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I was born in the early 90’s, an era filled with video games, I played many of them, across a wide number of different consoles from Nintendo, Microsoft, Sony, SEGA and more. So thankfully I had the honour of experiencing video games from many generations as I grew older.Alongside my 12+ years within the gaming industry, our team here at Retro Dodo have also tested many different video games too, but more importantly so have our community of readers.We asked our audience to help rank their favourite retro video games using a Google Form that was shared publicly across our social channels.This is to help create an up-to-date article that not only has our own professional video game opinions, but also an input from hundreds of retro gamers across the globe.votes from our public “best retro games” formOver 150 Retro Dodo readers have voted for their favourite retro games, and as you can see from the graph, a few stand out from the crowd.These entries have been used to strengthen our research, so let’s take a look at the best retro games of all time voted by you and me.Please feel free to enter your favourite retro games using our public Google Form, as we will update this list when games overtake each other thanks to your votes!1. The Legend Of Zelda: Ocarina Of Time (1998)I mean, it had to be, didn’t it. Not only is it the most in-depth adventure games of all time and one of the most beautifully crafted games ever developed, but it’s also a firm favourite with Retro Dodo voters.The Legend of Zelda Ocarina of Time is the only game to receive 99% on Metacritic, topping all of the other titles from any point in gaming history. With bosses like Twinrova and Shadow Gannon and the whole epic journey from Young Link to the saviour of Hyrule, it’s not hard to see why it’s one of Nintendo’s greatest.Ocarina boasts the best version of Hyrule in any Zelda game too, and the story is so spectacular that Twilight Princess is basically a massive knock-off of it.Of course, the open world Hyrule in BOTW is phenomenal, but all the people from happy carpenters to the Gerudo guards make this game one of the most immersive titles on any console.If there’s one game that’s had the biggest impact on my life, it’s Ocarina of Time. Whether on the N64 or the 3DS, its a fascinating tale of bravery, honour, and two worlds connected by a hero chosen by the gods.2. Super Mario World (1990)image credit: super mario worldSuper Mario World was released on the Super Nintendo Entertainment System back in the early 90’s and was later re-released on the Game Boy Advance in the early 2000’s for those wanting to play it on the go.Selling well over 20,000,000 copies worldwide it is deemed by many, and Retro Dodo readers to be one of the greatest video games ever developed, thanks to the immersive 2D adventure that it offered during its time.Gamers controlled either Mario or Luigi throughout the game, continuing the popular side-scrolling gameplay that has occurred in previous Mario games with a few new items such as the Cape Feather which allows players to float and P-Ballon which creates a new spin jump move.It also introduces the popular Yoshi, Mario’s Dinosaur friend that he can ride to venture through the game and attack enemies by eating them or shooting out items that he has just consumed.Combining that with an incredible overworld, unique puzzles, beautiful colours and great design there’s no wonder its one of the best retro games ever made.3. Pokemon Red/Blue (1998)Pokemon Red/Blue sits very high on this list and yes, this is the RPG that shaped most of our childhood (and adult) lives.Forget Pokemon Go or Scarlet & Violet; this 1996 classic (or ’98 in Western Countries) propelled Game Freak into the public eye and became an unprecedented success. It’s undoubtedly one of the greatest Gameboy games of all time and even has a nice red or blue shade when played on the GBC.Honestly, the music that played through the Gameboy speaker when I got the bicycle out still floats inside my head to this very day.Catching every Pokemon and beating the Elite Four still remains the greatest challenge of all time, and picking the best team was anything but plain sailing.For me, Pokemon was more than just a game; it was an immersive story, a franchise that we lived and breathed both on the Gameboy and the TV. It was tactical, and it made you think about trading with friends and actually spending quality time with them in the same room!Plus, let’s not forget that without Red and Blue, we’d never have Gold, Pearl, Diamond, or any of the other classics for all of Nintendo’s portable consoles!4. Super Mario 64 (1996)It wouldn’t be a retro gaming list without the infamous Super Mario 64, created for the poplar Nintendo 64 console in 1996 and still to this day its being remade and ported to modern day consoles thanks to its popularity.Super Mario 64 changed the gaming industry forever, it was showcased the next big step in graphical advancements and immersed gamers in a new 3D Super Mario World that blew peoples socks off.Mario could not only run and jump, but crawl, climb, swim, kick, backflip and punch objects using the Nintendo 64’s unique controller, adding a new way of using your favourite Italian plumber.It starts with you popping around to Princess Peach’s castle for some cake, when all of a sudden you are met with Bowser who has invaded the castle using the 120 power stars. It’s your job to get at least 70 of those to break Bowsers’s curse and opening up the final area to beat him.Between the cake and the fight there’s an incredible amount to discover, featuring well known characters, tricky puzzles and penguins that you throw off a cliff…It’s a phenomenal game that ever retro gaming enthusiast has to experience once in