

10 best ps5 games

The Ultimate Guide to the 10 Best PS5 Games

10 best ps5 games represent the pinnacle of gaming innovation, offering breathtaking visuals, immersive gameplay, and captivating narratives that push the boundaries of what's possible on a home console. The PlayStation 5 has quickly become a powerhouse for gamers seeking unparalleled experiences, and this curated list highlights the titles that truly define the console's capabilities. From epic open worlds and adrenaline-pumping action to poignant storytelling and innovative gameplay mechanics, these games deliver unforgettable adventures. Prepare to embark on a journey through some of the most critically acclaimed and beloved titles available for the PS5, showcasing diverse genres and unforgettable moments.

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Introduction to the PS5 Gaming Landscape

The PlayStation 5 has rapidly established itself as a dominant force in the gaming industry, delivering experiences that are both visually stunning and deeply engaging. This next-generation console offers players access to a growing library of titles that leverage its powerful hardware for faster load times, more detailed graphics, and innovative features like the DualSense controller. As the PS5 continues to mature, so too does its software library, with developers consistently pushing the envelope to create truly memorable gaming moments. This guide aims to highlight the absolute best the platform has to offer, ensuring that players can make informed decisions about their next digital adventure.

Spider-Man 2: The Definitive Web-Slinging Experience

Marvel's Spider-Man 2 is a monumental achievement in superhero gaming, building upon the foundations of its predecessors to deliver an even grander and more emotionally resonant experience. Players once again step into the suits of both Peter Parker and Miles Morales, each with their unique abilities and storylines that intertwine seamlessly. The expanded New York City feels more alive than ever, filled with iconic landmarks and dynamic events. The combat system has been refined, offering more acrobatic maneuvers and a wider array of gadgets and special abilities, especially with the introduction of the symbiote suit for Peter, which brings a darker, more aggressive edge to his gameplay.

A Dual Protagonist System

One of the most celebrated aspects of Marvel's Spider-Man 2 is the ability to switch between Peter Parker and Miles Morales on the fly. This not only adds variety to the gameplay but also allows for a more nuanced storytelling approach. Each character's personal struggles and growth are central to the narrative, making their journeys compelling. The seamless transition between the two heroes in both

story missions and free-roam exploration keeps the gameplay fresh and engaging throughout the extensive campaign.

Visual Fidelity and DualSense Immersion

Visually, Marvel's Spider-Man 2 is a showcase for the PS5's capabilities. The level of detail in character models, environments, and the sheer density of the city are astonishing. Ray tracing brings a new level of realism to reflections and lighting, making the bustling streets and towering skyscrapers feel incredibly authentic. The DualSense controller further elevates the immersion with its adaptive triggers simulating web-slinging tension and haptic feedback conveying the impact of every punch, dodge, and environmental interaction. This creates a truly visceral connection to the action on screen.

Elden Ring: A Masterpiece of Open-World Exploration

FromSoftware's Elden Ring transcends the boundaries of traditional action RPGs, offering an expansive and intricately designed open world that rewards curiosity and bravery in equal measure. The Lands Between is a vast, mysterious, and often perilous realm filled with diverse biomes, hidden dungeons, and formidable bosses. The freedom granted to players to explore at their own pace and tackle challenges in their preferred order is unprecedented for the developer, making each playthrough a unique discovery. The lore, crafted in collaboration with George R.R. Martin, is deep and enigmatic, providing a rich tapestry for players to unravel.

Unparalleled World Design

The art direction and environmental design in Elden Ring are simply breathtaking. From the majestic vistas of Limgrave to the treacherous swamps of Caelid and the ethereal beauty of Liurnia of the

Lakes, each region feels distinct and brimming with secrets. The sheer scale of the world encourages exploration, with countless optional bosses, hidden paths, and valuable loot waiting to be found. The collaborative storytelling approach, which blends environmental clues with item descriptions and cryptic NPC dialogue, makes piecing together the history of the Lands Between a rewarding intellectual pursuit.

