

ENGAGED

family gaming

The Magazine

Anticipation

Looking forward to the newest video and board games of 2023!



Blast from the Past

What's old is new again for D&D fans!



Collectables

Look who's getting into trading card games!



From the Editor's Desk

Dear readers,

We couldn't be more excited as we look ahead to the next year in family gaming. The industry has been through a lot of changes in recent years, and we've seen some incredible developments in the world of gaming. But one thing that has stood out to us as we've been tracking the latest releases is the number of big-name titles that have been pushed from 2022 into 2023.

For many of us, this might feel like a disappointment. After all, who doesn't love getting their hands on the latest and greatest games as soon as possible? But games can only be delayed for so long. Eventually they need to be released (assuming they aren't cancelled).

When game developers and publishers announce delays, it's often because they want to take the extra time to make sure the final product is as polished and enjoyable as possible. And while it can be frustrating to wait, the payoff is often worth it. We've seen countless examples of games that have been delayed, only to be released to widespread critical acclaim and commercial success.

So as we look ahead to 2023, we're excited to see all of the games that have been delayed finally make their way to our screens. From the latest entries in popular franchises (Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom) to brand new titles (Minecraft Legends) that are sure to capture our imaginations, we're confident that this is going to be a great year for family gaming.

We know that many of you are just as excited as we are, and we can't wait to hear your thoughts and reactions to all of the upcoming releases. So let's gear up and get ready for an amazing year in gaming!



Stephen Duetzmann, Founder, Editor in Chief



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Video Games of the Year: 2022



Disney Dreamlight Valley

Dreamlight Valley came out of nowhere and left us enchanted. Join all your favorite Disney characters in a wondrous life sim.



Kirby and the Forgotten Land

This is the best Kirby has ever been. Full stop.



Horizon: Forbidden West

More robot dinosaurs and an even MORE gorgeous landscape to explore. We can't wait to go back!



God of War: Ragnarok

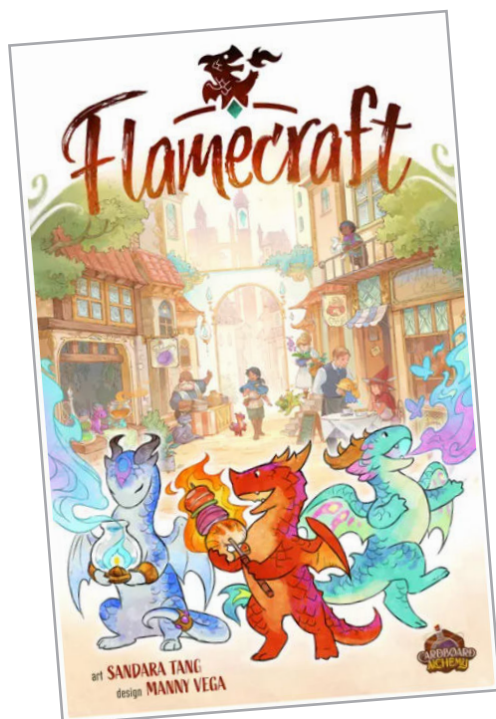
The perfect follow-up to an all-but-perfect adventure. This is Kratos at his finest (with some surprises).

Board Games of the Year: 2022



Planted

Grow your indoor garden by collecting resources to feed and tend your plants in this beautiful game with amazing components and built-in features to support beginning players.



Flamecraft

Grow your reputation as a master crafter with the help of some adorable dragons! This is one of the prettiest games we've played in a long time.



Boop

What could be more adorable than kittens booping each other off the bed. Area control at its most adorable.



Honorable Mention: Chonky Donkey

Burst out laughing in a party game where instead of judging you can not laugh or smile as you read the questions submitted to correspond to the answer posed to the group.

Most Anticipated Video Games

Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom

Our founder has gone on record as saying that The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild is the best game Nintendo has ever made. Tears of the Kingdom is the sequel and it has enormous shoes to fill. We know precious few details and have a ton of unanswered questions. But what little we have seen has us ready to play right now!

Street Fighter 6

Fighting games are in the midst of a new golden age. Several wonderful new games have come out in the last few years and it looks like we are due for new entries in several of the biggest franchises in the genre (like Tekken, Mortal Kombat, and obviously Street Fighter). It launches on June 2, 2023 and the full roster has been revealed. To say we are hyped is an understatement.

