playing games I had read about in Nintendo Power but never had a chance to play.



**Rarest NES item in your collection:** I don't have any of the super rare games. Here are a few 'semi' rare games: all 4 Dragon Warriors, all 6 Mega Men, Contra Force (I sold the box and manual for \$1.00 before I knew it was worth quite a bit more), Zombie Nation, Tengen Tetris, Translated bootleg of Sweet Home, 2011 8-bit X-mas

**What's the story behind you finding it:** Zombie Nation and Tengen Tetris were found in a local shop called 'disc-replay'. They are the only 'rare' games I have seen in the wild so I picked them both up. The rest were bought online.



**“I didn't really have a goal in mind initially,”**

**Why is it so rare:** Until recently I just used my own judgement to judge the rarity of games. I used the maxim 'I don't remember it in the video store when I was a kid and don't remember reading about it in Nintendo Power so it must be rare'.







By Phil Greenhorn

Acquiring a Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) late in the console's commercial life was an unexpected surprise to someone as Nintendo-less as me. Meaning I have limited playing hours and knowledge within this new found gaming emporium. So I hope this little antidote of mine from a complete amateur doesn't offend, as I am still learning about this amazing system and company.

In the years when amusement arcades processed and transferred our consciousnesses into realms of fantasy and adventure for a modest outlay of pocket change, it's no surprise that Nintendo wished to develop its own arcade kingdom within the burgeoning American coin-op market.

Although reallocating their popular arcade titles didn't go as planned for then company president Hiroshi Yamauchi, as East and West's aesthetics were continents apart. By 1981 Nintendo of America (managed by Minoru Arakawa) was struggling and slowly running out of ideas until a young games designer conceived the quirky adventures of a rebellious pet gorilla, a carpenter named jumpman (aka Mario), and a damsel in distress. The story (if you can call it that!) involved Jumpman racing to the top of a construction site to rescue a damsel in distress from an angry barrel-throwing gorilla. This game looked out of

place in times of futuristic shooters and alien hordes, but the simple yet ingenious style of game play made it an instant hit both in Japan and America. The young prodigy was Shigeru Miyamoto and the game was Donkey Kong.



The Donkey Kong phenomenon made Nintendo realise that the company could license and convert different formats, to promote the development of its American subsidiary. However, a lawsuit nearly burst the Kong balloon. A well-known conglomerate claimed that the game or name Donkey Kong breached their intellectual property rights to King Kong. Unyielding, Nintendo faced MCA-Universal in the courts and won. This action established Nintendo as a force that would protect its reputation and future.

Since 1980, Hiroshi Yamauchi had pushed the idea of an affordable home console. This task fell to Masayuki Uemura, who had previously worked with Gunpei Yokoi on designing the Game & Watch product range. Gunpei was able to produce handheld gaming at an affordable price, by incorporating tried and tested ("withered") technology with the LCD display and button cell batteries, used in the early calculators and digital watches. Another important innovation was the unique control method consisting of two or four buttons arranged in a cross, up, down, left, right and jump depending on the style of game.

Realizing that this next generation console had to surpass its predecessors at an affordable price, Uemura again reverted to past technologies. By cleverly redesigning a CPU (Central Processing Unit) from the mid 1970's to increase its processing power and capabilities. Adding a extra components including memory and a graphics chip all benefited the looks and appeal of this new system.

Most importantly, incorporating the ingenious control system from Gunpei's Game and Watch, consisting of a directional pad +, four buttons labelled A, B, and Select and Start. This small flat and



highly durable control method soon became the preferred choice for gamers. By 1983 Nintendo had all of the necessary components in place, for the launch of the Family Computer or Famicom.

The Famicom was an instant success in Japan, but a hardware-manufacturing fault with early batches caused Nintendo some embarrassment. Yamauchi acted swiftly by recalling all of the faulty hardware. This action was a costly gamble, but had a positive effect in relations with Japanese consumers, and sales continued to grow.



Yamauchi confidently decide to take on the American home console market. However, the U.S gaming industry was imploding in 1984. Many a company went to the wall; so the very idea of an unknown commodity and machine entering this volatile market was either laughed at or ignored. Atari was offered a licensing deal, but for some reason, the contracts never materialised, which was a good thing, in retrospect!

The lonely task fell back on Nintendo of America's (NOA) shoulders. Minoru Arakawa's first decision was to re-brand the Famicom for the North American market as an entertainment device rather than a videogames console. Initially renamed the Advanced Video System, NOA hired a small stand at the 1984 Consumer Electronics Show (CES), and began to demonstrate their new machine to as many retailers as possible.