Challenging and Rewarding Combat

As expected from a FromSoftware title, Elden Ring features a deep and challenging combat system that requires precision, patience, and strategic thinking. Players can customize their character build with a vast array of weapons, spells, and abilities, allowing for diverse combat styles. The boss encounters are legendary, each presenting a unique set of mechanics and patterns that must be learned and overcome. Victory over these colossal foes provides an immense sense of accomplishment, a hallmark of the Souls-like genre.

God of War Ragnarök: A Saga of Epic Proportions

God of War Ragnarök continues the critically acclaimed saga of Kratos and his son Atreus, delivering a narrative that is both emotionally resonant and action-packed. The game expands the Nine Realms of Norse mythology, allowing players to explore new and diverse locations, each with its own unique challenges and secrets. The father-son relationship remains at the heart of the story, with Atreus now a young man grappling with his destiny and his identity as Loki. The narrative explores themes of fate, family, and the cyclical nature of violence with maturity and depth.

A Vast and Varied World

Ragnarök boasts an impressive array of environments, from the snow-covered lands of Midgard to the fiery realms of Muspelheim and the majestic halls of Asgard. Each realm is meticulously crafted, offering distinct visual styles, enemy types, and environmental puzzles. The inclusion of new mythological pantheons and expanded lore enriches the experience, providing a deeper understanding of the world and its inhabitants. Exploration is further enhanced by new traversal mechanics and a more open world design compared to its predecessor.

Refined Combat and Stunning Presentation

The combat in God of War Ragnarök is a brutal and satisfying ballet of destruction. Kratos's Leviathan Axe and Blades of Chaos return with new abilities and synergistic combos, while Atreus provides invaluable support with his bow and mystical powers. The boss battles are spectacular, featuring colossal mythological figures and intricate attack patterns that demand mastery of the game's mechanics. Visually, the game is a triumph, with incredibly detailed character models, lush environments, and impressive particle effects that fully utilize the PS5's graphical power. The soundtrack and voice acting are equally superb, contributing to an utterly immersive experience.

Horizon Forbidden West: A Visually Stunning Post-Apocalyptic Adventure

Horizon Forbidden West plunges players back into the vibrant and dangerous world established in Horizon Zero Dawn, expanding upon its lore, gameplay mechanics, and visual splendor. Aloy's journey takes her to the titular Forbidden West, a sprawling and visually diverse landscape filled with new tribes, ancient ruins, and even more awe-inspiring robotic creatures. The game pushes the boundaries of open-world design with its incredible attention to detail, from the lush jungles and arid deserts to the underwater exploration that was a significant new addition.

A World Teeming with Life and Danger

The environments in Horizon Forbidden West are a testament to the PS5's graphical prowess. The sheer density of foliage, the realistic water effects, and the detailed textures of the robotic fauna create a world that feels incredibly alive. The introduction of new machines, each with unique behaviors and combat weaknesses, ensures that encounters remain thrilling and challenging. Players must adapt their strategies and utilize Aloy's diverse arsenal of bows, traps, and elemental attacks to overcome these mechanical beasts.

Enhanced Gameplay and Narrative Depth

Gameplay in Forbidden West sees significant refinements, including improved traversal options, a more robust skill tree, and a refined combat system that allows for more dynamic and fluid engagements. The narrative delves deeper into the mysteries of the Old World and the origins of the rogue machines, offering a compelling story that keeps players invested. The character development for Aloy and the introduction of new, engaging characters add significant emotional weight to her quest to save the planet.

Demon's Souls: A Remake That Defines Next-Gen Graphics

Bluepoint Games' remake of Demon's Souls is not just a graphical overhaul; it's a complete reimagining of the game that started it all for the Souls-like genre. This PS5 launch title serves as a stunning benchmark for what the console is capable of, showcasing incredibly detailed environments, character models, and visual effects that are simply breathtaking. The dark fantasy world of Boletaria has never looked so grim and foreboding, with every stone, every shadow, and every demonic creature rendered with unparalleled fidelity. The sound design is also a crucial element, with the atmospheric audio immersing players in the oppressive atmosphere of the game.

