

Nintendo's history is a long one. There's a reason Nintendo is known as, "The Grandfather of Video Gaming." Founded in 1889 after the fall of the Shogunate and rise of the Emperor Meiji in Japan, Nintendo was the primary manufacturer of Hanafuda playing cards. These playing cards were traditional "flower cards" and became wildly popular. Nintendo eventually moved on to the more common playing cards, which sold very well to the rest of the world, and even better in Japan itself. This production of playing card manufacturing would continue uninhibited for nearly a century.

Eventually, partnered with the likes of Mitsubishi in 1975, Nintendo created one of the first video game consoles. This tremendous accomplishment would lead Nintendo on a path to becoming one of the greatest video game developers. But, for the time, Nintendo would work with video games primarily through arcade machines. Such large, dedicated machines were much easier to work with given the technology. Through incremental developments and inventions, Nintendo released their line of portable LCD gaming consoles called, "GAME & WATCH" in 1980. They were moderately popular in Japan, and opened the door to the concept of handheld gaming devices.

Then, later that same year, Nintendo would develop the idea for an arcade game that would have a carpenter jumping over barrels to save his girlfriend from a giant ape. As you can probably guess, this was Donkey Kong, one of the most legendary games in history. Donkey Kong would release in 1981, and very quickly became the best selling coin-operated arcade machines in the industry. Donkey Kong would put Nintendo firmly in the spotlight of arcade game development.

A short few years later in 1984, Nintendo would develop and release to Japan their independent home video game console called the Famicom, later renamed to the Nintendo Entertainment System when it released to the rest of the world. Nearly every game released on the system was a major success, everything from Excitebike and Punch-Out!, to The Legend of Zelda, Metroid, and Super Mario Bros. Mario especially became an icon in the mid 80's, becoming a character on the same level with Mickey Mouse and Bugs Bunny.

And only 5 years later, Nintendo returned to the handheld game system with The Game Boy. Over the next decade, The Game Boy would become the single best console in history, selling upwards of 100 million consoles. This immense popularity was aided by the launch of games such as Pokémon Red & Blue and Tetris.

Over the years, Nintendo would produce a myriad of gaming consoles, both home and handheld consoles. They are, in chronological order: The Super Nintendo Entertainment System (SNES), Nintendo 64, Game Boy Color, Nintendo GameCube, Game Boy Advance (and GBA-SP), Nintendo DS, Game Boy Micro, Nintendo Wii, Nintendo 3DS, Nintendo Wii U, and most recently the Nintendo Switch. Most of these consoles were commercial success, and consoles like the Wii and DS were rivaled only by The Game Boy itself.

And to talk of all the great games on these consoles across the decades would be a list too large to give. Needless to say, nearly every console has had one or more games that have broken 10 million units sold.

Nintendo's history is one of fun. Ever since the beginning, it was this company's desire to bring fun to those who followed them. As one of the presidents of Nintendo's American branch once said, "If it's not fun, why bother?" And they have certainly succeeded on that front. Hundreds of millions of people have had fun with their games over the years, and millions more will continue to enjoy them for years to come.

*Nintendo History.* (2015). Nintendo of Europe GmbH. Retrieved 2021, from

<https://www.nintendo.co.uk/Corporate/Nintendo-History/Nintendo-History-625945.html#1889>