

best games to play on pc for free download



The best free online games for PC: no download required.

Looking for some of the best free online games to play right now? Publishers like Steam and Epic Games are busy locking horns over their digital storefronts and platforms, but there's a rich world of fun browser games that can be accessed directly through the web. No launchers or two-factor authentication, no agonising downloads or hard drive space juggling, just instant, free online games.

The best free online games and browser games have even gone onto to inspire larger budget remakes and spin-offs, like My Friend Pedro and Kingdom of Loathing. Impressively, despite the obvious tech constraints developers have also managed to craft free online games to cover any genre you can imagine, so yes, you can play a 100-player battle royale in your browser. So whether you're looking for something to sink a few minutes into or your next gaming habit, there's a free online game for you.

We've tried to ensure this list caters to all sorts, all at the enviably low price of free .

Here are the best free online games for PC:

FORGE OF EMPIRES.

Forge of Empires takes elements from the Civ and Age of Empires series and mixes them together to create one of the PC's best free online games, no download required. You start off in the stone age with a few shabby huts and a couple of spearmen to prop up your humble enclave of humanity, and over many, many hours you'll progress your people through several historical eras, researching new military, scientific, welfare, and cultural institutions. Combat and expansion play out in separate screens, offering a little more space for players to flex their tactical muscles.

GAME OF THRONES WINTER IS COMING.

If you're looking for an official Game of Thrones game then this is pretty much your only option on PC, and the fact that it's a free online browser game doesn't hurt either. You guide your very own lord on a path to greed and power on server map modeled after Westeros, complete with all the major landmarks you encounter in the novels and TV series. Your aim, as in an MMO strategy game, is to grow and accumulate wealth and power, taking over more and more land before you're ready to launch an attack on a major stronghold like Storm's End, The Eyrie, or King's Landing.

Aside from being able to add famous faces from the franchise to your army like Arya Stark, Jon Snow, and Daenerys Targaryen, one of the game's best features is its JRPG-inspired battle scenes, which offer the kind of cinematic flair and scale that's often missing from free browser games.

Anocris.

Brush up on your hieroglyphs and get set to conquer the ancient world in Anocris. In this browser-based MMO, you take a tiny settlement on the banks of the Nile and turn it into your own bustling metropolis that's the envy of all. Curry favour with the gods and earn special powers by holding festivals in their honour; build up your army to defend against marauding nomads (and other players); and strengthen your hold over the country by joining forces with other tribes. And yes, you get to build pyramids.

Elvenar.

Historical city building is all well and good, but sometimes, it would be fun to create something a little more... magical. In Elvenar, you can choose to develop a mysterious Elven kingdom full of living buildings and fantastical creatures, or a more pragmatic and warlike empire in the name of humankind.

But you're not confined to the streets of your new home as the explore mode allows you to uncover many additional areas with new abilities, mysteries, and monsters. Or, if you're feeling particularly belligerent, you can whip your magical troops into shape at the barracks before heading out to take on the neighbouring provinces.

Stronghold Kingdoms.

The MMORTS genre might not be as widely recognised as the best MMOs and MMORPGs, but it's on the rise, and Stronghold Kingdoms is one of the best examples around. This massively multiplayer real-time strategy game casts you as a feudal lord or lady and sets you to work building and growing a medieval empire by besieging your rivals, researching invaluable new tech, and forming alliances with others. It does require a tiny download to play, but the download itself is tiny and the game should run on any rig.

Like many free MMO RTS games, Stronghold Kingdoms is packed with depth if you've got the time to sink into it, with political struggles between players and large-scale wars to navigate on your rise to success. And sure, the graphics certainly look like they come straight from the late nineties, but they're nothing if not charming.

RAIL NATION.

Rail Nation isn't exactly for train games fanatics – this is a strategy game at its core, where you'll spend your time making deals and expanding your railway empire rather than cruising along the Settle-Carlisle. Like many great browser-based online games games, you'll start small and slowly amass a vast network of railway lines, eventually allying with other railway tycoons to make your association as powerful as possible. There are heaps of train models to choose from and upgrade to, but for the most part this is an online strategy game all about economics.

Travian: Legends.

Travian has been knocking around for well over a decade, building up a loyal fanbase of MMO and strategy games enthusiasts and laying the foundations for many other entries on this list. Legends is its latest form, boasting gorgeous graphical upgrades while still being one of the few online games that doesn't require a download.

The gameplay is refreshingly simple with very few hidden mechanics: you choose one of a handful of factions, found your tribe, and grow from a ramshackle village into a fortified, technologically advanced empire. You can keep yourself to yourself if you want, but if you do want to branch out there are also trades, alliances, and plenty of warfare to throw your clan into at a moment's notice. There is some waiting around for buildings and actions to complete, but if you treat this as a relaxing game then you won't find it too egregious.

Supremacy 1: The Great War.

If you're looking for something with some serious tactical nous then Supremacy 1 is one of the best free online games for grand strategy fans. The aim is simple enough: you guide your 20th century nation to dominance over your continental peers. Your main tool is outright warfare, where you can deploy a huge range of units via land, air, and sea, which grows even more expansive as you grind through the game's research tree.

There's diplomacy options so you can carefully manage your war-waging, plenty of resource-management so you constantly need to consolidate your growth. There aren't many free browser games that manage to feel as complex and detailed as a true grand strategy title, but Supremacy 1 comes close. There's no download required to play Supremacy 1 on PC – you just need to run it on a web browser – but there is a Steam version coming later this year.

Codenames.

One of our best online board games picks is also one of the top online games to play with friends for free, no download required. Codenames is all about word association. You and an opponent assume the roles of rival spymasters and your aim is to work out where your fellow agents are in the field, which you do by taking it in turns to give one-word clues. Of course, it's also crucial that you don't give any clues to the enemy, or accidentally prompt someone to guess the game-ending word. Setting a game up is mercifully simple, making this a great online game for Zoom calls, just be wary of forming vernacular vendettas with your besties.

Fallen London.

Sunless Skies developer Failbetter Games has established itself as a fine crafter of narrative games since it came together in 2010. It's there to see in one of the studio's earliest efforts, too. Fallen London is a browser-based interactive narrative game that takes you to a Victorian and gothic take on the Old Smoke. The city itself has been stolen, and it now rests underneath the rest of the world on the shore of the Unterzee. You've just arrived, and you're down on your luck. That doesn't mean you can't rise to the top through the legal and illegal activities made available to you, though.

Ditto.

Like all great platformer games, Ditto has its own spin on traversal to keep you guessing through its many, many levels. Every level is divided in two, with a reflected version of your character copying all of your actions, albeit in a sort of shadow realm where the obstacles are slightly different – if your shadow version falls off a ledge or is killed by a monster then you both perish.

Cookie Clicker.

Idle games are the ideal free online games for if you're too busy to actually play a game, and Cookie Clicker is one of the best examples of the genre around. You start with a giant cookie that you click on to produce more cookies, then you spend those cookies on upgrades like automatic cookie-clicking fingers to click the giant cookie for you, grandmas to bake more cookies, or temples to pray for cookie-creating buffs. Before you know you're producing hundreds of thousands of cookies per second.

Making numbers go up and up and up forever and ever is pretty addictive, so it goes. Cookie Clicker is one of the most famous computer games online, and the fact that it's still being updated and played by thousands speaks to its endless appeal.

Slither.io.

Io games are some of the most relaxing games on PC and offer a great break from work or more focused gaming. Slither.io is pretty simple: you're a worm who slithers around a circular petri dish-like space gobbling up food and growing in length. There are other player-controlled worms to avoid or consume depending on whether you're smaller or larger than them.

Hole.io.

If you've played the endlessly charming Donut County then you'll be familiar with the core gameplay of Hole.io. You play as a hole in the bottom of the world that expands as objects fall into it. You'll start small by hoovering up pedestrians and fire hydrants before graduating to trucks, buildings, and eventually skyscrapers. If you're after chill free online games to play now then Hole.io will Hoover up your attention almost immediately.

Card Hunter.

This D&D-inspired card battle game mixes tabletop RPG elements with the deck-building gameplay of a CCG in a way that's fresh and nostalgic all at once. You build a deck of cards for each of your party's heroes by assigning them the weapons, armour, and trinkets you collect as loot on each of your adventures.

Pandemic 2.

If you've played Plague Inc. then you should have a pretty clear idea of what Pandemic 2 is all about. This strategy game casts you as a budding virus, parasite, or bacteria on your quest to infect everybody in the world. Charming.

My Friend Pedro.

There may be a shiny new version of My Friend Pedro on Steam, but the free online browser version that launched back in 2014 is still heaps of fun. This side-scrolling shooter is heavily inspired by Max Payne, so expect lots of slow-mo diving sequences and gratuitous gore.

Wonderputt.

This gorgeous isometric putting game has the whole course in view from the start, and with each section you complete a new one will spring up with ingenious animations. There are some light puzzles to navigate – as you'd expect from a mini golf course – and a seductive level of depth as you try to beat your score (or just make par) with increasingly ambitious shots.

Zombs Royale.

It really is quite incredible that one of the best battle royale games on PC is a free online browser game. Zombs Royale takes the simple assets and controls of Zombs.io and adds all the trappings of a PUBG-like, with a shrinking playable zone, random loot to scavenge, and 99 other players to outlive. It's ridiculously fast-paced, so if you need to kill a couple of minutes and grab a poultry dinner than this one's for you. It's refreshing to see that the limits of free games with no downloads are still being pushed.

Zombs.io.

Zombs.io is an impressively deep 'survive the night' style zombie game where you build a base, farm resources, build up your defences, and prepare to hunker down after the sun goes down and the undead begin attacking your base. Like other io games there are plenty of other players to fend off, too, so don't leave your base undefended during the day either.

Kingdom of Loathing.

There aren't many funny games in general, let alone comedic free online games. Fortunately, Kingdom of Loathing is on hand to plug the gap with its ludicrous spin on classic RPG classes, like the saucerer who flings hot sauce at enemies to damage them, or the pastamancer, who can control long, lethal strings of pasta to take down foes from afar. As well as being ridiculous and humorous, Kingdom of Loathing is also a fully functioning MMORPG, with clan dungeons and PvP combat. So, if you've ever wanted your free online games with a smidge more food fights and seal clubbing then KoL is most definitely for you.

And there you have it, a list of the finest online games at the fairest price of all: free. Of course if you're wanting a bit more from your free PC games then we have a list of free MMOs and free Steam games, too. So, what are you waiting for? There's a whole world of free online games out there.

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Updated: Jun 4, 2021.

Jordan prides himself on one thing alone: being better than you at Rainbow Six Siege. Oh, and his job. He joined PCGamesN way back in 2015, and now has a shiny deputy's badge to show for it.

The Best Free PC Games for 2021.

We've tested the best PC games for hunting monsters and blasting enemies without whipping out your debit or credit card.

Free-to-play games have become increasingly popular over the years, and it's easy to understand why. They're excellent time sinks, and are now so robust that you never feel handcuffed for not plunking down real cash.

If you have some time to kill, you can't go wrong with a free title—especially if you're playing on PC, which has many free-to-play options. But with so many games to sample, it can be daunting to find a game worth downloading. You could stick to free Steam games, but if you don't mind venturing outside the comfy convenience of Valve's online video game store, you'll find a lot of good stuff.

We've got some obvious picks in our list, like the massively popular battle royale game Fortnite, which combines third-person shooting, resource gathering, and building to create a highly addictive multiplayer experience. Of course, no free-to-play PC list would be complete without Riot Games' highly popular MOBA League of Legends. That said, there are numerous other free-to-play games on PC, many of which may have flown

under your gaming radar.

Some of these free titles you can find on Steam, others are on Epic Games Store, and still others can only be downloaded from a game's official website. All are well worth playing, so grab a keyboard, mouse, or gamepad and let the good times begin.

Blade & Soul

There are a lot of MMORPGs to play, each with unique aesthetics, combat, and lore. Blade & Soul takes you to a fantasy world inspired by Wuxia fiction and martial arts. It's packed with dungeons and raids to conquer, as well as strong player-versus-player systems that encourage you to master your skills.

If dungeon crawling isn't your thing, Blade & Soul's arena offers excellent PVP action to slake your competitive bloodthirst. Leveling is fairly easy, too, so it doesn't take very long to get to max level, where the game's content really opens up.

Blade & Soul is free to play, of course, but you can optionally purchase new warrior outfits, additional character slots, and other items.

Brawlhalla

Brawlhalla is a fighting game that echoes Nintendo's Super Smash Bros. series, but with a few unique twists of its own. You can participate in up to four-player competitive matches, with the object of knocking your opponent off the arena to score points.

The game is a weapons-based affair, so each of the 40 fighters has a designated set of weapons they can use during a match. These weapons randomly rain onto stages and complement your move set. Brawlhalla has a weekly rotation of playable characters, but you can purchase your favorites using in-game currency.

Cross-platform play between PC, PlayStation 4, Xbox One, and Nintendo Switch means you'll always find a match.

Dauntless

Monster Hunter World has made a massive critical and commercial impact, so it's no shock to see games that are inspired by Capcom's series. Dauntless is one such title. Dauntless pits you against vicious behemoths in a post-apocalyptic fantasy setting. It can be played in single player or multiplayer modes, with up to four people hacking at a beast's shins. Multiple combat classes keep the fighting interesting.

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