With virtually no sales and poor feedback from customer research, Arakawa was considering giving up on Nintendo's American dream. Yamauchi was adamant that the system would be a hit, especially as the Famicom had already sold over 3 million units since its debut in its native land. Arakawa had to rethink the marketing strategy, and the console itself.

The Famicom (Advanced Video System) design was transformed; the cartridge slot was moved from the top of the console to the front, like many VCRs of the day. The Famicom controllers were hardwired to the system, with one containing a microphone and a volume control instead of the Select and Start Buttons. The controllers were redesigned to unplug from the unit. The colour scheme was altered from white and red with gold trim to a larger grey box and rechristened again the Nintendo Entertainment System or NES for short.

Not content with the resigned console, two peripherals were now included: a light gun (The Zapper) with game Duck Hunt, and R.O.B. (Robotic Operation Buddy, developed by Gunpei Yokoi) that supposedly interacted with games Gyromite and Stack Up. Arakawa prepared for the 1985 CES show with R.O.B. and the Zapper as the main exhibits along with some arcade game conversions. R.O.B. did attract some renewed interest, but no orders were made.

NOA's next foray was to entice New York retailers over the Christmas 1985 holiday period. With a small loyal team, Arakawa offered major shopping chains a proposal that if they stocked the NES, his team would arrange the advertising and stands. NOA would buy back any unsold units; the only loser would be Nintendo. This was a brave move, as it went against the wishes of Nintendo Co. Ltd in Kyoto

The systems didn't particularly sell well at first, but it was enough to gain the retailers confidence and very few returned their stock, allowing NOA to expand its operations to other retailers across America. When Shigeru Miyamoto transformed the character

into Mario the plumber and released Super Mario Bros in 1986 as a NES package, Yamauchi began to realise his American dream.

Whether Japanese or American, Yamauchi was adamant on protecting the name and reputation of Nintendo, from poor quality and unlicensed merchandise. Japanese companies had already signed a licensing deal, but the new American market still had to comply. This wasn't going to be easy as the contract was strict and in Nintendo's favour.

Yamauchi was keen not to allow the NES be over-supplied with poor quality software products. He included within the licence that a company could only develop and publish five games per year, and for Nintendo's machines alone, for up to two years. Whether shrewd business on Nintendo's part or not, this clever way of controlling its inventory control possibly stopped America's gaming industry from collapsing altogether.



Nintendo's decision not to follow and conquer the UK and mainland European markets has been a rather a conundrum, as we had the Sinclair ZX Spectrum, Commodore 64 and Sega Master System to play with. By the time the NES appeared in the UK (1987), Nintendo still seemed disinterested in gaining a market share comparable to those achieved in the U.S and Japan. The quality of Nintendo's gaming library could have been just the thing we required back then, and for me still am experiencing to this day.



# Big Dan's Cheat-O-Rama



Big Dan, the cheat wizard, spends a great deal of time searching through his NES collection to bring you some of his favourite tips & tricks

## Nintendo World Cup



Passwords for every round possible:

10307 – second match  
30707 – third match  
01507 – fourth match  
22007 – fifth match  
72107 – sixth match  
11507 – seventh match  
42407 – eighth match  
62607 – ninth match  
60207 – tenth match  
22307 – semi finals  
12807 – finals

## Parodius



### Full Power

For full power press  
Up, Up, Down, Down,  
Left, Left, Right,  
Right, A, B, A and B

## POW



### Extra Lives

Press A, B, B,  
Up, Up, Down,  
Left and Start on  
the title screen  
for extra lives.

## Rad Racer



### Continue

To continue on the  
same track you  
previously racing on  
you need to press A  
and Start  
simultaneously

## Probotector



### 30 Lives

Before the music stops  
on the title screen  
enter Up, Up, Down,  
Down, Left, Right, Left,  
Right, B, A and Start  
to gain a few extra  
lives.



## Robocop



### Infinite continues

When out of continues you can get more by pressing A, B, Select and Start on the title screen.

## Rockin' Cats



### Recharge energy

To recharge your energy as often as you like just pause the game and hold Down, A, B and then press Start.

## Snake Rattle N Roll



### Warp to level 3

Go to the first island and press B and A to warp to level 3.