their life.5. Sonic The Hedgehog 2 (1992)Like all of the other memorable characters above, Sonic the Hedgehog is a gaming icon, a hero, even. He’s the poster boy for Sega and one of the most influential characters (and hedgehogs) to ever have lived.And, thanks to the success of the recent Sonic the Hedgehog Movies younger gamers are still discovering this franchise in new ways.And Sonic 2 got the formula so right too. Ok, I love Sonic Adventure 2 Battle, but the stages on this game have helped to shape pretty much every other Sonic game that came after it.And blowing dust out of a cartridge beats crying over scratches on a disc any day.This is the side-scrolling adventure to top all side-scrolling adventures. Stop Robotnik from stealing the Chaos Emeralds, and play as both tails and Sonic while saving little critters and stacking up those rings.How many of you played as Knuckles with the extra slot-in cartridge too?Yes, this game is 30 years old. Can you believe that? I guess everything goes fast when you move at the speed of light…… do all hedgehogs dream of being as fast as Sonic.6. Goldeneye 007 (1997)Any list of the best retro games isn’t complete without this classic N64 title. Deathmatches with the golden gun, lasers on the Facility level, fighting Xenia with the RCP90…… man, this game had it all.Whether taking on the scenes from the film in one-player mode or slapping your mates silly in the jungle, this game captured the hearts and minds of a generation.Pierce Brosnan remains the ultimate Bond because of how popular this title was, and seeing him shooting the screen followed by blood running down it never ever get old.As I mentioned above, the levels pretty much follow the plot of the film. Meet with Natalya and Trevelyan as you move through the levels, logging into your spy file to choose different missions and difficulties.And the cutscenes were incredible on the N64 too. I mean, they might look pretty stretched and pixelated these days, but boy were they cutting edge back in the ’90s.For me, there just isn’t a multiplayer title like it. Deathmatches were never the same again after Goldeneye, and I think lots of people still compare new titles to it today.Be proud of your achievement, Rare, this certainly is one game in a billion!7. Tetris (1984)How many of you just sang the Tetris theme tune out loud? All of you, right?I picked the NES version of this game because the cover is just fantastic. It’s not the original, coming out five years after the Soviet classic first dropped, but man is it one of the best.Plus, any game cover that bears the title ‘the Soviet Mind Game’ has to be an absolute belter.It’s pretty safe to say that without this blockbusting game, we’d never have classics like Columns or Candy Crush, or all the other knock offs that you play on your mobile continuously instead of doing those spreadsheets in the office.Ok, so it’s not one of the versions of Tetris with all the bells and whistle on like Tetris Effect or Puyo Puyo Tetris, but this simple purple screen brought so much joy to millions over the globe.Even the background is made up of Tetris blocks, for crying out loud!The tunes, the multiplayer action, she fact that purple can look good in so many shades; yep, this is the Tetris game for me, and it’s 100% impossible to put down!8. Pac-Man (1982)image credit: namcoEVERYONE knows Pac-Man. Whether you’ve watched him on the Pixels movie or played him in the arcades back in the ’80s, you’re bound to know this dot-gobbling-dude and his four ghost mates.I can’t believe I’m about to explain what Pac-Man is, but here goes. Players move the little wheel of cheese dude around epic retro mazes, racking up a high score and trying to stay away from the coloured blobs with eyes.From hoodies to lunchboxes, Pac-Man is a gaming institution. It’s the quintessential arcade game and the one that I think every time I talk about old gaming halls.Along with his better half, Ms. Pac Man, these gaming icons still fetch a pretty penny on second-hand sites. They appear on countless ‘best of’ titles and have even featured in their own 3D adventure!Yeah, Pac-Man is a bona fide legend. Who would have thought that something that looks like a cross between a maths symbol and a wheel of parmesan would have become a globally recognised figure!9. Final Fantasy VII (1997)image credit: squaresoftAfter racking up 10 million sales and considering it’s one of the most exciting RPGs on the PS1, there’s no surprise that Final Fantasy VII has made the cut.Seven year old me couldn’t get enough of this game. It was the first title in the series to get a European release and sparked a life-long love of this series that is still as strong today.Plus, Cloud Strife is still one of the best names for a video game protagonist, and I’m willing to get into a heated debate with anyone that disagrees with me.Whether you play the original or the exciting original, you’ll love the dark, post-apocalyptic feel of the game and the sci-fi elements throughout. Honestly, the storyline will blow you away.The map is massive, and as this was the first time I had ever experienced a JRPG first hand, it all felt so exciting and fresh.Plus, you can’t beat FF games for massive weapons that no human should feasibly be able to carry. I think even Daruk would have a hard time picking that sword up on the front cover!The original Metal Gear Solid game doesn’t exactly need an introduction either. Still, if I never wrote any introductions, then my articles would be very slim on words, and that wouldn’t be fun on anyone!MSG was the worthy winner of out best PS1 games article, and for very good reasons. It’s the ultimate stealth title, a thrilling shooting title jam-packed with tactical action from the very first moment.Yeah, I think we all need to take a few minutes