Reimagined Visuals and Atmosphere

The visual transformation of Demon's Souls is astounding. From the crumbling architecture of Boletarian Palace to the eerie depths of the Latria dungeon, the game is a feast for the eyes. The lighting effects, particle systems, and texture detail are all at the highest level, creating a truly next-gen presentation. The increased draw distances and smoother frame rates also contribute significantly to the overall immersion, making exploration feel more fluid and less constrained.

Core Gameplay Intact, but Refined

While the visuals are drastically updated, the core gameplay of Demon's Souls remains true to the original. The challenging combat, intricate level design, and rewarding progression system are all intact. However, minor quality-of-life improvements, such as the updated UI and the ability to move items in your inventory, make the experience more accessible for newcomers while still respecting the game's punishing difficulty. The remake successfully captures the essence of the original while offering a fresh and visually spectacular experience for a new generation of players.

Ratchet & Clank: Rift Apart: A Technical Marvel of Interdimensional Travel

Insomniac Games' Ratchet & Clank: Rift Apart is a pure joy from start to finish, showcasing the PS5's capabilities in a fun, accessible, and visually spectacular package. The game utilizes the console's SSD to its fullest, enabling near-instantaneous dimension hopping, a core mechanic that is both thrilling and creatively implemented. Players are treated to a vibrant and imaginative universe filled with quirky characters, outlandish weapons, and dazzling visual effects. The story follows Ratchet and Clank as they traverse different dimensions to stop a nefarious emperor, leading to some truly creative and unexpected scenarios.

Seamless Dimension Hopping

The signature feature of *Rift Apart* is its dimension-hopping mechanic, which allows players to seamlessly transition between parallel universes with the press of a button. This is not just a narrative device; it's a gameplay mechanic that dynamically changes the environment, enemy types, and even the platforming challenges on the fly. The speed at which these transitions occur, thanks to the PS5's SSD, is mind-boggling and a true demonstration of next-gen technology.

A Showcase for PS5 Hardware

Beyond the dimension-hopping, *Ratchet & Clank: Rift Apart* is a visual masterpiece. The character models are incredibly detailed, the animations are fluid and expressive, and the environments are brimming with color and imaginative design. The game supports ray tracing, offering stunning reflections and lighting effects that further enhance the visual fidelity. The DualSense controller is also put to excellent use, with haptic feedback adding impact to weapons and adaptive triggers providing unique sensations for different armaments. It's a game that truly feels built for the PS5.

Cyberpunk 2077: A Revitalized Open-World RPG

While its initial launch was met with challenges, *Cyberpunk 2077*, especially on the PS5 with its significant updates and the *Phantom Liberty* expansion, has transformed into a compelling and immersive open-world RPG experience. Night City is a sprawling, neon-drenched metropolis that pulses with life, danger, and endless possibilities. The game offers an unparalleled level of player choice in character customization, skill progression, and how you approach quests, allowing for vastly different playstyles. The narrative, while dark and mature, is engaging and features memorable characters and impactful choices.

Night City: A Living, Breathing Metropolis

Night City is the undeniable star of *Cyberpunk 2077*. This densely packed urban environment is filled with towering skyscrapers, grimy alleyways, bustling markets, and exclusive clubs. The attention to detail in every district, from the corporate plazas of City Center to the gang-ridden streets of Pacifica, is remarkable. The sheer density of NPCs and the dynamic weather system contribute to a believable and immersive world that feels constantly alive. Exploring Night City, whether on foot or in a vehicle, is an adventure in itself.

Deep Role-Playing Mechanics and Engaging Story

Cyberpunk 2077 offers a robust RPG experience with extensive character customization and a deep skill tree that allows players to tailor their V to their preferred playstyle. Whether you want to be a stealthy netrunner, a heavily armored solo, or a charismatic diplomat, the game provides the tools to achieve it. The main storyline, combined with a multitude of side quests and fixer contracts, offers dozens of hours of engaging content. The *Phantom Liberty* expansion further enriches the narrative with a gripping spy-thriller plot and new areas to explore, solidifying its place as one of the best PS5 RPGs.

