

An ode to the green screened portable wonder

by BJ Wanlund
Contributor

Ah, the Nintendo Game Boy. Anyone who was around at that time who was a kid remembers the original monochrome-screened white-cased Game Boy with the D-pad and the purple A and B buttons.

I certainly do, and while I love my DS, I still pine for the old days when purple buttons were all the rage, and portable games didn't require ultra-flashy graphics, ultra-innovative gameplay methods, and ultra-cool in-game music to succeed wildly in the marketplace.

Games like Super Mario Land, Daedalian Opus, Tetris (the pack-in), Kirby's Dream Land, Donkey Kong, Dr. Mario, Yoshi (called Mario and Yoshi everywhere else), Yoshi's Cookie, Mario's Picross, Blades of Steel, Pokemon, and many, many other wild, weird, and wonderful games defined an entire generation.

And Game Boy is now fading into the sunset, thanks to the wildly successful (in today's terms) Nintendo DS. However, the Game Boy brand is still (for now) sharing a part of the spotlight. The part of the spotlight that the Game Boy brand holds is quickly fading into nothing, but those of us who fondly remember the original Game Boy will always remember that portable, whether or not it was our first portable system.

If you want an original Game Boy currently, good luck finding a working model on eBay. You're probably better off getting a Game Boy Advance SP or a boxed original Game Boy. The DS does NOT play original Game Boy games unless you're willing to use a Game Boy Advance flash cart and put the Game Boy games on a memory card, modifying it just a little bit so that you can actually save your progress, although most Game Boy games don't have a way to save your progress, as this was only for certain games, like Final Fantasy Legend 1, 2, & 3, Pokemon, Kid Icarus: Of Myths & Monsters, The Legend of Zelda: Link's Awakening, and others of that ilk.

It was really low of Nintendo to not offer backwards compatibility with Game Boy and Game Boy Color titles in any of the two DS models that are out so far. But, maybe we'll begin to see their logic when the new Game Boy Downloadable Channel debuts, whether on the Wii as part of the forthcoming Everybody's Nintendo Channel or on a special DS game card that relies strictly upon the Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection service built into the DS, with downloading Game Boy & Game Boy Color games (with original green screens) to a special GBA card that comes with it, or whether a newer-tech version of the original Game Boy will appear with a

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Wi-Fi connection not unlike Amazon's Kindle, where you can think of a Game Boy game, and download it practically automatically with Nintendo Wireless Connectivity, along with a free game every week to try out, along with the games that you buy.

Looking into the future, as I try to see how much money a company like Nintendo can still make from arguably its biggest moneymaker is like having your fortune told without a crystal ball in sight. I honestly have no idea what Nintendo will do to extend the Game Boy brand once again, or if they've officially abandoned the Game Boy forever.

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