Why You Should Make Your Own Games (+How To Start!)

MAKING GAMES IS A MODERN FORM OF SELF-IMPROVEMENT

Learning to make art, play sports, or perform music is a healthy, fun part of life.

Most people who play soccer will never do it as a career, but it's still time well spent.

We do it to build discipline and confidence, to express ourselves, and meet people.

Making your own games can be just as life enriching if done in the right way.

9 Tips on How to Make Games for Personal Development & Enrichment

Remake classics at first to start simple

- Pick a 1970s game, then '80s, and so on
- Short projects with little art keeps focus on the fundamentals
- With experience you can add new twists or create mash-ups

Begin without Unity to get more out of it

- Big games are easier with Unity – it's great!
- Like using a graphing calculator, it helps to know what it's doing
- Code your first games without Unity to gain better control over it

Level up to your "dream game"

- Each game you make is a stepping stone
- Get beginner errors out of your system on a few smaller games
- Ideally on a big game it's not your first time doing most parts of it

Get past tutorials, get to your games

- Original games are harder but motivating
- Full game tutorials, like training wheels, should be outgrown
- Tutorials will remain useful, but for parts of your own games

Plan to release your practice games free

- Early focus on sales reduces creative risks
- Build up skills and find your style – starting a business isn't step one
- Like musicians, payoff for original work isn't near-term or certain

Stick to a deadline

- 1-2 months if you are new and alone
- 2-6 months for a new team, longer is tough for practice projects
- Finishing is a critical skill so adapt to hit a target release date

Make placeholder art for your game

- It can be ugly, we just need to tell what it is
- Fancy pre-made art leads to designing the game around it
- If it plays well, then hire art and audio for a pro re-release

Join teams and a peer community

- Specializing enables far deeper learning
- It's hard to find time if working alone, but teams build faster
- Leading & teamwork are powerful skills to develop and practice

Save time with a professional guide

- We seek help to learn sports, art, and music
- With an experienced guide you'll learn and do more in less time
- A person who knows you can help much better than websites

Years ago, I shared these ideas with a long-time industry veteran to get his feedback. He said it makes a lot of sense, but those last 2 points? On finding good teams and a professional guide? He said are nearly impossible when starting out.

The "nearly impossible" is part of what we solve for people who join HomeTeamGameDev.com

"You might learn something playing a game. You will always learn something making a game."

Nolan Bushnell
Founder of Atari

A free game development resource by
Chris DeLeon of HomeTeamGameDev.com