Resident Evil 4 Remake: A Masterclass in Survival Horror Reinvention

Capcom has delivered another exceptional remake with *Resident Evil 4*, transforming the beloved 2005 classic into a modern survival horror masterpiece for the PS5. This reimagining retains the core elements that made the original so iconic while significantly updating the gameplay, graphics, and narrative. Leon S. Kennedy's mission to rescue the President's daughter from a remote European village infested with a terrifying parasitic outbreak is as thrilling and tense as ever, but now with a

heightened sense of immersion and visceral combat.

Modernized Gameplay and Intense Combat

The gameplay in Resident Evil 4 Remake has been meticulously updated. The over-the-shoulder camera is now more fluid, and Leon can move while aiming, drastically changing the combat dynamic. The addition of a knife parry adds a critical defensive and offensive layer, allowing for clutch saves and devastating counter-attacks. The enemy AI is more aggressive and intelligent, forcing players to constantly adapt their strategies and manage their precious ammunition. The weapon upgrade system and merchant interactions remain satisfyingly deep, rewarding players for their exploration and resourcefulness.

Stunning Visuals and Atmospheric Horror

Visually, the Resident Evil 4 Remake is a showcase for the PS5. The environments are incredibly detailed and atmospheric, from the eerie, fog-shrouded village to the menacing castle interiors. The character models are lifelike, and the creature designs are more grotesque and terrifying than ever before. The sound design is equally crucial, with ambient noises, enemy growls, and the unsettling soundtrack creating a palpable sense of dread. The faithful yet refined presentation ensures that this remake is not just a graphical update but a true evolution of the original's terrifying legacy.

Final Fantasy XVI: An Ambitious Action RPG Epic

Final Fantasy XVI marks a bold new direction for the legendary RPG series, leaning heavily into spectacular action combat and a mature, politically charged narrative set in the brutal world of Valisthea. Players control Clive Rosfield, a sworn protector seeking revenge amidst a devastating war

fueled by powerful Eikons and their Dominants. The game delivers breathtaking cinematic moments, epic-scale boss battles that push the boundaries of visual spectacle, and a story that tackles complex themes of prejudice, destiny, and the cost of war. The shift towards a more action-oriented combat system makes battles feel incredibly dynamic and impactful.

Spectacular Eikon Battles and Action-Focused Combat

The Eikon battles in Final Fantasy XVI are simply on another level. These colossal clashes between summon creatures are presented with unparalleled visual flair and scale, feeling like kaiju movie spectacles brought to life. The standard combat, controlled by Clive, is fast-paced and stylish, allowing players to chain together combos, utilize a variety of magical abilities, and master dodge and parry mechanics. The introduction of new abilities and the progression system offer ample opportunity for players to customize Clive's fighting style to their liking, ensuring each encounter feels engaging and rewarding.

A Mature Narrative and Immersive World

Valisthea is a richly realized world, torn apart by conflict over Mothercrystals and the powers they bestow. The narrative in Final Fantasy XVI is uncharacteristically dark and mature for the series, exploring the socio-political ramifications of magic and power with gritty realism. The characters are well-developed, and their struggles feel genuine, drawing players into the intricate web of alliances and betrayals. The presentation is top-tier, with stunning graphics, a phenomenal orchestral score, and superb voice acting that all combine to create a truly unforgettable epic.

Baldur's Gate 3: A Deep and Rewarding CRPG Experience

Larian Studios' Baldur's Gate 3 is a monumental achievement in the CRPG genre, offering an unparalleled level of player freedom, deep strategic combat, and a richly reactive world. Based on the Dungeons & Dragons 5th Edition ruleset, the game allows players to create unique characters and embark on an epic adventure filled with moral choices, complex companions, and a vast, explorable world. The sheer scope and depth of Baldur's Gate 3 are astounding, with countless ways to approach quests, interact with NPCs, and overcome challenges, making every playthrough a distinct experience.

