



GAMING GROWS UP

IT might not feel like it, but videogames haven't actually been around for that long. The first games only came out in the early '70s, around 40 or so years ago. Despite this, the world's videogames industry has grown to be worth around £3.86 billion, meaning that there's more money in gaming than in video and music combined!

Boxed versions of the year's biggest games didn't quite sell as well as last year, but altogether, the world of videogames brought in 51.3% of the all the money in the entertainment market, according to the Entertainment Retailers Association (ERA).

That amount doesn't include digital game sales, or the amount made by mobile and free games that are downloaded and played (the most popular being Fortnite, with around 200 million worldwide players), so it's likely that the real numbers are even bigger!

Most of the success has come from three big games, one of which was FIFA 19.

More consoles have been sold this year, too, and on PC the number of users playing with VR headsets, like the Vive and Oculus Rift, has doubled.

So, can we expect gaming to grow even more in 2019? Well, with rumours of a possible new Xbox or PlayStation on the horizon, it sure might!



TETRIS EFFECT
PRETTY much everyone knows Tetris!
Even if you've not played it, you'll have heard of the falling block game, which first came out in 1984.

There have been lots of different versions of Tetris released since then, but we're confident that there's definitely never been one like Tetris Effect.

The core of it is like every other Tetris game: rotate the blocks as they fall to make a line, which then disappears. It's game over when the stacked blocks reach the top!

While simple to understand, the game of Tetris is pretty deep and requires a lot of concentration.

Tetris Effect takes the simple game of Tetris and puts it in an almost mind-bogglingly beautiful world, complete with matching – and often great – music.

With the PSVR (PEGI 12), this can become almost overwhelming. As you focus on the game, the objects around you zoom by, influenced by the way you're playing. It can be pretty magical.

With loads of levels and music, Tetris Effect is a treat for the eyes, the ears and even the mind.

IS THIS NINTENDO'S LAST CONSOLE?

OUT of the PS4, Xbox One and Switch, Nintendo's hybrid console has sold much faster than the other two, selling more than 8.7 million units from March 2017 – November 2018. Despite this, Nintendo's boss hinted this week that the company could soon stop making consoles.



Nintendo president Shuntaro Furukawa has hinted that the Switch could be the last console that the company makes.

"We aren't really fixated on our consoles," Furukawa said. "At the moment we're offering the uniquely developed Nintendo Switch and its software, and that's what we're basing how we deliver the 'Nintendo experience'."

"Technology changes. In the long-term, perhaps our focus as a business could shift away from home consoles – flexibility is just as important as ingenuity!"

Will we one day be playing Nintendo games on something other than Nintendo's own consoles?

MODDING MADE ILLEGAL IN JAPAN

MODDING is when you create custom levels, objects, characters or even unique or standalone games from an existing game engine – and it's now against the law in Japan.

Modders could face a sentence of up to five years in prison, along with fines of nearly £36,000, thanks to new rules brought in by the country's new Unfair Competition Prevention Law.

The rule makes classic cheat cartridges like Action Replay illegal, too. Do you think the rule is too harsh?



WIN! TICKETS TO THE VITALITY NETBALL WORLD CUP



LOVE playing netball? Love watching sport live? Then get ready for a thrilling competition between 16 of the world's top netball teams at the Vitality Netball World Cup this July!

First News has joined forces with the Vitality Netball World Cup team and we're offering three fabulous prizes, consisting of a set of four tickets – including a First News winner and three other family members – to attend the event.*

You can win the chance to see Northern Ireland battle it out against Sri Lanka in the first round of the tournament on Saturday 13 July 2019. The showdown at Liverpool's spectacular M&S Bank Arena is set to be a tough encounter between the two elite teams. You'll get to see a whole host of



Some 16 top international teams will compete in the tournament, including the Vitality England Roses, pictured here after their success at the 2018 Commonwealth Games

top international netball stars in the flesh!

It's the event everyone is talking about, so don't miss out! To be in with a chance of winning, just answer this question:

How many players are there in a netball team?
 a) Nine b) Eight c) Seven

*Children under 14 on the date they attend the event will need to be accompanied by an adult over the age of 18

ENTER NOW! MARK YOUR ENTRY NETBALL

firstnews.co.uk/competitions or see page 25. The closing date is 24 January 2019.