## Solar Jetman



### Secret level

To access a secret level enter the following code: BKKKBKKHMBHMB

## Sword Master



### Infinite continues

On the title screen hold Down and press Select. Now press Start and infinite continues shall be yours.

## Thunderbirds



### Level select

On the title screen press and hold Up, Left diagonal and press Reset. When the title screen reappears press A, B and Select to choose any stage.

## Total Recall



### Extra life

Sit through the cinema credits to gain an extra life.

## Track and Field



### Last day codes

US - 54HLPJHNI  
GB - YAWWWHJ45  
France - 5ZHDPZJ2S  
USSR - 2M15PZJWS

## Vigilante



### Level select

To enter a secret level select menu press Up, Left, A and B on the title screen.





# COLLECTORS CORNER

Name: Aaron Norton. Location: Gillette, Wyoming.



**Why did you start collecting for the NES and do you have a goal in mind:** I've had the collecting bug in me for as long as I can remember and I've had the gaming bug since my brother received a NES for his Birthday in 1987. I've kept all my games from my childhood and one day it just hit me, I should see how many NES games are out there. My search began at local thrift shops and the internet, it rapidly grew from there. My ultimate goal for collecting is rather ambitious. I'm working towards collecting every Nintendo game released from 1985 – 2006, not including DS/Wii. I would estimate I'm about 70% complete with consoles and 10% with handheld. I've just started collecting handhelds.



**Rarest NES item in your collection:** It's funny, I'm about 30 NES games away from a licensed set. Every single one left of them can be considered quite rare. So I have a lot of carts, but not a lot of rares. That said, my rarest would probably be my Action 52 cart.

**What's the story behind you finding it:** Action 52 was the first NES cart I had bought in probably 15 years. It seemed that anytime I read something about retro gaming on the internet its name would pop up. As if it was haunting me, everytime I'd turn around it was there. It had a reputation for being terrible, but I thought to myself, how bad could it be? I had to



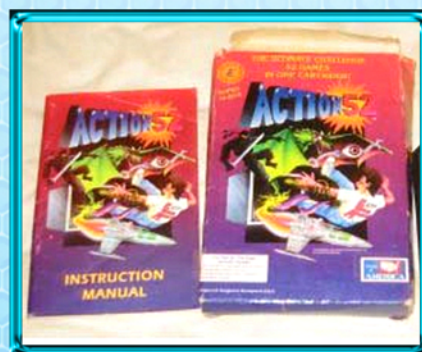




find out. I searched ebay and found a copy for \$40 shipped (this was 2007, the game was pretty cheap then). i didnot collect games at the time, but thought what the heck, let's give this a try. One week later I received my very own Action 52 game. I popped it in my NES, suffered through all 52 games and from then on a true believer of its terribleness.

**"It's 52 games of bad programming, bad ideas and bad energy. Action 52 is the stuff of nightmares."**

This unlicensed cart was produced by a small company named Active and retailed for \$100. Thankfully for the gaming public this game had low production numbers and low sales, so not many people had to suffer through it. Making this a rather rare game to come across.



**Why is it so rare:** Action 52 cart is rather infamous due to its overwhelming poor quality. It's 52 games of bad programming, bad ideas and bad energy. Action 52 is the stuff of nightmares.







**I WANT YOU  
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**NEAREST RECRUITING STATION**

## Top 5 Games For NES Newcomers

By Eric Bailey

Whether you have a modern-gaming friend who has expressed a curiosity for older games, or want to show your kids something cool, or your classics-fan friend always preferred the Master System but never played the NES – Whatever your motivation, you may have a reason to try and recruit someone into the sweet-lovin' community of 8-bit Nintendo Entertainment System fans.

Maybe what you're after is just a fun little gameplay session, rather than full-on recruitment; but honestly,

