

Playing Old Games on a New Computer

It's a Hoot!

Admit it - you still crave a good game of scrolling Super Mario or Dig Dug just like you did "back in the day." We all do because playing them brings back some of the fondest memories. But it isn't easy to play these games the way we used to. Unless we've kept the systems and cartridges of the past in good working condition, our only trip down this jagged pixel lane is through a little known gem called emulation.

Through emulation, you can play some of your favorite games from the past including games made for Commodore, Atari, and Nintendo. Emulation refers to the ability of a program or device to imitate another program or device and it tricks the software into believing that a device is really some other device. It is also possible for a computer to emulate another type of computer. For example, there are programs that enable an Apple Macintosh to emulate a PC. 1

All that gobbledey gook doesn't really mean too much until you discover that with the right emulator, your computer can play all your old favorite games. And the news gets even better. You can download emulators from the Internet - free. You can download Amiga, Commodore, GameBoy, Playstation 1, and Nintendo emulators plus you can download the games (ROMs) that these machines play.

Our favorite emulator is the ZSNES Emulator. This particular program emulates the old Super Nintendo console and you can learn more about it yourself by visiting <http://www.zsnes.com>. This program comes with an extensive help file and walks you through the process of setting up a copy on your own PC. At the very least, your system needs a 486/100 processor, 14.5MB of RAM, a VGA card, and a Sound Blaster or 100% compatible sound card. However a system with a fast P200 or higher Pentium processor, 32MB of RAM, VGA card, and Sound Blaster 16 or 100% compatible sound card yields the most realistic results.

But don't think that just because a console is on the computer - you can't enjoy your favorite gaming accessories. The ZSNES Emulator let's users maneuver around games with the keyboard and a joystick. But enough about the emulator - You probably want to know what kind of games you can play, right?

Called ROMs, you can play any game on your PC that you played on the Super Nintendo System including:

- * Bomberman 5
- * Super Battleship
- * Beavis n' Butthead

- * Bustamove
- * Clue
- * Dragonballz
- * DreamTV
- * Final Fantasy 4
- * Frogger
- * The Great Waldo Search
- * Inspector Gadget
- * Jeopardy Deluxee
- * John Madden Football
- * Mariokart
- * Marvel Superheroes
- * Megamans Soccer
- * Mighty Morphin Power Rangers
- * Monopoly
- * Mortal Kombat 2
- * Pinocchio
- * Power Rangers
- * Race Driving
- * Carmen San Diego
- * SimAnt
- * SimCity
- * SimCity 2000
- * Super Mario RPG
- * Sonic
- * Space Football
- * Starfox
- * Streetfighter 2
- * Super Black Bass
- * Super Ninja Boy
- * Super Punch-Out!!
- * Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- * Themepark
- * Troddlers
- * Utopia
- * Vortex
- * Wacky Race
- * Wheel of Fortune
- * Wings 2
- * Wordtris
- * World Soccer 94
- * Yoshis Island
- * Zelda 3

* ... and tons more.

Downloading these games is a simple matter of finding them online and there are plenty of websites that host them. Try <http://www.everyvideogame.com> for starters.

Be aware that there's an issue with downloading these games and it's a legal one. Basically, you're not allowed to download and play any game that you don't already own on a cartridge. If can abide by this law, you can revisit the past, in the present, on your brand new PC.

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1 Source: Mecklermedia Corp.