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By Greg Lindberg Shockwave games range from car racing to fashion, jigsaw puzzles to sports. You can download a free player and then take the games for a test run. The player runs on both PCs and Macs. You can download trial versions of games for free, buy games (usually for around \$20) or sign up for one of several membership deals. Here is how to download games from the official Shockwave website. Download and install the latest Shockwave player. See Resources below. Go to www.shockwave.com. Click on the My Shockwave tab. Create a free account before signing up for any club offers. After your account is created, you can choose among membership offers. To start out, try the 10-day free trial of the Shockwave Unlimited membership, which allows you to download more than 600 games. The free trial will give you a sense of how much time you would spend playing the games and whether you would prefer to purchase a single game or select one of the paid membership options. Click on the Download Games tab to search through the games. For example, choose the game Plants vs. Zombies. Below the game is the option to download the free trial or to buy the full game. If you have signed up for an exclusive membership with Shockwave, you will see an option to simply download the game. Click the Download option and select where you want to save the game on your computer. If you are paying for the full version, you will have to go through checkout before downloading the game. Plants vs. Zombies is \$19.95 for the full game. Once downloaded, you can click on the game file, and it will start automatically on your Shockwave player. GamingApr 1, 2021By: Gadgets Now Bureau It's always fun looking back at old PC ads, right? Back when 48KB of RAM was a huge deal, or when a 450MHz processor was the norm, or when 10MB of storage space was more than anyone expected to fill in a lifetime. Nowadays I have multiple terabytes of storage capacity...and it just keeps filling up. It's all video games. One of 2016's large-scale PC gaming trends—emphasis on large—was the rapid inflation of download sizes and drive footprints. It's becoming a problem, and one that's fast putting PC gaming out of reach for some people. Let's dig into why before examining some potential solutions. Breaking the 50GB barrier Seagate Barracuda Pro 10TB This 10TB drive is truly vast and stupendously fast (for a hard drive), and is also miserly on the power consumption. All in all, it's the best consumer 3.5-inch internal hard drive we've ever tested by a long shot. I love our all-digital future. I really do. Moving to Steam and away from traditional retail channels has enabled a much more diverse games industry—releases as small and meditative as Sorcery! or as gun-happy as the Doom reboot. It's allowed for the revival of long-dead genres like the isometric CRPG, leaving us with Wasteland 2 and Divinity: Original Sin and Pillars of Eternity. It's given us back the B-games, the middle of the market I thought died with THQ—games like Shadow Warrior 2 and Obduction, too big to feel “indie” in the traditional sense but still comparatively small when put up against games from Ubisoft and EA. And if I contrast the size of my Steam library with my not-so-huge apartment...well, I'm pretty grateful my games don't take up physical space nowadays. I'd be drowning in jewel cases. 2016 gave way to some truly massive releases though—and again, I'm talking massive in terms of hard drive footprint, not marketing dollars or shelf presence or whatever. The largest I've seen: The double-packed Call of Duty: Infinite Warfare and Modern Warfare Remastered. Call of Duty: Infinite Warfare Call of Duty: Infinite Warfare - 75GB so you can be bored by this guy for six hours. Want to take a guess at how much space the pair requires? Brace yourself and brace your hard drive, because it's 120GB. Yes, over 100GB of space to install the pair, with Infinite Warfare taking up 75GB of that all by itself. Just to break that down into more concrete terms: If the PC version of Infinite Warfare were released during the Xbox 360 era, it would've required approximately ten DVDs to hold all that data. Even with Blu-ray, you'd need two dual-layer discs for Infinite Warfare alone. Others aren't far behind. Gears of War 4? 73GB. Forza Horizon 3? 