to salute this mighty behemoth of gaming.And, just like Link, Mario, Spyro, Crash, and the Master Chief, Solid Snake is one of the most recognisable gaming characters of all time!So, why is MSG one of the ultimate retro games ever made? Well, for starters, it has the coolest name ever, and the main character is called Solid Snake.Do I really need to elaborate on that?I’ve mentioned stealth a lot through this section so far. I’ve never been great at these games, but I put the time in with MSG and tried my best to master it.Ducking and sneaking is often more effective than running in all guns blazing… I learnt that the hard way.Even though most of this game is viewed from a top-down perspective, having 3D combat moments really draws gamers into the heart of the action. Konami made a masterpiece when they produced MSG, and the series has only gone from strength to strength since.11. Grand Theft Auto IV (2008)Grand Theft Auto IV takes the 11th spot in this list. It’s one of the most iconic open world titles ever published and sees a return to the fan favourite ‘Liberty City’, one of the original settings in the very first game.It might be 7th in our list, but where does GTA IV come in the main canon? Well, it’s the 4th main title in the series but the 9th GTA title overall.Power through a city that looks, feels, and probably smells like New York City as you work your way up the social ladder by intimidating and killing people that stand in your way…… It’s not the kind of social ladder that gets you an invitation to the cricket club Christmas dinner, though you might have guessed that!Ok, so GTA IV didn’t have the ability to fly planes, but does that really matter? It had huge explosions, epic weapons, and so many missions and side quests that players could just roam for hours at a time simply exploring.Opening up the elements of the map while hijacking cars, visiting strip clubs, or working as a hired goon were all parts of the journey that gamers went through with this game. It even had its own internet and email platform for characters to use!I think it’s safe to say that we wouldn’t have titles like Cyberpunk 2077 without GTA IV and the wider series. The NPCs are fantastic, the graphics are superb, and although it’s a pretty harrowing game at times, it’s still a classic that everyone should try…… as long as they’re old enough, that is!12. Tony Hawk’s Pro Skater 2 (2000)The music and the moves on Tony Hawks Pro Skater 2 were phenomenal. It’s another one of those games that everyone has played once in their lives.Plus, with the new remake dropping on all the major consoles, it’s time to go ‘back to our roots’ and relive this fantastic game.I’ve never done a heelflip or a kickflip before. Heck, I can’t even do an Ollie. But on Tony Hawk’s Pro Skater 2, I was an absolute skating god.And, while the first ever Tony Hawks game is undoubtedly the pivotal title that got the ball rolling, the second game perfected the formula and acted as the basis for the many titles to come.Let’s get back to that music. How many of you can remember the tunes in this game? We used to keep restarting levels until our favourite songs came on so that we could ‘play the game better’.Street skating in this game felt so real too. The grungy settings and epic ramps were so addictive that trying to repeatedly playing the same moves over and over again never got boring, and that feeling when you finally pulled off a 1080…… jeez, I just wanna get back and play this game right now!Whether playing as Tony Hawks or a Roswell Alien, the characters looked the part and reacted exactly as you’d expect while falling down a stair set and colliding with a metal pole.Yeah, I think I’ll stick to virtual skating for the time being!13. Spyro: Reignited Trilogy (1998 – 2019)Remember everything I said about the Crash Bandicoot N.Sane Trilogy? Well, the Spyro: Reignited Trilogy gives the original three Spyro games the exact same treatment.We all know that the best Spyro games are the original 3. They provide instant nostalgia as soon as the loading screens appear, which is pretty much why we play the retro games, after all.But the sheer difference in the makeup of these original titles as seen in the Reignited Trilogy is astounding.From blades of grass to Spyro’s teeth, everything is clearer, looks more defined, and has a sheen that provides a much-needed new lease of life.Just look at the still above and tell me that you’re not impressed? Honestly, there are so many things I missed in these games the first time around that I spotted while playing on the Nintendo Switch.Yes, that’s the real best bit bit about this trilogy – playing on the go in handheld mode. It’s the whole reason why everyone went mad for the Super Mario 3D All-Stars game too… Super Mario 64 in the office; the dream come true!If I had to pick my favourite Spyro game, it would have to be the first Spyro the Dragon title, but that’s because I’ve got some incredible memories of charging at those sheep for the very first time.Which is your favourite title in the original three?14. Super Mario Galaxy (2007)Nintendo new they had to pull a stonker out of the bag after the success of Super Mario Sunshine, and boy did they not disappoint.Galaxy felt so different to everything that ever came before. Sure, Sunshine was cool with the FLUDD gameplay and the cool new dynamic, but playing upside down while running around planets and jumping on Pirhana plants in zero-gravity simply blew me away.The concept is simple – save Peach from Bowser. It’s worked on pretty much every planet on every console so far, so I guess it’s only reasonable to think that it could work up in space too!Stars make up the bulk of the collectible action, though finding them amongst the stunning levels is no simple task… mainly because the temptation