

Single Player Video Games

I get asked all the time what games I'd recommend and it got to the point where I was rambling nonstop because there's JUST. SO. MANY. GOOD. GAMES. So instead of doing that I'll just send people here. All the games are divided by experience level with games since that seems to be the biggest factor in what I'd recommend you try playing.

All of these games are **single player games** I personally enjoyed. Obviously there are more good games out there but these are the ones that brought me enough joy to want to encourage others to try.

🐐 - GOAT

🏳️‍🌈 - LGBT Characters

📱 - Recommended for Mobile

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Never Played

This is where to start if you have never played a single game in your life. They have relatively simple controls and won't expect you to react quickly at any point. (I'd still recommend this to experienced gamers, though, they're all excellent)

Florence



Florence is more of an interactive graphic novel about young love than a game, but if this is your first time ever trying out games, it's my number one pick. The music and animations are lovely and it ends up teaching you a lot of basic gameplay elements you'll see in other games. [It plays very well on mobile.](#)

Oxenfree



If you liked the witty banter or paranormal mystery of *Stranger Things*, this is the right kind of game for you. Oxenfree uses a timed dialogue tree that you can select mid-conversation which can actually change the character's response if you cut them off while they're talking or wait for them to finish what they have to say. In practice, it feels a lot more like real-world talking than typical games that pause in between lines.

Hidden Folks



It's Where's Waldo but animated! There's not much more to say about it, but there's a lot here to find.

[Untitled Goose Game](#)



Play as a goose terrorizing the local English town! Your goals include stuff like "steal the farmer's hat" and "make the old man fall on his bum". It's incredibly funny and has a dedicated honk button.

[Her Story](#)



Her Story is crossed between a short film and a game. Your goal is to find clips based on dialogue said by the woman being interrogated. The only problem is you're limited in how many clips you can see, so you'll need to use unique words to find the clips that reveal the story of what's really going on. The acting and story here are top-notch and you'll be engrossed in solving the mystery after a few minutes in.

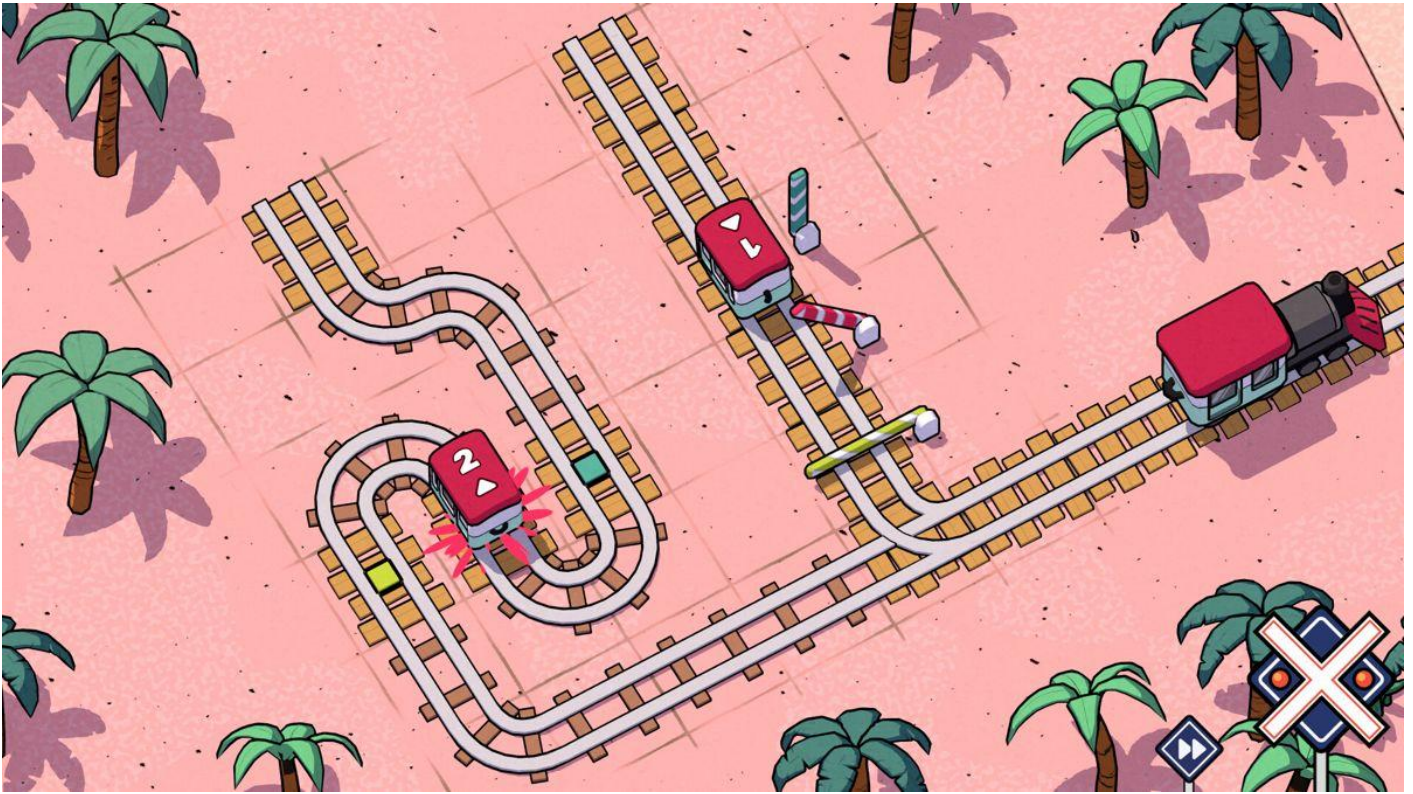
This is a very easy game to play as well. If you can type into a search box, you can play this game.

[Donut County](#) ☐



You get to control a hole that gets bigger as it hoovers up items! It creates a really interesting puzzle as you figure out what needs to be consumed first before it takes in the larger objects. Also there's a goofy raccoon that teaches you that capitalism is bad!

[Railbound](#) 



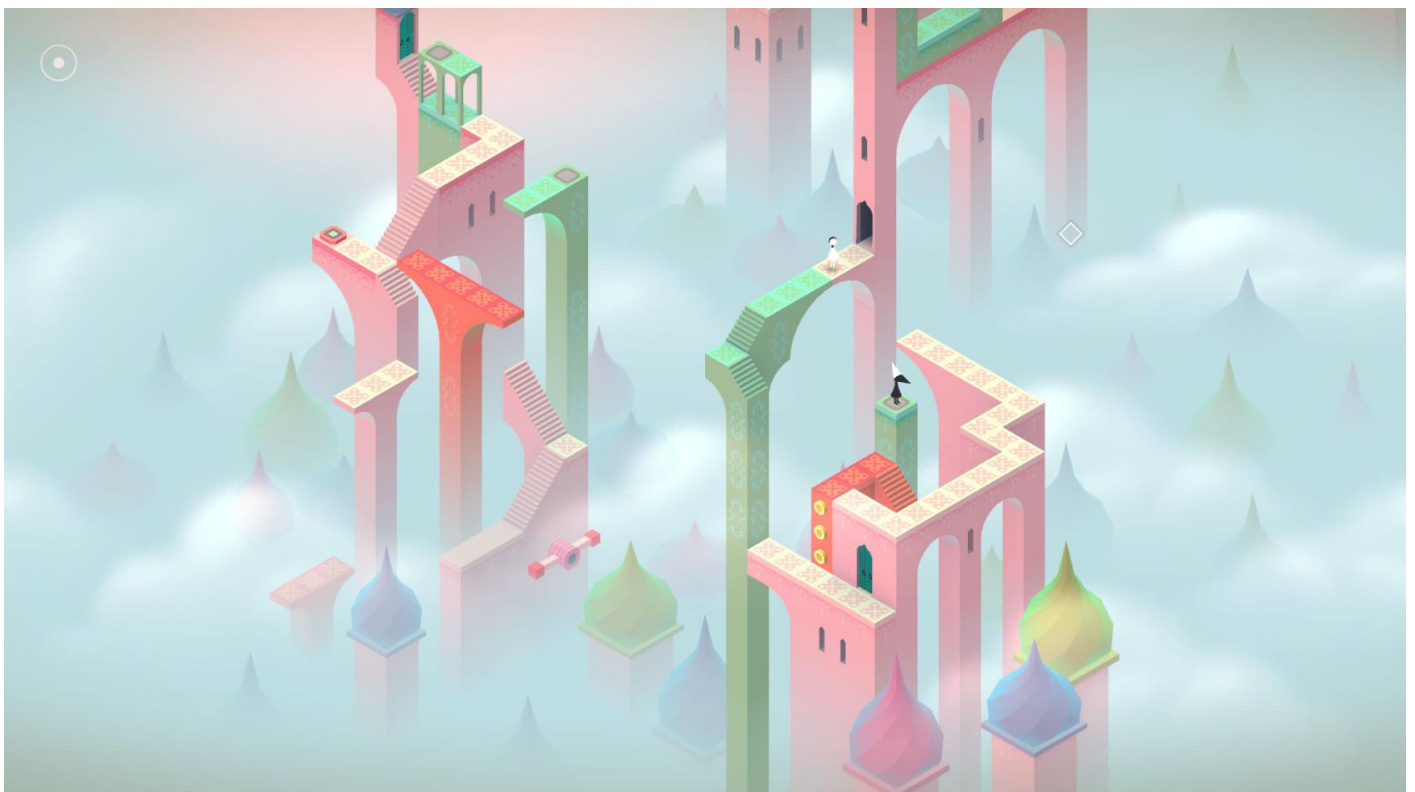
A nifty little puzzle game of placing track down for cars that you need to place in the correct order. It's incredibly easy to get started on this and the game builds on itself over time with more complex puzzles. It can get fairly challenging at times but you won't be overwhelmed with complexity.

