WISEGROW

ISSUE #00 · OCTOBER 2026
VIÑA DEL MAR · CHILE

RETROGAMES

MAGAZINE

THE RETRO GAMING EXPERIENCE

RETRO HISTORY

NES: 40 YEARS OF HISTORY

COLLECTION

THE CARTRIDGE REVOLUTION

HARDWARE

RETRO HARDWARE: FPGA VS ORIGINAL

HOMEBREW

MAKE YOUR OWN GAME BOY GAME

PRESERVATION

PRESERVING IS NOT PIRATING

NEW!
ISSUE #00

COLLECTING IN CHILE
P. 22



THE GOLDEN AGE OF GAMING

WHY DO WE STILL PLAY?

History, hardware, collecting, preservation, homebrew and Chile's retro scene.

- THE GOLDEN AGE OF GAMING
- PRESERVATION KIT PREVIEW
- 36 PAGES

7 800026 0001

ADVERTISEMENT



EVAN-AMOS · PUBLIC DOMAIN

YOUR HISTORY, PRESERVED.

PRESERVATION KIT #01 · NES EDITION

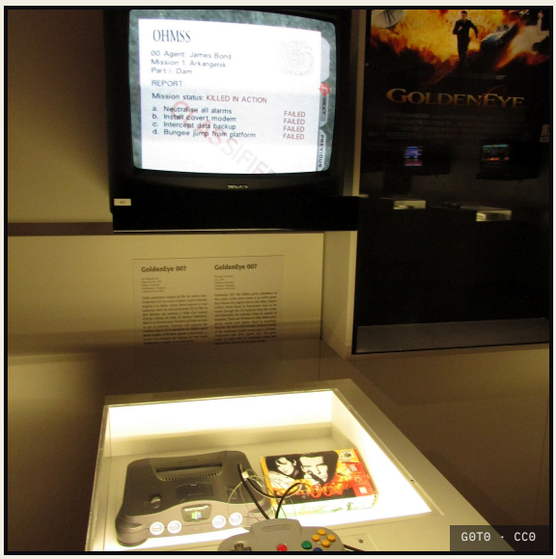
- Open source emulators
- Homebrew & freeware
- ROM hacking
- Dumping tools
- Development
- Documentation & extras

NO COMMERCIAL ROMS · OPEN SOURCE

WRG-PK01

CONTENTS

#00



ISSUE THEME

WHY DO WE STILL PLAY?

Issue zero, launch edition: the philosophy of Wisegrow RetroGames Magazine and everything to come.

04 EDITORIAL
Editorial: Insert coin

05 NEWS
Press Start: news of the month

06 FEATURE
Why do we still play?

08 RETRO HISTORY
Opener: Retro History

09 RETRO HISTORY
NES: 40 years of history

10 RETRO HISTORY
Timeline 1983–2001

12 HARDWARE
Opener: Hardware

13 HARDWARE
Tutorial: cartridge cleaning

14 HARDWARE
Spec sheet: FPGA vs original

16 COLLECTION
How to start a collection

18 PRESERVATION
Preserving is not pirating

20 HOMEBREW
Make your own Game Boy game

22 RETRO CHILE
When Nintendo came to the neighborhood

24 RETRO CHILE
Interview: The Wise Collector

25 REVIEWS
Review: Chinese NES and N64 flashcarts

26 REVIEWS
Review: GKD Bubble

27 COLLECTION
10 cartridges to start with

28 MARKET
Market guide: how to assess a console

30 COMMUNITY
Wisegrow RetroGames Community

32 MAGAZINE
About the magazine: flavors

34 ISSUES
Upcoming issues

35 ISSUES
Coming up



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

INSERT COIN TO CONTINUE

Welcome to issue zero. A magazine made by players, for players, from Chile.

For years we dreamed of a magazine that spoke about the way we play: blown-on cartridges, neighborhood rental stores and Sunday flea markets. A magazine that treated retro gaming as what it is: culture.

Wisegrow RetroGames Magazine is born digital, but it thinks in print. Every page is designed to be printed one day and earn a spot on your shelf, next to the games you collect.

Each issue will be dedicated to one console. We'll cover history, hardware and how to fix it, responsible collecting, preservation without piracy and the homebrew scene that keeps these machines alive.

And above all, we'll talk about you. The magazine is connected to the community forum: your questions, setups and restorations will be part of every edition.

Alongside the magazine we are launching the Preservation Kit: guides, free software and homebrew to back up the cartridges you already own, with no commercial ROMs. It is our way of saying that preserving is not pirating. This issue zero is an invitation. Press Start.



ADVERTISEMENT · WISEGROW AD

Wisegrow Retro Club

PLAY, REPAIR AND TALK WITH PEOPLE WHO GET IT

Monthly meetups, a repair forum, early access to every issue and kit discounts for members.

SIGN UP AT RETROGAMES.WISEGROW.NET

RODRIGO FUENTES

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF · @CARTUCHO

STAFF

CAMILA ROJAS · HARDWARE EDITOR
DIEGO ARAYA · DIGITAL PRESERVATION
FERNANDA MUÑOZ · HOMEBREW & DEVELOPMENT
TOMÁS HERRERA · RETRO CHILE & HISTORY
IGNACIA LAGOS · COLLECTING & MARKET

NEWS OF THE MONTH

PRESS START

What moved in the retro world this month. Our own summaries, with a link to every source.



MITCH ALTMAN FROM SAN FRANCISCO, USA · CC BY-SA 2.0

HARDWARE

THE NEO GEO AES+ SLIPS TO SEPTEMBER 2027

Plaion moved its recreation of SNK's console from November 12, 2026 to September 16, 2027, citing component supply constraints.

SOURCE: TIME EXTENSION ↗

REISSUES

THREE MORE NES CLASSICS ON NINTENDO SWITCH ONLINE

Ninja Gaiden III, Ikari Warriors and R.C. Pro-Am II join the Nintendo Classics library. A simple, legal way back to them.

SOURCE: NINTENDO LIFE ↗

CARTRIDGES

R-TYPE DX RETURNS ON A GAME BOY COLOR CARTRIDGE

Limited Run Games and Retro-Bit opened preorders for a physical reissue of the 1999 classic, with its soundtrack on CD and vinyl.

SOURCE: GAMING RETRO ↗

HANDHELDS

TRANSLUCENT SUPABOY: FAMICOM AND SUPER FAMICOM

Hyperkin unveiled two editions of its handheld that plays original SNES cartridges, inspired by Famicom and Super Famicom colors. They launch October 28.

SOURCE: GAMING RETRO ↗

HOMEBREW

ZERO WING OFFICIALLY COMES TO NEO GEO

A port by a demoscene developer became a licensed release: homebrew opens doors too.

SOURCE: TIME EXTENSION ↗

Press Start is an editorial roundup: news is told in our own words and we always link to the original source. Got news from the Chilean scene? Write to retrogames@wisegrow.net.



VONGUARD · CC BY-SA 2.0

COVER STORY

WHY DO WE STILL PLAY?

Forty years after the Famicom, with consoles rendering whole worlds in 4K, millions of people still choose 8 and 16-bit cartridges. It isn't just nostalgia: it's design, ritual, ownership and community.

