

Take an Adventure with Video Games by Dennis May, Adult Services Coordinator

Video games are so awesome. You can go anywhere and be anything when you turn on a video game. Want to be a professional football player or play in the World Series? What about a Samurai or a Viking? You could be an Italian plumber who can't seem to keep his princess girlfriend from being kidnapped by a fire breathing turtle. Just name it!

I make time to play video games every week to both quiet my mind and work on my problem solving skills. Just like sinking into a book or watching a movie, immersing yourself in a video game is a perfect way to escape. My love for video games started when I was a kid. My first console was a Nintendo. My brother and I would take turns playing "Duck Hunt" and "Super Mario." Then we upgraded to a Super Nintendo.

When I received my Nintendo 64, I was in awe of the three dimensional graphics. I thought it was the peak of video gaming. The N64 was the console that truly taught me how educational and immersive gaming could be. I was solving puzzles while playing "Super Mario 64" and "Donkey Kong 64," and, as a shy kid, I was learning teamwork while playing "Goldeneye's" co-op mode with friends.

I took a long break in playing video games until, while in college, I rediscovered them as a way to unwind from long days of classes, theatre rehearsals, and homework. Video games are not just long forms of entertainment, they can offer benefits such as relieving stress, fostering social skills, and improving decision making and problem solving.

When the Kirkland Town Library received a grant from the Central Library Resource Council to purchase a pair of Nintendo Switches and video games, I thought, "what an exciting way to connect people to an exciting and undervalued way of learning." Since the launch of the Switches we have hosted two free-play events that allowed patrons to play together. We are planning to host more of these events. In the meantime, anyone can visit us and play one of our Switches in the library or take one of them home!

With the in-library Switch, not only can you play the newest edition of Mario Kart, but you can also dive into classic Nintendo games and relive the 80s and 90s world of video gaming. You can also take one of our Switches home with you! You can check out games such as "Mario Party Jamboree," "Zelda: Tears of a Kingdom," and "Pokemon: Let's Go Pikachu." We also have games for the Playstation and Xbox available, too! If the Switch is not available, don't fret. We will add your name to the waitlist and will let you know when it's ready to be picked up!

So, visit us and play with your friends, or, if you're feeling brave, challenge one of our staff members to a round of "Mario Kart" or "Super Smash Bros." I have been working on my skills just in case we are visited by a challenger. We'll be waiting to see who is the fastest Mario kart driver in the land. I'll be practicing.