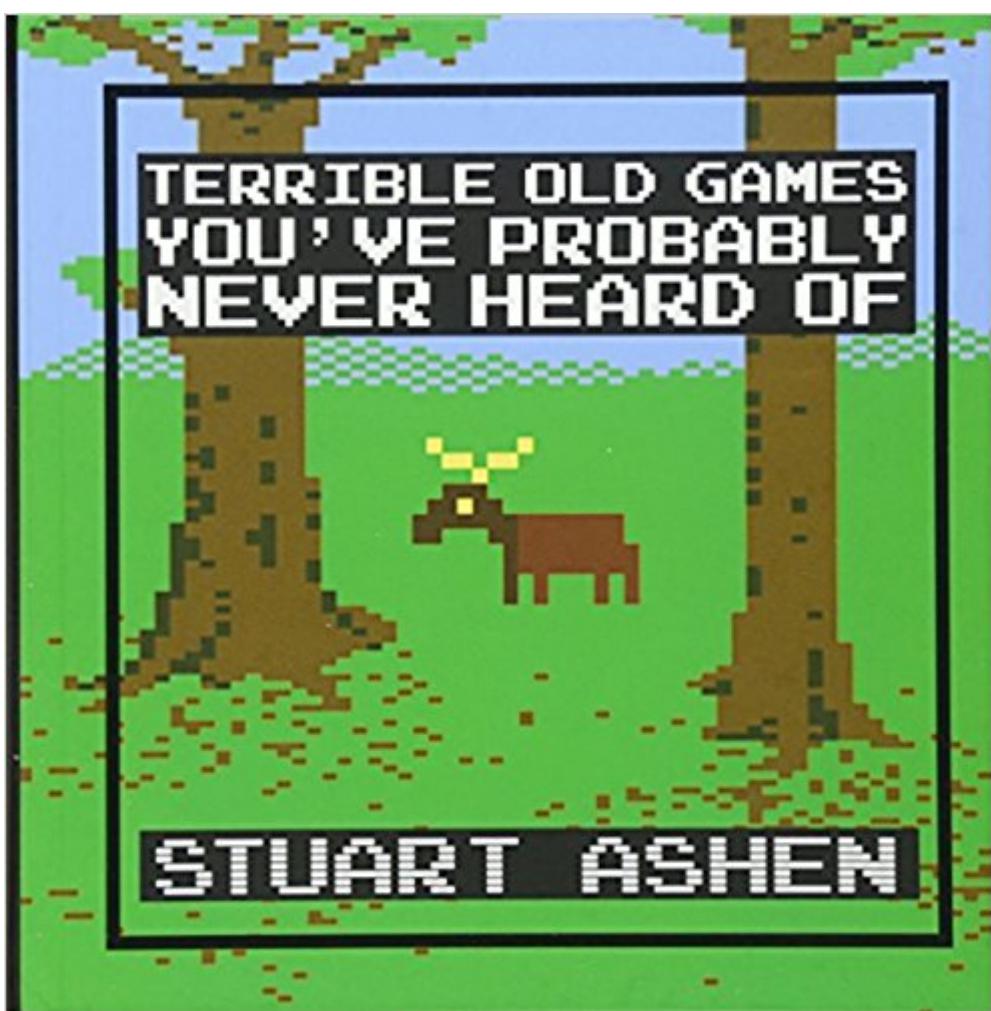


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# Terrible Old Games You've Probably Never Heard Of



## Synopsis

Terrible Old Games You've Probably Never Heard Of is a full-color illustrated compendium of the most painfully bad games, based on Ashens' YouTube series of the same name. Everyone's heard of E.T. for the Atari 2600 and Superman for the Nintendo 64, but these are almost nothing next to the abject incompetence of Count Duckula 2 on the Amstrad CPC. There are people who seriously believe that Shaq Fu is the worst fighting game ever made, having never experienced Dangerous Streets on the Amiga. This book will blow their very soul apart. (Not a guarantee.) Terrible Old Games You've Probably Never Heard Of is meticulously researched and written, with the dry humor you'd expect from a man who has somehow made a living by sticking rubbish on a sofa and talking about it. Each entry is accompanied by a series of full-color images from the games.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Stuart Ashen does a great line in Larry David-esque incredulity, and excels at rounding up a gang of genuinely obscure, implausibly released rubbish." - Mr Hyde

