My subjective opinion on console generations and modern games

A few words of explanation

In the future, I plan to write a post about my favorite retro games, because this list mainly concerns games that are relatively new (released in the 6th generation of consoles and/or later), and these are generations of games in which diamonds (such as FEZ or The Witcher 3) are rather exceptions to the rule, and games that, at least for me, are interesting and give me a good dose of fun are a rarity in the new generations of consoles and PC games. Therefore, these ratings are about the games that I considered worth mentioning, but for contrast, I also mentioned a few games that I thought would be good (because, for example, I played previous iterations of a given brand) and turned out to be a total failure. The table format also forces me to write a maximum of 2-3 sentences per game. Perhaps I will write a more extensive review of my favorite platforms when it comes to retro games.

I also omitted competitive games such as LoL, TF2, CS:GO, Fortnite, etc. from this list. Why? Mainly because these games are not closed compositions, and if I wanted to evaluate them, I would have to evaluate a specific season in a given game, for example. Secondly, because I am not a fan of such games (I had a moment in my life when I tried to play TF2), I don't like them. Thirdly, from an ethical point of view, I disagree with what these games represent or have in their content: microtransactions, buying and trading skins, many anti-cheat systems do not work on Linux and not because it is technically impossible, but because many of the companies responsible for these games have decided to exclude the entire Linux system because it is by definition incompatible with anti-cheat systems here you can read more about this topic. Most games of this type fall under at least these two accusations.

Games	1: seasons	2: skins	3: Anticheat on linux
LoL	✔	✔	☐
TF2	☐	✔	✔ (VAC)

Games	1: seasons	2: skins	3: Anticheat on linux
CS:GO	✔	✔	✔ (VAC)
Fortnite	✔	✔	✘

This post would be far too long if I wanted to explain and describe in detail why I think these three points work against players. However, to sum up, if a game meets at least two of these points, I don't think it makes sense for me to spend the time needed to write a blog post about it or rate it on my list.

Console Generation Tierlist

S Tier

GameBoy Advance and Nintendo DS

In my opinion, these are the two best consoles ever released. I could also add the 3DS here, but I don't think it has as diverse a game library as the GBA and NDS.

Why this choice?

Some of my favorite game series were released on the GBA. In my opinion, the best remake in the Pokemon series is Pokemon FireRed. There are also very good iterations of the Zelda series, and great strategy games such as Advance Wars and Fire Emblem. Nothing more, nothing less. Admittedly, the display on the original GBA wasn't the best, but nowadays most people play these games on emulators or Linux handheld consoles.

As for the Nintendo DS, it is one of the consoles with the most diverse game library. Great RPGs, great puzzle games, great platformers, and even rhythm games. When it comes to this console, in my opinion, playing these games on an emulator is a bit pointless. The console itself suffers from broken hinges, but that doesn't change the fact that some of the best Pokémon and Mario games were released on this platform.

A Tier

Nintendo 3DS, Classic GameBoy and Gameboy Color, PlayStation 1, Sega Dreamcast, Nintendo Wii, Playstation 2, Playstation Portable PSP.

Nintendo 3DS. The best portable console released to date, it can play NDS games and, with emulators, games from other consoles. It does not have as many different games as the NDS, but it is still a console worth considering for any video game fan. In a way, it is the console that the NDS aspired to be but failed to become. Despite this, it still sold better than its competitors' portable consoles.

Classic GameBoy and Gameboy Color. No backlight, poor graphics even for its time, and yet it's in Tier A. This is the console that started one of my favorite series, Pokemon, which is mainly why it's in this spot. Besides, many other great games were released for this console, some of my favorites being: Tetris, TLoZ: Links's Awakening, Mario Picross. Nowadays, I recommend playing classic GB games on the Super Gameboy emulator, which is an emulator of the SGB add-on for the SNES console. It has

additional frames and colors for games, which makes them look less crude than on the original.

Playstation 1. I'm not a big Sony gamer, but the PS1 had such a diverse game library that I also found something for myself: Crash Bandicoot, Final Fantasy.

Sega Dreamcast. One of the most underrated consoles of all time. The first in its generation with such graphics. The first with online features. With a good game library, yet remembered in history as strange and forgotten.