Marvel's Spider-Man 2

Who doesn't love Spider-Man? We're big fans here at EFG. The original was our game of the year in 2018 and the follow-up Spider-Man: Miles Morales is one of our favorites as well. The sequel is going to be TWICE as exciting because we'll be able to play as both Peter Parker and Miles Morales. Both Sony and Insomniac Games have insisted that the sequel will launch this fall and we cannot wait to get our hands on it.

Steamworld Build

The Steamworld franchise has been a favorite of ours for years. With each new game Image and Form chooses a new genre and applies a steampunk futurist aesthetic. The result is perfect family entertainment with jokes and references that adults can enjoy and funny robots that kids can appreciate. Steamworld Build will be their take on a town-building game like SimCity coupled with a strategy game. There is a demo out now so it's release is imminent! ★★



Did you know...

You can listen to EFG chat about the latest in games from wherever you are? We publish regular podcasts about video games, board games, and all sorts of family entertainment!

Check out [Facebook.com/EngagedFamilyGaming](https://www.facebook.com/EngagedFamilyGaming) to hear the latest!



Most Anticipated Board Games

Casting Shadows

From the creators of Unstable Unicorns and our personal favorite Here to Slay, a new game with beautiful art where you are battling in a competitive strategy game in the immersive world. Choose your character to play as for the game, and see their shadow form and the special ability available in that form. Then see who will be the last standing.

Mission Control: Critical Orbit

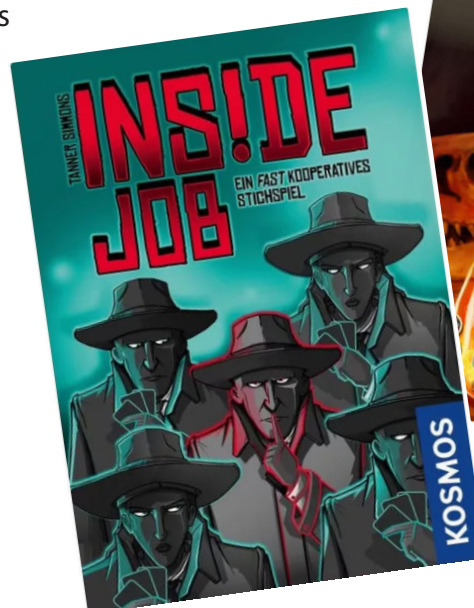
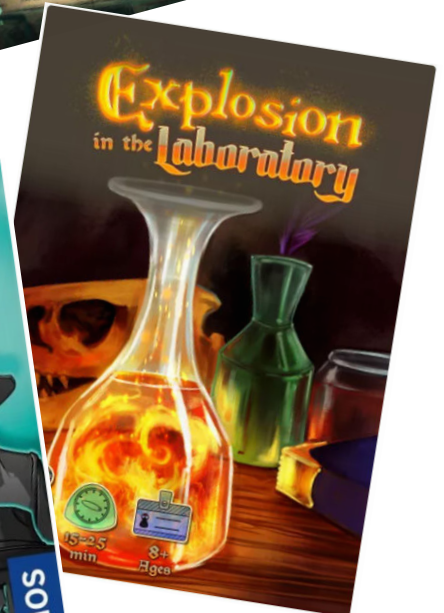
The team across the globe is needed to save the crew of the Mercury 3 before they run out of air. Mission Control is an asymmetrical play, cooperative, roll and write. Players must accomplish their various roles and tasks to save the crew in a real-time 20 minutes. This fast-paced, frantic game has all the players on the edge of their seats the whole time.

Explosion in the Laboratory

The prequel to the amazing game Fire in the Library. It tells the story of junior chemists trying to find the most interesting and volatile compounds. However, it is risky with the library close by. Explosion in the Laboratory is a push-your-luck micro game with only 27 cards. Players are trying to push the boundaries of compounds, until they push too far and one explodes, ending the round. Just as with the other games from Weird Giraffe Games, there is a solo mode included as well.