Unprecedented Player Freedom and Choice

The defining characteristic of Baldur's Gate 3 is the absolute freedom it grants players. Every decision, from dialogue choices to how you approach combat encounters, has tangible consequences that shape the narrative and the world around you. The game embraces the spirit of D&D by allowing for creative problem-solving, encouraging players to think outside the box and exploit the environment and their abilities in unexpected ways. The extensive character creator and the diverse range of origin stories ensure that players can truly craft their own unique adventurer.

Strategic Turn-Based Combat

The turn-based combat in Baldur's Gate 3 is a faithful and exhilarating adaptation of the D&D 5e rules. Players command a party of up to four characters, each with their own distinct skills and abilities, engaging in tactical battles that require careful positioning, resource management, and synergistic ability usage. The environmental interaction is key, allowing players to utilize surfaces, height advantages, and explosive barrels to their tactical advantage. Mastering the intricacies of combat is incredibly rewarding and essential for overcoming the game's many formidable foes.

Choosing Your Next PS5 Adventure

The PlayStation 5 boasts an incredible library of games that cater to every taste and preference. Whether you're drawn to the adrenaline-fueled action of superhero adventures, the vast exploration of open worlds, the intricate narratives of RPGs, or the spine-chilling tension of survival horror, there is something here for everyone. Each of these titles represents the best of what the PS5 has to offer, delivering memorable experiences that will keep you hooked for hours on end. This list serves as a starting point for discovering the truly exceptional gaming experiences available on this powerful console, ensuring your next purchase is a guaranteed hit.

FAQ

Q: What makes these games stand out as the 10 best PS5 games?

A: These games are recognized as the 10 best PS5 games due to their exceptional quality across multiple aspects, including groundbreaking graphics, innovative gameplay mechanics, compelling narratives, immersive worlds, strong replayability, and critical acclaim. They effectively leverage the PS5's hardware to deliver unique and unforgettable gaming experiences that push the boundaries of what's possible on a console.

Q: Are these games exclusive to the PS5, or can they be played on other platforms?

A: While many of these titles are PlayStation console exclusives or were initially developed with the PS5 in mind, some, like Elden Ring and Cyberpunk 2077, are available on other platforms. However, their PS5 versions often benefit from optimized performance, faster loading times, and enhanced graphical features thanks to the console's advanced hardware.

Q: Which of these PS5 games is best for newcomers to gaming?

A: For newcomers to gaming, titles like Ratchet & Clank: Rift Apart offer a fantastic entry point. Its accessible gameplay, vibrant visuals, and engaging story make it easy to pick up and play. Marvel's Spider-Man 2 is also a good choice due to its intuitive controls and captivating superhero narrative.

Q: I enjoy challenging games. Which of these 10 best PS5 games would be the most difficult?

A: Elden Ring and Demon's Souls are renowned for their high difficulty. These games from FromSoftware demand precision, patience, and a willingness to learn from failure. Baldur's Gate 3 also offers significant challenge, particularly in its higher difficulty settings and complex tactical combat.

Q: Are there any games on this list that focus heavily on story and narrative?

A: Absolutely. God of War Ragnarök and Final Fantasy XVI are celebrated for their epic, character-driven narratives. Cyberpunk 2077, especially with the Phantom Liberty expansion, also boasts a deep and engaging story with significant player choice. Baldur's Gate 3's narrative is also incredibly rich and reactive to player decisions.

Q: Can I experience these games with the unique features of the PS5's DualSense controller?

A: Yes, many of these games are designed to take full advantage of the PS5's DualSense controller. Titles like Marvel's Spider-Man 2, Ratchet & Clank: Rift Apart, and God of War Ragnarök utilize haptic feedback and adaptive triggers to enhance immersion and gameplay feedback, making the experience more tactile and responsive.

Q: How do the graphical capabilities of the PS5 enhance these top 10 games?

