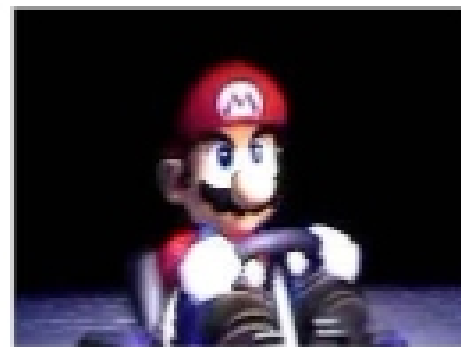


MARIO KART

Hierarchy of Videogames



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Action, Arcade Driving/Racing Games, Basic Arcade/Platform Games, Fighting Games, First Person Shooters, Adventure/Role Playing, Simulation, Sports, Strategy/Wargames- these are some of the most popular ways of categorizing genres of video games (Walker 105). Today, there are hundreds of thousands of video games, including some that do not fit in any genre; so which are the best, and how do we decide which ones to play? Unlike most consumers, video gamers don't tend to base their buying on price, for with video games, it will always go down with time. Instead, gamers pay more attention to how fun a game is, word of mouth/friends' reviews, and previous experience playing (demos in stores). One game that has done particularly well, has gotten good reviews, plays for hours and has a great fan base, is MarioKart. Only recently introduced to the world first through the Super Nintendo Entertainment System (SNES), then through the Nintendo 64, MarioKart has created an interesting place for itself in the history of video games. By going through this history and explaining why MarioKart is so popular, what makes it so fun, we will see why MarioKart is here to stay as a game that will be a classic for years to come, despite the current trend in storytelling games.

The first "video game" was called "The Tennis Program," created in 1958 by Willy Higinbotham at the Brookhaven National Laboratory in Upton, New York. It was played on an oscilloscope, connected to an analog computer. This "program" opened the world to video games, and in 1972 the first home TV game system was released, the Magnavox Odyssey. On June 27, 1972, Nolan Bushnell would establish the Atari company, which would later come out with "Pong," an evolution of the Tennis Program

(Jase). Around this time Atari would release some of the first racing games, such as Street Racer for the Atari 2600 (Chance). However, Atari's Night Driver, released in 1976, would be the first racing game in the first person perspective, as opposed to the characteristic aerial view of most racing games (Kuitteinen). A few years later, in 1981, Mario, the star of MarioKart, would say hello to Japan in the arcade game Donkey Kong (TW) at the same time that Sega would release its racing game Turbo (Burke). Created by Mr. Shigeru Miyamoto, who joined Nintendo (from the playing card company of 1889, Nintendo Koppai, translated as "Work hard, but in the end it is in Heaven's hands") at the age of 24 after graduating from college in Japan, Mario was first called "Jumpman," then later renamed after the owner of Nintendo's first warehouse, Mario Segali. In 1983 Mario received his first feature game, another arcade game, Mario Bros., which also introduced his brother Luigi. A huge success, Mario would be featured in a slew of games (Mirabella). Following Atari's success in the 1970's, video game consoles were soon to follow, and in 1986 the company that would introduce MarioKart, one of the most famous names in video games, Nintendo would release its Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) to the world. It would sell for \$199 in the US and include a copy of the Super Mario Bros. game (Jase), which introduced Mario's enemy, Bowser, and the Princess Peach (TW). Mario would continue to make games, and when the Super NES was released in 1991, Super MarioKart followed on September 1, 1992. Miyamoto and the Nintendo Entertainment, Analysis, and Development team (EAD) (Brown, 1) struck gold when they created the first go-kart, cartoon racing game that allowed players to race with the many ever-popular Nintendo characters, controlling Mario and Luigi,