to explore every nook and cranny will leave you forgetting what the main mission was in the first place!Listen, it’s a Mario game, which means it’s smooth, sleek, and dripping with Mushroom Kingdom madness.Familiar faces and brand new ones make up an all-star memorable cast, and Mario has plenty of cool tricks up his sleeve for gamers to pull out along the way!15. Street Fighter II: The World Warrior (1992)Be prepared to receive a hundred-hand-slap as we take a look at Street Fighter II: The World Warrior!This game almost beat me half a hundred times. I take it back; becoming the World Warrior was way harder than beating the Elite Four. I think I was 16 when I finally managed it after a good eight years of trying.Just think about the players in this game; Guile, Ken, E.Honda, Chun Li, Dhalsim. There are so many incredible characters to choose from, each of them with their own fighting styles to boot.I still don’t know what Blanca was in this game or what his deal was, but he was certainly one angry dude.If you’re a button-mashing player, then the premise is simple – hit everything as fast as possible and try not to die. Still, there are tonnes of moves to learn if you want to get the best out of each character, including the epic Hadouken!Play three rounds in a best-of-three battle, knocking down your opponents health to determine who the ultimate warrior truly is.The graphics aren’t amazing anymore, but that doesn’t matter. Grab yourself a Sony PVM, sit down with a lovely beer, and enjoy one of the best fighting games of all time!16. Halo: The Master Chief Collection (2003 – 2019)Halo: The Master Chief Collection is a game that wraps all of the best Halo games in one, with the ability to switch between retro and modern graphics.I think we can all agree that Halo: Combat Evolved was one of the greatest FPS games of all time, and seeing it in glorious HD up on the Xbox One feels like reliving Christmas Day for the first time all over again.The collection consists of Halo: Combat Evolved Anniversary, Halo 2: Anniversary, Halo 3, Halo 3: ODST, Halo: Reach, and Halo 4. That’s some serious firepower on one disc and should keep any fantasy fans occupied for years to come.It’s safe to say that Halo: Combat Evolved changed everything on the shooting game scene. The Master Chief is one of the most recognisable characters on the Xbox, even in the gaming world as a whole, and wed’ve never had titles like Destiny without it!One of the things that I remember most about Combat Evolved was the sheer size of the map. In fact, scrap that – everything in this game is massive! How many of you can remember jumping into a Warthog for the very first time?That kind of thing never leaves you!17. Space Invaders (1978)space invaders quarter arcadeDoes Space Invaders really need an introduction? It’s one of the most influential games of all time and I’m pretty sure every single one of you will have played it at some point.Heck, it’s safe to say that it could be one of the greatest and best arcade games ever made!I’ve chosen the Atari 2600 version because, for me, it’s the quintessential version. So it’s not that advanced anymore and doesn’t look great, but back in 1978 this was like turning on Skyrim for the very first time!Just imagine a game making over $13 billion. $13 billion! Taito struck gold with this space-age marvel, and they’ve been laughing all the way to the bank ever since.For those of you that have never ever played Space Invaders before, here’s the drill.Aliens move down a screen towards a little green gun turret. Players move said turret and try to shoot down the invaders from space… you get the picture.If you’re looking for a game that should come with an addictive substance warning, then this is it. Space Invaders is one of those games that anyone can play and that never gets old.It’ll outlive all of use, that’s for sure!18. Crash Bandicoot: N. Sane Trilogy (1996 – 2018)Keep a hold of your apples; Crash Bandicoot: N.Sane trilogy is here.Ok, so I know this is a PS4 case, but hear me out. This trilogy takes the original Crash Bandicoot games and turns them up to 11. Forget everything you knew about the old titles; those graphics aren’t as good as you remember anyway…… sorry to tell you the truth guys!The N.Sane Trilogy is fully remastered and looks super slick on the PS4, the Xbox One, and the Switch. Play all of Naughty Dogs classics ‘Crash Bandicoot’, ‘Cortex Strikes Back’, and ‘Warped’.And if you’re wondering how popular this title was, it sold 10 million units worldwide. If that isn’t a success story, then I don’t know what is!The gameplay is still the same, the levels are still the same, and Crash’s moves are as on point as ever. Jump and spin through nostalgic stages that look so slick you’ll spend more time gawping at the backgrounds than following Signor Bandicoot!And of course, the Aku Aku mask returns to give you that little safety blanket when you’re heading into the unknown.There’s no other way to play Crash Bandicoot – there, I said it, especially when playing on the Nintendo Switch on the bus or the toilet (we all know you do it!).You and Crash deserve the best, so treat yourself to the N.Sane trilogy today!19. Final Fantasy IX (2000 – 2019)image credit: squaresoftI bet a few of you were wondering when Final Fantasy IX would appear on this list, weren’t you? This game has seen more reboots and remakes than many of the other titles in our compendium, and for one very good reason… it’s flawless.Yes, you’re looking at one of the best PS1 RPGs to ever grace Sony’s maiden home console. It’s the 9th official title in the FF canon and boasts a storyline that Tolkien would have been proud of.Gamers take their places in Gaia, but not the titaness who became Mother Earth in Greek mythology. This is a fantasy realm wrapped