

## Switching it up

The much rumoured Nintendo NX has at last been revealed as the Nintendo Switch, a hybrid home/portable console. [Jack Richardson](#) gives us a first look

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Image: Nintendo

Leading up to 3pm GMT, the world held its breath. Well, some of the world. News that the much, much rumoured Nintendo NX, the Japanese giant's latest console, would be formally announced was greeted with, unsurprisingly, a deluge of 'my body is ready' memes. Reggie Fils-Aimie probably isn't the only one grinning now, though.

The [three minute long trailer](#) is simple and direct: showing what the hardware is capable of. We saw a bit of the already-announced *Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild*, as well as *Splatoon's* return and... wait, *Skyrim*?

Yes indeed. And Bethesda is far from the only company to have formally announced support for the new console. Take a look at Nintendo's website, [the list](#) is enormous. The dearth of third-party support that plagued the Wii U looks to be rectified in spectacular fashion if all of those names follow through.

But enough about the games, let's have a look at what the Switch can actually do. It wouldn't be a modern Nintendo console without a gimmick, and this is no different. The console itself includes an integrated screen of what seems to be iPad mini size, kickstand, headphone jack and cartridge slot for the games themselves. What's far more significant is everything else that attaches to it.

Two slim controllers, called 'Joy-Con' can slide onto either side of the screen, creating something not dissimilar to a black Wii U gamepad. Or they can connect to a central pillar, called the Joy-Con Grip, for a stable (if rather boxy looking) separate controller. The Joy-Cons can also be used with one in each hand if you like to play games while doing star jumps. Finally, for impromptu/cheap multiplayer, each player can take one Joy-Con for a small and basic joystick-and-four-buttons approach. There's also a Nintendo Switch Pro Controller, which has far more generic looks but is likely to be the most comfortable of the different forms.

On the console side of things, the Switch can be played using the integrated screen or slid into a dock and played on a TV. The trailer also showed wireless multiplayer support between up to four Switches at once. This announcement was a sizzle-reel rather than a full tech demo, but graphics look to be at least up to

Wii U standard — it seems highly unlikely that even Nintendo would accept a step backwards in hardware power.

That's what we know. What we don't know, however, as how much the Switch will cost, or how long its battery will last. The console looks reasonably chunky, but if it can only handle a couple of hours unplugged, its attractiveness as a portable solution will decrease significantly. Much of the Switch seems to rely on hardware add-ons, like the dock and controllers. Nintendo have a tricky balancing act ahead of them to work out how much to include in the basic bundle and how much to charge for the extras. Online gaming too is more important than ever, with Microsoft and Sony continually stepping up their offerings. Nintendo's clunky network support is certainly in need of a refresh, and hopefully the esports references in the trailer are a hint that those fears too will be allayed.

Provided they do get these things right, however, the Switch looks to be a triumphant return for Nintendo after a dark few years. Gone is the confusing Wii moniker, lack of third party support and low-powered portable system. Instead, we have a more traditional approach that has a bit of Nintendo magic added to it, not replacing it. This may be the first announcement and somewhat thin on details, but if they play their cards right (heh), Nintendo could be on to a winner.



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