Inside Job

Work together as a team of secret agents to complete missions, but look out, there is an insider working to thwart you. Thames and Kosmos took many elements of the wildly popular and award-winning game, The Crew, and added another game mechanic and compelling theme. Inside Job combines cooperative trick taking with a little bit of hidden traitor, as players work to complete their missions and identify the insider who is trying to undermine the team's efforts. ★★



Is a New Switch On the Horizon?

There have been rumors about a “Pro” version of the Nintendo Switch for the last few years. If those rumors are to be believed, then this mystery Switch was going to include more powerful innards and a better looking screen so it could support some of the more demanding third-party games.

Those rumors have not come to fruition though. We have no new Switch. We don’t even have an announcement (or an announcement of an announcement). In fact, some of those same sources have confirmed that the “Switch Pro” is not happening.

What does all that mean for us?

The original Switch was released in 2017 and it was already on shaky ground from a power perspective. It runs using the chips that you would find in tablets (in 2017). It simply cannot keep up with the games being made for the PS5 and Xbox Series S/X. The Switch Lite and OLED version are just revisions and they didn’t add much in the way of power to the console. All of that makes me feel, very strongly, that a new Switch is coming in the next year or so.



If your family is just entering the video game console market and likes to be on the bleeding edge, then I can’t recommend buying a Switch this year. It simply won’t be the top-of-the-line Nintendo console for much longer.

All is not lost though! The Switch has been wildly successful for Nintendo and I don’t expect that they will squander that fan excitement and good will. Support will continue for the current Switch and its game’s in one form or another.

We’ll be keeping our eyes on the situation and will report developments as they arise! Subscribe to our podcast and follow us on social media for the info as we get it! ★★

PlaneScape is Coming!

Planescape was originally published as a supplement to Advanced Dungeons and Dragons all the way back in 1994. This was a campaign supplement built around Sigil, the City of Doors, and its innumerable portals to different planes of existence. Each of these planes is themed after either an element (Fire, Water, etc.) or a different Dungeons and Dragons alignment. This leads to adventures that vary widely from moment to moment.

It’s been one of my favorite settings since its release (back when I was in high school) and I am very excited to give it another go. ★★



3 Things We Still Want to Know About Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom



What exactly is “New” about this game compared to Breath of the Wild?

We know that Tears is set in the same place. (Or at least it looks like it is.) But, we don’t know what game mechanics are re-turning or leaving. Will we have similar spells to play with like last time? Or will we have a new (Sheikah) slate of abilities to experiment with? Only time will tell.

Weapon Durability

Weapons broke down constantly in Breath of the Wild and it was one of the most divisive features of the entire game. The EFG staff and our kids stand divided on whether or not it was a good thing. This is a chance for Nintendo to respond to fan feedback. Will they put a different weapon system into Tears? Hopefully we find out soon.

What is going on with Link’s arm?

The footage we have seen so far has featured a peculiar pattern on Link’s shoulder and what appears to be a guardian-esque mechanical arm. It sure is interesting to look at, but we have no idea as to the context of the design, or how it will play out in the game. I can’t wait to find out. ★★



Disney is Entering the Collectible Card Game Market



Magic the Gathering, Pokemon, and Digimon have been the kings of the collectible card game space for years. There are other games that have come and gone (Transformers, My Little Pony, etc.) but none of them have stood the test of time. 2023 has a new contender, and it has the best chance of competing with the major players yet.

Lorcana is a Disney-themed trading card game that is being published by Ravensburger. Yes. You read that correctly. A Disney-themed trading card game. You build decks using Disney characters in existing and reimagined art styles and battle it out just like other games currently on the market.

I'm usually very doubtful of new TCGs when they come out. It takes something special to unseat the current champions. Lorcana has something no one else has had so far: the power of the House of Mouse.

You can't keep a trading card game going if the cards sit on store shelves. I don't suspect that will be a problem for Lorcana because Disney collectors are often ... highly motivated. At the end of the day these cards are going to include art for fan-favorite Disney characters which should motivate the Disney fans and keep the game selling well even if the game itself isn't doing well.

With that said, it is being published by Ravensburger. They are a top notch publisher with no shortage of amazing designers. If ANYONE could make something like this work, it is them. ★★



Happy 2023 from the EFG Staff!



We're always working hard to get you the latest info on the best the gaming world has to offer. Here's some of the staff at the latest meeting.

Let us know what you're looking forward to this year! Join us on EngagedFamilyGaming.com!