in a terrible war and features bandits, princesses, and an assassination that might bring an age of peace.Why do I like Final Fantasy IX the best? Well, it’s an old school RPG with a modern feel.It’s turn-based action with organic gameplay, and it sticks true to the mechanics of early RPG titles rather than adding the bells and whistles used on the previous three titles.It should also go without saying that IX is the best ranked FF game in the history of the series. No wonder it’s had so many reboots.Whether you helped rack up this games epic 5 million sales by purchasing it on the PS3, the Vita, or modern consoles, you’ve certainly helped to secure FFIX in the annals of history as one of the greatest games ever.Well done you!image credit: bethesdaI’m not gonna lie; Skyrim hardly ever left my PS3. I instantly connected with it as it’s basically a much more brutal version of the Zelda games.Well, it’s more like Breath of the Wild but came out six years before… so I guess Bethesda got there first!This open world adventure is one of the most finely crafted titles on the PS3. Explore ruined cities and vast mountain ranges with sword in hand, slaying dragons and casting spells in one of the greatest fantasy tales ever to grace a console.I still can’t believe that this game came out for the PS3; just look at the still above! These graphics are fantastic and look as though they should belong to a next-gen console. If you’re struggling to get hold of the best PS5 games, then this could definitely be a good shout!Who is the mystery star of this epic tale, I hear you ask? Well, gamers play as Dragonborn, one of the best named characters just beating Keith Courage…… everyone loves Keith!You are the only one capable of thing down a massive Dragon, but there are so many side missions and quests to explore that you’ll end up playing this game long after the main story is complete.Tasks can be finished in any order, but Skyrim has one over on BOTW in the fact that the world doesn’t revert back once the final boss is killed.21. Gran Turismo (1997)image credi: sonyThe PS1 had some fantastic racing titles in its time, but perhaps none as influential as Gran Turismo. It spawned an epic series that still has a loyal following today and provided a formula that would eventually be copied by pretty much every developer on every console.With a collection of 140 epic cars and a selection of tracks that felt super-realistic back in the day, the first GT games could well be thought of as the grandaddy of all driving games.Nothing felt better than getting behind the wheel of branded cars and racing against your mates…… I guess it is the ‘real driving simulator’, after all!For the driving fans, the arcade mode provides quick thrills and a place to blow off steam while burning rubber. Still, the best bit about Gran Turismo is the Simulation Mode.If you like games where progression is a key element, than becoming a professional racer in GT will be right up your street. Start off with an old used car, race to earn money, and upgrade your vehicles.How many games can you move from a Honda Prelude to a swanky Dodge Viper?Gran Turismo is a winner every day of the week. If you’ve never played it before, then what’s wrong with you?!22. Donkey Kong Country (1994)It’s a well known fact that Mr Miyamoto never had big love for Donkey Kong Country. He was never a great fan of the pre-rendered graphics used in this game and didn’t care who knew it.Still, this is one of the best SNES games of all time and, in my opinion, one deserves it’s place on this list.It’s pretty clear that the general public agree with me and not Shigeru, as this game sold well over one-million copies during it’s lifespan. We’re all waiting for the new Donkey Kong game to drop, but DKC is the perfect game to keep us occupied in the mean time.Team up with Diddy to take down King K.Rool and his army of Kremlins. Take a ride on Rambi the Rhino or watch as two simian superstars take to a mine cart and hurtle along dangerous tracks.The premise is simple; collect bananas, kick crocs, and collect the golden KONG letters on each level.King K. Rool doesn’t get that much press coverage, but he’s up there with the greatest baddies of all time. Any villain whose sole mission is steal a monkey’s bananas is a nasty piece of work, am I right?It’s fun, fast paced SNES action with two of the best apes around. Younger gamers who came to the DK gang on Smash Bros Ultimate should definitely check out this seminal title…… if anything, it’s the major stepping stone that led us to the DK rap.Imagine a world without that!22. Metroid Prime Trilogy (2002 – 2015)image credit: nintendoThe truth is that I just can’t pick which of these Metroid Prime games should feature in this list. Samus Aran is, I think we can all agree, an absolute legend and a pivotal figure in Nintendo’s history.The inclusion of 3D games to the canon blew our mind, and all there games are, quite frankly, superb.For those who don’t know, this trilogy is made up of two GameCube titles, Metroid Prime & Metroid Prime: Echoes, and Metroid Prime: Corruption for the Wii.Samus is the most bad-ass bounty hunter in the galaxy and is a favourite at pretty much every gaming event the world over. These FPS games take players through spectacular worlds and pit them against some of the freakiest enemies ever to hit your TV.In true FPS style, gamers only see Samus’ arm cannon as she skulks through shadowy passages and sneaks into heavily-guarded areas.If you’re a fan of RPGs, then you’ll love collecting all of Samus’ amazing power-ups, from the spin attack made famous on Smash Bros to gun powerups.Listen, Samus is right up there with Link and Mario in my book. She’s one of the greatest video game characters of all time and a real retro icon!23. Duck Hunt (1984)Duck