[Thank Goodness You're Here](#)



Similar to [Untitled Goose Game](#) except this time you'll be assisting instead of terrorizing a charming British town. If you're a fan of Monty Python style humor, I highly recommend this game.

[Monument Valley](#)



Imagine if all those [MC Escher drawings](#) were turned into a video game.

[Chants of Sennaar](#)



Chants of Sennaar takes the experience of learning a brand new language and boils it down to its basest parts. It also conveys how different cultures use language in unique in different ways. For example, you may run into a puzzle where one culture shares "Love" and "Honor" with the same word while another might have "Love" and "Trust" as the same.

If you love puzzles and foreign languages, this one is for you.

[Secret of Monkey Island](#)

I played this game repeatedly as a kid and I still come back to it every once in a while. Monkey Island is the quintessential "point and click" adventure game and the clever comedic writing still holds up more than 30 years later. This special edition update the graphics and adds professional voice acting to the mix so it feels like a modern game now.

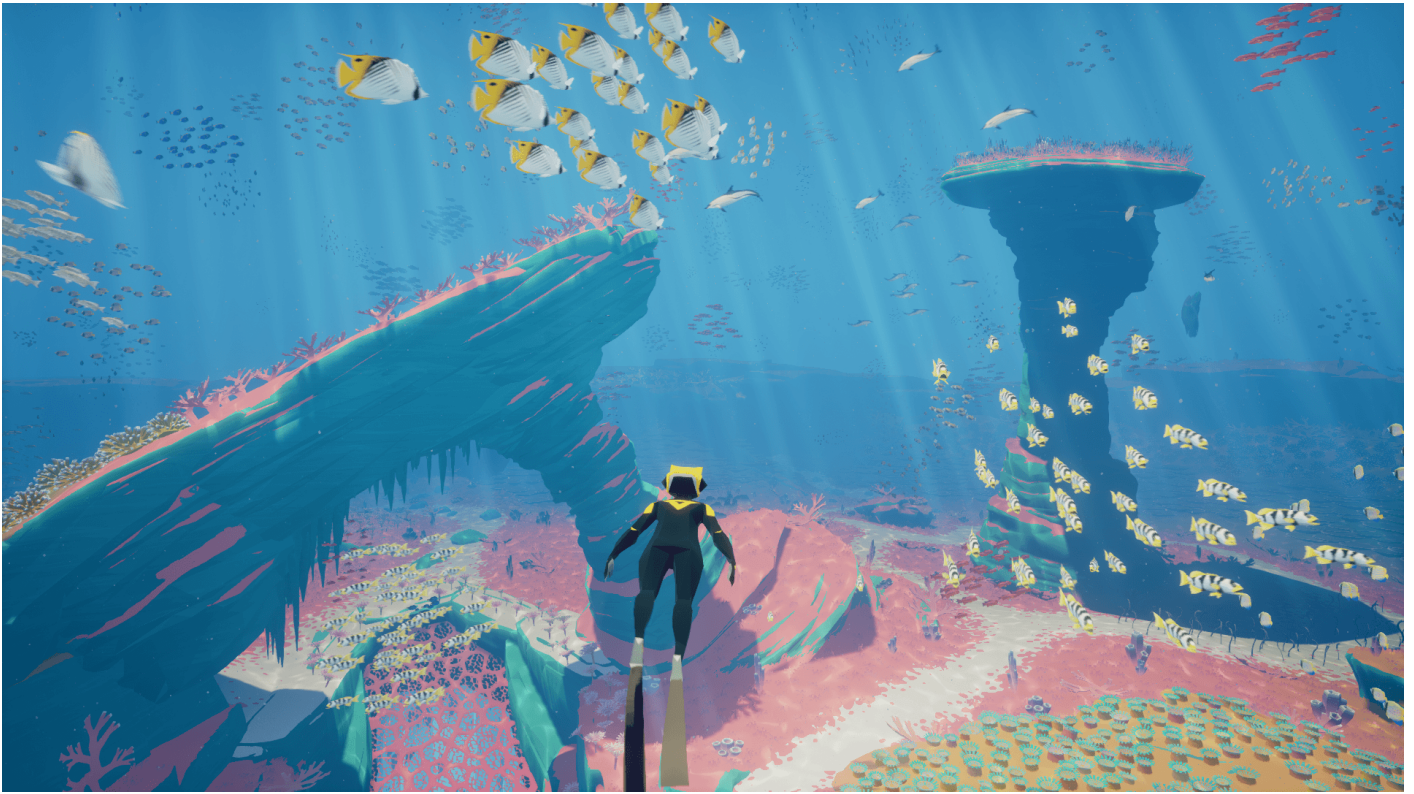
[Stardew Valley](#)□□□□



This is a cozy farming sim game that provides a laid back and friendly environment to play in. The designer ensured that the game wouldn't punish players for failure of any kind so you'll never feel like you did something wrong.

That said, it's an incredibly deep game and you'll likely spend several hours playing it as you try your best to woo and marry one of the many characters in the game.

[ABZU](#)



Just an absolutely gorgeous sea exploration game. You'll traverse through several different biomes and swim with all kinds of sea life. There's no combat of any kind so if you're new to playing games with a controller, this would be a great first start.

Some Experience

Okay, you've beaten a few games and know what all the buttons on the controller do. Here's a set of games you can sink your teeth in to.

[Infra](#) 

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/GMXqy4QUNfY?si=PNBdmY63hj1IDdaZ>

INFRA is a game where you play a structural engineer taking photos of crumbling infrastructure. Okay that sounds boring but it's really not. This is one of my all-time favorite games!

The game will have you moving through incredible recreations of abandoned buildings of all kinds and you'll need to solve real-world style puzzles to progress. Think trying to get to the third floor of an office building where the stairs and the elevator have collapsed. It's also set in Finland and you can learn just how seriously they take their saunas.