Nintendo Wii. The console that started the motion gaming trend, backward compatible with GameCube, is in fact an extension of GameCube with several great games (e.g., Mario Galaxy) and motion features. It outsold all other consoles of its generation.

PlayStation 2. As I mentioned earlier, I am far from being a Sony fan, but in order for this subjective assessment not to be too subjective, I couldn't give the best-selling console in history a rating lower than tier A.

PSP. I remember this console mainly for a few cool games (Lemmings, LocoRoco, Patapon, etc.) and for the fact that it had real 3D graphics in games, rather than a voxel engine with overlaid textures like the NDS.

B Tier

Nintendo GameCube, Sega GameGear, Nintendo 64, Nintendo Entertainment System, Super Nintendo Entertainment System, Nintendo Switch. GameCube. The first Nintendo console to compete with the PS1, it was technologically much better than the PS1, but unfortunately, due to a few bad decisions, it has been somewhat forgotten. Although I still think it is much better to have a small library of games, but with only gems in it, than to have a million games, half of which no one will play after 20 years. GC games have proven their timelessness, as some of them are still being released as remakes for subsequent Nintendo platforms.

GameGear. A competitor to the Gameboy, better than it in every way, although the game library is a little more meager. But I think it deserves a mention. Nintendo 64. In terms of its market position and game library, this console was similar to the GC, except that in this case the limitation was the hardware rather than management decisions. The design was very strange to still use cartridges for gaming instead of discs. Nevertheless, several games were released for it, thanks to which series such as Mario and Zelda became video game legends.

NES SNES. I put them in one category because, in my opinion, they should be evaluated in this way. These are consoles that have aged poorly, and it is difficult to play some games from these platforms nowadays. In my opinion, SNES performs much better in this respect, as there are several timeless gems that are worth playing even today. Nintendo Switch. Many people will ask why it ranks so low. My answer is this: it is a console that started the form factor of a tablet combined with a gamepad (no, Steam Deck wasn't the first), you can still see remnants of the Wii's motion controller, but it's not the same level of innovation as in the days of the DS and 3DS. The management's decisions regarding consumer treatment also leave much to be desired, and it is one of the first consoles to introduce a policy of remote console blocking and remote game deletion.

C Tier

Nintendo Wii U, Playstation Vita, Xbox One, Playstation 4, Xbox 360, Xbox Classic, Playstation 3

Nintendo Wii U. The games for this console were great, with lots of remakes from GC in higher resolution and with better assets, as well as many original titles, including Zelda Breath of The Wild. However, the console had too small a game library and was not innovative enough to gain widespread popularity. If this assessment were even more subjective, this console would be in tier A or at least B.

Xbox One, Xbox 360, Xbox Classic. Not many exclusive games for these platforms. The devices themselves are not particularly innovative. The first Xbox is actually the same as the latest one, the only difference being the processing power . In its heyday, I had an X360, the Kinect games were terrible, and I only played a few titles that I could just as easily have played on my computer. PlayStation 3 and Vita. Two consoles that had a very difficult start at launch, and in fact, publishers were very reluctant to release games for them. It was only when modders got their hands on these consoles (Vita) or at the end of their life cycle (PS3) that they came back to life. I haven't played much on these consoles; I've held a PS Vita a few times in my life and played Gran Turismo on PS3 a few times. However, this does not change the fact that I do not have a good opinion of these consoles. PS4. A console that fixed the problems of its older brothers, Sony withdrew from the mobile market and introduced a real console with real network features and a good game library. So why so low? Because it's not a console I'm familiar with, it doesn't have a series of games I'd like to play, it's a kind of console that has disappeared somewhere between the weak PS3 and the new PS5 console.

D Tier

VirtualBoy

It was a ridiculous console built on the wave of what was then very early VR. It was no more innovative than the GameBoy, it was very unergonomic, and as a result it is very rare and collectible nowadays, and therefore also expensive. It was a ridiculous console built on the wave of what was then very early VR. It was no more innovative than the GameBoy, it was very unergonomic, and as a result it is very rare and collectible nowadays, and therefore also expensive.

Game grading table

A version of the table with search and sort options is available at ostrowski.net.pl.