A: The PS5's powerful hardware allows for stunning visual fidelity in these games. Features like 4K resolution, high frame rates, ray tracing for realistic lighting and reflections, and incredibly detailed environments and character models are showcased, providing a visually immersive experience that was not possible on previous generations of consoles.

Q: Which of these games offer the most replayability?

A: Games like Elden Ring and Baldur's Gate 3 offer exceptional replayability due to their open-ended design, vast customization options, and branching narratives. Cyberpunk 2077 also provides significant replayability through its diverse build options and quest choices.

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10 best ps5 games: VGC: The 2025 Guide to Video Games 1981 Media Ltd, 2025-05-30 Relive 2024's gaming highs, lows, and industry upheavals with this expertly curated year-in-review. There's no such thing as a quiet year in video games, and 2024 has been no different. For players, a

steady stream of high-profile game releases has meant there's always been something new to play regardless of what console, handheld, PC or mobile device they were using. Meanwhile, behind the scenes 2024 has been one of the most turbulent years in the history of the games industry, with widespread job losses, studio cuts, acquisitions and other controversies. Video Games Chronicle, the expert source for video game news, has covered 2024's goings-on every step of the way, and this book summarises the entire year in one handy volume. Designed like an old-school games magazine, this book presents the VGC website's best coverage of 2024 in a more traditional format. Our News section takes you through all the major stories that took place throughout the year, allowing you to relive every moment (for better or worse). Our Reviews section contains every notable VGC game review from 2024, 'remastered' and presented to you in physical form (we're big on preservation, you see). Our Features section offers some of our best long-form articles from the past year. Finally, our Previews section takes a look at some of the games coming in 2025. The world of online games media is a fast-moving one, and news and reviews usually arrive at breakneck speed then disappear from our consciousness to be replaced with the latest stories. With this book, we hope to provide a more permanent summary of the year, while also harking back to the days of the games magazines we loved so much.

10 best ps5 games: *A History of Sports Video Games* Lu Zhouxiang, 2024-12-09 This book explores the history of sports and sports-themed video games, providing a comprehensive and holistic view of this complex and diverse genre. The author highlights the influence of technological advancement, industry competition and popular culture on game design, marketing strategies and user experience. Offering valuable insights into the historical process of interaction and integration between real-world sport and video games, this volume will enrich existing scholarship on video games. This volume is a valuable contribution to the fields of both game studies and sports studies, and will be perfect for those interested in the history of science and technology as well as social and cultural history.

10 best ps5 games: *The Best Non-Violent Video Games* James Batchelor, 2023-10-30 A comprehensive guide to over 300 non-violent video games, from AAA studios to beloved indies. What if there were video games that weren't about killing things? The world's biggest entertainment medium has come under decades of scrutiny because of its violent content. But here's a little known fact: from the very beginning, non-violent video games have done as much, if not more, to shape the industry than violent ones. *The Best Non-Violent Video Games* is the first ever guide to the full breath of interactive entertainment. Discover the true variety the medium has to offer and learn how developers constantly find new ways to engage people by challenging their minds, testing their reflexes, and even tugging at the heartstrings. Take a journey through more than three hundred video games, stretching back to the very dawn of the industry and extending right up to modern day indie hits. You'll learn more about the origins of some of gaming's biggest franchises, discover underrated gems from developers of all sizes, and perhaps even find some new favorites. Written by a journalist with over 15 years of industry experience and more than 30 years of gaming experience, this guide is for anyone seeking something truly different from the video games space without dealing with guns and gore, or those simply looking for a change of pace.

10 best ps5 games: *Sony: Makers of the PlayStation* Tom Streissguth, 2023-08-01 This book introduces readers to Sony, the technology company behind the PlayStation consoles and hit franchises such as *Uncharted*, *God of War*, and *Gran Turismo*. Readers will explore the company's history, its focus on games with immersive and thrilling narratives, and how the company continues to innovate today. Features include infographics, a glossary, references, websites, source notes, and an index. Aligned to Common Core Standards and correlated to state standards. Essential Library is an imprint of Abdo Publishing, a division of ABDO.