There's a sound anyone who grew up in the nineties recognizes instantly: the dry click of a cartridge sliding into the console, followed by the hum of a tube TV waking up. It's a ritual. And like every ritual, it survives because it means more than the act itself.

The easy answer is nostalgia. But nostalgia doesn't explain why young players who never owned an NES now hunt for cartridges at flea markets, why the homebrew scene keeps releasing new games for forty-year-old machines, or why big companies keep reissuing their classic catalogs. Something in those games still works.

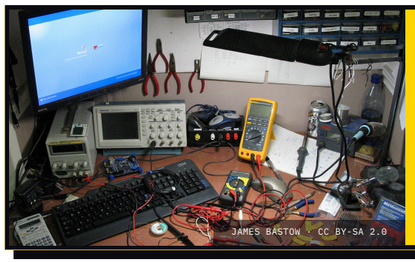
Part of the answer is design. With limited memory, every sprite, every note and every level had to justify its existence. The result is direct, readable games you learn in seconds and master over years. You switch the console on and ten seconds later you're playing: no updates, no accounts, no stores, no notifications.

There's also ownership. A cartridge is yours: it doesn't depend on a server or a license that might disappear. At a time when digital games get pulled from stores, owning the physical object, worn label and manual included, has become almost an act of resistance.

And there's time. A session of Super Mario Bros. 3 or Sonic fits into a free hour. Retro games don't ask for a hundred hours or a season pass: they ask for skill, and they give back real progress. Going back to them means going back to a more human pace.

The last part is people. Retro gaming is, above all, a community: people who repair consoles, document, preserve and trade cartridges on a Sunday at the market. Parents teaching their kids the same game that shaped them. This magazine was born to tell those stories, here, from Viña del Mar.

CONTINUE ON THE WEB →


JAMES BASTOW · CC BY-SA 2.0

ADVERTISEMENT · FICTIONAL SAMPLE AD

Taller & Bits

RETRO CONSOLE REPAIR

Pin, capacitor and screen replacement. Deep cleaning, video mods and no-strings diagnosis.

ASK FOR RATES · @TALLER8BITS

AN 8-BIT GAME DOESN'T ASK FOR YOUR TIME: IT ASKS FOR YOUR ATTENTION.

— RODRIGO FUENTES



WOJCIECH PĘDZICH · CC BY-SA 4.0

SECTION 01 · P.08

RETRO HISTORY

The story of the consoles, arcades and games that defined four decades of gaming culture.

NES | SNES | MEGA DRIVE | GAME BOY | NINTENDO 64 | PLAYSTATION | DREAMCAST | ARCADE



EVAN-AMOS · PUBLIC DOMAIN

RETRO HISTORY

NES: 40 YEARS OF HISTORY

From Japan's 1983 Famicom to the gray box that reached North America in 1985: how one console rescued an entire industry.

In July 1983 Nintendo launched the Family Computer, the Famicom, in Japan. Two years later, after the crash that had sunk the North American market, the company redesigned the machine as an entertainment device: front loading, VCR looks and a robot sidekick. That's how the NES was born.

The console set rules that still define the industry: quality control, licensing for third-party developers and a game library that became canon. Platformers, adventures, RPGs and shooters found a common language in its 8 bits.

In Latin America the story was different: many families met the NES through imports, clones and video rental stores. We explore that local version of history in Retro Chile.

> **THE NES DIDN'T INVENT HOME GAMING. IT MADE IT TRUSTWORTHY.**
>
> — TOMÁS HERRERA

TECH SHEET

- **CPU:** Ricoh 2A03 (6502-based) · ~1.79 MHz
- **RAM:** 2 KB
- **Colors:** ~54-color palette
- **Launch:** 1983 (JP) · 1985 (NA)

NES ACCESSORIES



EVAN-AMOS …

ZAPPER (1985)
Duck Hunt's light gun: it reads the white flash on a tube TV.



EVAN-AMOS …

R.O.B. (1985)
The robot that helped sell the NES as a toy after the 1983 crash.



EVAN-AMOS …

POWER GLOVE (1989)
Mattel's glove with flex sensors. Iconic, but hard to use.



EVAN-AMOS …

NES ADVANTAGE (1987)
Official arcade stick with adjustable turbo and slow motion.



EVAN-AMOS …

FOUR SCORE (1990)
Four-player adapter, perfect for sports and brawlers.



EVAN-AMOS …

POWER PAD (1988)
A 12-sensor mat to run and jump in front of the TV.

TIMELINE

1983 → 2001

Eighteen years, from 8 bits to 128 bits: the consoles that built the culture we collect today.

Each date marks the console's first launch. Arrival dates in Chile and Latin America varied widely, and we are documenting them with the community.



EVAN-AMOS …



EVAN-AMOS …



EVAN-AMOS …



EVAN-AMOS …



EVAN-AMOS …



EVAN-AMOS …



EVAN-AMOS …



EVAN-AMOS …



EVAN-AMOS …

Made until 2003: twenty years in production.

1983 — FAMICOM

Nintendo launches the Family Computer in Japan.

Ricoh 2A03 CPU · 1.79 MHz. Famicom and NES total 61.9 million.

Best seller: Super Mario Bros., bundled with the console.

1985 — NES

The gray box reaches North America.

Debuted Nintendo's official quality seal and the 10NES lockout chip.

Sonic the Hedgehog (1991) became its flagship game.

1988 — MEGA DRIVE

Sega opens the 16-bit era.

Motorola 68000 · 7.6 MHz. About 30 million worldwide.

Tetris, packed in the box, made it essential.

1989 — GAME BOY

Four shades of green in your pocket.

Sharp LR35902 · 4.19 MHz. With the Color, 118.7 million.

Best seller: Super Mario World.

1990 — SUPER FAMICOM

Mode 7, a sound chip and RPGs.

Ricoh 5A22 · 3.58 MHz. 49.1 million sold.

First console to pass 100 million units.

1994 — PLAYSTATION

Sony bets on CDs and polygons.

MIPS R3000A · 33.9 MHz. 102.5 million sold.

Super Mario 64 defined the 3D platformer.

1996 — NINTENDO 64

Analog stick and four players.

NEC VR4300 · 93.75 MHz. 32.9 million sold.

Sega stopped making it in 2001; homebrew lives on.

1998 — DREAMCAST

Built-in online play and an early goodbye.