Hunt, like Pacman, is one of those iconic arcade games that will never, ever get old. Everytime I hook this up to my old CRT TV and get the NES Zapper out, i get a huge smile on my face.Plus, this is one of the first games that I was introduced to my by late uncle, so it means a heck of a lot to me.If you’re too young to know what Duck Hunt is, then firstly, I’m incredibly jealous of how much youth you have. The game is simple; just point your gun at the screen and hit the trigger to shoot the ducks.You might have played it on the Wii using the Wiimote too, but you’ve got to hold the Zapper or get the SuperScope on your shoulder to get those proper retro vibes.It’s a simple game and isn’t going to win the world’s most advanced title, but I guarantee you’ll find it incredibly hard to put down once you start.24. The Legend Of Zelda: The Minish Cap (2004)Come on, you didn’t think I’d wait much longer before putting a Zelda title into this list, right? The Legend of Zelda: The Minish Cap is up next!This game almost took the top spot in out best Gameboy Advance games list, and I’m still questioning my decision not to give it the gold trophy today… but we move on.This game was a bit of an enigma at the time as it was a Capcom developed title and not a Nintendo home special. They nailed it though, mixing all of the elements that made Link’s Awakening and A Link To The Past together and coming up with a perfect title that won the hearts of every Zelda fan.We’re going super small in this adventure thanks to the comic stylings of Ezlo the Minish Cap, a cantankerous hat that helps Link discover the small world of the Picori.Link usually has a helper of some sort in these early games, but it’s nice that this one is actually part of his legendary garb for a change.Some of you might have missed this one the first time around, but I strongly recommend giving it a try if you’ve still got your GBA SP kicking around!25. Mortal Kombat II (1993)Fatalities, Sub-Zero breaking enemies into little ice-shards, Johnny Cage doing that sick move with his nightstick, what’s not to love about Mortal Kombat 2, released in 1993.This game defined my childhood, which goes a long way to explaining a lot things about my personality…I remember vividly playing this on my SEGA Mega Drive with my friends, learning all of the moves from the manual and practicing our “finish him” voice, just incase.I loved the Mortal Kombat cartoon series as a kid too. Getting to watch Raiden’s warriors in action before heading onto the Mega Drive to actually fight with them was everything back in the day.Ok, so the cartoon had way less blood, but that was probably for the best as our parents probably wouldn’t have let us watch it otherwise.Mortal Kombat uses the same gameplay formula as every other fighting game that you’ve played, it’s just more brutal and has some epic fatalities players can use when ending their opponents.It’s not as lethal as Mortal Kombat 11 by any stretch of the imagination, but it’s still a great game to kick back with on a Sunday afternoon with friends! The best classic PC games truly show us how far we've come since the early days of gaming. Be it from technological standpoints or charting trends; they were the tastemakers that have given way to all of the best PC games today. Basically, it's thanks to them that we have a thriving industry that is packed with variety and creativity. However, classic PC games still offer some of the best stories in games and are worth replaying whenever you get the chance. Whether it is classic adventures like Grim Fandango and Day of the Tentacle, immersive sims like Deus Ex and System Shock 2, or titles that still can absolutely dominate your spare time like Diablo 4's older sibling Diablo 2, there really is something for everybody to enjoy in this list.While a few of these experiences may look a little janky by modern standards, these titles have earned a spot among the 20 best classic PC games for good reason, and you're about to find out why. You may like 20. Myst(Image credit: Cyan Worlds Inc)Released: September 24, 1993Developer: Cyan Myst is a puzzle-based adventure game that launched in the early '90s and went on to become the best-selling game of the decade. Armed with a magical book, the player can hop through different worlds, solving puzzles and finding the missing pages of yet more books, to ultimately save one of two brothers trapped in - wait for it - other books. Or you could opt to leave them languishing in their respective prisons.Myst was applauded for its visuals and sound, although the audience was split over the gameplay, making it the marmite of adventure games to some degree. Either way, it’s had a slew of remakes over the last 25 years, and was even released on console and mobile, so if you want to see what all of the fuss is about, you can dive in when the fancy takes you.Read our Myst review for more details. Weekly digests, tales from the communities you love, and more19. Duke Nukem 3D(Image credit: Gearbox Publishing)Released: January 29, 1996Developer: 3D RealmsIf it wasn’t for Duke Nukem 3D, I’m not sure any of us would know what a real man looks like. At least that’s what the buzzcut-topped bundle of machismo barely suppressed behind a pair of sunglasses and bursting out of a red tank top would have you think. Duke may have been desperately compensating for something but solid and fun gameplay wasn’t it.Steeped in the action hero runoff from the late '80s ad early '90s, Duke kicks ass, chews bubblegum, and saves buxom beauties from an alien threat that invades his impromptu vacation in L.A. after he just got done saving the world in Duke Nukem 2. The bare-bones story and action movie caricature may not have aged well - as evidenced by the horrendous flop of Duke Nukem Forever - but you can relive Duke’s glory days with Duke Nukem 3D: Megaton Edition. If you need more adrenaline, check out our list of the best action games to play today. 