



PlayStation

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For the 'Play Station', a game system designed by Sony and Nintendo in the early 1990s but not released to the public, see SNES-CD. This article is about the "PlayStation" brand. For the 1994 console, see PlayStation (console). For other uses, see PlayStation (disambiguation).

PlayStation (Japanese: プレイステーション Hepburn: *Pureisutēshon*, officially abbreviated **PS**) is a series of video game consoles created and developed by Sony Computer Entertainment . The brand was first introduced on December 3, 1994 in Japan with the launch of the original PlayStation console.^[1] It now consists of four home consoles, as well as a media center, an online service, a line of controllers, two handhelds and a phone, as well as multiple magazines.

The original console in the series, the PlayStation, was the first video game console to ship 100 million units, 9 years and 6 months after its initial launch.^[2] Its successor, the PlayStation 2, was released in 2000. The PlayStation 2 is the best-selling home console to date, having reached over 155 million units sold as of December 28, 2012.^[3] Sony's next console, the PlayStation 3, was released in 2006 and has sold over 80 million consoles worldwide as of November 2013.^[4] Sony's latest console, the PlayStation 4, was released in 2013, selling 1 million consoles in its first 24 hours on sale, becoming the fastest selling console in history.^[5]

The first handheld game console in the PlayStation series, the PlayStation Portable or PSP, has sold a total of 80 million units worldwide as of November 2013.^[6] Its successor, the PlayStation Vita, which launched in Japan on December 17, 2011 and in most other major territories in February 2012 has sold 4 million units as of January 2013.^[7] PlayStation TV is a microconsole and a non-portable variant of the PlayStation Vita handheld game console.^[8] Other hardware released as part of the PlayStation series includes the PSX, a digital video recorder which was integrated with the PlayStation and PlayStation 2, though it was short lived due to its high price and was never released outside Japan, as well as a Sony Bravia television set which has an integrated PlayStation 2. The main series of controllers utilized by the PlayStation series is the DualShock, which is a line of vibration-feedback gamepad having sold 28 million controllers as of June 28, 2008.^[9]

The PlayStation Network is an online service with over 110 million users worldwide (as of July 2013).^[10] It comprises an online virtual market, the PlayStation Store, which allows the purchase and download of games and various forms of multimedia, a subscription-based online service known as PlayStation Plus and a social gaming networking service called PlayStation Home, which had over 41 million users worldwide at the time of its closure in March 2015.^[11] PlayStation Mobile (formerly PlayStation Suite) is a software framework that provides PlayStation content on mobile devices. Version 1.xx supports both PlayStation Vita, PlayStation TV and certain devices that run the Android operating system, whereas version 2.00 released in 2014 would only target PlayStation Vita and (optionally) PlayStation TV.^[12] Content set to be released under the framework consist of only original PlayStation games currently.^[13]

7th generation PlayStation products also use the XrossMediaBar, which is an award-winning graphical user interface.^[14] A new touch screen-based user interface called LiveArea was launched for the PlayStation Vita, which integrates social networking elements into the interface. Additionally, PlayStation 2 and original PlayStation 3 consoles also featured support for Linux-based operating systems, though this has since been discontinued. The series has also been known for its numerous marketing campaigns, the latest of which being the "Greatness Awaits" commercials in the United States.

The series also has a strong line-up of first-party titles due to Sony Computer Entertainment Worldwide Studios, a group of fifteen first-party developers owned by Sony Computer Entertainment which are dedicated to developing first-party games for the series. In addition, the series features various budget re-releases of titles by Sony with different names for each region; these include the Greatest Hits, Platinum, Essentials, Favorites (this in Latin America) and The Best ranges of titles.

PlayStation

PlayStation.

2D monochrome version of the original multi-coloured 3D logo

Product type	Video game console (Home, handheld and microconsole)
Owner	Sony Computer Entertainment
Country	Minami-Aoyama, Minato, Tokyo, Japan
Introduced	1994
Markets	Worldwide
Registered as a trademark in	Worldwide

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History

Origins

PlayStation was the brainchild of Ken Kutaragi, a Sony executive who had just come out of his hardware engineering division at that time and would later be dubbed as "The Father of the PlayStation".^{[15][16]}

The console's origins date back to 1988 where it was originally a joint project between Nintendo and Sony to create a CD-ROM for the Super Famicom.^[17] Although Nintendo denied the existence of the Sony deal as late as March 1991,^[18] Sony revealed a Super Famicom with a built-in CD-ROM drive that incorporated Green Book technology or CD-i called "Play Station" (also known as SNES-CD) at the

its partnership with Sony, opting to go with Philips instead but using the same technology.^[19] The deal was broken by Nintendo after they were unable to come to an agreement on how revenue would be split between the two companies.^[19] The breaking of the partnership infuriated Sony President Norio Ohga, who responded by appointing Kutaragi with the responsibility of developing the PlayStation project to rival Nintendo.^[19]