10 best ps5 games: *Nintendo* Randy Nichols, 2023-10-13 Originally founded in 1889 as a manufacturer of playing cards, this book examines the history and political economic status of the multinational consumer electronics and video game giant Nintendo. This book offers a deeper examination into Nintendo as a global media giant, with some of the industry's best-selling consoles

and most recognizable intellectual property including Mario, Pokémon, and Zelda. Drawing upon the theory of the political economy of communication, which seeks to understand how communication and media serve as key mechanisms of economic and political power, Randy Nichols examines how Nintendo has maintained its dominance in the global video game industry and how it has used its position to shape that industry. This book argues that while the company's key figures and main franchises are important, Nintendo's impact as a company – and what we can learn from its evolution – is instructive beyond the video game industry. This book is perfect for students and scholars of media and cultural industries, critical political economy of media, production studies, and games studies.

10 best ps5 games: Level Up 2025: An AFK Book Dynamo Limited, 2024-09-17 Get ready for the ultimate annual video game guide! From scoops on the hottest games on the horizon to tips and tricks that will help you become a certified gaming master, Level Up 2025 has got it all! Get hyped for a wild year of gaming with this guide to all the year's latest and greatest! Level Up 2025 is has got you covered with info on all the coolest games and consoles that you may have missed, as well as what to look out for next! From heavy hitters like Mario and Zelda to secret indie gems, this guide has it all! All games featured in AFK's Level Up 2025 are rated T for Teen or younger -- perfect for young gamers.

10 best ps5 games: The Greatest Stories Ever Played Dustin Hansen, 2025-08-22 In this fun and informative YA Non-fiction title, Dustin Hansen, author of Game On!, a self-confessed video game addict with over 20-years experience in the gaming industry, examines the storytelling skills shown in some of the most beloved and moving games of all time. We all know that video games are fun, but can a video game make you cry? Can it tell you a powerful love story? Can a video game make you think differently about war? About the environment? About the choices you make? Whether it's playing through blockbuster-esque adventures (Uncharted, God of War, The Last of Us), diving deep into hidden bits of story and lore (Red Dead Redemption II, Bioshock, Journey) or building relationships that change the fate of the world itself (Persona 5, Undertale), video games are bringing stories to life in ways that are immediate, interactive and immersive. Focusing on some of the best, most memorable, experiences in gaming, The Greatest Stories Ever Played, examines the relationship between gaming and storytelling in a new way.

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covering Prince's famous anthem to the new year. The highlights of the lowlights continued when WCW and WWE drew 35 million American viewers each week with sex appeal and stories about insurrections. Insane Clown Posse emerged from the underground with a Woodstock set and platinum records about magic and murder. Later that year, Dance Dance Revolution debuted in North America and Grand Theft Auto emerged as a major video game franchise. Beanie Babies and Pokémon so thoroughly seized the wallets and imagination of collectors that they created speculative investment bubbles that anticipated the faddish obsession over nonfungible tokens (NFTs). The trashy talk show Jerry Springer became daytime TV's most-watched program and grew so mainstream that Austin Powers, Sabrina the Teenage Witch, The Wayans Bros., The Simpsons, and The X-Files incorporated Springer into their own plots during the late '90s. Donald Trump even explored a potential presidential nomination with the Reform Party in 1999 and wanted his running mate to be Oprah Winfrey, whose own talk show would make Dr. Oz a household name. Among Springer's many guests were porn stars who, at the end of the millennium, were pursuing sex records in a bid for stardom as the pornography industry exploded, aided by sex scandals, new technology, and the drug Viagra, which marked its first full year on the US market in 1999. Benes shows us how so many of the strangest features of culture in 1999 predicted and influenced American life today. This wild ride through pop culture uncovers the connections between the kayfabe of WWE and the theatrics of politics, between the faddish obsession with Beanie Babies and with NFTs, between faithful fans and political loyalists, between violent video games and society's scapegoats, and much more. 1999 is not just a nostalgic look at the past. It is also a window into our contentious present.

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