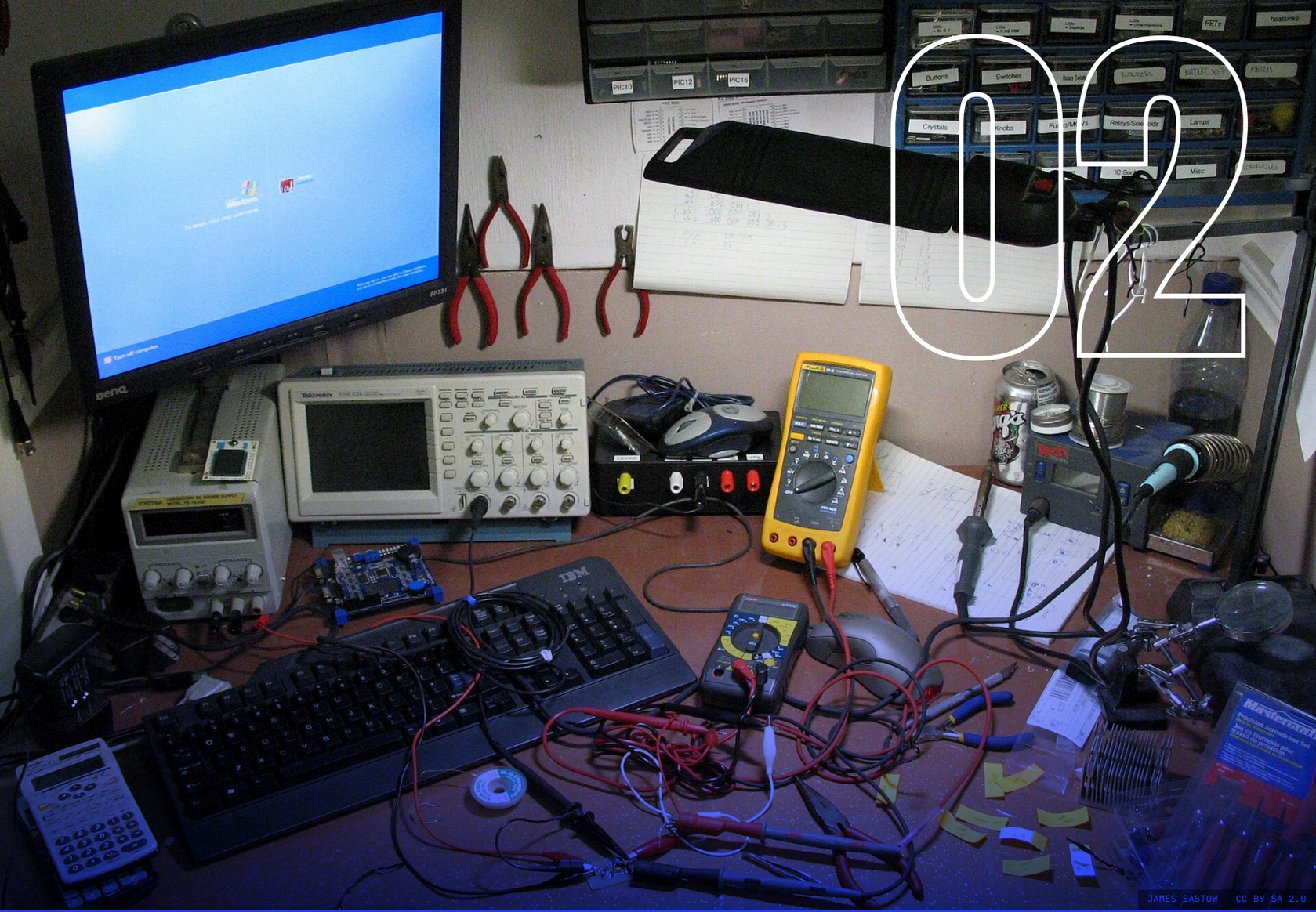
Hitachi SH-4 · 200 MHz with a built-in modem. About 9.1 million.

The best-selling console of all time.

2000 — PLAYSTATION 2

A DVD player that also runs PS1 games.

Emotion Engine · 294 MHz. Over 160 million sold.



SECTION 02 · P.12

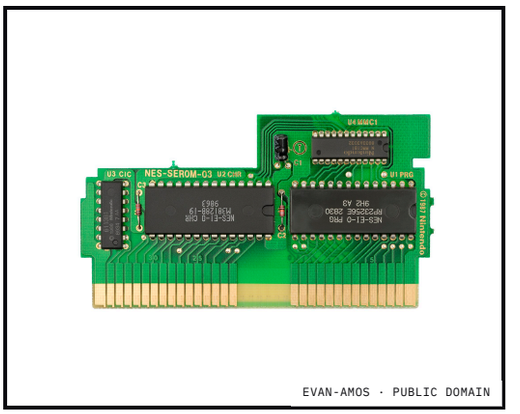
HARDWARE

Repair, maintenance, mods, cables, CRTs, flashcarts and FPGA. The magazine's workbench.

CRT | RGB | RECAP | FLASHCARTS | EVERDRIVE | FPGA | HANDHELDS | CONTROLES

TUTORIAL · HARDWARE

CLEAN YOUR CARTRIDGES WITHOUT BLOWING



EVAN-AMOS · PUBLIC DOMAIN

LEVEL: EASY | ⏱ 15 MIN | DIY

Blowing was never the fix: moisture corrodes the contacts. Here's how to clean a cartridge safely.

YOU'LL NEED

- 99% isopropyl alcohol
- Cotton swabs and microfiber cloth
- Good-quality 3.8 / 4.5 mm security bit
- For soldering: temperature-controlled iron and flux

⚠ WARNING

Avoid sandpaper, abrasive erasers or water-based products. If corrosion is deep, ask on the forum before going further.

01 — INSPECT
Check the contacts in good light. Dark stains mean dirt or oxidation.

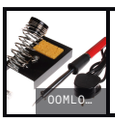
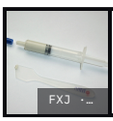
02 — ALCOHOL AND SWAB
Dampen (don't soak) and rub the contacts in one direction.

03 — REPEAT UNTIL CLEAN
Switch swabs until they stop coming out black.

04 — OPEN IF NEEDED
With the security bit you can open the shell and clean both sides of the board.

05 — LET IT DRY
Wait a few minutes before inserting it. Alcohol evaporates fast; patience doesn't.

MUST-HAVE TOOLS FOR CONSOLE REPAIR

3.8 — **SECURITY BIT** 3.8 and 4.5 mm: open Nintendo and Sega carts and consoles.	99% — **99% ISOPROPYL** Cleans contacts and evaporates without leaving water.	PIN — **BRUSH AND SWABS** Soft brush for dust, swabs for the pins.	x10 — **MAGNIFIER AND LIGHT** To spot broken traces and cold joints.
 **IRON AND SOLDER** Adjustable temperature and flux-core solder.	 **ANTISTATIC STRAP** Drains static before you touch the board.	 **MULTIMETER** Continuity, voltages and fuses in seconds.	 **THERMAL PASTE** Replace it when opening consoles with a heatsink.

⚠ SAFETY FIRST

- Quality tools: a soft bit strips the screw and a cheap iron burns traces.
- Clear desk, good light and ventilation: alcohol and flux fumes are flammable and irritating.
- Tidy cables and console unplugged; never open a power supply while it's connected.
- The iron runs above 300 °C: use its stand, wear safety glasses and keep cold water at hand for burns.

CONTINUE ON THE WEB →

SPEC SHEET

FPGA VS ORIGINAL

Period hardware or FPGA recreation? There's no single answer: it depends on how and where you play.



EVAN-AMOS · PUBLIC DOMAIN

VS



EVAN-AMOS · PUBLIC DOMAIN

	ORIGINAL HARDWARE	FPGA
ACCURACY	It's the reference	Very high, circuit-level
LATENCY	None on CRT	Very low
VIDEO	RF / composite / RGB with mods	HDMI and analog output
UPKEEP	Capacitors, contacts, PSUs	Core updates
COLLECTING	Historical value	A tool for playing

An FPGA (field-programmable gate array) is a chip whose circuits can be 'rewired' through software. Instead of running a program that imitates the console, like an emulator does, it's configured to behave like the original chips, cycle by cycle. That's why its latency is minimal and its accuracy very high. Open source projects like MiSTer have documented dozens of systems, and that is preservation too.