50GB. The aforementioned Doom? 65GB. Hitman? Also sitting at 65GB now that its first season is complete. Doom There's a reason games take up this much space, and we have only ourselves to blame for demanding ever-increasing fidelity. High-resolution textures and uncompressed audio are storage hogs. But it still stings a bit, when a few years ago the biggest games topped out at around 30GB—and even that was a rarity. When Titanfall hit 50GB back in 2014, it literally made headlines. Respawn had to come out and explain why it was that large. (All that uncompressed audio!) Now it's commonplace—and also a bit baffling. Solid-state drives are getting cheaper every week it seems, but that space still comes at a premium. Most people I know are running—at most—a 500GB SSD. Factor in your OS install and a few programs and you've only got enough room for four or five of these massive games. Crazy. The original Titanfall made headlines in 2014 for its 50 GB install. More important, and more pressing, is the fact that it's simply not feasible for many people to download 50GB of data a couple times a month. I'm blessed with an excellent Internet connection here in San Francisco, but my colleague Brad Chacos doesn't have quite the same luck in New Hampshire, nor do most people in the United States. A 50GB-plus game install could tie up your bandwidth all day, or maybe multiple days. The situation is even worse if you have a data cap to contend with—a reality now for many in the United States, thanks to Comcast's recent “Oh gee, only one percent of our users need a terabyte of data per month” lockdown. I bet a good chunk of that one percent plays and installs a lot of video games. Even if you only install a single game each month, you're talking maybe 60GB to 70GB for the game itself, then another few GB for those day one patches and probably some multiplayer matches. There's nearly a tenth of your monthly ITB usage, gone. But why? What irks me is that for many people, these supersized installs are completely unnecessary. EVGA GeForce GTX 1060 GAMING (Single Fan) Sure, there are edge cases where performance might be better with uncompressed audio or textures (that was Titanfall's argument), but by and large it's for enthusiasts with high-end hardware. If you're running a game on a single GeForce GTX 1060, do you really need assets designed for 4K? Probably not. If you're playing in English, do you need to install uncompressed audio for a dozen other languages? Nein. And if you only ever plan to play singleplayer, do you need all of the multiplayer stuff too? Though it's largely completed on the PC, the weird transition period between physical and digital media has left us with some troublesome baggage—namely, that we still package games as if they were being pressed to disc, and everything needs to be included in the box. A better model is readily apparent. Software already uses it, and has for years. When you go to install Microsoft's Visual Studio, for instance, you're given a long list of files you may or may not need. Mark the ones you want, ignore the rest, and save yourself some drive space. Visual Studio Pretty standard, right? So why not in games? Oh, we're just starting to see this modular approach taken in video games. Shadow of Mordor, for instance, allowed players to install the oversized “HD Content” pack if they had enough VRAM to make higher-res textures viable. Fallout 4 is doing the same, with its recently announced 58GB (58GB!) high-resolution texture pack being offer as an optional add-on. Steam Call of Duty—of all things—has decoupled its singleplayer and multiplayer portions ever since Modern Warfare II. If you own any of the games in Steam you'll notice, for example, separate entries for Call of Duty: Black Ops II, Call of Duty: Black Ops II - Multiplayer, and Call of Duty: Black Ops II - Zombies. That method was unwieldy and left my Steam library a mess, but it's even cleaner now. Call of Duty: Black Ops III and Infinita Warfare simply listed their singleplayer and multiplayer modules as DLC, so you can uninstall it the same as any other add-on. Steam I'm not saying these are the only—or even the best—solutions. But I offer them up to hopefully get us talking about this issue before it gets worse. The games industry needs to ease the burden of these gargantuan installations. Let the people who want (and can handle) 80GB downloads continue as normal, but the flexibility of the PC as a platform should mean there's a way for people who don't need the whole package to pick and choose, be it by accepting downgraded assets or by installing only one mode at a time, or whatever else developers can think up. The data-capped masses will thank you for it, developers—as will our poor SSDs. Note: When you purchase something after clicking links in our articles, we may earn a small commission. Read our affiliate link policy for more details. Photo Courtesy: Gallo Images/Getty Images Gaming is a billion dollar industry, but you don't have to spend a penny to play some of the best games online. As long as you have a computer, you have access to hundreds of games for free. From MMOs to RPGs to racing games, check out 14 of the best free online games. Star Wars: The Old Republic received a lukewarm response when it launched in 2011, but several changes since then have significantly opened up the appeal of the game. While the most obvious tweak was a shift to a limited free-to-play model less than a year after release, there have been a lot of more subtle changes that are good news for everyone. Photo Courtesy: Joe Klamar/Getty Images Only interested in the story? You can comfortably