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Through the ages board game strategy

Spruce Crafts uses cookies to give you a great user experience. By using The Spruce Crafts, you accept the use of our cookies. Photograph: Tim Noack/Moment/Getty Images Before going online, there's very little we can do on rainy days or when we're stuck at home. If we were lucky enough to have a siblings (or a baby care person who was involved), we could play board games when we were bored. Simply put, the game board is great in theory: everyone gets together and has fun playing a game... that is, until someone starts crying because they are losing or someone starts cheating because they are older siblings and younger siblings can not say anything. So while board games can have side effects of great family fun, they can also lead to decades-long competition and debate - but who's counting? If your family has game shelves (or game rooms), you can recognize nearly every popular family board game when you were a child. However, if your family is a serious family of gamers (before gaming became electronic, of course), you can name every table game ever made. Let's see if you have what it takes to beat the rest. Take this test to find out if you can identify all the games on the table (but we will warn you, some of these games are quite ambiguous). PUZZLEs can you identify Disney movies from a single frame? 7 Minute Quiz 7 Min TRIVIA Do you know the game from the price is right? 7 Minute Quiz 7 Min TRIVIA Can you name the 40 most popular cartoon characters of all time? 6 Minute Quiz 6 Min TRIVIA Can you name the Disney Live-Action movie from the screenshot? 6 Minute Quiz 6 Min TRIVIA Can you complete the Disney movie title? 6 Minute Quiz 6 Min TRIVIA Can you guess the vintage of these gadgets? 6 Minute Quiz 6 Min TRIVIA Can you identify the candy bars from an image? 6 Minute Quiz 6 Min TRIVIA From Typewriter to Boombox: Can you identify old technologies? 6 Minute Quiz 6 Min TRIVIA Can you guess the most popular movies of all time from the plot? 7 Minute Quiz 7 Min TRIVIA 91% of people can't name those sci-fi and fantasy movies from a picture! Can you? 7 Minute Quiz 7 Min How much do you know about dinosaurs? What is an octane rating? And how do you use a proper nod? Luckily for you, HowStuffWorks Play is here to help. 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Start your holiday shopping with gift guides, deals and more! The strategy genre is one of the largest and most diverse video games, especially on PC. From 4X mid-time classics like Crusader Kings III to small-scale strategy games like Into the Breach, there's something for everyone, no matter if you have 10 minutes or 10 hours. Our list of the 15 best strategy games has everything from the best real-time strategy games to the best turn-based games and everything in between. While most strategy games are only available on PCs, there are also some games on the console. We mingled in a few options, including Wargroove and Frostpunk, playing exceptionally well with a controller on the keyboard and mouse. Read more XCOM 2 XCOM 2 is a game about difficult decisions and tactics. Your alien opponent has overwhelmed Earth - the game's predecessor, Enemy Unknown, shows it. Now, limited to the Avenger, a major researcher and military ship floating in space, your job as commander is to plan your counterattack. Tough decisions start with the Avenger, from taking days off to scan new areas - where there is a threat of alien disruption - to choosing soldiers who need time to rest. On the battlefield is where you will feel them most, though. XCOM's signature permadeath system is present. Maybe you recruit new people to take the brunt of attacking foreigners, or maybe you give them time to live and put your best soldiers on the front line, running the risk of losing them forever. These decisions determine the course of your XCOM 2 campaign, but gameplay from one moment to another is also interesting. Combat takes place as Chess, with a small army of unique units set up to a network. With the threat of permadeath looming, the stakes are high in XCOM 2. Thankfully, a forgiving savings system allows anyone to get in pleasure without consequences. Read our XCOM 2 review Civilization VI Civilization VI identified the 4X strategy formula that games like Endless Legend and Hearts of Iron IV use to this day. If there is a unique mechanism or improved quality of life in a 4X game, it is probably in the first Civ. That's because, despite the franchise's decades-long history, every game has pushed to be not only deeper, but also more accessible. That's what makes Civilization VI so easy to introduce. no need for bait to get started. Civ VI guides you through everything from investing in your city to expanding into new territory, all without feeling overwhelmed. Even so, there is a lot of depth, especially if you learn about all the world leaders and what each of them does. Civilization sets the standard for another turn, and even for nearly 30 years, the franchise has been going strong. Reading our Civilization VI review Wargroove Wargroove delivers the simple, strategic gameplay of the Advance Wars series that fans have been waiting for for over 12 years. It's a straight-up strategy game, nothing more, and that's why we like it. Each level, you will put one of 15 unique commanders into battle, along with a small group of units. From there, it was a matter of capturing outposts, defeating enemy troops, and moving the front line towards the enemy base. Any team that loses their command or base first loses. Of course, there are position bonuses, and each unit specializes in a different angle of attack. The single player campaign is solid, with just enough story to keep you going. Many players will keep you coming back for more, though. In addition to multi-platform support on Switch, PC, PS4, and Xbox One, Wargroove also includes a very detailed level editer. You can even string your levels into a campaign, matching dialogue, cutscen scenes and even your own side missions. There is also a puzzle mode, which presents you with a detailed battle puzzle and asks you to solve it in a number of turns. Wargroove is a strategy