Why do some prefer the original? Because it's the reference: the exact sound of its chip, the picture on a CRT, the historical value of the object. An FPGA reproduces the behavior, but it isn't the machine that sat in your living room. FPGA fans value something else: clean HDMI output, no capacitor upkeep and the chance to play without risking a 40-year-old console.

The big recent release is the Analogue 3D: the first full FPGA recreation of the Nintendo 64, which started shipping in November 2025. It plays original cartridges region-free, takes period controllers in its four ports and outputs 4K over HDMI, with modes that imitate a CRT. It's proof that FPGA has reached the polygon generation.

OUR TAKE

To preserve and collect, original. To play daily on a modern TV, FPGA. Many end up with both.

⚠ THE SUPERSEGA CASE

Not everything announced as FPGA is. SuperSega promised to run every Sega system on FPGA, up to Dreamcast. According to specialist outlets like Time Extension, its demos showed editing cuts and an incomplete board, and experts doubted it could run games. After a Sega complaint over the name, its creator announced the end of the project in December 2025. The lesson: don't preorder hardware without verifiable demos.

SOURCE: TIME EXTENSION

Ad space

WANT TO ADVERTISE YOUR GAME STORE HERE?

Shops, repairers, fairs and creators from the retro scene: this page can be yours. Full-page, half-page or module ads.

CONTACT US

retrogames@wisegrow.net

AVAILABLE FORMATS

FULL PAGE

230 × 300 mm

Back cover, inside or next to the section you choose.

RATE ON REQUEST

HALF PAGE

230 × 150 mm

Horizontal, under an article related to your business.

RATE ON REQUEST

MODULE

110 × 145 mm

A quarter page: ideal for repair shops and fairs.

RATE ON REQUEST

STRIP

200 × 60 mm

Horizontal ad inside editorial pages.

RATE ON REQUEST

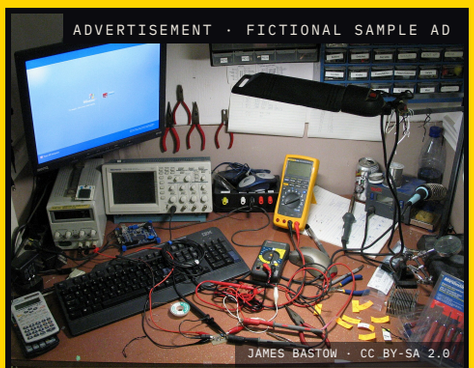
THIS IS HOW YOUR AD COULD LOOK



WISEGROW RETROGAMES

The magazine, the forum and the Preservation Kit in one place

RETROGAMES.WISEGROW.NET



Taller & Bits

RETRO CONSOLE REPAIR

Pin, capacitor and screen replacement. Deep cleaning, video mods and no-strings diagnosis.

ASK FOR RATES · @TALLER8BITS



Mercado Retro del Puerto

THE LAST SUNDAY OF EVERY MONTH

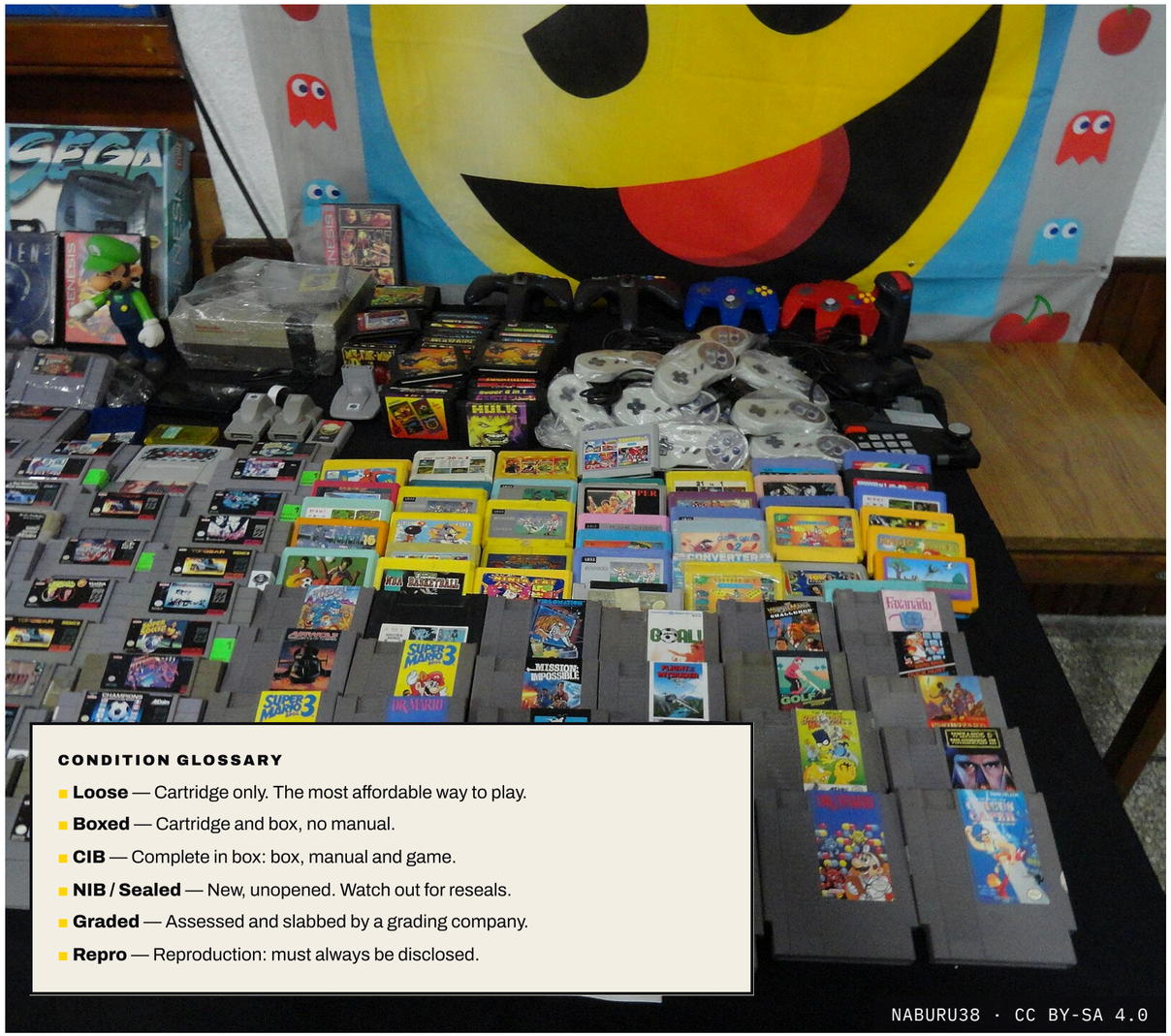
Over 40 stalls of cartridges, consoles, parts and magazines. Test area with tube TVs.

10 AM TO 6 PM · VALPARAÍSO (EXAMPLE)

COLLECTION

THE CARTRIDGE REVOLUTION

Old cartridges are objects of desire again. Why demand went up, how to start a collection wisely and what each condition grade means.