play solo all the way up to level 60. Do you love PvP action? You can skip all the way to level 60 upon character creation. Best of all, you no longer need to spend money to avoid endless grinding. There's never been a better time to visit a galaxy far, far away. Alien Swarm is a free online game available from Valve that pits you and up to three friends against alien monsters. While the game is admittedly dated at this point — it was released in 2010 — it continues to have an active fan base. If the numerous classes, weapons, characters and areas get old, you can always use the included map generation tool and mod kit to create your own dream bug hunt. League of Legends has been around for more than a decade, and it's still going strong. Players must work together to dominate the map in a fantasy world, and the game takes skill and practice — not to mention good teammates — to master. League of Legends tournaments are popular e-Sport events, so if you'd like to watch the pros go at it before trying the game out for yourself, you certainly can. Photo Courtesy: Chesnot/Getty Images Impressively, League of Legends has been so successful that its maker, Riot Studios, has had little need to put out other titles. It wasn't until 2019, a full decade after League of Legends' release, that Riot Studios put out its second game, Teamfight Tactics. Similar to League of Legends, Dota 2 is a multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) game with players competing for control of a map. While the mod can trace its origins to a mod made for Warcraft III called Defense of the Ancients (commonly abbreviated DoTA), Dota 2 is a game in its own right. Photo Courtesy: Suzi Pratt/Getty Images While the game remains one of the biggest names in e-sports, Dota 2 has seen a decline in player numbers since its release in 2013. For regular players looking for a free game to enjoy, however, Dota 2 is still a good time. RPGs and MOBAs aren't for everyone. Forza Motorsport 6 Apex is a free online racing game that's essentially a slimmed down version of Forza Motorsport 6 for the Xbox One. While you only have six tracks to choose from, they're the same as the original game, and you have your choice of sixty cars to race on them with some truly phenomenal graphics. In fact, the main downside of the game is simply that you need a powerful computer to run it at maximum graphic settings. Fortnite Battle Royale took off to become possibly the most popular game of 2018, and in doing so, it reinvigorated the battle royal game genre, with competitors like Call of Duty: Warzone soon springing up in its wake. Players engage in an epic battle to be the last one standing in a game of intense yet zany combat gun and melee combat. Online play is possible through PC, Xbox One, PlayStation 4, iOS and Android devices. Photo Courtesy: Bloomberg/Getty Images Hearthstone: Heroes of Warcraft is a free online game modeled after the Magic: The Gathering card game. It has a basic rule set that's easy to learn but difficult to master. While knowledge of the greater Warcraft universe can make the cards themselves more enjoyable, no knowledge of previous games is necessary to enjoy Hearthstone. Unlike some free online card games, you also don't need to spend money to have a competitive deck. Lord of the Rings Online may have been released in 2007, but while many other MMOs from that time have fallen by the wayside, this game continues on, in part because it appeals to hardcore fans. For Tolkien enthusiasts, the game is almost a Middle Earth theme park that you can visit from the comfort of your own home Photo Courtesy: @lotro/Twitter While some content does require a purchase, you can earn most of it for free with a bit of patience. Considering the rewards are fighting orcs in Mordor and protecting pies from hungry hobbits in equal measure, the rewards are well-worth it. While there are many pinball games out there to choose from, Pinball Arcade is special in that it attempts to recreate actual pinball machines so that you can play them from the comfort of your home. The base game on Steam comes with Frankenstein, Flight 2000, Ripleys, Starship Troopers and Star Trek Vengeance Premium tables, and you can pay for more if you enjoy the game enough. Additionally, other versions of the game have been released for Xbox 360, Xbox One, Playstation 3, Playstation 4, Android and iOS phones and more. Photo Courtesy: CasarsaGuru/E+/Getty Images Online gaming offers a great way to pass the time (particularly when we're all quarantined), plus it helps build manual dexterity skills and potentially enhances problem-solving abilities, depending on the games chosen. Entertaining online games come in many formats, ranging from colorful casino-style games and arcade-style classics to the most intricate role-playing games set in elaborate worlds. Of course, the cost of playing some online games can quickly add up, particularly if you opt for the more elaborate RPGs that often require monthly fees