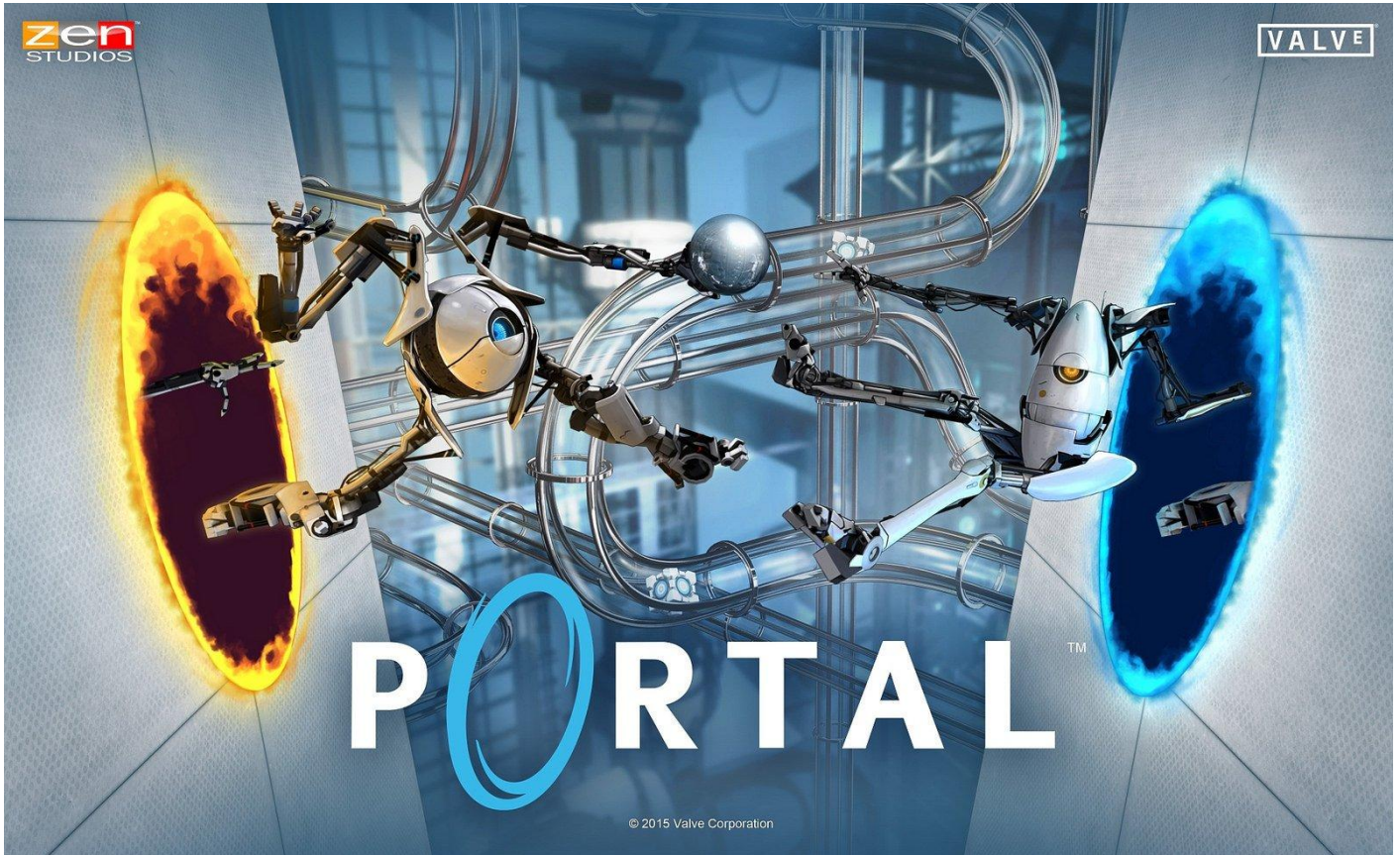
[Sunless Skies](#)□□□□



If you're in to surreal paranormal stories (e.g. [Welcome to Nightvale](#)), this will be right up your alley. While docked in one of the numerous floating islands, you'll read through beautiful prose of your adventures in this fantasy victorian setting as you collect supplies, crew, and new quests. In between, you'll pilot a flying train as you try to survive the many surreal and cosmic horrors in the fog.

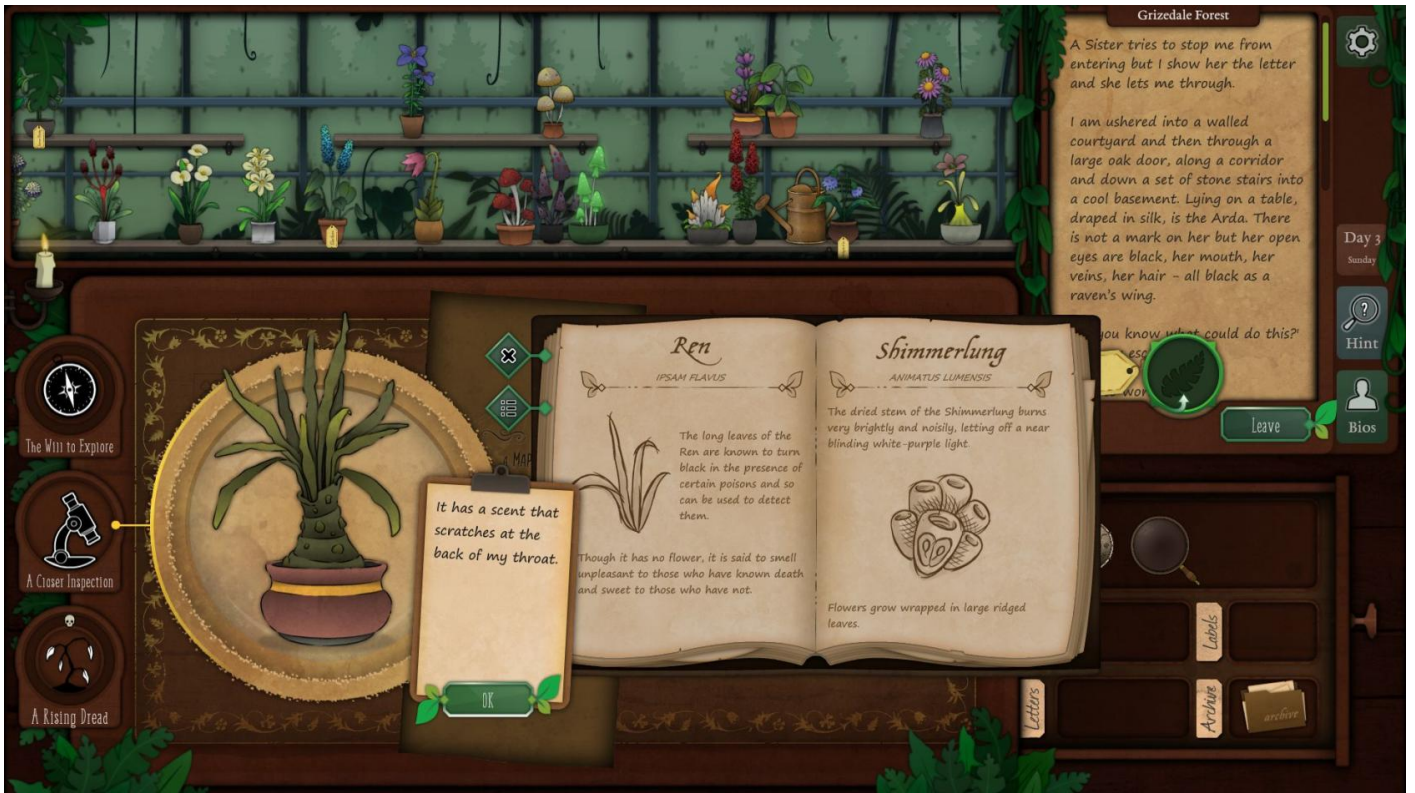
If you're not sure if the writing style is for you, I'd recommend trying out [Fallen London](#). It's free and made by the same creators.

[Portal 1 and 2](#)



Solve puzzles with portals! This game is considered to be a masterpiece by many and it's not hard to see that in its incredibly polished sets, clever puzzles, and very funny and well-acted voiceovers. I almost placed this in the Never Played category, but since this plays in first person, that may be rough for some people.

[Strange Horticulture](#)



A lovely game about identifying magical plants and combining them together to make potions for your customers. It has a wonderful story and the artwork is just plain beautiful. Also a lot of fun and out-of-the-box puzzles to solve

Animal Well



This game is a programming marvel. It's clocked in at 36MB and contains a massive world full of secrets and abilities. The old school style creates an eerie and mysterious world with lots to discover.

