

Video and Computer Games, Part I: Consoles

A survey of some of the most
influential and outstanding games
and how games have changed over
time

James Tam

Some Of The Major Console Manufacturers¹

- Coleco
- Atari
- Mattel
- Nintendo
- Sega
- Sony
- Microsoft

¹ Background material for the "Consoles" section "The ultimate history of video games: the story behind the craze that touched our lives and changed world, from Pong to Pokemon and beyond..." (Steven L. Kent, Three rivers press 2001)

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Major Players: Early Consoles (1970s)

- Coleco Telstar (1976)
- Atari 2600 (1977)
- Mattel Intellivision (1979)

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Coleco



Telstar: www.en.wikipedia.org

- 1976: releases the Telstar game console.
 - Between 1976 – 1978 a series of dedicated (games were hard-wired) consoles are released.
- 1982: Colecovision released
 - Generic console: games were executed from read-only **cartridges**.



Colecovision: www.en.wikipedia.org

- 1988: Coleco goes bankrupt

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Atari



Atari 2600 VCS

- 1972: Founded by Nolan Bushnell and Ted Dabney.
- 1976: Sold to Warner communications for 28 million.
- 1977: 2600 VCS (Video Computer System) released.
- Some of it's notable games:
 - 1979: released Asteroids its best selling game
 - 1979: Warren Robinett introduces the concept of Easter Eggs in the game 'Adventure'.
 - 1980: releases Space Invaders for the 2600.
- Fate of Atari:
 - 1984: Atari corporation bought by Jack Tramiel (but arcade division retained).
 - Later sold to a disk drive manufacturer JTS and again to Hasbro Interactive.

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Mattel



Intellivision: <http://www.nationalmediamuseum.org.uk>

- 1979: Releases the Intellivision
 - Ads featured head to head comparisons with it's major competitor console.



www.en.wikipedia.org

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Major Next Generation Consoles (1980s)

- Nintendo
 - NES (Nintendo Entertainment System) (1985)
 - Gameboy (1989)
- Sega
 - Sega Genesis (1987/1989)

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Major Next Generation Consoles (1990s)

- Nintendo
 - Super NES (1991)
 - 64 bit Nintendo 64 (1995/1996)
- Sega
 - Saturn (1994/1995)
 - Dreamcast (1998/1999)
- Sony
 - PlayStation 1 (1994/1995).

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Major Next Generation Consoles (2000s)

- Nintendo
 - 2001: releases GameCube
 - 2006: Wii released
 - 2010: 3DS
- Sony
 - PS2 (2000)
 - PS3 (2006)
 - PS4 (2013)
 - PS5 (Now – if you can get one in 2020 :’(…)
- Microsoft
 - Xbox (2001)
 - Xbox 360 (2005)
 - Kinect (accessory released in 2010/2012)
 - Series S, X (2020)

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Nintendo



www.nintendo.wikia.com

- 1889: Fusajiyo Yamauchi founds the Marufuku Co to manufacture and distribute Hanafuda (Japanese playing cards).
- 1951: Company named change to Nintendo “Leave luck to heaven”
- 1978: releases its first arcade game Othello.
- 1985: released the NES (Nintendo Entertainment System).
- 1989: releases the Game Boy.
- 1991: Super NES.
- 1995: 64 bit Nintendo 64 released in Japan (1996 in US).
- 1996: sells its billionth cartridge.

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Nintendo (2)

- 2001: releases GameCube in the US.
 - Example: 3D GameCube game: [\(Real 3D\) Highway Star - NES Longplay \(Famicom 3D\) \(Rad Racer\) - YouTube](#)
- 2006: Wii released
 - Innovative method of interaction (“nunchuck”)
 - Initial competitor (Sony) reaction: ‘tilt-controlled’ game controller.
- 2011 Nintendo 3DS available:



<http://www.pcworld.com>

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Sega



www.flippers.com

- 1964: Rosen Enterprises merges with Service Games to form Sega Enterprises
- 1965: releases Periscope a coin-op arcade game (the high shipping costs require 25 cents – this amount becomes the standard).
- 1987: releases the 16 bit Mega Drive console in Japan (1989 released as Sega Genesis: gets majority in the US console market by 1992).
- 1994/1995: releases Sega Saturn (year later in US).
- 1998/1999: Releases its Dreamcast console.
- Eventually gave on console development in favor of game development.

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Sony



- 1994: Releases PlayStation in Japan (a year later in US).
 - CD (Sony) vs. Cartridge (Nintendo 64)
- 2000: The PS2 (PlayStation 2) released in Japan and US.
 - DVD
- 2006: The PS3 (PlayStation 3) released.
 - Superior graphics (and other capabilities e.g. Blu-ray DVD)
- 2013: The PS4 (PlayStation 4) released at the end of this year.
 - Features expanded beyond just gaming e.g. better support for streaming movies, built in web browser

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Sony (2)

- 2020: PS 5 (PlayStation 5)
 - [Nearly impossible to find](#) (Dec 2020)
 - Raw 'specs' are very close to the competition (slight edge vs. the competition)
 - [PS5 vs. Xbox Series X: Which console wins? | Tom's Guide](#)
 - [PS5 vs Xbox Series X: which next-gen console should you buy? | TechRadar](#)

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Microsoft

- 2001 releases its Xbox console
- 2005 released its Xbox360 console
 - 2010 the Kinect is released for the Xbox360
 - A "souped-up" mode of interaction as compared to the Wii nunchuk
 - 2012 a computer version of the Kinect is released.
- 2020 Xbox series S, X
 - *Later in 2020): console is now available for purchase.

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References

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After This Section You Should Now Know

- General information
 - Release dates: consoles and games
- Gaming consoles
 - The companies that produced the consoles
 - What were the major events in their history and when did they occur
 - Who were the important people behind the game companies
 - What were some of the distinguishing characteristics of the consoles

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