NABURU38 · CC BY-SA 4.0

CONDITION GLOSSARY

- **Loose** — Cartridge only. The most affordable way to play.
- **Boxed** — Cartridge and box, no manual.
- **CIB** — Complete in box: box, manual and game.
- **NIB / Sealed** — New, unopened. Watch out for reseals.
- **Graded** — Assessed and slabbed by a grading company.
- **Repro** — Reproduction: must always be disclosed.

Twenty years ago, an NES cartridge was given away or ended up in a box in the attic. Today the same games are hunted at fairs, shops and websites, and some sell at international auctions as collector's pieces. The boom sped up over the last decade, with mini consoles, retro YouTubers and a generation that now has buying power and wants its childhood back.

Demand grew and supply didn't: no new original cartridges are being made, and every year some get lost, broken or lose their battery. That's why condition matters so much. The same game can be worth very different amounts loose, boxed or sealed; with a torn label or with its manual intact. Understanding those conditions is the first step to buying well.

Every collection starts with one game. The trouble begins with the second, the third and the tenth, when you realize space is short, prices move and not everything that shines is genuine. The good news: with a few simple rules, collecting becomes a joy instead of an anxiety.

One console, one genre, one series, or the games from your childhood. A clear focus prevents impulse buys and gives the shelf meaning. The cost of starting depends entirely on that focus: collecting loose carts is not the same as hunting complete boxed pieces.

Beyond format, check physical condition: label (complete, no scratches or store stickers damaging it), shell (no cracks or sun yellowing), contacts (clean, no green oxidation) and, on cardboard boxes, corners and crushing. A working, good-looking game is worth more than a 'complete' one in bad shape.



NABURU38 · CC BY-SA 4.0



SINTEGRITY · CC BY-SA 4.0

- Away from direct sunlight and humidity.
- Plastic protectors for cardboard boxes.
- Silica gel in closed containers.
- Check save batteries: they'll run out some day.

PRESERVATION

PRESERVING IS NOT PIRATING

Dumping, personal backups, hashes, formats and documentation: how to care for digital history without crossing the line.



MATTHIAS HULLIN · CC BY-SA 3.0

Cartridges aren't eternal. Save batteries die, chips fail and discs degrade. Preserving means making sure that data — and the context around it — survives. And it starts with something as concrete as reading a cartridge you own.

A dump is an exact copy of the data on the cartridge chip, obtained with a dedicated reader. To know it's correct you compute its hash (CRC32, MD5, SHA-1) and compare it with preservation databases like No-Intro. If it matches, your copy is faithful.

There are readers for almost everything. The Retrode connects SNES and Mega Drive cartridges over USB and shows them like a thumb drive. The Open Source Cartridge Reader, an open project you can build yourself, reads dozens of systems, from NES to N64. The INL Retro Dumper is the reference for NES and Famicom, and readers like the GBxCart RW or the GB Operator specialize in Game Boy and also let you back up and restore save files.

With a verified dump you can play your own game on an emulator or FPGA without wearing out the cartridge; rescue your save before replacing a dead battery; compare revisions and regions of the same game; and, for prototypes or unreleased games donated with permission, save forever a piece of history that would otherwise be lost.

Preservation is also documentation: scanning manuals, photographing boards and recording differences between versions. That often volunteer work is what lets us study game history rigorously.

ADVERTISEMENT · FICTIONAL SAMPLE AD



EVAN-AMOS · PUBLIC DOMAIN

Archivo Pixel

WE SCAN MANUALS AND BOXES

High-resolution scans, without harming the paper, for your collection or community archives.

QUOTES · ARCHIVOPIXEL (EXAMPLE)

THE LINE

- Only back up games you own.
- Always verify with hashes.
- Document: region, revision, board condition, photos.
- Don't distribute copies of commercial games.

EVAN-AMOS (FONDO REMOVIDO POR LA COMUNIDAD DE …



HOMEBREW

MAKE YOUR OWN GAME BOY GAME

With free tools like GB Studio, making a game that runs on a real Game Boy is within anyone's reach.

The homebrew scene proves a console doesn't die when production stops. Every year new games appear for NES, Game Boy or Mega Drive, many on physical cartridges, made by small studios and hobbyists.

GB Studio is a free, open source visual editor: you draw scenes, define events and export a ROM that runs in emulators, flashcarts and real cartridges. You don't need to code to start, though you can when you want more control.

The best advice is to start small. Your first game shouldn't be a forty-hour RPG: get a character walking across a screen, then jumping, then getting hurt by something. Every working step is a win, and a small finished game teaches more than a huge abandoned one.

Respect the machine's limits from day one: four shades, 8×8 or 8×16 sprites, few things on screen at once. Test often in an accurate emulator like SameBoy or Emulicious and, when you can, on a real Game Boy with a flashcart. Use version control (Git) so you don't lose work, and share progress with the community: early feedback saves weeks.

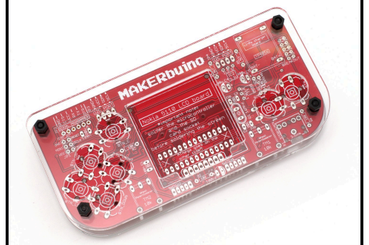
CONTINUE ON THE WEB →



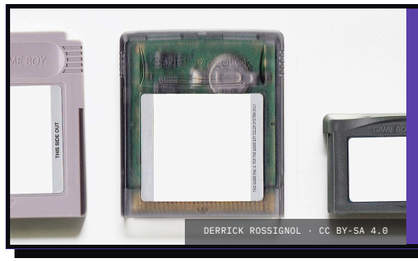
EVAN-AMOS · PUBLI…



EVAN-AMOS · PUBLI…



GARETH HALFACREE …



DERRICK ROSSIGNOL · CC BY-SA 4.0

ADVERTISEMENT · FICTIONAL SAMPLE AD

Pixel Forja

YOUR HOMEBREW GAME, ON A REAL CARTRIDGE

We make cartridges, boxes and manuals for your own GB Studio games. Small runs.

ASK FOR RATES · PIXELFORJA (EXAMPLE)

INCREMENTAL DEVELOPMENT

1 · SCREEN
A background and a moving character.

2 · COLLISIONS
Walls, floor and a jump that feels right.

3 · CHALLENGE
One enemy, lives and a way to lose.

4 · LEVEL
One complete level, start to finish.

5 · POLISH
Music, sound effects, title and game over screen.

6 · HARDWARE
Test on a real Game Boy and share.



A REAL BLOCKBUSTER IN ITS FINAL DAYS (USA, 2013). S
BACK.



THE NEWS TRIBUNE/ STAFF PHOTOGRAPH…

985: THE SAME BUSINESS MODEL THAT REACHED CHILE WITH THE



OMINAE · CC BY-SA 4.0

USED MEGA DRIVE CARTRIDGES AT A SECOND-HAND SHOP.

RETRO CHILE

WHEN NINTENDO CAME TO THE BLOCK

Video rental stores, clones, electronics shops and imported magazines: a history of Chilean retro gaming told by its players.

In Chile, for many people, 'the Nintendo' meant any console. Machines arrived through importers, electronics shops and travelers, and coexisted with multi-cart clones sold at street markets and downtown arcades. That mix of originals and clones is an essential part of our history.

