

Favorite video game soundtracks

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Introduction

Let's have a little rest from all the toxic news and analytical essays. I've loved VGM since I was a small child pretty much, and for over 10 years it has been all I've listened to. If you're looking for obscure old gems, you've found the right place - but I do recommend more popular titles as well. I could probably bury you with hundreds upon hundreds of tracks here, but I will try to focus only on the **toppest of the top tier** (which will inevitably end up five times bigger than I imagine, hahaha). I remember 8ch/v/ had a thread once with "curated video game OST lists" - you can consider this to be something like that, but "curated" to the most possible extent. Don't mind the categories, they're just how the tracks sound to my ~~autistic~~ unique mind. They are pretty fluid so some of the songs could fit into many, but I tried to pick the most fitting one. Okay, let's get the party started!

"Prepare your ass" themes

Music signifying a sense of urgency. Keeps you focused during your playthrough! Usually last level themes, or before-boss themes, but not always.

- Jazz Jackrabbit 2 - Jazz be Damned. One of my favorite games from my childhood, especially the multiplayer aspect. This theme plays during the last level (hell) before you meet the boss - which is underwhelming both in gameplay and soundtrack.
- Jazz Jackrabbit 2 - Jazz Belmont. Ghostly track for a ghostly level. Very cool and tough boss at the end of the level (much better than the final).
- Jazz Jackrabbit 2 - Medieval Jam. Similar in style to the above. False alarm though as there's no boss at the end. Anyway, this game has more good ones but as I said, only the very best will go on this list. So let's move on to some other games.
- Future Cop L.A.P.D - Hell's Gate Prison. Another childhood gem. The level itself isn't anything special, but the amazing theme almost makes you think so.
- Future Cop L.A.P.D - LAX Spaceport. A more energetic one than the above. Level is longer and ends with a fucking spaceship boss. As JJ2, this one also has other good tracks, but these two stand out.
- LEGO Racers - Nightmare Athon. Yet another childhood favorite. The game pits you against probably the hardest opponent before the last one, and the theme goes along with that.
- LEGO Racers - Desert Adventure Dragaway. Another one from the above game, more energetic.
- LEGO Racers - Rocket Racer Run. Final boss theme that doesn't sound like one (but of course, the game has no races without a boss in them, so that's how it had to be done). Best theme in the game. The others except these three are pretty average - good while playing the game, not so much elsewhere.

- Pokemon Red / Blue / Yellow - Indigo Plateau. The theme that plays before you challenge the Elite Four (the bosses of the game). Forget about the Fire Red / Leaf Green version, it's inferior (same as most of its soundtrack).
- Pokemon Gold / Silver / Crystal - Silver Cave. The place where you meet the Final Boss. Forget about the sequels - they fucked up the soundtrack heavily (even worse than FR / LG). If you want a non-beepy version, there are lots of fanmade remixes that are much better.
- Pokemon Gold / Silver / Crystal - Dragon's Den. Another good one (though there's nothing special there in-game...). Also has had a few fanmade covers.
- Pokemon Emerald - Battle Dome 2. Knowing that the OR / AS soundtrack completely outclasses vanilla Ruby / Sapphire, I was trying to find a justification to list at least one track from that generation. Turns out Emerald does provide it with one of the Battle Frontier themes (a place that was taken out of the remakes, ugh).
- Pokemon Diamond / Pearl / Platinum - Stark Mountain. Holy shit, the OST of this game is just so **annoyingly average** - not what we've gotten used to with the first 3 generations. This is one of the few good themes, and **it is good**.
- Pokemon Omega Ruby / Alpha Sapphire - Route 111. As opposed to HG / SS, these remakes **heavily improved the soundtrack** so much that the original one isn't worth caring about anymore. And this random route theme is one of the biggest benefactors. Could easily work as a preparation for fighting a legendary Pokemon or something, but it's stuck in an empty desert instead (well you do find some fossils, OK...). Whatever, enjoy your listen of what is likely one of the best VGM from this list at all (I know I've played this for 20 times straight on occasion). Fuck it, this one is so good I almost don't want to put up others from this game, even though they deserve it.
- Pokemon Omega Ruby / Alpha Sapphire - Heavy Rain. Hey, it's not gonna beat

Route 111, but it just has to be here. Though it's a different style than it anyway - way more mysterious and atmospheric, but captures the attention just as well.

