

Global sales of Nintendo's Wii top 50 million

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(AP) -- Japanese game maker Nintendo Co. said Thursday global sales of its popular Wii video game console have topped 50 million since it went on sale worldwide in late 2006.

Nearly 50 percent of the total sales of the [Wii](#) machine were in the United States and Canada, with Europe accounting for about 40 percent and Japan taking much of the rest, said the maker of Pokemon and Super Mario games.

The Wii hit stores first in the United States in November 2006, and went on sale in Japan and Europe in early December of the same year.

The Wii [game console](#) has quickly become a smash hit, in large part due to its unique wireless controller. The wand-like controller is equipped with [motion sensors](#) that allow users to control [game](#) action by jabbing and swinging it through the air. Wii games, including "Wii Fit," "Wii Play," and "Mario Kart Wii," have all become global best sellers.

Apart from the Wii console, Nintendo has sold more than 100 million [Nintendo DS](#) portable [handheld game](#) machines worldwide in just four years and 3 months - a milestone reached at the quickest pace for any video game console.

Compared to Sony, which has long appealed to hard-core gamers with its PlayStation series, Nintendo has scored hits with easier-to-play games that attract newcomers to gaming, including the elderly.

Nintendo's DS comes with a touch panel, making it possible to play some games without dealing with complex button-pushing.

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