Game Name	Platform	Grade	Description
The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild	Wii U	7	A complete paradigm shift for the series. An open world with side quests and a different dungeon system. Some people don't like it, but in my opinion, you have to look at this part of the series a little differently.
The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt + DLC	PC	9	One of the best west RPG games I've ever played. Hundreds of hours of fun. There are a few shortcomings, but for me, the balance between the amount of content in this game and the time it takes to complete it is the golden mean for such games. gier

Game Name	Platform	Grade	Description
Minecraft	PC	10	The game of my childhood. I spent thousands of hours playing it. I treated it more as a platform for mods than for playing “vanilla,” but it's still one of the best games in history, which is reflected in the number of copies sold.
The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time	N64, 3DS	8	The quintessence of what Zelda games should be in 3D. The dungeon system, boss fights, and music are all great in this game. The game itself has aged poorly, mainly due to the controls, but it's still fun to play using fan-made ports for PC.
Cyberpunk 2077 + DLC	PC	8	The rating is lower than Witcher 3 mainly because the main storyline is half as long and there is more side content. The game is built on side quests, and the main storyline leaves something to be desired. Still, it's a very good game.
Yakuza 0	PC	5	A relatively high rating, but still a game that was harder for me to get used to than Witcher 3. It has a lot of mini-game content, etc. The music is also very distinctive, the mechanics are cool, but something didn't quite click, maybe the lack of voice actors, or perhaps something else... I hope to return to this game someday.
Terraria	PC	8	A great title, one of the best indie games, combining sandbox and Metroidvania mechanics, great pixel art, and distinctive music. The only drawback of this game is that it is long and very engaging; it is not as casual as other 2D pixel art games. Once you start playing, 1 hour is not enough.
Shadow Of The Tomb Raider	PC	5	A cool game for boring evenings, nothing spectacular in terms of gameplay or storyline. Just a regular action game like many others on the market. It doesn't offer much in the way of innovation, but that's not why people play games from this series.
Wolfenstein: The New Order, The Old Blood, The New Colossus	PC	8	I am evaluating the game based on the main storyline and as a whole trilogy of “New Wolfensteins,” not as individual games. In my opinion, these are great games in terms of their storyline, mechanics, and audiovisuals. The game leaves nothing to be desired; it is exactly what I would expect from such a game.
Mario Kart 8	Wii U	7	A great installment in the series, with cool audiovisuals. Interesting mechanics, endless fun in multiplayer mode.
Mario Kart Wii	PC	4	Strange mechanics using a motion controller. The audiovisual setting is not bad, but due to the strange mechanics, I didn't spend more time with this installment of the series.
Red Dead Redemption 2	PC	9	The same rating as Witcher 3, because in my opinion it is a very competitive game in terms of the amount of content in the main storyline. The story is engaging, with great characters that the player becomes attached to and then watches them change. The atmosphere of a western game is also used to great effect here.