18. Hexen: Beyond Heretic(Image credit: id Software)Released: October 30, 1995Developer: Raven SoftwareHexen married a first-person shooter with a high fantasy setting, giving players three classes to choose from before unleashing them into a world full of monsters that were in need of a good trouncing. This '90s gem stands out as a lot of FPS shooters were sci-fi based, giving all of us Dungeons and Dragons lovers pure envy.A sequel to 1994’s Heretic, players have to choose a fighter, cleric, or mage before setting out to track down the second of the Serpent Riders, the game’s ultimate boss who awaits in a trap-riddled throne room. It may not hold up graphically, but there are plenty of mods that will spruce it up for you, letting you dive into some monster-exterminating shenanigans without taking a toll on your eyeballs. 17. Oddworld: Abe’s Oddysee (Image credit: GT Interactive Software)Released: September 19, 1997Developer: Oddworld InhabitantsOddworld: Abe’s Oddysee is a perilous prison break from RuptureFarms, a meat processing plant that is grinding up the local fauna into delicious treats for the Glukkon race of aliens. When the titular Abe gets wise to what’s going on, he makes a break for it, rescuing his fellow Mudokons on the way out - or not.The choice of playing the hero is left up to the player, but some consequences unfold at the end based on how many enslaved workers Abe transports to freedom. In a happy turn of events, Oddworld: Abe’s Oddysee also got a remake from the ground up in 2014, as Oddworld: New ‘n’ Tasty, so it’s another one on the list that you don’t need to take your rose-tinted glasses off for.For more on the said remake, read our Oddworld: New 'n' Tasty review. 16. Monkey Island 2: LeChuck’s Revenge(Image credit: LucasArts)Released: December 1, 1991Developer: LucasArtsRon Gilbert took the lead on one of LucasArts most well-loved titles with the second game in the Monkey Island series. Joined by Tim Schafer and Dave Grossman, the three conjured up a story about the return of the pirate LeChuck, resurrected as a zombie after his defeat in the first game. Gilbert left the studio after Monkey Island 2, stating that LucasArts’ vision of the series’ future wasn’t in line with his own, and so the game remains a must-play for his fans.A Special Edition launched in 2010, with new voiceovers and a hint system, which would have been handy for the infernal monkey wrench puzzle that was notorious for stumping players back in 1991. You can even switch between the new and original version of the game, if you’re anxious that you might be missing out on something. For more information, read our Monkey Island 2 Special Edition: LeChuck's Revenge review. (Image credit: Capcom)Released: January 21, 1998Developer: CapcomIn its heyday, Resident Evil 2 received critical acclaim for its cinematic camera angles, oppressive atmosphere, and level design. It introduced Leon S. Kennedy and Claire Redfield to fans, who were both nobodies before career and family brought them to Raccoon City as Umbrella’s zombie virus spilled out of Resident Evil’s mansion on the outskirts of town and spread to the local population.The story quickly escalates to the realms of the outlandish but it's par for the course for the series by now, and you’d be disappointed if it were anything different. If you were still potty training at the tail end of the '90s, you can give the Resident Evil 2 Remake a whirl. It's easily one of the best Resident Evil games that you can play today.Check out our Resident Evil 2 Remake review!14. Day of the Tentacle(Image credit: Double Fine Productions)Released: June 25, 1993Developer: LucasArtsAnother Tim Schafer masterpiece, Day of the Tentacle, is more renowned than Grim Fandango and is the sequel to the 1987s Maniac Mansion. A cartoon point-and-click adventure with a story centering on time travel, the players can switch between three different characters, separated by a faulty time machine.There are puzzles and different periods of history to explore here. There is also still tons of charm and laughs to be had, making Day of the Tentacle one of the best adventure games. The title got a remaster in 2016, made by Schafer’s new studio Double Fine, so you can enjoy all-new hand-drawn, high-resolution artwork, along with remastered audio. 13. Final Fantasy 8(Image credit: Square Enix)Released: February 11, 1999Developer: Square EnixFinal Fantasy 8 was a PlayStation console exclusive when it launched almost 20 years ago, but it got a PC release in 2000, so we are being cheeky and adding it to our list. A heart-wrenching story of lost love is at the center of the series’ traditional overarching story of political intrigue, peppered with magic, memorable characters, and breathtaking full-motion video sequences if you want to use the lingo of the time.While it’s common to hear Final Fantasy 7 cited as the best Final Fantasy game - on the PlayStation at least - Final Fantasy 8 was praised for building on the accomplishments of its predecessor. The title got a re-release on PC in 2013 and is sitting at Very Positive on Steam, so there’s a sweet dose of nostalgia right at your fingertips. 12. Doom(Image credit: Bethesda)Released: December 10, 1993Developer: id SoftwareDoom is the mother of all first-person shooters (in fact, it's still one of the best FPS games around), and the landscape of gun-toting games wouldn’t be what it is without it. A sci-fi horror, Doom follows a nameless space marine as he fights back the hordes of hellspawn that have broken through to the base on Mars.Despite not being particularly rich on the narrative front, the game boasted 3D graphics and networked multiplayer. These days, you can play Doom on pretty much anything, from a printer to an ATM machine. But the good news is you don’t have to. The game got a reboot in 2016 that is suitably shooty and gives players a veritable arsenal to play with. There's also a new game with Doom: The Dark Ages for us to look forward to!Read our five-star Doom review for more rip-and-tear details. 