[Slay the Spire](#) ☐



There's a lot of card-games-turned-video-games out there but Slay the Spire is considered to be the best. It's a great start to the roguelike genre as you start each run with a basic deck and build it up over time. Sometimes you'll die right away and other times you'll create a deck so broken then you'll breeze all the way through to the final boss.

With an absurd amount of cards to collect and combinations to play with, you'll never get bored of this game for a long long time.

[Life is Strange](#) ☐



The story of Max and Chloe has stuck with me now for nearly a decade. It's hard to convey just how incredible the characters are and the twists and turns it takes you through Max's time-bending powers. With some powerful voice acting by Hannah Telle and Ashley Burch, a beautiful soundtrack that holds up today, and a script that could have won an Oscar in screenwriting if it was a movie, this game and its characters will stay with you for a very long time.

Oh, and there's an excellent comic to follow-up on as well as a sequel coming soon!

[Guardians of the Galaxy](#)



Dude...okay, this game goddamn rocks! If you are a fan of the Guardians of the Galaxy movies at all, this is a must play for you. It feels like a solid 4th iteration with these quintessential characters but does better than any of the movies as it's allowed more time to build a deeper lore and relationship with the characters.

The worlds they create for every level are massive and vibrant. Plus the gameplay is pretty great, too!

[What Remains of Edith Finch](#)



Traverse through a dense and beautifully rendered home as you explore what happened to all the ancestors of the main character. There are some incredibly beautiful set-pieces here and a lot of innovation in ways to tell a story.

[Bugsnax](#) ☐☐☐☐



This game is basically "what if all the Pokemon were also food?" You'll spend most of the game exploring the island and trying various ways to capture all the creatures that roam this island. You'll also perform quests for the goofy

muppet-like characters and solve the mystery of where the island's leader disappeared to.

CONTROL



Remedy is famous for pushing the limits of what a video game can portray, as well as crossing borders between games and cinema. CONTROL in my opinion is easily their best endeavor here. You'll be searching through an office building very reminiscent to the SCP Foundation as you try to contain all of the crazy paranormal items that this organization has tried to store.

That being said, the game is NOT scary and largely plays out like an action film.

Marvel's Spiderman



It became a trope for a while when reviewers said "this game makes you feel like spiderman" but dude that is as accurate of a description you'll get for this game. Zipping through Manhattan as the web-crawler is an experience unlike any other and the combat here is fast and smooth while never being overwhelming. There's also hours of side content here and almost all of it is fun to go through. And with a spin-off, a sequel, and another game in the works, you'll never run out of fun spinning those webs.

Fairly Advanced

Alright, you have some experience under your belt and are ready for a challenge.

[Outer Wilds](#) □

https://www.youtube.com/embed/d6LGnVCL1_A?si=f1_mnjUIRKZQMFAj

This is **the greatest game of all time**. There is so much I want to say about it but anything I tell you will just diminish the magic of this absolute masterpiece. If you can handle games that involve moving through zero gravity space then this is an absolute must-buy. Be sure to get the Archeologist Edition because the DLC is just as incredible as the base game

[Ori and the Blind Forest](#)



Good lord, this game is gorgeous. Pictures don't do it justice so go look up a video of it.

This platformer is great if it's your first time ever playing one of these. It starts of pretty minimal but over time you'll develop new abilities and mechanics that bring about some really deep and interesting movement throughout the game. Plus Ori is just plain adorable.

[God of War](#)



If you're a dad, you gotta buy this game. God of War took an early 90s grimdark one-dimensional badass and turned him into a complex, grunting and wisened badass. The story here is so complex and deep as Kratos struggles with the violence of his past while helping his son navigate the hostile world he's brought him into. You'll find yourself deeply engrossed in the story here and blown away by the very human depictions of the Norse gods of this universe.

Plus the gameplay is just bloody excellent. It manages to feel different from any other action combat game I've ever played. You'll find yourself running all kinds of complex combos and strategies as you head further into the late game.

[Red Dead Redemption 2](#) ☐



RDR 2 is nothing short of a world wonder. The sheer scale of this game is dumbfounding. When you're going on a hunt and they animate every single aspect of skinning an animal, you know you're experiencing something incredible.

There's just so much to do in this massive game as you traverse a scaled-down recreation of an early 1900s wild west. The story is phenomenal as well as you navigate with your gang of con-artists and thieves and grapple with the bad decisions you've made throughout the game.

[Jedi Knight: Fallen Order](#)



If Disney Executives had a brain, they'd have use the storyline of the Jedi: Fallen Order and Jedi: Survivor for the Star Wars Sequels. These games capture exactly what we all wanted from a modern day Star Wars. There's just enough fanfare in it not to be annoying while at the same time there's plenty of unique story and lore added to the Star Wars canon to revive the cynicism that we've all developed as fans for the last couple of decades. Plus there are scenes in here that would have blown audiences minds if they were cast upon the silver screen.

The gameplay here is excellent, too. I would describe it as "baby's first Dark Souls" in that it has a similar souls-like combat mechanic but the difficulty is lowered way down so that most players can sink their teeth into it without it feeling frustrating. Also there's enough action movie style gameplay thrown in to make you feel like a powerful (yet grounded to reality) Jedi.

[Baldur's Gate 3](#) ☐☐☐☐☐



This game won all of the Game of the Year awards in a year that's considered one of the best years of all time for game releases. There's so much to gush about this game. The story, graphics, characters, gameplay, music, humor, scale, complexity, etc etc is all top-notch. It's THE definition of a 10/10 game.

If you've ever been interested in D&D, RPGs, or the fantasy genre, this is really a must buy. Be warned, though, this game is VERY horny.

[Subnautica](#)



If you have lassophobia, you should probably skip this one. For everyone else this game is an incredible experience as you dive through bright and luscious sea biomes, collecting resources you need to build your base and bigger and better sea vehicles to explore the ocean depths further and further.

Be warned, there are moments of true horror here, especially if you traverse beyond the bounds of the level, but if you can get past those rare moments, you'll be in for a treat.

[HITMAN Word of Assassination](#)



Killing people has never been funnier as you control the ever-scowling Agent 47. Every level is open world and gives you a laundry list of possible ways to kill your target. There's a ludicrous amount of tongue-in-cheek humor as Agent 47 drops a death-related pun on his target before he pushes them into ongoing traffic while wearing a clown costume.

There are also a ton of different modes to replay each and every mission as well as competing with other players online for a better score.

[Witcher 3: The Wild Hunt](#)



If you're a fan of deep fantasy stories and lore, this one is worth checking out. The Witcher is based on a series of books written by Andrzej Sapkowski which is heavily inspired by Polish folklore. While the game is based on the books, it has its own story, one that many consider to be even better than the book series. The voice acting is nothing short of stellar as well.

I'll be honest, though, while the gameplay is leagues better than Witcher 1 and 2 (and is the reason why I'll never recommend those games), the combat is nothing to write home about and can get repetitive near the home stretch. It's still a fun adventure but just know that you'll largely be playing this for the story.

Hardcore Gamer

Ready to put yourself to the test and die a lot? These games are for you!

[Hollow Knight](#)



Incredibly, this game was developed by three people and is essentially on par with what a AAA studio could make today.

You'll hop along as a warrior bug in this 2D platformer set within a grim and moody underworld. The visuals are nothing short of gorgeous and the gameplay is as smooth as any combat game can get. Every character you encounter is filled with delight and charm and that includes every single enemy as well, especially the bosses.

This game pulls no punches, though. It uses the same failure system as Dark Souls and every boss fight will put you through your paces. If you can handle the difficulty, though, this is a wonderful first step into the Soulslike genre.

[Lies of P](#)



I can't believe that the best Fromsoft game I can recommend people start with is NOT a Fromsoft game, but here we are. Lies of P takes the best parts of Dark Souls, Sekiro, and Bloodborne and wraps them all up in a badass puppet twink.

I think many people struggle with these types of games because Fromsoft never bothers to try to teach the player its mechanics and will often drop the player in a difficulty spike early on that turns off a lot of players. NOT the case for Lies of P. Everything here trains the player to use the abilities they're given and though there are some spikes in difficulty, it never gets to a level of frustration where you feel the need to stop.