Game Name	Platform	Grade	Description
Pokemon Red/Blue/Yellow	GB	6	It's difficult to evaluate this game when considering the perspective of subsequent generations of Pokémon games. Looking at it from a historical perspective, it was the game that gave us the most recognizable and well-known generation of Pokémon in terms of location and the monsters themselves. I played it but didn't finish it; I was curious to see where it all began.
Pokemon FireRed/LeafGreen	GBA	9	The best Pokémon game I've ever played, with a perfect balance between the new and the old. The graphics haven't aged as much as those of the Pokémon games on Gameboy.
Pokemon X/Y	3DS	5	It's not my thing at all; it feels like a mobile game from the 2010s. It turned me off right from the start. Maybe I'll give it another chance someday, but for now, I don't like anything about this game.
Stardew Valley	PC	8	The reason why you won't find Harvest Moon on this list is because, in my opinion, Stardew is better in every way than the game it was modeled after. It builds on everything Harvest Moon came up with, only 10 times better.
New Super Mario Bros.	DS	8	A great refreshment of the series in terms of audiovisuals. Lots of content, new worlds, new power-ups, a great installment of the series.
New Super Mario Bros. Wii	Wii	6	A great refreshment of the series in terms of audiovisuals. The only drawback is that the game smuggles in motion controls here and there, and I'm not a big fan of such controls. Lots of content, new worlds, new power-ups, a great installment of the series.
Super Mario Galaxy	Wii	7	An innovative approach to the genre, one of the first 3D platformers with such varied stages, and probably the only one to date to use such mechanics when it comes to planets and traveling across them.
Baldur's Gate III	PC	3	The complete overhaul of the mechanics on which the series was based, i.e., turn-based combat, whereas the original Baldur's Gate games were real-time with an active pause, is not present here, which completely ruins the whole experience of the game for me. Graphically, it's great, and the amount of content in this game is enormous.
Baldur's Gate I i II enchanced edition	PC	7	Great classic RPG games from the D&D universe, excellent implementation of the TTRPG system in the form of a game, reflecting all the mechanics, the active pause system makes it a perfect representation of what happens in TTRPG sessions, first the players tell the game master what actions they want to take and then they leave it up to fate to decide what will happen on the board :)
Disco Elysium	PC	7	The game is exactly on the same level as the classic Baldur's Gate games, nothing more, nothing less. The composition of the game even brings to mind the mechanics of the original Baldur's Gate games. In terms of storyline, the game touches on many interesting and profound topics that are not commonly found in video games.

Game Name	Platform	Grade	Description
Undertale	PC	3	I tried it, but something about the atmosphere of this game doesn't resonate with me; it didn't win me over. The idea behind the game and its mechanics are great and innovative, but I'm just not compatible with this game.
Shovel Knight	PC	5	The audiovisual presentation is reminiscent of third-generation games, and the game itself is quite enjoyable, with mechanics that are neither too easy nor too difficult. It is a great game for those who want to begin their adventure with Metroidvania-style games.
Papers Please	PC	6	A great, addictive indie game with a cool storyline and decent graphics. The mechanics are super interesting and innovative.
Plants vs. Zombies	DS	7	In my opinion, the DS version of this game is exceptionally good, because the low-resolution displays on Nintendo forced EA to create a game in full pixel art, which I think only adds to the game's charm.
Fallout IV	PC	2	The openness of this game and throwing the player straight into the deep end without guiding them through the first stages by the hand meant that I didn't like this game very much.
Prince of Persia Sands of Time	XBOX	5	A cool platformer in the style of the old Prince of Persia, leaving nothing to be desired.
Enter The Gungeon	PC	5	A cool bullet hell game with nice pixel art graphics. I'm not a big fan of the procedural dungeon generation mechanic and having to start from the beginning after every death. In my opinion, Archvale balances these issues much better.
Archvale	PC	7	A cool bullet hell game with cool pixel art graphics. A much better compromise between roguelike and bullet hell, you don't have to start stages from the beginning, the dungeons are well thought out and designed, not procedurally generated. In my opinion, the game is better than Enter The Gungeon in every way.
Advance Wars	GBA	7	A great turn-based strategy game with a retro feel. The mechanics are excellent, easy, and understandable. The pixel art is very cool, and the game is not unnecessarily complicated. The built-in campaign has a relatively high level of difficulty.
Metroid Fusion	GBA	6	A good game to start with in the Metroidvania genre. A little repetitive at times, interesting mechanics, the pixel art style doesn't make a big impression, but it's still a decent game in this genre.
Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney	DS, 3DS	7	An innovative visual novel game that uses many interesting mechanics, and there's nothing more satisfying than winning a trial :)
Diablo II	PC	6	Good game, familiar mechanics. The atmosphere of this game isn't really my thing, but I enjoyed playing it very much.