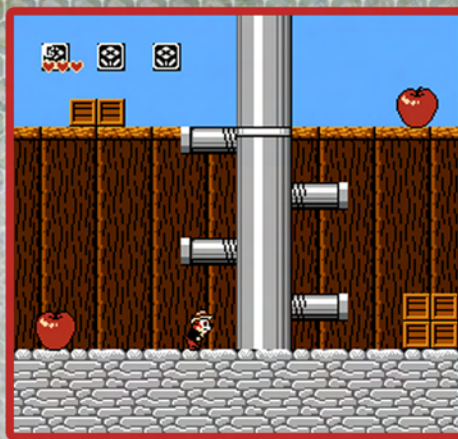
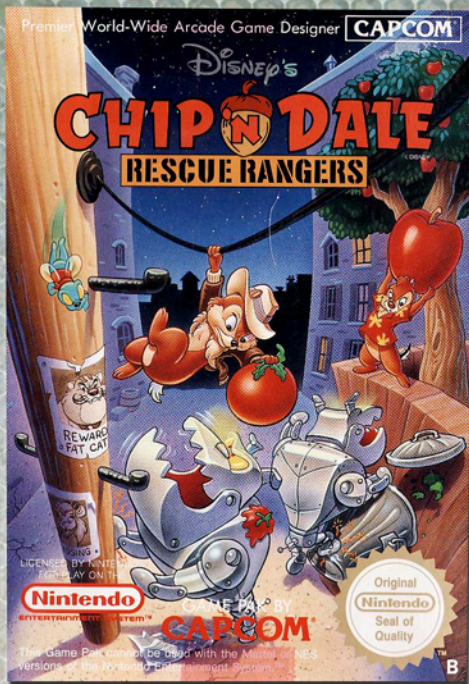
either way, what you need is a ready-made list of a handful of games that are appropriate for NES newcomers. These need to be cartridges that are not too rare, are easy to play but not childish, fun without being too nuanced, preferably playable with two people, PAL region, and just-plain fun enough to return to another day. Ideally, we are even going to avoid the big name games, purely to avoid any potential jaded preconceptions, and increase the likelihood of the experience

coming as a pleasant surprise. This means no Mario, no Mega Man, etc.

After much thought along those guidelines, I humbly present my picks for the Top 5 Games For NES Newcomers, with a brief explanation for each choice.

**RECRUITING  
THIS WAY**





Those factors combine to make it a great choice, but what makes this a perfect selection for NES newcomers is the fact that it is not too difficult, but just long enough to feel like a worthy challenge, especially as an introductory.

Also, although it is not really a two-player game, the fun comes in trying to solve the puzzles together; imagine either taking turns at the boards, or one person shouting suggestions to the other, quickly making this a cooperative teamwork exercise.

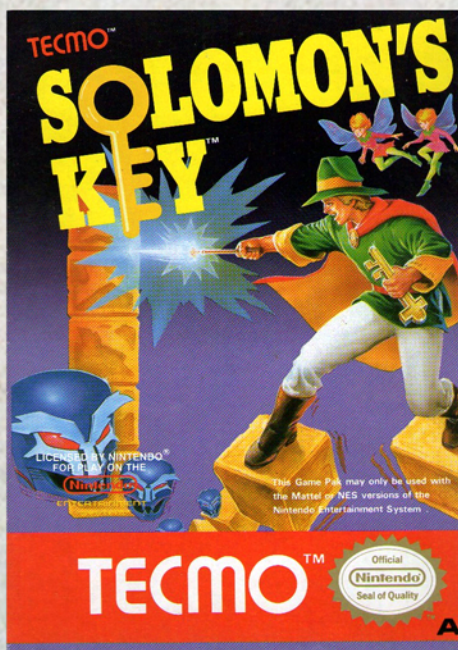


## 1. Disney's Chip 'n' Dale Rescue Rangers

The NES had a ton of side-scrolling platformers released for it, each with wildly varying degrees of gameplay quality and replayability. Capcom was a company that definitely put out some of the best titles for the category, and their Disney-brand carts were no exception:



Its "kiddie" feel aside, Rescue Rangers is a rock-solid game, with a decent graphics, sharp sound, and even a two-player co-op function, which is surprisingly rare for the genre.



## 2. Solomon's Key

Readers familiar with this game may balk and think, "What? Really? Isn't that game super tough and very demanding?" Hear me out on this one: Solomon's Key is a unique title, providing a distinctive action/puzzle hybrid form for the player. It is certainly not for everyone, but very appropriate when trying to provide a variety of experiences.