The video rental store was the great library: you rented games and, in some neighborhoods, consoles for the weekend. International chains coexisted with the corner shop, where the owner knew which game to recommend.

Choosing was an art. You'd walk the games aisle again and again, with money for just one rental. If the one you wanted was out, the gamble began: picking a box you'd never seen and deciding only by the cover art and the two screenshots on the back.

And those covers lied in the most beautiful way. Hand-painted illustrations, giant spaceships, muscular warriors and explosions the game would never show. You imagined incredible adventures, and sometimes the game lived up to it. Other times it didn't, but the excitement of the trip had already been worth it.

The ride home was part of the game: the box in your hands on the bus or in the car, reading the manual (if there was one) and staring at the screenshots over and over. Getting home, blowing on the cartridge — yes, we all did it — turning on the TV and waiting for the logo. No download replaces that moment.

CONTINUE ON THE WEB →

RENT IT FRIDAY. RETURN IT MONDAY WITHOUT HAVING SLEPT.

— READER TESTIMONY



INTERVIEW

THE WISE COLLECTOR

Santiago started with an NES, lost it all and rebuilt his collection one cartridge at a time. We talked about loss, flea markets and what the Chilean scene is missing.

SANTIAGO

COLLECTOR · VIÑA DEL MAR

> "I GAVE MY GAMES TO AN EX. SINCE THEN, EVERY CARTRIDGE I GET BACK IS A SMALL REVENGE."

23 CONSOLES

~400 GAMES

1984 BORN IN VALPARAÍSO

Where were you born and where did you grow up?

I was born in Valparaíso in 1984 and grew up in Viña del Mar, on a little street where all the kids played outside until dark. My dad was an electrician and the house was always full of cables and half-opened gadgets.

How did you get into video games?

Through a neighbor who had an Atari 2600 and the arcade machines at the corner shop. I saved coins all week to spend them on Saturday.

What were your first console and first game?

An NES that arrived on Christmas 1990, with two controllers and Super Mario Bros. I beat it that same summer, taking turns with my cousins.

Where did you get games back then?

At the neighborhood rental store, which rented cartridges by the day, and by trading at school. Buying a new one was a birthday luxury.

And where do you get them now?

At antique fairs in Valparaíso, retro shops, buy-and-sell groups and collector meetups. The best finds still turn up at the market, first thing in the morning.

What happened to that first collection?

I gave it to an ex. When we broke up there was no way to get it back: console, games and boxes. For years I didn't even want to think about it.

And how did you rebuild it?

Little by little. First the games I had as a kid; then the ones I always wanted and could never buy.

How many consoles do you have today?

Twenty-three, all working, and about four hundred games. I have one rule: if it can't be played, it gets fixed or it goes.

Which one do you treasure most?

An NES with its box, just like that Christmas one. I found it at a flea market, with the original foam. It's not the most expensive, but it's the one that closes the story.

What are you up to now?

I work as an electronics technician and fix friends' consoles on weekends. I'm also building a record of the cartridges that were sold in Chile.

What are you looking to collect?

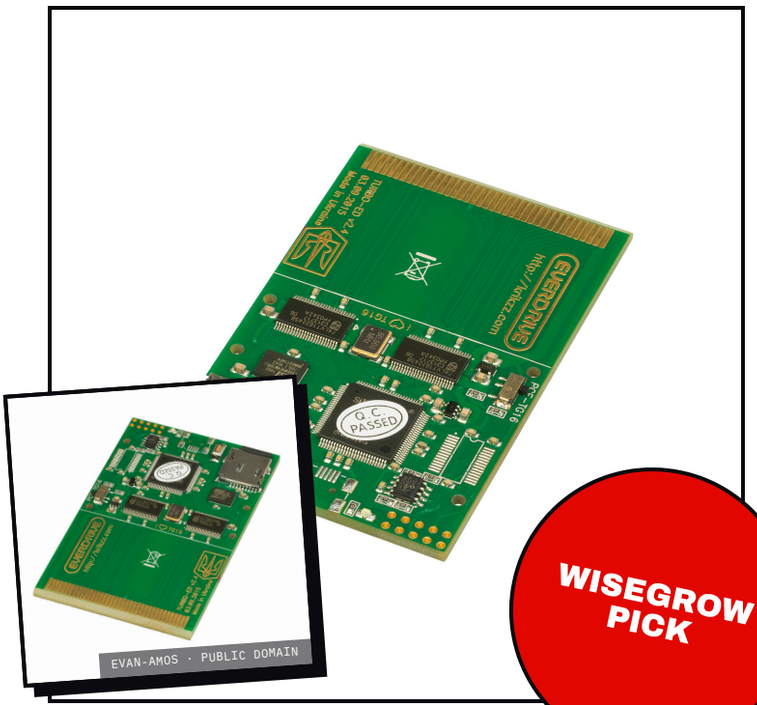
Cartridges with stickers from Chilean rental stores. Each one tells you which neighborhood it was played in. And someday, a Famicom Disk System.

Advice for beginners?

Decide what you want and don't buy out of anxiety. Test before paying, learn to spot a reproduction and play what you buy. And never give your collection away... unless it's forever.

What's missing in the Chilean scene?

Documenting and meeting up. Lots of people collect on their own. We need regular events, a record of what reached Chile and shops that clearly explain the condition of what they sell.



REVIEW · HARDWARE

REVIEW 01 · Accessory

CHINESE FLASHCARTS: NES AND N64

NES	**EverDrive N8 clone · microSD**
N64	**ED64 Plus clone · SD + USB**
N64 EMULATORS	**Neon64 · GB64 · SMSPlus64**
BEST FOR	**Homebrew and own backups**

We tried two budget clones: an SD flashcart for NES and an EverDrive 64 clone that, besides N64, runs NES, Game Boy and Game Gear emulators on the console.

A flashcart is a cartridge with rewritable memory that loads files from an SD card. The Chinese NES clone, based on the original EverDrive N8, costs a fraction and supports nearly every mapper in the library: it loads fast, saves games to the SD and is ideal for testing homebrew. Its limits: no ROMs over 512 KB, no in-game menu and a single save state.

The EverDrive 64 clone is the bigger surprise: besides loading N64 backups, it runs emulators on the console itself. With Neon64 you play NES, with GB64 Game Boy and Game Boy Color, and with SMSPlus64 Master System and Game Gear, all on your N64 with its controller. It's a fun way to give the console a second life.

A warning: both are unauthorized copies of the work of Krikzz, creator of the original EverDrives. Don't install official firmware on a clone: it can wipe your card. If you like the idea and can afford it, the original has better support and more features.



WHAT WE TESTED

- EverDrive N8 clone with an 8 GB microSD on an NTSC NES.
- ED64 Plus clone with a 16 GB SD on an NTSC N64.
- Free homebrew and backups of our own cartridges.
- Neon64, GB64 and SMSPlus64 running homebrew on the N64.
- Load times, saving to SD and use with the original controller.