Game Name	Platform	Grade	Description
Diablo III	X360, PC	7	I've played through the game several times on two platforms, X360 and PC. The atmosphere of the game is better than its predecessors, the gameplay is repetitive, but I didn't expect anything more from it. The boss fights aren't excessive either, but it's still the game in the series that has stuck in my memory the most.
Diablo IV	PC	2	A very strong impression of a mobile game. It's practically a clone of Diablo III, but with all the flaws of new games, i.e., microtransactions, skins, season passes, etc. I don't recommend it for people who prefer more balanced forms of entertainment.
Mafia I: Definitive Edition	PC	6	A short game with a very cool atmosphere and a compact, fast-paced storyline. The atmosphere and graphics are very cool. It finally allows you to play the first installment of the series, which has aged relatively poorly.
Mafia II	X360, PC	8	The best installment in the series, great music, awesome atmosphere, and graphics. Nothing more, nothing less—this is a game that others should use as a model for how to make games of this type.
Mafia III	PC	1	A game modeled on Ubisoft games, also suffering from repetitive gameplay. The locations are almost identical, the graphics are strange to say the least, the tasks repeat themselves over and over again, and after a few hours you get the impression that you are doing the same thing all the time. I struggled to get through it to the very end, and I'll just say this: 24 hours of my life wasted.
L.A. Noire	PC	7	A detective-style game in the vein of Noire, with very cool mechanics for interrogating suspects. Innovative technology for simulating character facial expressions, and a very interesting, suspenseful storyline. It's sad that RockStar didn't take this idea further.
Quake IV	PC	5	The game is not bad. What stuck in my memory is the graphics, which are so dark and drastic at times. I have nothing more to add, the built-in campaign is okay.
Quake II	PC	6	The most recognizable retro shooter. I recommend it to anyone who likes voxel 3D graphics.
Heretic + Hexen	PC	6	The games are very formulaic because they are based on the classic DOOM engine. I played the GOG compilation of these games, which had a few improvements, such as quick save, controller support, camera tilt adjustment, etc. I will definitely come back to them when I feel like playing a retro shooter.
Super Mario 64	N64	5	The game has aged a bit poorly, in my opinion the new iterations of the series are better, but I still come back to this game from time to time.
Mario 3D World	Wii U, 3DS	7	Great music, cool innovative mechanics, a little too easy at times. I recommend it for those who prefer something more relaxed to unwind in the evening.
The Oregon Trail	PC	6	I played Gameloft's remake, which I think definitely modernizes this title. The game has a bit of a mobile feel to it, but if you give it a chance, you can have a lot of fun. The game has cool mini-games and is fairly balanced.

Game Name	Platform	Grade	Description
Yes Yout Grace	PC	7	A very cool game, something new. I can't think of any other game that has mechanics like this one. At times it drags on, and the style of play is inconsistent in places. But it's something new and refreshing in the world of gaming.
UNO	PC	6	A cool game, a well-made board game for the computer. Adapted for playing with a gamepad. The audio is flawless.
Warcraft III	PC	8	I played both the original version and the reforged version. I think it's a very cool strategy game, but I'm a little biased because I'm very nostalgic about it.
unMetal	PC	7	I never played the original Metal Gear games from the 1980s, but this game, modeled after action games from that era, does it very well.
Tomb Raider (2013)	PC	4	Maybe because I played this game after SotTR, I didn't like it as much. It has completely different controls, a different style of graphics and setting. I didn't manage to finish this game and it didn't keep me entertained for long.
Talisman: Digital Edition	PC	8	A superb digital edition of the well-known board game, nothing more, nothing less.
The Stanley Parable	PC	9	It's one of the best games ever, with innovation through the roof. Generally, try it for yourselves and you'll see. I also played Ultra Deluxe.
South Park the Stick of Truth	PC	6	Cool game with lots of references to TV series, but also to TTRPGs and other games. The gameplay and graphics are nothing to write home about. A good game, recommended for fans of the series.
Slipstream	PC	8	A great retro racer, graphics, CRT effects, etc. make this game one of the best of its kind.
Ronin	PC	8	A good platformer, and here innovation and new types of gameplay are what I appreciate. I really like games like this, hence the rating.
Rimworld	PC	9	I've spent more hours playing this game than I'd like to admit. Great gameplay balance, great colony management systems, and overall awesome. Admittedly, I don't play this game as often as I used to, because every time I sit down to play, another 20 hours fly by.
Factorio	PC	9	It's the same as with Rimworld. I've spent way too many hours playing this game. It's great, but I don't play it as much as I used to because it requires endless amounts of time.
Red Dead Redemption	PC	6	The storytelling isn't as good as in 2, but the game itself leaves nothing to be desired. Maybe I'll come back to it and change my mind.
Random Heroes Gold Edition	PC	7	Returning after many years, a game from my childhood. I am biased here and feel a lot of nostalgia for this game, so there is no point in writing anything ;)
Primal Planet	PC	4	It's not a bad game, don't get me wrong, but something made me play it a few times and then leave it. It has innovative gameplay, new mechanics, etc., but it didn't keep me hooked. It's something that makes me go back to Metroid Fusion on GBA.