- Hitman: Codename 47 - Harbor. The game is seriously brought down by its weak stealth mechanics, but the atmosphere is top tier - and the soundtrack plays a big part in it. The Harbor theme sends chills down your spine and is quite significantly better than the others. Though the Hotel and Hospital themes are great, too.
- Hitman 2: Silent Assassin - Desert Sun. Amazing sequel to Codename 47 that fixed literally all its issues and to this day is one of the best stealth games out there. Great soundtrack too, but this theme hits particularly hard.
- Chip n Dale - Zone J. Hey, I like NES beeps too, and this is one of the best out there. Hint: you can try to find remixes if the beeps don't appeal to you (there just happen to be quite a lot of this theme).
- Kamen no Ninja Hanamaru - Stage 13. Another NES one. The game had an American remake to promote a pizza brand (capitalism in action <_<), and it was significantly worse including the soundtracks that were changed (but this one stayed the same).
- Kabuki Quantum Fighter - Round 4. Childhood favorite, but these days I think level 5 is even more amazing.
- Kabuki Quantum Fighter - Round 5. Last level, will lift you up. Both of these are better than the boss themes for sure.
- Go Dizzy Go - World 3. These damn NES beeps always manage to imprint themselves into your head, somehow. The other themes from this game are pretty terrible, but this one more than makes up for them.
- Tiny Toon Adventures 2 - Castle. I could never clear this level as a kid, so I just sat and listened to the catchy soundtrack.

- Contra - Energy Zone. Just pumps you up. Other themes are pretty average aside from maybe Snow Field, which doesn't come close to this one anyway. There's also an official remix of this track (from Contra Evolution), and it's of course way superior due to, well, not being NES beeps (though Pokemon remakes have managed to screw up remixing the GB beeps somehow).
- Trojan - Level 5. This might be one of the most impactful set of NES beeps around. Funny how the other themes from this game are either annoyingly average or just outright terrible.
- Exterminacja - Track 2. Old and obscure Polish RTS. Would be a fucking crime against humanity if I didn't have it listed. This is, without a doubt, **one of the two best soundtracks on here**. If the others have impressed you, this one will **blow you away**. I've been listening to this one for more than 10 years, and at no point have I become tired of it. Without exaggeration, it's a masterpiece. ~~All songs from this game will be on the list.~~ Actually, since the list was supposed to be curated, I'll just put up two of my favorite ones.
- Exterminacja - Track 3. Slower, more mysterious and "out of your way" than the above, but just as amazing.
- Rollercoaster Tycoon - Roman Fanfare. There are no boss fights in this game obviously, but the theme would be a fitting preparation for one.
- Rollercoaster Tycoon - Egyptian. Same as above. The game also contains a bunch of other tracks that are either terrible or sound OK while playing, but aren't something you'd listen to while doing something else. These two clearly stand out.
- International Rally Championship - To the MAX. An old, obscure as fuck racing game. There are 8 race themes, and this is one of the 3 that are the best. But the whole soundtrack is good.

- International Rally Championship - Miles and Miles. Another great one from the above. Last one will be put in another category. But I heavily recommend giving the whole OST a listen.
- Ignition - Gold Rush. Another racing game. The other themes lack the required impact, but this one has it in spades.
- Wizards & Warriors - Suspense 1. Music from an old, obscure RPG that is IMO way underrated and under-known. The atmosphere and attention to detail in it are off the fucking charts. Anyway, name of track should reveal what to expect. It's not particularly fast, but keeps you on your toes. What I especially love about it is how it manages to seamlessly switch up styles / instruments many times, almost ending up a different track in the middle of it, but keeping quality all the way through. It's a masterpiece, like the whole game.
- Wizards & Warriors - Intense 1. Now this one **is much more energetic** but creates atmosphere just as well.
- Wizards & Warriors - Theme 1. Yes, another one from this game. This one plays in the overworld instead of dungeons, so it's less "heavy" - but sounds just as amazing.
- Dungeon Siege - Main theme. Amazing intro to a disappointing game. At least the theme justifies its existence :D
- Crime Cities - Blacklound Night. By the same composer who did the soundtrack for *Exterminacja*. The entire soundtrack is great here, as well. But I didn't want to put it all in, so I've decided on this single theme that I like the most.
- Evil Islands: Curse of the Lost Soul - East. An obscure Russian RPG that somehow hits all the spots thanks to its amazing hobo phase. Great enemy variety, a story that keeps you wondering, and - holy shit - that crafting mechanic which makes you excited about killing that new monster for its unique loot. Too bad the game kind of falls of a

cliff later, but what RPG doesn't? Includes an extremely good soundtrack with a few excellent battle themes, but I prefer this one, which conveys the "prepare your ass" feeling perfectly.