VERDICT

NO SCORE: EDITORIAL VERDICT

PROS

+ Very affordable
+ Protects your original carts
+ N64: NES, GB and Game Gear emulators

CONS

– NES: 512 KB limit and one save state
– Clones with no official support

HOMEBREW NES N64



REVIEW · HANDHELD

REVIEW 02 · Handheld

GKD BUBBLE: A POCKET GAME GEAR

SCREEN	**3.5" 4:3 IPS · 640×480**
CHIP	**Rockchip RK3566 · 1 GB RAM**
BATTERY	**4,000 mAh**
PORTS	**HDMI · USB-C OTG · Wi-Fi · 2 microSD**
REF. PRICE	**US$60–70 on AliExpress (Oct 2026)**

Game Kiddy's handheld imitates the Sega Game Gear's design and pairs it with a modern chip. We put it through its paces: what it runs, what it doesn't and what it costs.

The GKD Bubble came out in late 2024 and its charm is the design: rounded horizontal shell, Game Gear-style screen bezel and the power lights right where the Sega logo used to be. It's smaller than the original and adds four face buttons, triggers and two sticks.

In our tests, everything 8- and 16-bit runs without issues — Game Gear included, of course — and PlayStation works well. Nintendo 64 and Dreamcast stutter, and anything above that is out of reach. Nintendo DS runs fairly well, but without dual screens: you see one at a time and switch as the game requires. There is no touch input either.

With an HDMI cable it outputs to a TV and, with a USB-C OTG adapter, it takes controllers: at home it becomes a living-room console. The 4,000 mAh battery lasts several afternoons away from the outlet. The buttons are a bit clicky and the 4:3 screen, though colorful, isn't very bright.

Reference price: on AliExpress it sells for US$60 to 70 (checked October 2026; varies by store, shipping and taxes). Many stores sell it with a microSD "full of games": those cards usually carry unlicensed commercial ROMs. We recommend formatting it and using your own backups and homebrew.

It isn't the most powerful handheld, but it's one of the most charming. If you grew up with the Game Gear — and its six AA batteries that lasted an afternoon — the Bubble is a welcome tribute.

WHAT IT RUNS

- 8 and 16 bits, Game Gear included: flawless.
- PlayStation: good. N64 and Dreamcast: stutter.
- Nintendo DS: one screen at a time, no touch.
- Nothing more demanding than N64 or Dreamcast.

VERDICT

SCORE 7/10

PROS

+ Price
+ Game Gear-style design
+ TV output and controllers via OTG
+ Portability
+ 4,000 mAh battery

CONS

– Somewhat clicky buttons
– Dim screen
– Limited power: N64 and Dreamcast stutter

PORTABLE SEGA LINUX

TOP 10 · COLLECTION

10 CARTRIDGES

An NES editorial selection. No scores: ten games that explain why the console matters.

01

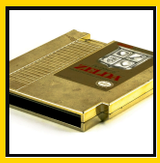


NES

SUPER MARIO BROS. 3

The definitive 8-bit platformer.

02



NES

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA

Exploration without hand-holding.

03



NES

MEGA MAN 2

Flawless music and level design.

04



NES

CONTRA

Legendary co-op.

05



NES

METROID

The origin of an entire genre.

06



NES

CASTLEVANIA

Gothic, demanding, unforgettable.

07



NES

PUNCH-OUT!!

Pure pattern recognition.

08



NES

KIRBY'S ADVENTURE

The NES at its technical limit.

09



NES

DUCKTALES

The world's most famous pogo.

10



NES

TETRIS

Eternal.

★ Editorial selection · no scores · Illustrative images (not the official art)

MARKET

MARKET GUIDE: ASSESS BEFORE YOU PAY

What to check on a used console, how to spot repairs and why in Chile you need to think about 220V and NTSC.



ARNOLDREINHOLD · CC BY-SA 4.0

CHECKLIST

- **Ask to test it** — Video, sound, both controllers and at least one game.
- **Check the screws** — Stripped or missing screws mean previous openings.
- **Check voltage and region** — Chile uses 220V and NTSC. US or Japanese consoles need a transformer.
- **Labels and shell** — Reprinted labels or new shells aren't a problem if disclosed.
- **Controllers and cables** — Responsive buttons, a firm d-pad and uncut cables.

Flea markets are still the best place to find surprises, and also to make mistakes. We don't publish prices: they change weekly and depend on condition. What we can give you is a method to assess what's in front of you.

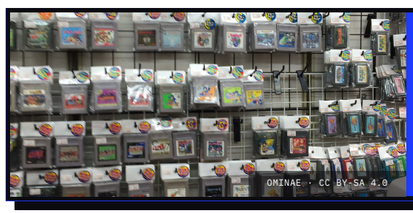
Arrive early: the best stuff goes in the first hour. Bring cash in small bills, a padded bag and, if you can, a test cartridge you know works and your own controller. That way you can tell in seconds whether a fault is in the game or the console.

Learn to spot reproductions: oversaturated or blurry labels, plastic in a different shade, regular screws instead of security ones, or a board with a single modern chip when you open it. A repro isn't bad if sold as one; the problem is paying for it as an original.

Negotiate respectfully. Ask about a discount for several games, calmly point out any flaws you find and remember many sellers are collectors too. A good relationship with your regular stall is worth more than any bargain.

Restoring is also an opportunity: a console with no video might have a simple fault. But that bet only pays off if you can repair it or know who to ask. That's what the forum is for.

ADVERTISEMENT · FICTIONAL SAMPLE AD



OMINAE · CC BY-SA 4.0

Mercado Retro del Puerto

THE LAST SUNDAY OF EVERY MONTH

Over 40 stalls of cartridges, consoles, parts and magazines. Test area with tube TVs.

10 AM TO 6 PM · VALPARAÍSO (EXAMPLE)

GOLDEN RULE

- Test cartridge and controller
- Cash in small bills
- Phone flashlight to check contacts
- Padded bag for the trip home

WISEGROW RETROGAMES COMMUNITY

WE ALL WRITE THIS MAGAZINE

Every issue is fed by the forum: questions become tutorials, restorations become covers, collectors become interviews.

SEND YOUR SETUP! /FORO

LATEST FORUM TOPICS

RE	**¿Qué versión de Mario 64 tienen?** @RETROPLAYER · #NINTENDO-64	12
CA	**Busco VMUs Dreamcast (Santiago)** @CARTUCHOORO · #BUSCO	4
MO	**Mejor método para limpiar contactos de Game Boy** @MODCHIPCL · #REPARACIONES	24
PI	**Cómo distinguir PS1 original de copia en Chile** @PIXELITA · #RAROS	31
NE	**RPGs SNES imprescindibles en español o fácil de seguir** @NESFAN90 · #RECOMENDACIONES	18

SEND YOUR ARTICLE

Wrote about a game, a repair or a memory? Send it and we will publish it, with your byline.