[Noita](#)



Oh Noita....you terrify me in every way. This was made in a custom game engine so that every single pixel was rendered with its own physics. If you drop a piece of dynamite in a pool of water, it will turn all the ground into rubble and the water into mist.

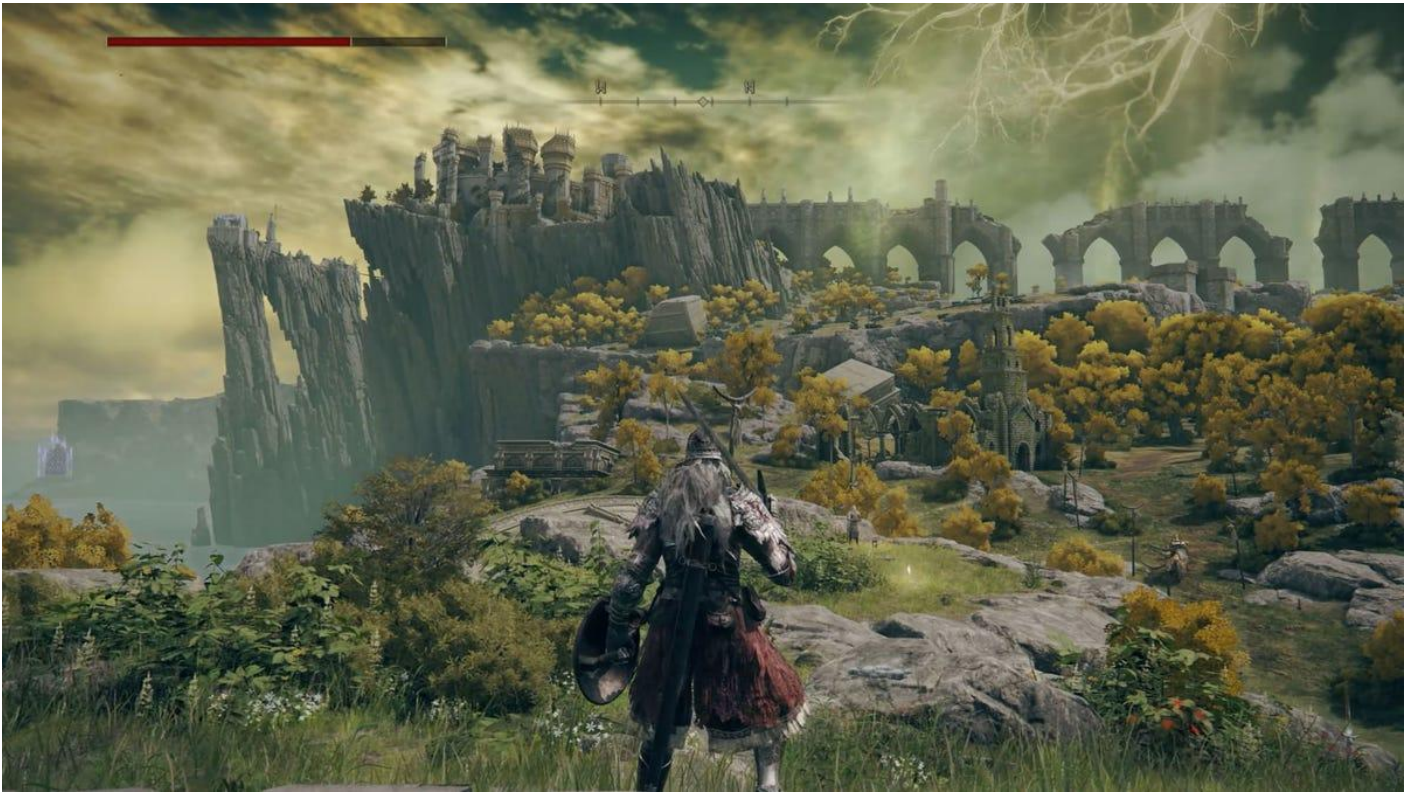
You can also program your wands in a similar way to regular programming which means if you're given the right items in a run, you can create wands and abilities that completely break the game. If you're on the fence, be sure to google some people playing this, it will break your brain.

[Celeste](#) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐



Don't let the cutesy artwork fool you. This game is BRUTAL. But don't get discouraged! Celeste does a great job of making death quick and easy to recover from and encourages you to keep trying time and time and time again to get through each gauntlet it throws at you.

[Elden Ring](#) 



Okay, yes, if you have never played a Fromsoft game I still recommend Lies of P over this but I would be a fool not to recommend the absolute masterpiece that is Elden Ring. While I do think the balance for this version is off, nothing comes close the sheer scale and intensity of this game. The setting is gorgeous and lore is written by George R. R. Martin and it really shows.

If you have experience with at least one Fromsoft game, I'd pick this one up. Hell, I wouldn't blame you if you picked it up if you didn't. It's a masterpiece through and through.

[Enter the Gungeon](#)



Gawd I've sunk so many hours in this game. Unlike a lot of roguelikes and bullet-hell games, dying in this almost never feels cheap. Every time I've gotten hit, I felt like I knew where I screwed up and what I'd need to do next time to prevent it.

Also the game is hilarious. Everything is guns or gun-themed! You will be giggling every time you pick up a new weapon and realize it's once again another gun pun.

[Spelunky 1 and 2](#)



Spelunky is one of the OG procedural generated roguelike games and it still holds up well after all this time. The sequel is even better and has a level of content that I would never be able to complete even if I dedicated my whole life to it. Still, it's a ton of fun and its 4 player local coop is a blast to play through.

[Hotline Miami](#)



Closest game I've felt to being John Wick. Every level you gotta run in and kill everything that moves. The only problem is you will die in one hit just like all the other bad guys. If you die, you gotta start all over again so every run is tense and requires a lot of precise movements.

But don't let that stop you! The game's incredible soundtrack will keep you trying again and again until you finally pull off the hit.

Okay, hear me out...

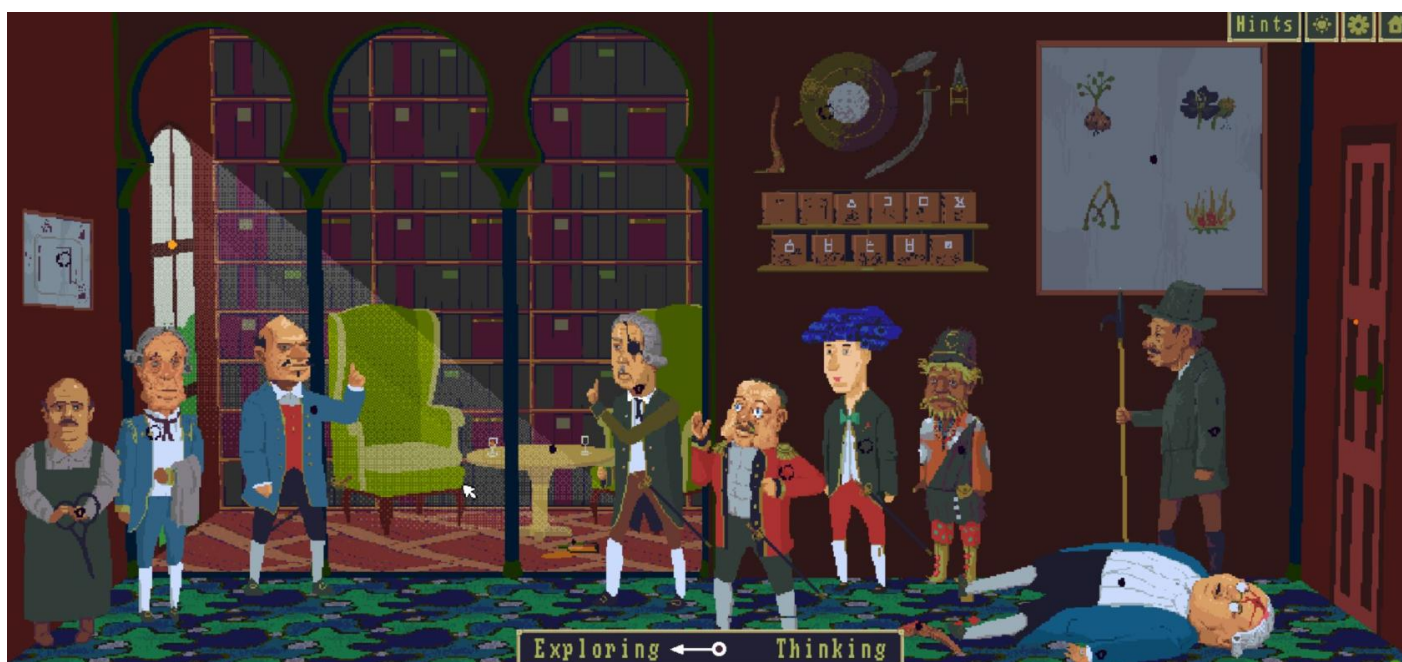
These games are definitely an acquired taste. They take a little bit of patience to get in to and may have some jankiness, but you won't regret it if you put in the work and looked past some flaws.

