

FIELD GUIDE

The 20 Apple Arcade Games That Make It Worth the Money



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Photo: Alex Cranz (Gizmodo)

Out of all the subscription bundles that Apple has pushed out in its recent lurch towards being a services company, it's the \$5-a-month Apple Arcade one that makes the most sense—a ton of exclusive games for mobile and desktop, all for one flat fee. Just how good a deal Apple Arcade ends up depending on the games. We've heard a lot about the captivating Day-Glo endless runner game Sayonara Wild Hearts, but there are countless other games also available and it can be hard to find the one that's right for you. That's where we come in.

We've taken advantage of the free month's trial that Apple is giving to anyone who wants one to check out the titles on offer: From the craziest golf you ever played to

mysterious to in-depth open-world exploration games. These are the best of the bunch, and the games that are most likely to get you subscribing to Apple Arcade.

1) [What The Golf?](#)

Screenshot: Gizmodo

At first we thought *What The Golf?* was ridiculous, but by the time we were trying to hit par by pushing a spinning office chair into a golf hole we were pretty sure it's inspired. You get a plethora of crazy golf holes to take on, each more ingenious and entertaining than the last, and with cute graphics and lots and lots of replay value, this is undoubtedly one of the stars of Apple Arcade at the moment. Get it on your 'must play' list immediately.

2) [Pilgrims](#)

Screenshot: Gizmodo

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Fire up *Pilgrims* and prepare to get swept up in an atmospheric, wonderfully drawn game of adventure and exploration, driven through the use of cards—you need to know which cards to play when to solve the puzzles you're met with, and to propel the story forward. It's reminiscent of the point-and-click adventure games of old, but with a more gentle style of gameplay, and it's a testament to the game's ingenuity that it doesn't need any dialog.

3) [Skate City](#)

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One of those games that manages to combine some gorgeous-looking visuals with a perfectly judged soundscape and controls that just make sense no matter what device you're playing on. Tap and swipe your way through an endless skate run, or take on one of the many challenges set down for you, it's up to you—the basics are easy to get to grips with but the game has enough depth to keep you entertained as your skating skills grow.

4) [Projection: First Light](#)

Screenshot: Gizmodo

Reminiscent of something like *Limbo*, *Projection: First Light* is actually a tribute to the world of shadow puppets. The platform puzzler leads you through a series of diverting, engrossing challenges, with the artwork beautifully rendered and the audio a constant delight – whether it's the sound effects (listen to the way your character's footsteps sound different depending on where you are) or the haunting, minimal

5) [Patterned](#)

Screenshot: Gizmodo

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If you like your games laid-back and restful then *Patterned* is for you: The idea is that you pick up and drop patches of a repeating pattern, matching each piece with its location on the grid, a little bit like a jigsaw. The image starts out as just a black and white sketch, but as the pieces are dropped in, the color starts to fill in, and your task gets a little easier. Mix in a gentle, ambient soundtrack and it's the perfect way to spend some time relaxing.

6) [Grindstone](#)

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Screenshot: Gizmodo

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Picking off long chains of similarly colored items is rarely as engaging as this, thanks to the solid visuals and atmospheric sounds of *Grindstone*—there's level after level of creepy monsters (rather than gems or candy) to hack and slash your way through, and enough variety in terms of challenges and special bonuses to keep you coming back for more. It's in Apple Arcade games like these where the lack of in-app purchases is really refreshing.

7) [Mini Motorways](#)

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Get ready to lose a lot of time to *Mini Motorways*, a frighteningly addictive game that – like a lot of addictive games – seems simple to begin with then gets fiendishly complex very quickly. Your goal is to keep the traffic successfully flowing around a city, for as long as you can, with a finite number of roads, bridges, stoplights and motorways at your disposal. The gameplay here is perfectly judged, and the visuals and music are very impressive as well.

8) [Oceanhorn 2](#)

Screenshot: Gizmodo

The sequel to the original *Oceanhorn* for Android and iOS, obviously, this *Breath of the Wind*-style adventure romp is fantastically designed and offers up plenty of depth and variety. From solving puzzles to battling monsters to simply exploring the environment, you're not going to have a dull moment in this game—the developers deserve a lot of credit for the amount of locations, side quests and challenges they've

9) [Where Cards Fall](#)

Screenshot: Gizmodo

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Even by the high standards of the initial crop of Apple Arcade games, *Where Cards Fall* looks stunning. The gameplay is fantastic too—the challenge is to get from A to B on every level by assembling and disassembling houses of cards. Add a touching central narrative about memory and growth on top of the stylish visuals and clever gameplay mechanics, and you’ve got what is undoubtedly one of the best Apple Arcade games right now.

10) [Lego Brawls](#)

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Screenshot: Gizmodo

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By now you may well be familiar with one or more of the Lego video games—whether with a Star Wars, Harry Potter, Indiana Jones, or any other sort of twist—and *Lego Brawl* takes this idea and just distills it to the basics of smashing your enemies into dozens of tiny blocks. It's by no means the most sophisticated or detailed of the games on Apple Arcade, but it's a whole load of fun, and there's plenty of potential for leveling up your character.