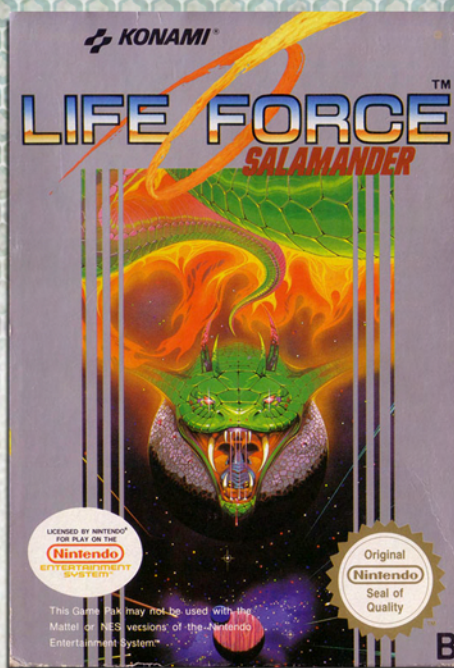
## 3. Pin\*Bot

Pin\*Bot, based on the legendary pinball machine, is a great cartridge to show off the hardware capabilities of the NES, with some stunning background music, innovative visuals, and even some eerily enjoyable robotic speech effects. But what may make this a wonderful "gateway game" for NES newcomers is the simple, nostalgic appeal of making a pinball game into a video game.





Pin\*Bot is a solid game on its own merits, but the bonus of helping to show what the NES can do, in terms of technical aspects and gameplay possibilities, makes it fantastic.



#### 4. Life Force Salamander

The shoot-'em-up genre has a hard-core, loyal fan base. These games are not for everyone; but, for whatever mystical reason, they strike some particular people as their favorite games.



The reason may not be easy to make clear in words, but some take to these games naturally, and instantly fall in love. And when introducing someone to the shmup genre, why not begin with one of the all-time best? Even for general gaming fans, Life Force provides a rich, deep, endlessly respectable time.



#### 5. Probotector

If we strip away the etiquette, the formalities, and the saccharine sentiments, we face the cold truth that, ultimately, when we play with a friend, we are probably just looking for an action-packed explosive good time. When nothing else will do, when the situation demands a bit of adrenaline, and when no more excuses can be accepted, just reach for Probotector and start blasting away at the alien onslaught. Your enjoyment is guaranteed.



*Eric Bailey is an enthusiast of the NES who currently runs NintendoLegend.com, which is a crazy quest to write a quality review for every American release for the console, and can be reached at [thenintendolegend@gmail.com](mailto:thenintendolegend@gmail.com)*



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By  
*Dan Stephenson*

Thinking of hitting the Car Boot sales in the coming months to pick up those retro goodies on the cheap? Here are some handy tips to help you find some bargains.

1. Turning up early is a given, but how early should you turn up ideally? If the buyers' entrance time is an hour after the dealers' entrance, then arrive as soon as possible. Hopefully by then the greedy dealers will have already been round. If it's a dealers and sellers at the same time place, then I would recommend arriving twenty to thirty minutes after opening to allow for sellers to get themselves sorted.
2. Alternatively, turning up near the end can sometimes work in your favour. Some sellers will just want to get rid of their stock in order to save taking it home, and therefore will be more willing to take lower prices.
3. Take as much pocket change as possible. Yes, some sellers will have change, but how would you feel if someone tried to buy a games priced at 50p with a £20 note?
4. Don't be afraid to haggle. Conversely, don't take the mick: Somebody selling five NES games for a fiver, offer £4. Worst they can say is no. However, if somebody is selling five NES games for a quid, don't try and haggle it down to 50p.
5. Don't get despondent. I went five weeks to a Car Boot sale without buying a single retro gaming item, yet on the sixth week I managed to pick up a complete boxed Commodore Amiga 500 with joystick and 21 complete games for just £10.
6. Try to not show 'obvious' body language. Somebody selling a rare game for £1, don't stand there looking all gleeful shouting out how ridiculously cheap it is. You might suddenly find the price quickly going up...
7. Do a quick walk and then a slow walk. The first thing I do when I arrive is quickly walk round the place looking at stalls to see if I can spot any obvious things on peoples stalls. After then I then go round again having a proper look under tables, in boxes etc.
8. Have fun. At the end of the day, it's a place to see if you can pick up cheap bargains. So take your time, wander around and have a good day!





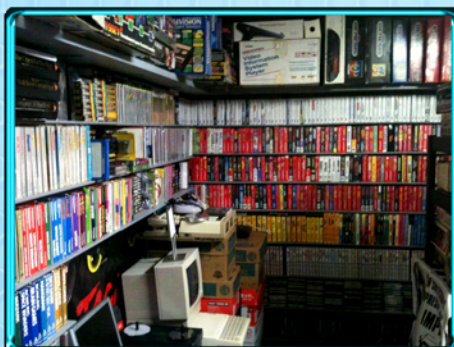
# COLLECTORS CORNER

Name: John Hancock. Location: Longview, WA



**Why did you start collecting for the NES and do you have a goal in mind:** Early in college(1995) I started to track down all the Nes Games I had earlier in life. Back then there were alot fewer collectors(and information). I lived in Northern California at the time and mostly got my early collection from thrift stores, rental stores, and pawn shops. I then extended my search to Oregon and Washington when I was having a hard time tracking down games.