- Top Gear - Frankfurt. Zero idea about this game so I won't bother to type up a description. This song somehow popped up in my Invidious recommendations, years ago, probably. And I liked it, so it's here.

"Shit's going down" themes

Playtime is over! It's all on the line here and now! Mainly battle or boss themes. Let's start with some NES beeps:

- Kamen no Ninja Hanamaru - Final Boss. Regular boss theme isn't all that, but this one is surely worth of being the last thing you hear (except the credits lol).
- The Flintstones - The Surprise at Dinosaur's Peak - Boss. Short, but manages to fit a fuckload of awesome into it.
- River City Ransom - Boss. The beloved beat-em-up on the NES, way before its time. First boss theme is the best, 2 and 3 are OK and the final just sucks. But this one you can listen to on repeat for a long time. And there are lots of remixes on the 'net if the beeps get tiring.
- Virtua Fighter - Akira Yuki. Theme of the "main" character. It's a masterpiece, and it's long. Other themes from this game are OK too, but don't come close.
- Virtua Fighter 2 - Akira Yuki. He's back and better than ever. But this time has some competition:
- Virtua Fighter 2 - Kage Maru. The resident ninja might have an even better (and

fucking fitting) theme than Akira. One of my all time favorites.

- Virtua Fighter 3TB - Dural. Final boss, with a better theme than "she" had in the previous games. **Much better**.
- Virtua Fighter 4 - Dural. "She" is back and with another great theme.
- Virtua Fighter 4 - Kage Maru. But the ninja won't give up the quest to have the best themes in the serie.
- Virtua Fighter 5 Final Showdown - Jean Kujo. A new character enters the party with a theme that is sure to lift you up. Used to listen to this one many times straight, it's that good.
- Last Bronx - Yusaku Kudo. Sega's obscure fighting game with just as good of an OST as VF. And this one happens to be the best of those.
- Last Bronx - Red Eye. But has some competition with this one (the final boss).
- Last Bronx - Brilliant Room. And this one, which plays during a doppelganger fight.
- International Rally Championship - Speedskills. If this game had bosses, this theme would play there. Whole soundtrack is good, but the three listed clearly stand out to me.
- Seiken Densetsu 3 - Faith Total Machine. Another one I could listen to a bunch of times in a row. The game has many other boss themes that are all good, but this one is just that much above them.
- Pokemon Red / Blue / Yellow - Final Rival Battle. You think you're finally the champion, but someone got there before you and is ready to **kick your ass**. Couldn't have picked a better theme for the fight. B2 / W2 and OR / AS have official remixes.
- Pokemon Gold / Silver / Crystal - Kanto Gym Leader. Remake of the R/B/Y theme, and about 10 times better than the Johto track.
- Pokemon Gold / Silver / Crystal - Lance / Red. Just an iconic theme. The amount of

remixes it has accumulated over the years is **fucking insane**. Pokemon Stadium 2 also has an official one.

- Pokemon Platinum - Giratina. One of the few themes from Gen 4 that's worth putting on a portable player. But it is REALLY good - manages to mix up styles pretty well, while still being fast and keeping you focused on the fight. B2 / W2 and OR / AS have remixes that are barely any different.
- Pokemon Black / White - Kyurem. All other battle themes from this game are absolutely terrible. Only this one sounds like an actual battle theme, and it's good. It's really just the Reshiram / Zekrom theme with a few beeps added, which makes it seem faster - so this version is chosen.
- Pokemon Omega Ruby / Alpha Sapphire - Battle Chatelaine. For pure battling action with no gimmicks, you can't get better than this one. This is actually a remix of Emerald's theme benefiting from the better hardware, more instruments, etc. So it's here over that one. Good thing they didn't fuck it up like the HG/SS and FR/LG's remixes...or I'd be mad!
- Pokemon Mystery Dungeon: Explorers of Sky - Dialga's Fight to the Finish. Heh, no idea how I've missed one of the best Pokemon themes of all time. Though it's energetic it's also very sad, fitting for how the final boss fits in the story. It has many many remixes, too.
- Rollercoaster Tycoon - Rock Style 1. Remember when I said this game has no more good themes? Well, I lied. This one just happens to sound more like a boss theme than the others. Rock 2 and 3 suck, by the way.
- Croc: Legend of the Gobbos - Boss Fosley. Holy shit. The **whole fucking OST** of this game is top quality. But I don't want to put it all in here of course. This boss theme just feels the most impactful - the others are either too happy or "atmospheric" for a boss