fan game right now, and any strategy fan will easily get their money's worth at the asking price. Read our impressive Wargroove Into the Breach Into the Breach is the second release from Subset Games, the same studio behind FTL: Faster Than Light. Like FTL, Into the Breach is a game about using strategy to escape situations when your back is against a wall. It's a tactical game similar to Wargroove, albeit on a much smaller scale. Battles take place on an eight by eight grids, and you only take three units into battle with you. Despite the scope of Into the Breach, it is one of the most tactical, strategic games today. That's because of the way I set up every encounter. Unlike similar games, Into the Breach is not tasked with defeating your opponent. Instead, each level is on a timer in turn, and as long as you protect the friendly structure for that time, you will win. That puts the focus on winning and puts it on not losing, and The Child Set completely uses that difference. Into the Breach is challenging and rewarding in equal parts, highlighting a balance that many games try but few achieve. Read our Into the Breach Gears Tactics review Even after the successful launch of Gears 5 – we gave it an almost perfect score in our review – the Gears of War franchise is in need of refresh. And that's exactly what Gears Tactics has to offer. It's a spinoff strategy game developed by splash damage great not because there are no new Gears games to play, even so. The influence of XCOM is clear, but Gears Tactics is not just a reskin. The tactic breaks from chess-like gameplay, allowing you to freely move your characters around the battlefield. That - combined with the system of implementation, which allows you to defeat a bleeding opponent For an extra action point - adds an extra layer of action rarely seen in tactical games. Gears Tactics feels undeniable as a Gears of War game, even if the systems that make up the game are completely different. Read our Gear Tactics: Blades of the Shogun Shadow Tactics review is a real-time stealth strategy game similar to Desperados. You control five highly specialized figures appointed by japan's new Shogun during the Edo period. Each of these characters plays a different role on the battlefield, from Hayato, a ninja who has access to long-range attacks in the form of shuriken, to Yuki, a child picked up from the street that specializes in attracting enemies towards traps. You will need to use everyone to make it through a mission in Shadow Tactics. The game is unashamedly difficult. Although everything happens in real time, shadow tactics speed is much slower, allowing you to reserve every situation and adjust your plan accordingly. It's a pure tactical game, one that rewards you for thinking through your plan before doing it and punishing you for taking down enemies ha randomly. Despite the difficulties, Shadow Tactics is still accessible to new arrivals with a generous savings system. No matter where you are in the game, you can always quicksave to mark your progress. Battlefleet Gothic: Armada 2 There are many strategy games set in the Warhammer 40K universe, but Battlefleet Gothic: Armada 2 is the best. It's a real-time strategy game between galaxies where you engage in big space battles after big space battles. And they're huge. Battlefleet Gothic: Armada 2 earned its set in the 41st millennium, with screens filling space battles made up of ships of impossible scale. The spectacle of watching a battle take place in Armada 2 is worth admission alone, but the game goes further. Various attacks, boarding action, and mobile tactics keep combat interesting, if a little overwhelming. Thankfully, you can use armada 2's excellent automated attack system, which allows you to prioritize each enemy, as well as target specific systems on their ships. Age of Wonders: Planetfall Series Age of Wonders always combines the best elements of other strategy games under a single roof, and Age of Wonders: Planetfall is no different. It's a 4X science fiction strategy game with a core gameplay similar to Civilization VI. On the hex-based map, you set up colonies, build your resources and venture to meet - or conquer - distant lands. The difference is that Planetfall gives you a list of characters to pay attention to instead of anonymous, anonymous soldiers. As your game progresses, your character will get the experience of and learn new skills, making them even stronger in battle. Talking about battle, whenever you need to let the wrong end of your laser rifle do the talking, Planetfall zooms the camera to a tactical battlefield just like XCOM. You can use the experience you gain to equip your army with and weapons, with all kinds to give the research tree a run for its money. Planetfall balances these battles with a fast 4X mechanism, where you often see rewards from your actions in just a few turns, not a matter of hours. All these elements combine to make Age of Wonders: Planetfall fun and engaging from the start, all without losing the depth of similar, slower games. City: Skylines Franchise SimCity has died a slow death following the launch of SimCity in 2013 and the problems are always online next. Two years later in 2015, Cities: Skylines was released, becoming the actual city builder, and it is still there to this day. There are a few reasons for that, including the fact that Skylines doesn't have any intrusive DRM and it supports custom content. On it, though, City: Skylines is just a blast to play. Building infrastructure, partitioning businesses, and expanding your city all work for a day in Cities: Skylines. There's always something to do, and as your city grows, the list gets longer. Traffic congestion will make residents and tourists unhappy, and industrial parks that cause odors, are likely to turn their backs on new residents. You can also enact laws for your city, some of which draw more taxes at the expense of happy citizens and others doing the opposite. That is the breadth of content in Cities: Skylines that makes the game fun. You start with no more than a few square kilometers, and from there, it's up to you to develop that space into a bustling metropolis. Frostpunk Frostpunk is the city: skyline in hell. It