and in-game purchases that are necessary to succeed. Ideally, you want to find free online games that are still a lot of fun to play. One of these top free online games may offer the perfect solution. Dauntless is a free online monster-hunting game. The hunt for good monster-themed games to play free online has increased significantly since the release of the successful Monster Hunter series. The game pushes players to use memory and logic skills to protect a colony of humans from hordes of monsters. PCMag gave it a “Good” rating, praising its easy learning curve and cross-compatibility with game consoles. Negatives include limited weapons and environments that could use some work. Photo Courtesy: @Dauntless.comn/Twitter Little Big Snake is a skills game that enhances manual dexterity and puzzle solving skills. It's similar to the early versions of snake games, but the graphics are vastly improved. Your snake eats nectar and bugs, but if it touches another snake, then it's game over for your slinky friend. This game requires Adobe Flash Player to play, and it's available as a mobile app as well as an online game. Photo Courtesy: @\_11fe\_/Twitter Like drag racing games? Drag Racer V3 offers some fun, free online game play for all the racing fans out there. Created by Phantom Games, it pits you against other racers to fan the flames of competition. When starting the game, you “buy” a race car, customize it to meet your personal specifications, and then race against other cars to see who gets bragging rights. Photo Courtesy: @JohanRusch2/Twitter Fortnite Battle Royale drops you into a world with 99 other players, all with the goal of being the last player standing at the end of the battle. The game allows you to play with friends in the same world, or you can make all new ones. You get time to build up some protective structures before the competition battle, so get started gathering resources right away. The game has a 4.5-star rating on TechRadar, partially due to fun combat scenarios and the vibrant gaming environment. Photo Courtesy: @FNBRLeaks/Twitter Video game developer Riot Games created League of Legends to appeal to fans of the popular World of Warcraft online game. This fast-moving, aggressive game teaches both teamwork skills and logic. Manual dexterity is also needed as you progress through the game. Riot Games also organizes various Esports tournaments, including League of Legends tournaments with prizes in excess of \$1 million for skilled players to compete to win. Photo Courtesy: @ArtStationHQ/Twitter With the Killer Instinct game, you can play as one character for free, but if you want to expand your character options, you have to shell out some cash. The concept of the game is similar to Super Smash Bros., and players can pick up mascots from other popular games, such as Halo and Battletoads. Despite its character limitations, it has an 8.4 rating on IGN, partially due to the fluidity of the fighting moves. Photo Courtesy: @maximilian\_/Twitter If you enjoy a round or two of putt putt golf, you may be thrilled to hear you can play without braving the elements. Even better, you can play in quarantine with your friends! Golf with Your Friends supports and enhances hand-eye coordination, with players banking golf balls off obstacles and around corners to reach the holes in the fewest possible shots. Featuring game play for up to 12 simultaneous players and various game modes that even let players change the size and shape of their balls, GYWF offers a fun solution to boredom. Colorful graphics further add to the appeal of the game. Photo Courtesy: @GolfWYF/Twitter As the world's most popular MMO (massively multiplayer online) role-playing game, Runescape has been around for quite some time. Currently entertaining players with its third incarnation, the game drops players into a world filled with different cultures battling a host of angry gods for supremacy. It features hundreds of quests for players to complete to achieve this goal. Photo Courtesy: @RuneScape/Twitter The Awesome Adventures of Captain Spirit is a sequel to the popular game Life Is Strange. Captain Spirit is the alter-ego of a nine-year-old named Chris, which means this is a kid-friendly game that isn't packed with violence like some other adventure games. Adding to the kid appeal, it only takes a couple of hours to play through the full game, on average. Photo Courtesy: @edouardcaplain/Twitter The strategy game Starcraft II drops players into different galactic environments, where they take on various challenges to conquer the galaxy. Created by Blizzard Entertainment, the developer of the wildly popular World of Warcraft, the game requires players to set up a Battle.net account to play, but game play is free once you complete that step. Some characters are only available through purchasing, but players can enjoy the game without buying extra characters if desired. Photo Courtesy: @StarCraft/Twitter

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