[Nancy Drew Games](#)

Okay, so the Nancy Drew games may have outdated graphics, or terrible controls, or sometimes bizarre puzzles, or....

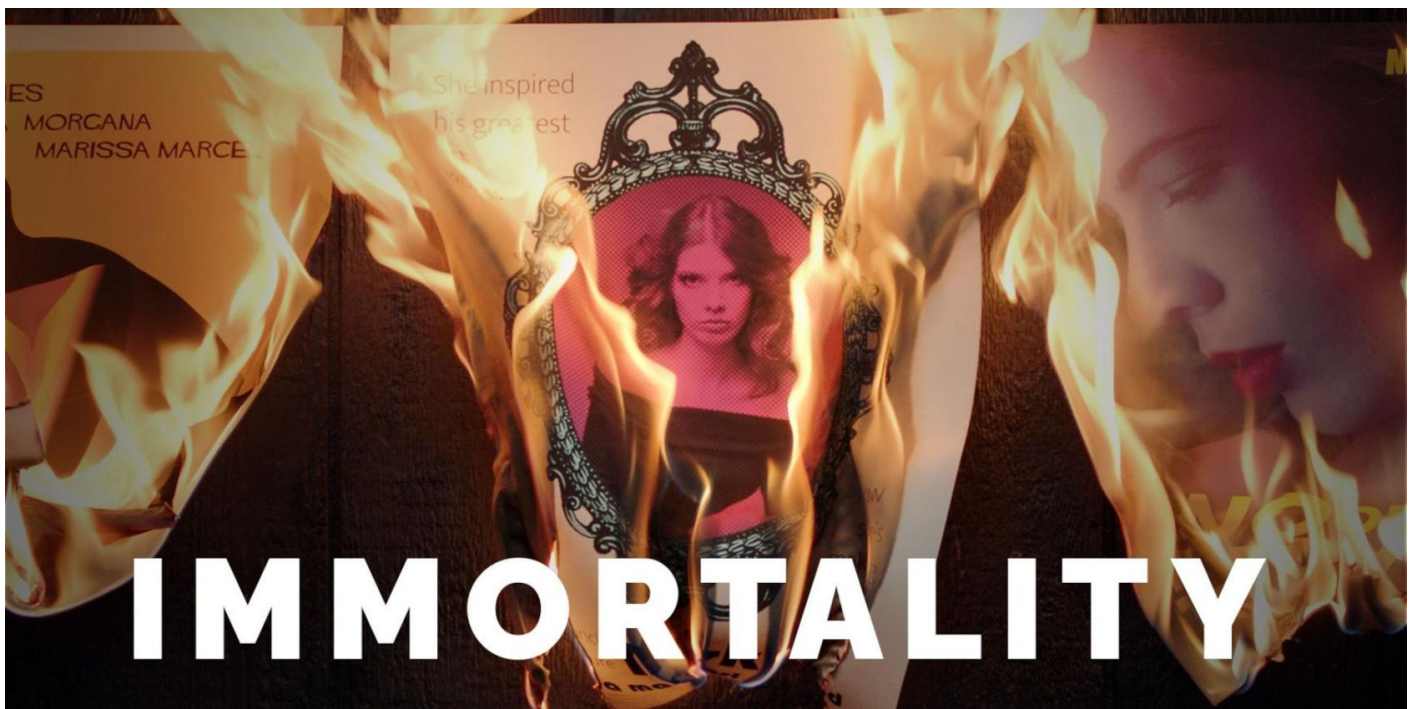
What I'm saying is there's a lot of flaws, okay? But behind those flaws is a real gem of a game series. The stories are cheesy but always managed to grab me for some reason. Also, despite being marketed to teen girls, they have some of the most complex puzzles I've ever had to solve! If you're looking for a challenging game, this might be a series worth checking out.

[The Case of the Golden Idol](#)



This is the second best mystery game I've ever played. You'll need to fill in ad-libs to solve what's happening in the scene in order to move forward and there's quite a lot of inference going on as you solve the puzzle. Some of the puzzles I found impossible to solve and the lot of the overarching storyline is just...strange, but I loved many moments of having a eureka moment as I deduced the mystery.

[Immortality](#) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐



Made by the same team as [Her Story](#), this is a similar idea just with a much much bigger budget. Instead of one low-budget film, you'll parse through the unedited clips of 3 mid-budget films all "set" in different time periods.

While I loved the story and crazy plot twist, I found a lot of the controls to be random and difficult to control. Instead of searching through a transcript, you'll click on various images in the scene and it will transport you to an entirely different scene to watch. It seemed like there was no real logic to that change, though, and I often found myself shuffling blindly through scene after scene. There's also a weird mechanic you learn at one point in the game and if I was inexperienced with games, I likely would have missed it entirely.

That being said, the acting and writing here is top-notch and I'd recommend this to anyone who loved [Her Story](#) and wants more.

[Unavowed](#)



Dave Gilbert is known for making some very mature and story-rich point-and-click adventure games of incredibly high quality. Unavowed is easily his best game so far. This is his most ambitious game yet but it does a great job introducing the story and characters.

Like most Dave Gilbert games, the puzzles are minimal compared to a typical point-and-click, and there's a couple times where you'll tear your hair out and need to read a walkthrough. But despite all that the journey is worth it.

[Kingdom Come: Deliverance](#)



This is a historically accurate rendition of Bohemia in 1403 as you play the son of a blacksmith in a small village. That may sound dull but goddamn does this game absolutely rule!

The game is incredibly janky and the first few hours of play are ROUGH but before you know it you'll be getting wasted with priests, tripping on shrooms in the forest, sword-fighting with Cuman soldiers, and sleeping with a lord's wife behind his back. And that just scratches the surface of all the craziness this game entails.