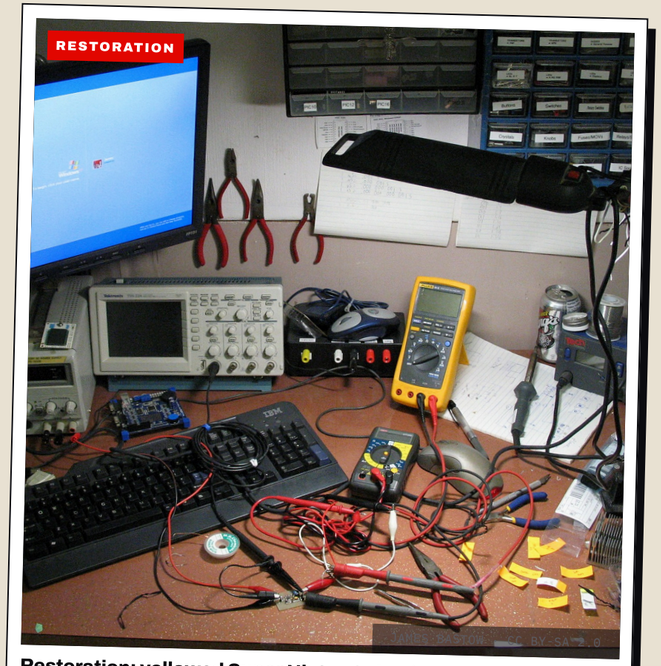
SEND YOUR SETUP

A photo of your gaming corner and a few lines: you will appear in Reader setups.

✉ retrogames@wisegrow.net



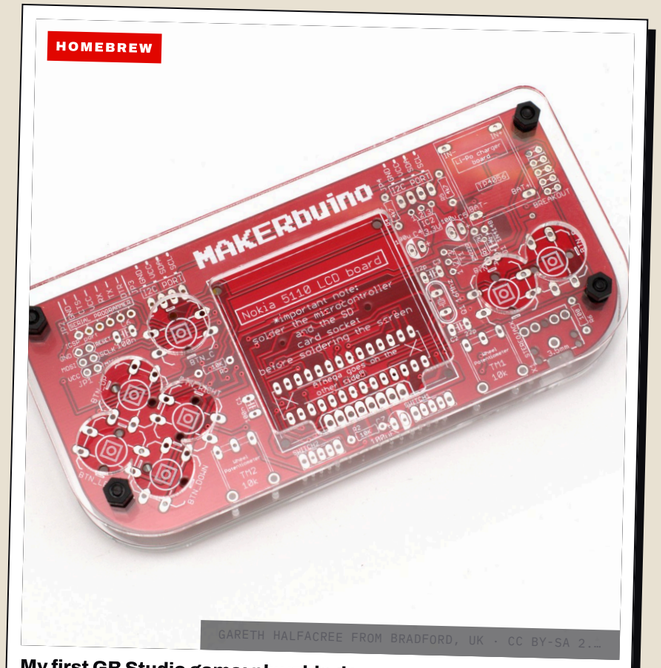
My CRT corner: 21" Trinitron + RGB on every console
@PIXELITA · ♥ 128



Restoration: yellowed Super Nintendo back to gray
@SOLDERQUEEN · ♥ 96



30 years of collecting cartridges: the full shelf
@CARTUCHOORO · ♥ 210



My first GB Studio game: playable demo
@8BITFER · ♥ 77

ABOUT THE MAGAZINE

ONE MAGAZINE, MANY FLAVORS

Wisegrow RetroGames Magazine is born 100% digital and free. If visits and feedback keep coming, the next step is print, in different flavors depending on how much you want to take home.

AVAILABLE NOW

FMT-01

DIGITAL

FREE WEB READER

The full magazine as a high-resolution PDF and in the web reader, with forum links and bonus content.



- High-resolution PDF
- Interactive web reader
- Issue wallpapers

DEPENDING ON VISITS AND REVIEWS

FMT-02

PHYSICAL

MAGAZINE ONLY · 230 × 300 MM

The printed edition, made for the shelf: numbered spine and special-finish cover.



- ~40-page printed magazine
- Digital edition access
- Collectible numbered spine

FMT-03

COLLECTOR

MAGAZINE + GIFTS

For collectors: printed magazine, double-sided poster, sticker sheet and cover postcard.



OMINAE · CC BY-SA 4.0

- Printed magazine
- Double-sided A2 poster
- Sticker sheet
- Cover postcard

FMT-04

PRESERVATION KIT

MAGAZINE + CARTRIDGE USB

Printed magazine + cartridge-shaped USB with open source software, licensed homebrew and documentation. No commercial ROMs.



EVAN-AMOS · PUBLIC DOMAIN

- Printed magazine
- Collectible cartridge USB
- Open source software & homebrew
- Preservation handbook

LATER ON

FMT-05

LIMITED EDITION

NUMBERED · LIMITED RUN

Hand-numbered edition with alternate cover, cartridge-style box and certificate.



DERRICK ROSSIGNOL · CC BY-SA 4.0

- Alternate cover
- Cartridge-style box
- Preservation Kit included
- Numbered certificate

★ NO PRICES FOR NOW: WE WILL SET THEM WITH THE COMMUNITY ONCE A PRINT EDITION IS VIABLE.

NEXT ISSUE

UPCOMING ISSUES



ISSUE #01

NOVEMBER 2026



ISSUE #02

DECEMBER 2026



ISSUE #03

JANUARY 2027



ISSUE #04

FEBRUARY 2027



ISSUE #05

MARCH 2027



ISSUE #06

APRIL 2027

COMING UP

IN UPCOMING ISSUES

One console per issue. And in every one: the best games, tricks, reviews and accessories.

#01 NES

NOVEMBER 2026

- Top 25 NES games
- Classic tricks and codes
- Fixing the 72-pin connector
- Accessories: from Zapper to Power Glove

#02 SEGA MEGA DRIVE

DECEMBER 2026

- The best Mega Drive games
- Sonic and Streets of Rage tricks
- Review: 6-button controllers
- Tectoy and the Mega Drive in Latin America

#03 SUPER NINTENDO

JANUARY 2027

- The best Super Nintendo RPGs
- Super Mario World secrets
- Review: RGB outputs and scalers
- Accessories: Super Game Boy and Multitap

#04 PLAYSTATION

FEBRUARY 2027

- The best PlayStation games
- Tricks and codes from the CD era
- Review: replacement optical drives
- Memory cards: save and preserve

#05 NINTENDO 64

MARCH 2027

- The best N64 multiplayer games
- Mario 64 and GoldenEye tricks
- Review: Analogue 3D in depth
- Accessories: Rumble Pak and Expansion Pak

#06 GAME BOY

APRIL 2027

- The best Game Boy games
- Pokémon and Zelda tricks
- Review: replacement IPS screens
- Accessories: Game Link and Game Boy Camera

Regular sections BEST GAMES | TIPS & CODES | REVIEWS | ACCESSORIES | COLLECTING | COMMUNITY

WISEGROW

ISSUE #01 · NOVEMBER 2026
VIÑA DEL MAR · CHILE

RETROGAMES

MAGAZINE

8 BITS THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING

TOP 25

THE BEST NES GAMES

HARDWARE

THE 72-PIN CONNECTOR

COLLECTION

FAMICOM VS NES

TIPS

CLASSIC TRICKS AND CODES

REVIEWS

ACCESSORIES FOR YOUR NES

KIT #01!
PRESERVATION

NES IN CHILE
SPECIAL

NEXT ISSUE · NOVEMBER 2026 · CONTINUE?



THE GOLDEN AGE OF GAMING

NES

The best games, tricks, repairs and the guide to collecting NES in Chile.

7 800126 0011

■ NES SPECIAL ■ PRESERVATION KIT #01 ■ NOVEMBER 2026