11) [*The Enchanted World*](#)

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Another Apple Arcade game that scores highly for the quality of its visuals and the ease with which you can just jump into the gameplay. In this case, we're dealing with the classic tile shuffling puzzle, but it's a lot more exciting than that, as you put together pathways, streams, and more complex mechanics. While the basic premise doesn't change much, the game never gets boring and comes with several surprises as you work through the levels.

12) [Assemble With Care](#)

Screenshot: Gizmodo

A charming and relaxing gaming experience that has you take the role of Maria, a restorer of gadgets and statues and various other household items: You need to break down each object you're given into its individual parts, work out what's wrong, and get it fixed. The game doesn't need any real technical skill though, just a bit of common sense. The accompanying story narrative is really nicely done, as are the

13) [Overland](#)

Screenshot: Gizmodo

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Something not particularly nice seems to have befallen the planet, and your goal is to keep ahead of the nasty monsters that prowl the empty streets—and to keep enough gas in your car to keep escaping. The turn-based nature of *Overland* means it's more about using your brain and planning ahead than knowing the best combat moves, while the low-poly visuals (which change as you cycle through the days and nights) work really well too.

14) [Mutazione](#)

Screenshot: Gizmodo

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Some Apple Arcade games are designed to be played in quick bursts whenever you have a spare five minutes, while others are built for more considered, long-term contemplation: And *Mutazione* is definitely the latter. You wander around a mysterious, wonderfully drawn island, uncovering its secrets and speaking with its inhabitants, and slowly revealing an absorbing story that'll stick with you long after you've stopped playing for the day.

15) [Sneaky Sasquatch](#)

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As the eponymous Sasquatch your challenge is to pinch food from a nearby campsite without being spotted by the campers or chased off by the rangers—it's an entertaining enough concept that's wrapped in a cheerfully cartoonish design, and the developers have put in enough side challenges and ways to level up that it always keeps you on your toes. The gameplay design makes it really easy to follow what's happening around you, too.

16) [Possessions](#)

Screenshot: Gizmodo

Possessions is a game about our stuff, and the spaces that we live our lives in, but it's also an addictive and fun game that relies on one central mechanic—being able to rotate and zoom in to a room so that various floating objects are correctly positioned. It doesn't sound particularly compelling from that description, but as you work your way through the levels, you'll find yourself getting drawn in by the gameplay and the

17) [Stela](#)

Screenshot: Gizmodo

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Stela is a game where you just keep running and running—an endless runner, if you will—but there are so many challenges and variations in each level that you always need to be thinking one step ahead (and right from the start as well, with a marauding army of beetles on your tail). The puzzles are smart, the game mechanics are nicely put together, and the quality of the visuals and sound effects make this well worth checking out.

18) [Red Reign](#)

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Screenshot: Gizmodo

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Red Reign isn't particularly original in terms of its real-time strategy mechanics but there's enough going on here to keep you coming back—the variety of creatures you can command, the detail in the locations, the attention to detail, and so on. The game manages to hit the right balance between letting you make decisions and making decisions on your behalf, which means you can get playing without too much training.

19) [Spaceland](#)

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There's nothing especially unique in either the game mechanics (turn-by-turn strategy) or the overall narrative (aliens have wreaked havoc on a remote base) in *Spaceland*, but it ticks enough boxes—varied gameplay, high-quality graphics, plenty of humor—for it to be worth investigating for Apple Arcade subscribers. The game also offers up an easy mode for those who are new to the format, or who want to quickly reach the finishing line.

20) [Speed Demons](#)

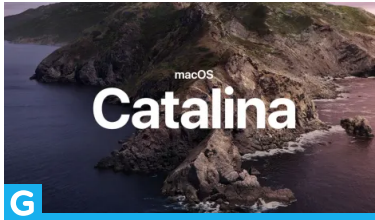
Screenshot: Gizmodo

There's something deeply satisfying and fun about the best auto-scrolling games, and that's certainly the case here with *Speed Demons*: All the acceleration is handled for you, so you simply need to concentrate on dodging the traffic ahead of you, and applying the brakes when needed. You've got 25 different vehicles to experiment with, eight different game modes to have a go at... and remember, there's not an in-

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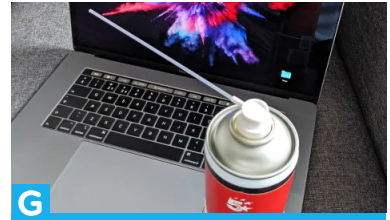
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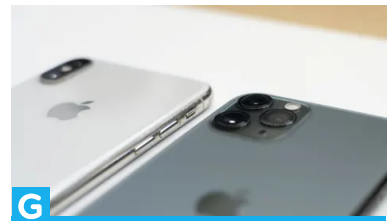
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