**“I started to immediately get offers on the cart”**



Since I have a US licenced cart set wth about 550 of them boxed, my goal is to hopefulliy find boxes for the rest of them, financially permitting. The problem with me is that I collect alot of things other than nes too, lol. Most of all though, is to have fun doing so.

**Rarest NES item in your collection:**  
My default answer is a NTSC Stadium Events







### What's the story behind you finding it:

**Great Story!** I won a mystery auction in 2005 at Classic Gaming Expo for a mere \$100, which was all the money I had left for the show.

sealed Cheethamen III! The nice thing at the time is that I already had a sealed Cheetahmen III! Needless to say that this transaction completed my NES set...now for those boxes!

store shelves due to Nintendo purchasing the Family Fun Fitness technology that was then used in the creation of the Power Pad. It is believed that only a couple hundred carts were sold before all remaining stock was field destroyed. Keep note that the rarity is for the NTSC version and not to be confused with Stadium Events from other regions, which are easier to acquire.



I actually came late to the auction and was in the very back row. The content of the auction was a very rare and elusive Atari 2600 cart Magicard. I started to immediately get offers on the cart. I then decided that I could use the cart as trade for Stadium Events. I had multiple offers from people to trade me, and I ended up trading the cart for not only a Stadium Events, but a



**Why is it so rare:** Limited Distribution and Sales, as well as a very short time span of actually being available to purchase the cart. The cart was pulled from





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# H. G. G. HOOK

THE MAGICAL SPIRIT OF SPIELBERG REIMAGINES YOUR MICRO

Ocean

Available on Nintendo

# Creepy, Kooky, Ooky, Spooky!

## Addams Family

Available on Nintendo

AMSTRAD - ATARI ST - CIBI AMIGA

# Coming to a Nintendo ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM near you

## Explosive Games!

# BRILLIANT!

## adventure of a lifetime!

### DIZZY

CODEMASTERS

# NES The Best You can Get!

**Nintendo ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM™**

# EXCELLENT!

## GAME GENIE is here!

INFINITE LIVES  
JUMP HIGHER  
PUNCH HARDER  
RUN FASTER  
SKIP LEVELS  
LIVE FOREVER  
AND MORE!

930 CODES

GAME GENIE HELPLINE  
0843 231 088

# THE ORIGINAL!

## - OF A GREAT SERIES

### DOUBLE DRAGON

Jimmy and Billy Lee grew up on cold, tough streets. Learn the ways of the Martial Arts to protect themselves from the vicious street gang - so Jimmy and Billy can kick, punch and headbutt their way out of trouble, and are inseparable. But it's mean out there on the street...

Nintendo





**Nintendo**  
ENTERTAINMENT  
SYSTEM™

**GAME BOY**



*"If you haven't played Lemmings yet then this is a must buy.  
A true Classic!"*



*"Anyone who has played Lemmings will tell you it's possibly the most playable game of all time."  
- E. BROWN, IGN*



*"Lemmings is a classic game that has stood the test of time. It's a must have for any Game Boy owner."*



ocean

**STORM**  
A Division of  
**Entertainment**

So, actually, before choosing what the  
new shows have and seeing  
the results of the previous season's  
viewer ratings survey.

Only some games will come close  
to hanging out at the top of these  
lists. If the shows' lead characters  
to become like the real world actors.  
At some of these levels will be not  
to get a... make the right time and  
if you're not out at the edge of your seat  
to watch a series of new characters  
your job, you're watching them.

66 "Based on the top 10 in the Nielsen  
data. A weekly game show, it's  
the best of the 1980s, 1990s, and  
the 21st century. **CASTELIAN** is  
a fun, fast-paced board game."

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# ROBOCOP 2

## HE'S BACK

NOW ON YOUR 



Seven levels of muscle-straining reflex-testing, sideways scrolling fury! Destroy the lethal drug Nuke, face a stream of deadly Nuke gangs, and then it's your survival - face the terror that is RoboCop 2!

MORE THAN A GAME - ROBOCOP 2 INSPIRES DISASTERS.



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NAME & GAME

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