11. Grim Fandango(Image credit: Double Fine Productions)Released: October 30, 1998Developer: LucasArtsGrim Fandango is a funny and heartwarming tale that follows the adventures of underworld travel agent Manny Calavera as he ushers the recently departed on their journey through the land of the dead. With a gripping plot and devilish puzzles, LucasArts upped the ante on an already stellar title by making it the first adventure game to be rendered in 3D, bringing the vibrant Aztec-inspired art deco graphics to life.Hailed as one of the last great adventure games of the '90s, its hard-boiled film noir narrative was resurrected in a Grim Fandango Remaster in 2014, and with an Android and iOS release a year later, there’s no reason to miss out on it.Check out our Grim Fandango Remastered review to learn more about this classic PC game. 10. Quake (Image credit: Bethesda Softworks)Released: June 22, 1996Developer: id SoftwareId Software hit it out of the park again just three years after the release of Doom with Quake. It abandoned the Doom engine for the Quake engine, rendering 3D environments that knocked the socks off everyone old enough to persuade their parents to buy it for them. Medieval gothic was the setting this time around, and multiplayer was cranked up a notch, supporting a whopping eight players instead of a paltry four.Quake was also the first shooter to have maps specifically for multiplayer, and clans sprouted up in the community around it. The game is arguably just as important as Doom for shaping the current gaming vista. The title spawned a series, with the most recent entry being the 2022 Quake Champions, a fast-paced arena shooter that’s currently still in Early Access on Steam.For more PC picks, read our list of the best Steam games to play right now.9. Chrono Trigger(Image credit: Square Enix)Released: March 11, 1995Developer: Square EnixTechnically, Chrono Trigger shouldn't be one of the best classic PC games, as it was originally released for the SNES in 1995, but the seminal JRPG got a PC port in 2018, and now that Square Enix’s post-launch updates have cleaned it up significantly, it’s well worth a look at on Steam.What’s more, it was made by the dream team of RPG developers, including Final Fantasy series creator Hironobu Sakaguchi, Dragon Quest series creator Yuji Horii, and Dragon Ball manga artist Akira Toriyama, as well as a host of other talent from the 16-bit era. The game’s story is a time-hopping adventure with multiple endings and a unique battle system. Now that it’s available on PC, there’s no excuse not to play one of the best RPGs ever made.Read our five-star Chrono Trigger review to learn more about this classic.8. System Shock 2(Image credit: Nightdive Studios)Released: August 11, 1999Developer: Irrational GamesBioshock’s Ken Levine designed System Shock 2 (aka one of the best horror games of its time) almost a decade before he unleashed Bioshock and Andrew Ryan onto the world. Instead of the depths of the ocean, the game takes place in the vastness of space, tasking the player character with trying to prevent an infection from spreading to everyone on board.Bioshock is considered to be the spiritual successor to the System Shock series and echoes System Shock’s narrative to some degree. It's a super fun game, though, with shooting, exploration and hacking, and psionic abilities to play around with. A remake was being kickstarted by Nightdive Studios, but we haven't heard any news on that for some time now. For more, read our System Shock remake review.7. Thief(Image credit: Square Enix)Released: November 30, 1998Developer: Looking Glass StudiosStealth games today might not be what they are without Thief’s contribution to the genre. Or perhaps it might have taken them longer to get there. Either way, Looking Glass Studios’ 1998 title was a first-person game that actively had players avoid confrontation rather than running headlong into the action. It's hands down one of the best stealth games you can play, period.Thief’s steampunk setting added a touch of whimsy and was brought to life with emergent gameplay as players decided how best to navigate the levels - either with pure stealth or by engaging in combat. However, the latter wasn’t half as satisfying. The series got a fourth installment a decade after 2004’s Thief: Deadly Shadows, which acted as a reboot for the franchise, so if you’re feeling light-fingered, you can get a taste of the criminal lifestyle in 4K with the 2014 Thief reboot.Check out our Thief review for more insights into this classic PC gem. 6. Star Wars: TIE Fighter(Image credit: LucasArts)Released: July, 1994Developer: Totally GamesStar Wars: TIE Fighter is renowned as one of the best space games and best Star Wars games in history, with strategy playing a huge part in epic dogfights set against the backdrop of space. The energy management system keeps players on their toes, having them decide whether to sink it into shields, the ship’s engines, or weapons for each scenario.What was even more revolutionary was that a Star Wars game put players into the shoes of an Imperial pilot rather than a member of the resistance. TIE Fighter was made available to buy on Steam in 2014 with slightly improved graphics and sound and all of the game’s expansions to boot, giving you the chance to play one of the best classic PC games ever for under $10 / £10.5. StarCraft(Image credit: