

# Nintendo 64 UK Launch

Article scanné dans le magazine Computer and Video Games n°184 (Mars 1997)

Sujet de l'article : Nintendo 64 (\*)

Un aperçu de la console quelques jours avant son lancement au Royaume-Uni.

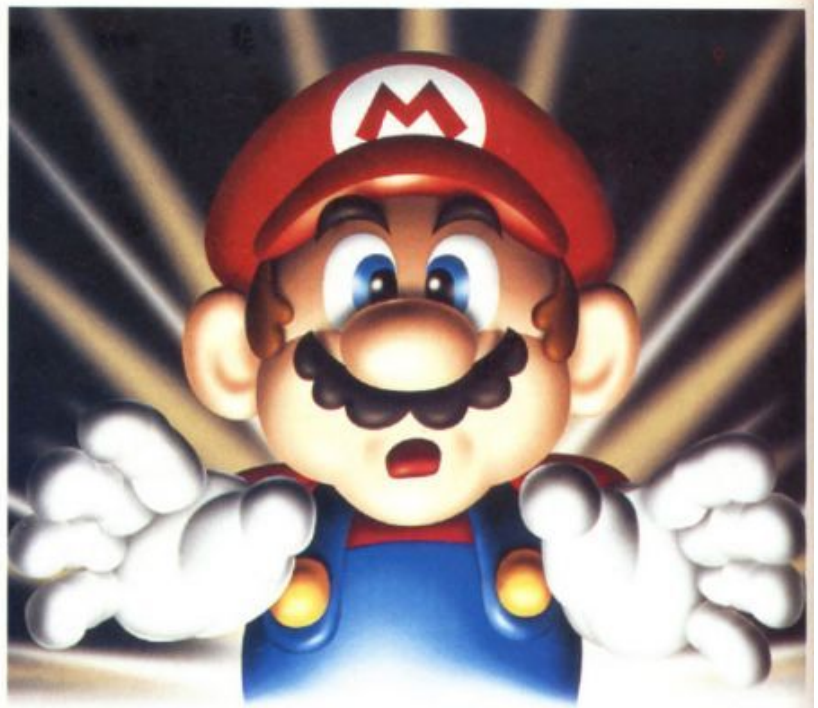
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Official UK PAL N64 systems are locked in warehouses up and down the country. On March 1st you'll be able to buy one. And about bloody time!

**S**ome of you have been waiting TOO LONG for this day to arrive. We know because we've listened to your phone calls, read your letters, heard you complaining to the shop assistant! This feature is intended to rekindle the excitement you felt when you first saw the shots of N64 games last July. It's also intended to let you know exactly what to expect when you head into your nearest stockist, Sterling in hand, to buy a cool piece of the gaming future. So, would you, should you, COULD you go out and buy a Nintendo 64 on March 1st?



NINTENDO 64: UK LAUNCH

# NINTENDO 64 UK LAUNCH

## 64-BIT SUCCESSOR TO THE SUPER NES



### REALITY ENGINE

The Nintendo 64 is a joint development between Nintendo 64 and Silicon Graphics. The chipset inside the console – the hardware which produces the amazing audio/ video routines – is based upon Silicon Graphics' esteemed Reality Engine chipset. As the two companies like to remind us, a Silicon Graphics Reality Engine was at the heart of special effects in films such as Terminator 2 and Jurassic Park. For the player, the significance of true 64-bit technology at home is as much to do with the richness of the environment, and the possibilities within that environment, as it is with looks. Which is why almost all Nintendo 64 games require the use of the new 3D stick to exploit them...



When you see the T-Rex coming at you in *Turok*, you'll believe every word Nintendo said in 1993.



### AND THE PRICE IS...?

First of all let's clear the price thing up. The Nintendo 64 starter pack is originally going on sale at £249.99. In the box you get the deck (console), a custom mains adaptor with plug, one grey controller, an RF Modulator, an RF lead, an RF switch-box, and an RF extension cable. Games are extra.



### OVER THREE MILLION PEOPLE CAN'T BE WRONG!

A glib comment to make, but Nintendo 64 has really taken off in other parts of the world. In Japan it has been noticeably slower than expected, but this is sure to have something to do with a lack of software available early on. In the States, machines have been selling just as fast as the retailers can get them on the shelves. Games like *Shadows of the Empire* have been almost impossible to obtain on import as a result. So the obvious statement would be "yes, it is a wise and wonderful decision to buy a Nintendo 64". Just consider that there are only a handful of games available initially. But with *Turok* and *Mario 64* among them, this shouldn't be too much of a problem! And of course the UK machine is by far the better option for users who want a care-free crack at the whip – no power converters to worry about, or wondering if you've got the right picture or not. Go for it!



# THE PHAT CONTROLLER

Half the magic of playing any of the key N64 titles lies in the uniqueness of this controller. Though Sega and Sony now have analogue devices of their own, they are mostly just accessories to make playing existing games more exciting. With N64 the analogue centre-piece is essential – the new breed of games depend on it. Of course Nintendo put a lot of effort into the rest of the controller too!

**\* The trademark Nintendo D-pad. It has served us well enough for over a decade on the NES and Super NES. Eight-directional for use with standard action games.**



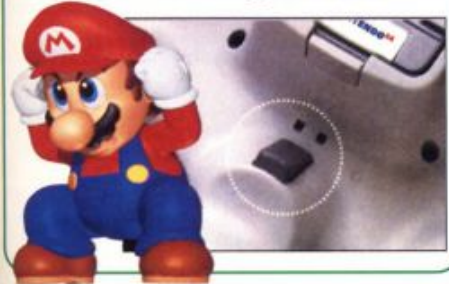
**\* L/ R Trigger Buttons. Have all kinds of uses: extra gun trigger; jump button; used to open doors, and so on.**



**\* C-buttons. Used to control the viewpoint/perspective – most prominent examples being Mario 64 and Pilot Wings 64.**



**\* Z Trigger. Situated beneath the centre handle, falling conveniently beneath the forefinger. Adds an extra dimension to Mario 64, and works great in Turok!**



**\* 3D Stick. Key to making N64 games stand apart in terms of gameplay as well as looks. True enough the precision offered by this analogue stick makes the world of difference in the few N64 games which use it well.**



## CONTROLLER PACK

Similar to how the PlayStation Memory Card works, the Controller Pack allows players to store gameplay information and transfer it to another system. For example in Wave Race the settings of a custom machine can be taken to a friend's house for a two-player challenge. With Mario Kart, ghost data of an especially fast lap time can be inserted into a rival's controller for them to challenge. This information is in addition to the gameplay data stored on individual copies of games – unfortunately you can't transfer all the cartridge info onto a controller pack.

## BORDERLINE DECISION

Those of you accustomed to playing British consoles are familiar, and in fact quite used, to playing games under the PAL format. Usually this entails playing slightly 'inferior' versions of Japanese/ American originals which suffer from a 17% loss of speed and black borders top and bottom of the screen. In the run up to March 1st, Nintendo had sent over 10 PAL N64 systems to the UK for evaluation, running a copy of Mario 64. The game does have slight borders, but is running up to speed. Unfortunately NOBODY in the UK has seen versions of Shadows, Pilot Wings, or Wave Race in action. Let's hope they've all been optimised too.

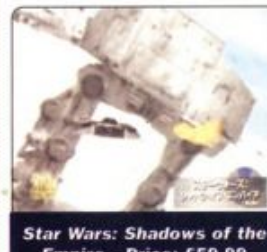
## GAMES AVAILABLE AT LAUNCH

Here's where Nintendo's critics like to have their fun. N64 games are priced in the region of £50-60. For the biggest games the recommended price is £59.99 (Mario 64, and Shadows of the Empire). Slightly less prominent titles such as Pilot Wings 64 are suggested at £49.99. While THE Games fully expect that individual retailers will affect their own discount of around a fiver or so, the official standpoint won't change for some considerable time.



**Mario 64 – Price: £59.99**

**Arguably the best video game ever created (you should here Paul and Ed argue). The title you have to own for your new Nintendo 64. Review: page 56.**



**Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire – Price: £59.99**

**Every Star Wars fan's dream. Not the toughest SW game around, but the most varied. Review: page 60.**



**Pilot Wings 64 – Price: £49.99**

**Stunning flight simulation which showcases the N64 to the hilt. Exciting in a different way. Review: page 58.**