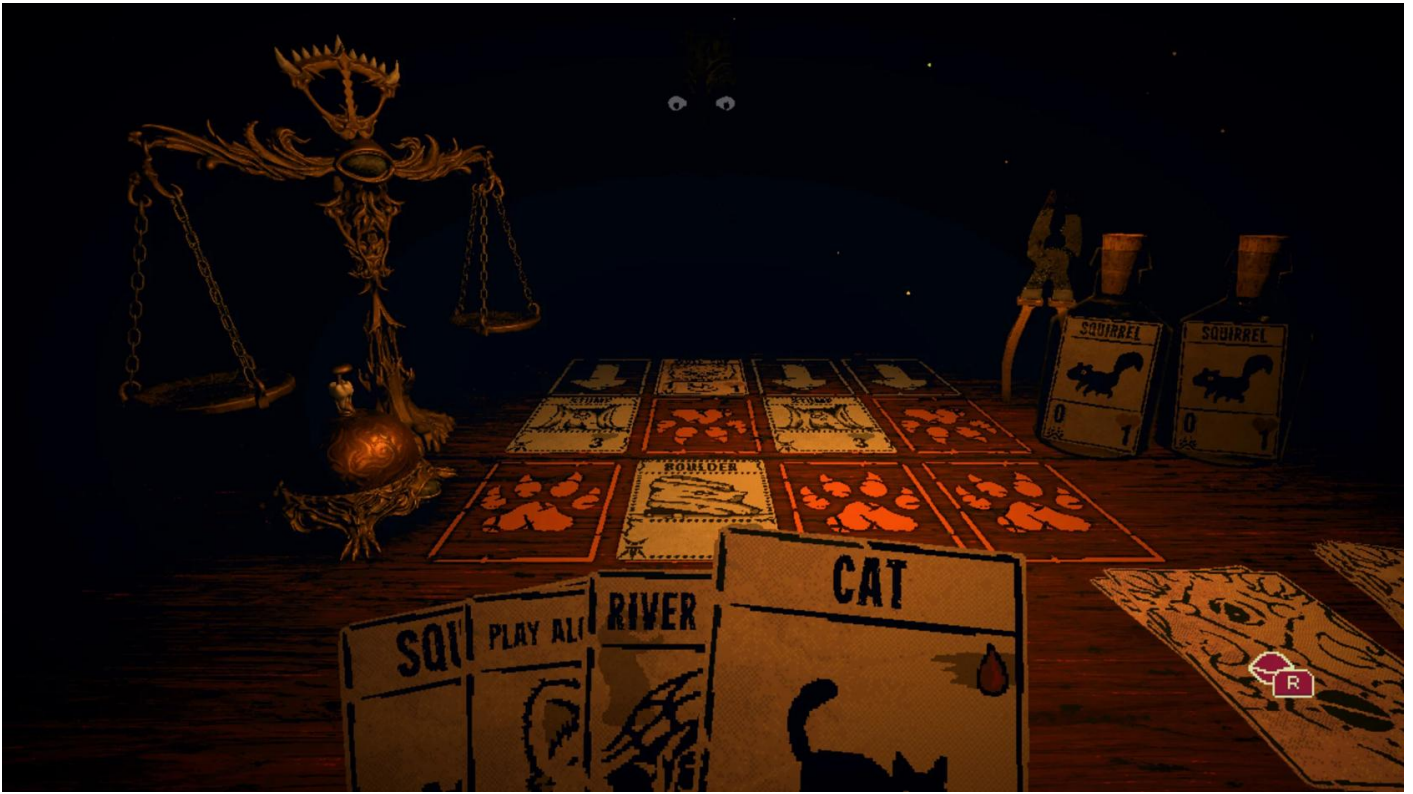
Plus you'll get to learn a LOT about what the typical life of that era was. It may even inspire you to pick up a book on the subject and learn more about this period.

[Thief: The Black Parade](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/xc0VnVuWqYQ?si=NMEbQbEcmUwoT0aa>

This is a mod for an old stealth game called Thief: The Dark Project. It adds 10 new levels and is a VAST improvement from the original game. Despite the older engine, Thief still holds up and the use of modern day hardware allows the designers to create some absolutely MASSIVE maps. [You can get a copy of Thief here.](#)

[Inscription](#)

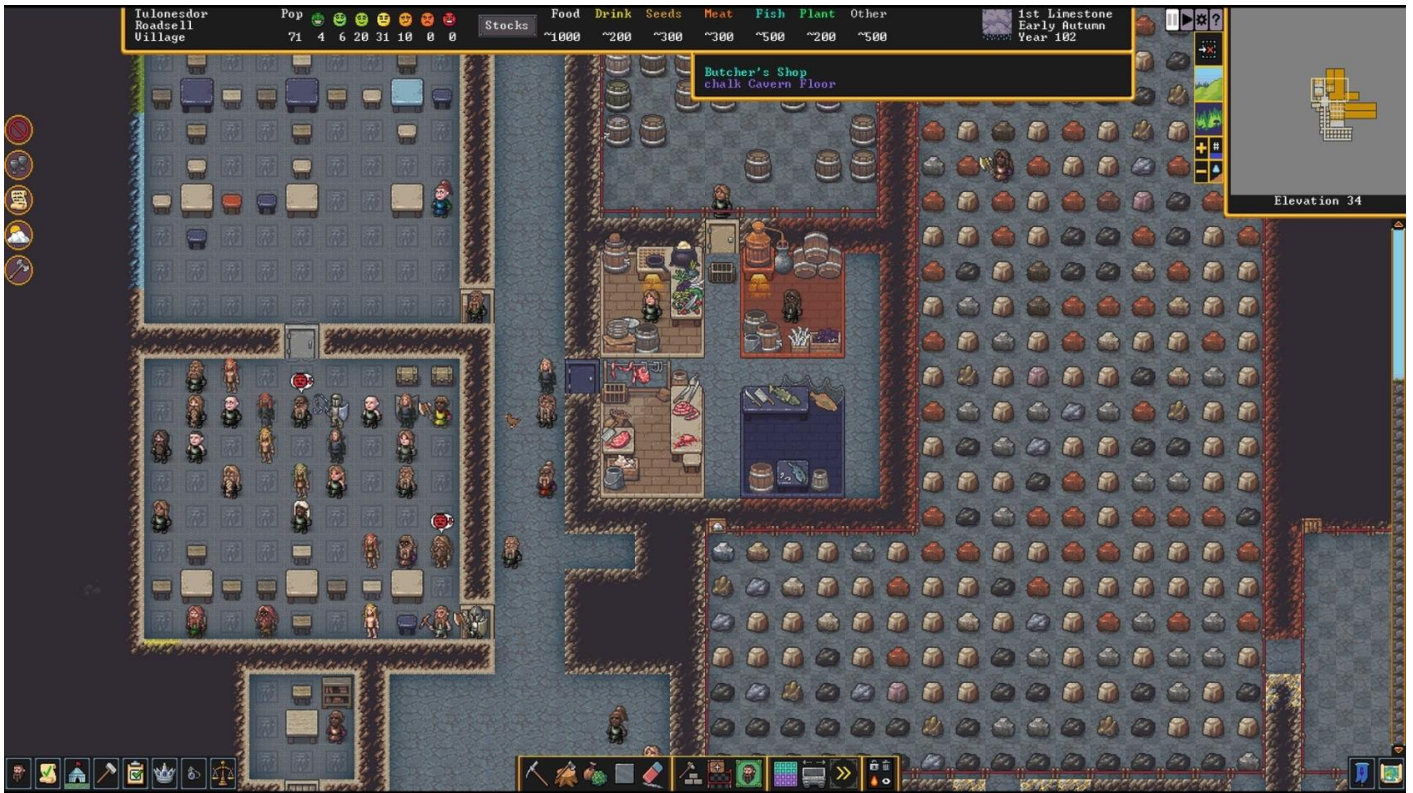


Another game that's hard to talk about without spoiling anything. All I'll say is that there's a LOT more going on than what the promo pictures are showing.

If you like card games, this is definitely for you. It plays like a simple card game roguelike for a while before exploding into something else entirely after you finally beat the first section. There's also a very deep card game once you get to the end and there's now an endless mode where you can try all kinds of combinations. It gets to the point where it feels like a lighter version of Slay the Spire.

I placed it down here just because the setting and "vibe" can be off-putting to some. There's also a meta-game story that some may find difficult to parse through. Honestly none of it is all that bad, though and if you enjoyed Slay the Spire, you should pick this one up.