At that time, negotiations were still on-going between Nintendo and Sony, with Nintendo offering Sony a "non-gaming role" regarding their new partnership with Philips. This proposal was swiftly rejected by Kutaragi who was facing increasing criticism over his work with regard to entering the video game industry from within Sony. Negotiations officially ended in May 1992 and in order to decide the fate of the PlayStation project, a meeting was held in June 1992, consisting of Sony President Ohga, PlayStation Head Kutaragi and several senior members of Sony's board. At the meeting, Kutaragi unveiled a proprietary CD-ROM-based system he had been working on which involved playing video games with 3D graphics to the board. Eventually, Sony President Ohga decided to retain the project after being reminded by Kutaragi of the humiliation he suffered from Nintendo. Nevertheless, due to strong opposition from a majority present at the meeting as well as widespread internal opposition to the project by the older generation of Sony executives, Kutaragi and his team had to be shifted from Sony's headquarters to Sony Music, a completely separate financial entity owned by Sony, so as to retain the project and maintain relationships with Philips for the MMCD development project (which helped lead to the creation of the DVD).^[19]

According to SCE's producer Ryoji Akagawa and chairman Shigeo Maruyama, there was uncertainty over whether the console should primarily focus on 2D sprite graphics or 3D polygon graphics. It was only after witnessing the success of Sega's *Virtua Fighter* in Japanese arcades that "the direction of the PlayStation became instantly clear" and 3D polygon graphics became the console's primary focus.^[20]

Formation of Sony Computer Entertainment

At Sony Music, Kutaragi worked closely with Shigeo Maruyama, the CEO of Sony Music, and with Akira Sato to form Sony Computer Entertainment, Inc. (SCEI) on November 16, 1993.^[21] A building block of SCEI was its initial partnership with Sony Music which helped SCEI attract creative talent to the company as well as assist SCEI in manufacturing, marketing and producing discs, something that Sony Music had been doing with Music Discs. The final two key members of SCEI were Terry Tokunaka, the President of SCEI from Sony's headquarters, and Olaf Olafsson. Olafsson was CEO and president of New York-based Sony Interactive Entertainment which was the mother company for the 1994-founded Sony Computer Entertainment of America (SCEA).

The PlayStation project, SCEI's first official project, was finally given the green light by Sony executives in 1993 after a few years of development. Also in 1993, Phil Harrison, who would later become President of Sony Computer Entertainment Worldwide Studios, was recruited into SCEI to attract developers and publishers to produce games for their new PlayStation platform.^[19]

After a demonstration of Sony's distribution plan as well as tech demos of its new console to game publishers and developers in a hotel in Tokyo in 1994, numerous developers began to approach PlayStation. Two of whom later became major partners were Electronic Arts in the West and Namco in Japan. One of the factors which attracted developers to the platform was the use of a 3D-capable, CD-ROM-based console which was much cheaper and easier to manufacture for in comparison to Nintendo's rival console, which used cartridge systems. The project eventually hit Japanese stores in December 1994 and gained massive sales due to its lower price point than its competitor, the Sega Saturn. Popularity of the console spread after its release worldwide in North America and Europe.^[19]

Home consoles

PlayStation

Main article: PlayStation (console)

The original PlayStation released on December 3, 1994 was the first of the ubiquitous PlayStation series of console and hand-held game devices. It has included successor consoles and upgrades including the Net Yaroze (a special black PlayStation with tools and instructions to program PlayStation games and applications), "PSone" (a smaller version of the original) and the PocketStation (a handheld which enhances PlayStation games and also acts as a memory card). It was part of the fifth generation of video game consoles competing against the Sega Saturn and the Nintendo 64. By December, 2003, the PlayStation and PSone had shipped a combined total of 102.49 million units,^[22] eventually becoming the first video game console to sell 120 million units.^[2]



The original PlayStation.



The redesigned PSone.

PSone

Released on July 7, 2000,^[23] concurrently with its successor the PlayStation 2, the PSone was a considerably smaller, redesigned version of the original PlayStation video game console.^[24] The PSone went on to outsell all-other consoles, including its successor, throughout the remainder of the year.^[24] It featured two main changes from its predecessor, the first being a cosmetic change to the console and the second being the home menu's Graphical User Interface; a variation of the GUI previously used only on PAL consoles up to that point.