doesn't really put in hell or anything, but it definitely feels that way. In Frostpunk, it's not a matter of keeping your citizens happy, but merely living. You lead a group of London citizens who fled the city after a period of freezing world ice. Your only hope of survival is that a thrombolymite coal furnace provides heat to your city, and as the game continues, you will continue to expand your city around that furnace. It's an act of balancing resource management to get your citizens the heat they need, but Frostpunk is grimer than that. Nearby resources are covered in ice, families have been distributing food and running thin, and your over-working crew is ready for a break, despite the fact that your city is barely hanging on. This is often the desolate state of problems in Frostpunk. It's a dark game that forces you into decisions with no positive results, as you balance resource gathering with keeping your citizens alive and, hopefully, awake. Just as This War of Mine appeared before it, the developer of 11 Bit Studios explores how catastrophic events affect people in Frostpunk. That's Experience difficulties, with games that often fight against you. Even so, Frostpunk is mesmerizing, often roping you for hours at a time. DEFCON DEFCON puts you at the heart of the Cold War. but there is also activation ready to go. DEFCON guarantees destruction from the beginning, when you tick from Defcon 4 to Defcon 1 and send your military units around the world, knowing that when nuclear weapons start flying, they won't make it home. DEFCON is not an interesting game. There are different ways in which Introversion Software developers reinforce that. Instead of giving you a very detailed map of the world, you stay scanning the same radar shown in the screenshot above. You don't play as an all-minded commander either, but as a U.S. general buried deep in an underground bunker staring at the screen, making decisions about whether millions of people will live or die for relative safety. DEFCON is not an interesting game, but it is an enchanting game. It's a game that shows what could have happened during the Cold War, in line with the psychological warfare that very few strategy games touch. Anno 1800 Cities: Skylines mission you build a modern city while Anno 1800 looks to the past. However, the change in settings brings more than different 3D models. Aspects of industrial revolutionary life are different, and Anno 1800 captures the differences. You need to build farming communities in early games to keep your citizens fed, trade routes to bring your village resources with no access to, and production lines to not only build your city's infrastructure, but to bring cash through exports Too. While cities: Skylines trade in power and water lines, Anno 1800 deals in commercial routes and soil quality. The Anno franchise has been going strong for over 20 years, and now with the new DLC released for Anno 1800, it's the best game in the series. It's a game that never seems to follow time, keeping you building and expanding your city for hours. Endless Space 2 Amplitude Studios has been constantly improving its 4X design since the launch of Endless Space in 2012. Since then, the French developer has released Endless Legend - which deserves to be suggested on this list - and Endless Space 2. Endless Space 2 is an mid-galaxy game about resource management, diplomacy, war and realization. Unlike its processor, it comes with a list of highly specialized races, each with different characteristics and privileges. Instead of progressing on a hex-based network, your fleet draws routes between star systems. As you invade and expand star systems, your influence grows, butting up against other nations. Maybe that country is friendly and decided to please ask you to come back. Or maybe they're ruthless, building their army from a system beyond your sight. Endless Space 2 plays like a traditional 4X game, with battles usually lasts up to more than 10 hours. It's the quality of the systems and the way they lock together that keeps the game attractive in turn after the turn. Crusader Kings III If you haven't had the privilege of playing Paradox's Crusader Kings series, Crusaders Kings II is free and one of the best free games at the time. Crusaders Crusaders III is just newer and better. Like previous games, you lead a Middle Ages dynasty through the Middle Ages, from the Viking era to the fall of Constantinople (shortly 700 years). Although the typical principles of large strategy are present - including large-scale and diplomatic battles - Crusader Kings III is a game about extremely powerful rulers and profound dysfunction. That's how the connection rulers that make the Kings III Crusaders so deeply engrossing. Neighboring countries can only lead with blood, arranging family marriages to create new rulers, while others can sit drunk day in and day out, not interested in the state of the world. Like the Hearts of Iron IV that we'll get to next, Crusader Kings III is strategic on the largest scale. Unlike similar games, however, Crusaders Kings III allows world events to have a backseed for characters that influence them. Hearts of Iron IV Paradox big strategy game puts you at the heart of history. From influencing the European and Asian kings of the Middle Ages in Crusader Kings III to nurturing a Renaissance nation in Europa Universalis IV, Paradox has a taste for capturing a moment in history and allowing you to influence that moment. Hearts of Iron IV just hits close to home. You don't have to look back at the millennium or even centuries, but just go back to 1936, on top of the Second World War. Hearts of Iron IV is certainly not the only strategy game set during World War II, but it is the biggest. In True Paradox fashion, Hearts of Iron IV is large-scale. Each game starts three years before the start of the real war because you have three years of planning to do. Is your country going to be the first on the front line? Or will you focus your infrastructure to build a military defense? Hearts of Iron IV allows you to choose, allowing you to play in history while also affecting it. Editor's recommendations

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