[Dwarf Fortress](#)

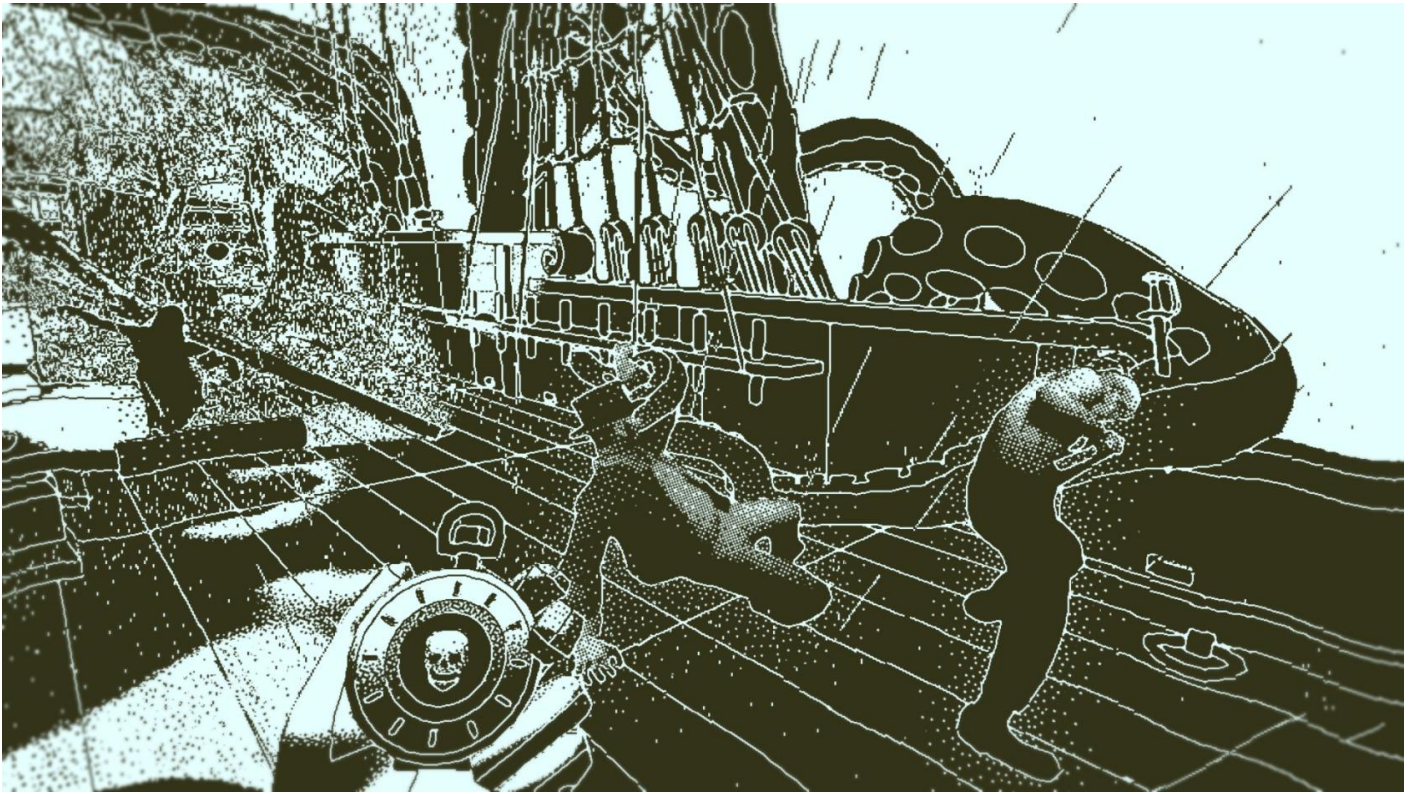


Oh god. Dwarf Fortress. If you've never heard of this masterful marvel, it's essentially the simulation to end all simulation. Every single object has an absurd amount of traits that interact with each other in numerous different ways and the scale of Dwarf Fortress is essentially infinite.

There's an incredible "bug" where the devs discovered that cats were dying of alcohol poisoning because they were rolling in the ale the dwarves were spilling everywhere then licking their fur. That was never intentionally programmed in and simply a result of the many systems these absolute madmen put in place.

You can [download the game for free](#) or buy it on steam for the graphical version.

[Return of the Obra Dinn](#)

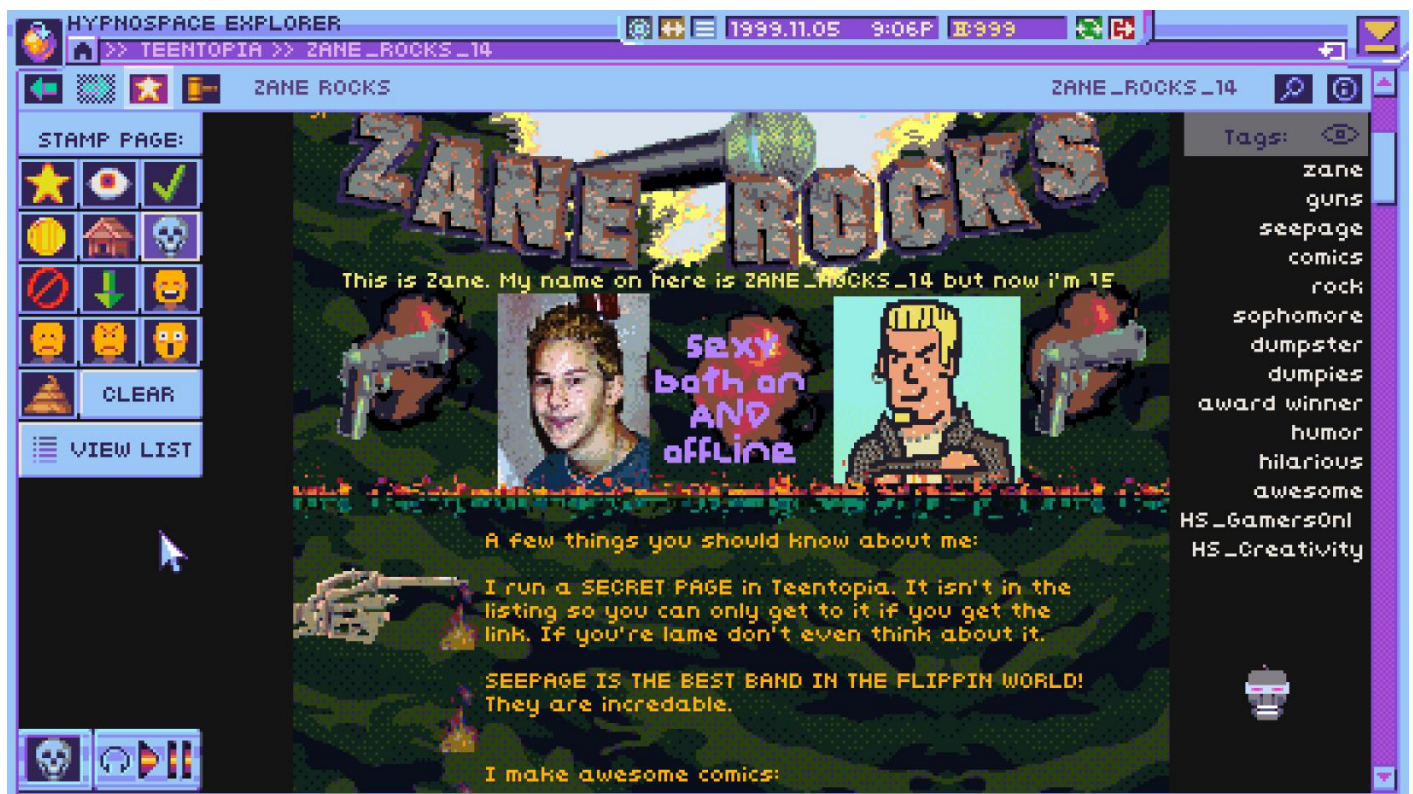


Remember how I said *The Case of the Golden Idol* was the second best mystery game I ever played? Well this one is the first.

Very similar in style, with the same ad-lib questionnaire but it goes way further in depth as you use a special device to travel back in time to discover how every single crew member of this doomed ship died.

The graphical style can be offputting at first but the more you play the more you get used to it. There's also a lot of hard puzzles here as you try your best to infer from a lot of out-of-the-box thinking.

[Hypnospace Outlaw](#)



Do you miss the mid-90s internet as much as I do? Well this game is for you! You'll explore a simulation of the old internet and try to find hidden parts of the web based on reading and searching through people's personal profiles.

If you can get past the outdated web graphics, you'll find a really interesting mystery game hidden behind it.

[Shadows of Doubt](#) ☐☐☐☐



Another simulation that breaks my brain. This is a procedurally generated murder simulator and you're a hardened PI breaking into homes, interrogating witnesses, and tracking fingerprints wherever you can as you try to solve each mystery.

What the designers pulled off here is nothing short of incredible. I've found some really clever and unique mysteries played out here, though I will admit that most of them are very basic and some of them are impossible to solve.

It's a great buy if you're open to rolling the dice each time you take on a case or maybe you would love skulking around a 1980s cyberpunk simulation while you manage your cola addiction.

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