PlayStation 2

Main article: PlayStation 2

Released in 2000, 15 months after the Dreamcast and a year before its other competitors, the Xbox and the Nintendo GameCube, the PlayStation 2 is part of the sixth generation of video game consoles, and is backwards-compatible with most original PlayStation games. Like its predecessor, it has received a slimmer redesign, and was also released built into the PSX DVR and the Sony BRAVIA KDL22PX300 HDTV. It is the most successful home console in the world,^[25] having sold over 155 million units sold as of December 28, 2012.^[3] On November 29, 2005, the PS2 became the fastest game console to reach 100 million units shipped, accomplishing the feat within 5 years and 9 months from its launch. This achievement occurred faster than its predecessor, the PlayStation, which took "9 years and 6 months since launch" to reach the same figure.^[2] PlayStation 2 shipments in Japan ended on December 28, 2012.^[26] *The Guardian* reported on January 4, 2013 that PS2 production had ended worldwide. But studies show that many people all around the world still own one even if it is no longer in use. Playstation 2 has been ranked as the best selling console of all time as of 2015.^[27]



Original PlayStation 2 console (left) and slimline PlayStation 2 console with 8 MB Memory Card and DualShock 2 controller (right).

Slimline model

Main article: PlayStation 2 Slimline

Released in 2004, four years after the launch of the original PlayStation 2, the PlayStation 2 Slimline was the first major redesign of the PlayStation 2. Compared to its predecessor, the Slimline was smaller, thinner, quieter and also included a built-in Ethernet port (in some markets it also has an integrated modem). In 2007, Sony began shipping a revision of the Slimline which was lighter than the original Slimline together with a lighter AC adapter.^[28] In 2008, Sony released yet another revision of the Slimline which had an overhauled internal design incorporating the power supply into the console itself like the original PlayStation 2 resulting in a further reduced total weight of the console.^[29]

PlayStation 3

Main article: PlayStation 3

Released on November 17, 2006 in North America, the PlayStation 3 is a seventh generation game console from Sony. It competes with the Microsoft Xbox 360 and the Nintendo Wii. The PS3 is the first console in the series to introduce the use of motion-sensing technology through its Sixaxis wireless controller. The console also incorporates a Blu-ray Disc player and features high-definition resolution. The PS3 was originally offered with either a 20 GB or 60 GB hard drive, but over the years its capacity increased in increments available up to 500 GB. The PlayStation 3 has sold over 80 million consoles worldwide as of November 2013.^[4]

Slim model

Main article: PlayStation 3 Slim

Like its predecessors, the PlayStation 3 was re-released in 2009 as a "slim" model. The redesigned model is 33% smaller, 36% lighter, and consumes 34% to 45% less power than previous models.^{[30][31]} In addition, it features a redesigned cooling system and a smaller Cell processor which was moved to a 45nm manufacturing process.^[32] It sold in excess of a million units within its first 3 weeks on sale.^[33] The redesign also features support for CEC (more commonly referred to by its manufacturer brandings of BraviaSync, VIERA Link, EasyLink and others) which allows control of the console over HDMI by using the remote control as the controller. The PS3 slim also runs quieter and is cooler than previous models due to its 45 nm Cell. The PS3 Slim no longer has the "main power" switch (similar to PlayStation 2 slim), like the previous PS3 models, which was located at the back of the console.^[30] It was officially released on



Original (left) and slim (right) PlayStation 3 consoles with the DualShock 3 controller.

Super Slim model

Main article: PlayStation 3 Super Slim

In 2012, Sony revealed a new "Super Slim" PlayStation 3. The new console, with a completely redesigned case which has a sliding door covering the disc drive (which has been moved to the top of the console), is 4.3 pounds, almost three pounds lighter than the previous "slim" model. The console comes with either 12GB flash memory or a 250GB, 500GB hard drive. Several bundles which include a Super Slim PS3 and a selection of games are available.

PlayStation 4

Main article: PlayStation 4

The PlayStation 4 (PS4) is the latest video game console from Sony Computer Entertainment announced at a press conference on February 20, 2013. In the meeting, Sony revealed some hardware specifications of the new console.^{[36][37]} The eighth-generation system, launched in the fourth quarter of 2013, introduced the x86 architecture to the PlayStation series. According to lead system architect, Mark Cerny, development on the PlayStation 4 began as early as 2008.^[38] PlayStation Europe CEO Jim Ryan emphasized in 2011 that Sony wanted to avoid launching the next-generation console behind the competition.^[39]

Among the new applications and services, Sony introduced the PlayStation App, allowing PS4 owners to turn smartphones and tablets into a second screen to enhance gameplay.^[40] The company also plans to debut PlayStation Now game streaming service, powered by technology from Gaikai.^{[41][42]} By incorporating a share button on the new controller and making it possible to view in-game content being streamed live from friends, Sony plans to place more focus on social gameplay as well.^[40] The PlayStation 4 was first released in North America on November 15, 2013.



The PlayStation 4 with the DualShock 4 controller.

Comparison

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