fight. Just beat shit up! That's how a boss theme should sound like.

- Croc: Legend of the Gobbos - Boss Itsy. Actually, now that I think about it - this one is just as good.
- Heroes of Might and Magic 1 - Battle 4. The other battle themes are great too but I picked the best one. It evokes the "shit's going down" feeling the most, for sure. Probably all of them outclass the HOMM3 themes by the same composer that are also good, but I promised top tier only.
- Etrian Odyssey II - FOE. The FOE is here and it's calling for **your death**. The whole serie has some really intense battle themes but I picked the best one. There's a modern remake but the DS version is way tougher (personally, I think the modern version's instrument choices are all wrong - like something that'd play in a circus, instead of during a boss battle).
- Etrian Odyssey II - Boss. Might as well add it since it's just as good. Untold killed it, by the way - making it sound fun instead of serious.
- Etrian Odyssey III - Boss. Well, I'm going to add a few more from this serie, since it deserves it. I like the original more than the Nexus version - stop weakening battle themes in remakes!
- Etrian Odyssey V - Final boss. Very unique theme, with those "screams". Excellent none the less.
- Etrian Odyssey Untold: The Millenium Girl - Ren and Tlachtga. Couldn't have missed this one, since it might be the best in the entire serie. I was debating whether to include this one or the original - but in the end, this version has been heavily modernized without becoming weak, so it's in.
- Stranger of Sword City - Battle. The regular one ends up being better than the boss one.

- Ace Attorney 2: Justice For All - Core 2002. Oh man, this hits hard! It would wake a corpse from its eternal slumber and scream, "look at what just happened!". The most important moment in the game, and the theme is up to the task of showcasing it. Annoyingly - in the next Ace Attorney game - this theme plays much more often and also during irrelevant moments. Sometimes once is enough.
- Stunt GP - Skytop Speed Circuit. Want to get this out of the way, lest I forget. A racing game from my childhood, with stunts. Pretty fun and seemingly unknown. Decent music too, with this theme a cut above the others.
- Cuphead - Railroad Wrath. Favorite theme for one of my favorite (recent) games, reviewed [here](#).
- Mortal Kombat 4 - Goro's Lair. Never liked this game or cared for the franchise at all, really. But this song is fantastic, fitting for the final boss.

Calming / exploration themes

Enough beating stuff up, time to rest!

- The Flintstones - Level 1. This NES game already hits you with this gem at the beginning. And unfortunately for it, it doesn't get better from there. Ice level is also decent.
- Wizards & Warriors - Daytime 1. Another theme from the amazing RPG that somehow never gained traction. This time playing inside towns instead, and fits the situation perfectly.
- Leisure Suit Larry 7 - Peter Purser. I liked this game as a kid a lot, even though I didn't get what the fuck it was about. Other tracks are not that great, but this one is

strangely captivating.

- Croc: Legend of the Gobbos - Forest Island 1. The first level of the game greets us with the perfectly fitting, comfy soundtrack.
- Croc: Legend of the Gobbos - Ice Island 1. And the first ice level does the same. Seriously, I recommend **listening to the whole OST** - it contains many gems such as these. And try to find the PC version, not the shitty PSX one.
- Hitman: Codename 47 - Jungle Exploration. A less "serious" version of Dark Jungle, you could say. Very nice to listen to while you're chasing the Indian running away, haha.
- Hitman: Codename 47 - Hong Kong. Could also conceivably fit into the urgent category, but has enough ambient segments (and the others are not particularly "heavy") that I've put it here.
- Hitman 2: Silent Assassin - H2 Exploration. You could consider this the SA equivalent of Jungle Exploration.
- Heroes of Might and Magic 1 - Desert. This game's terrain themes are also great, and this is my favorite.

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