Game Name	Platform	Grade	Description
Pokemon Uranium	PC	6	That's cool, but I still get the impression that all the ROM hacks for the original Pokémon games mess with the game's balance and make it either super-duper hard or just unplayable.
Plants vs Zombies Replanted	PC	1	Cool, but I still get the impression that all the rom hacks for the original Pokémon games upset the balance of the game and make it either super ultra difficult or simply unplayable.
Plague inc.	PC	7	A funny game, mainly popular on Polish YouTube. I like it, I've played it a few times.
Parking Garage Rally	PC	8	Retro Indie Racer, yes, that combination ;). A very cool game, fun to play and race, with a very satisfying drift mechanism.
No, I'm not a human	PC	8	Great atmosphere, great graphics, and cool audio. A very cool and innovative idea for a game.
Montezuma's Revenge	PC/C64	6	A classic when it comes to platform games
Mother Russia Bleeds	PC	6	A fighter with cool mechanics in a retro style
Yakuza	PS2	6	I prefer this game to Yakuza 0, to be honest.
MegaBonk	PC	5	A game made in the wake of Vampire Survivors. I don't quite understand the idea behind these games. They're fun for unwinding in the middle of the week after work, but that's about it.
LIMBO	PC	7	I recommend playing with headphones, turning off the lights in the room, playing in the evening, and immersing yourself in this title.
Legend Of Grimrock	PC	4	Just your average dungeon crawler, nothing interesting.
Orcs & Elves	DS	8	A dungeon crawler that still holds up today
Katana Zero	PC	7	At times a difficult game, but very satisfying when you manage to complete a level, and a great soundtrack.
Jacksmith	PC	7	A very cool game ported from the Flash era. I feel quite nostalgic about it.
Hades	PC	7	A very cool game, for short or long series, a little challenging at times. Recommended for Diablo fans, it's a slightly different take on the genre.
Firewatch	PC	9	In my opinion, one of the top games, it really resonated with me at the end. Great storytelling, the gameplay itself is a backdrop for the story.
Fez	PC	8	A great platformer, a classic indie game
Fallout (1997) oraz (1998)	PC	6	The new Fallout games aren't for me, so I don't even rate them. I tried playing them, but I just can't. The classic Fallout RPGs, on the other hand, are fun, but they've aged relatively poorly and don't hold up as well as, say, BG:EE.
Death Road to Canada	PC	6	A cool indie game for an evening with friends. It plays well on one TV on the couch with a group of friends.
Coldline	PC	6	A very short game, a funny concept, innovative controls ;)
Clinical Trial	PC	8	This is the essence of underground creativity in RPG Maker.
ChessMaster: GrandMaster Edition	PC,DS	8	In my opinion, the PC version is still one of the best chess games ever, and its DS version is a good compromise for trips or traveling.

Game Name	Platform	Grade	Description
Chess ultra	PC	3	Lots of bells and whistles in the chess piece shapes, backgrounds, checkerboards, etc. However, there are few options for setting game parameters and few game modes.
Pure Chess	DS	7	I didn't realize how great it is to play chess on two screens simultaneously, with a 3D chessboard with pieces at the top and a 2D chess diagram at the bottom... wow.
The Begginers Guide	PC	5	I don't know what to think about this game... maybe its message is too deep for me.
A Hat in Time	PC	7	A great platformer, although as a Mario fan I still think Mario is better, but this game is very close to perfection.
60 seconds	PC	6	A funny game, also popular on Polish YouTube, but it's a combination of a text game and graphics... I know it sounds strange, but try it for yourselves, you might like it.
Risk of Rain 2	PC	6	Good game with fun powerup system. I like the graphics. although the fast pace and exponential difficulty of the game is really draining. Playing one sessions for 30min-1h is enough