Stuart Ashen makes videos for YouTube and writes comedy scripts and sometimes acts in things. He lives in Norwich, in a house filled with all sorts of useless items that he tells himself he needs for work. He is obsessed with old video games and things that aren't quite good enough for their intended purpose. On his YouTube channel he reviews the best of the worst that the world has

to offer, showing an equal amount of commitment and enthusiasm for both. He has produced over 440 YouTube videos over an eight-year period. In 2013 he raised \$73,000 for the production of a feature film *Ashens and the Quest for the GameChild* starring Warwick Davis and Robert Llewellyn. The film has been watched over 500,000 times on YouTube and is also available on DVD and Blu-Ray.

A fun read- I only wish there was more of it. Which is actually why I deducted a star; the book is half as long as I expected, with about 50% of the page count devoted to reviews of these terrible old games. The other half is a long list of names of people who supported the book on Kickstarter. There's also a long "Choose Your Own Adventure" section, and numerous interviews with influential people describing the most disappointing game they've ever played. So you're really only getting about 25% game reviews, but the other content is solid and Stuart Ashen's writing is hilarious, so given what a labor of love the book seems to have been for Ashen and his fans, I'd still call it well worth it. I'm not a gamer, so I actually assumed the book was about console games, but instead it focuses on early computer games. This was a bit of a surprise for me, but it actually made the book a lot more interesting, and taught me something about a universe I knew nothing about. Ashen focuses on early 1980s systems like the Amstrad, Electron and Amiga, mostly the UK models, although the author does extensive discussion on different versions available for various systems internationally. This was actually very interesting, and it also helped explain some of the awfulness of certain games that were hastily produced and even more hastily converted. These asides provided some great insights into the early games industry and how it evolved. I knew that there was an era where successful games might be programmed by 1-2 people in a basement somewhere, but this book did a lot to really flesh out what that era was like. So while I didn't get a solid 200 pages of hilarious reviews, I think I actually got a little bit more than that.

Internet comedian Stuart Ashen masterfully adapts his *Terrible Old Games You've Probably Never Heard Of* webseries into print format with this book. As the title suggests, this is a list of terrible retro games that you've probably never heard of, namely European computer games from the 80's and early 90's, with systems ranging from the ZX Spectrum to the Atari ST, as well as some lesser-known computers. Each entry is given a several page summary, with many spot-on jokes made at its expense, along with screenshots with hilarious captions. If you're familiar with Ashen's videos, you'll understand the kind of humor to be expected from one of his books. Also included are reviews from several guests, and an interview with a programmer who worked on computer games

back in the 80's, giving some interesting insight into how the industry worked. If you're looking for a new take on the "worst games ever" kind of list, definitely check this out. And if you're an Ashens fan, let's face it, you already bought this.

Terrible Old Games You've Probably Never Heard Of was a series of videos by Stuart Ashen done on his YouTube channel. This book, crowdfunded on Unbound, is a continuation of that series. It should be noted that none of the entries are repeats of ones the author has covered on the show. Terrible Old Games You've Probably Never Heard Of covers eighteen games of various genres released between 1980 and 1995 for the various home computers of the time, including the ZX Spectrum and Commodore 64. Entries begin with the first page showing a screenshot of the start screen with the title, format, year of release, developer, publisher, and original price (in pounds) listed below it. The following pages describe the synopsis of the game and how it plays, all done with Ashen's sense of British humor. Scattered through the pages are screenshots from the game, helping show what is described and underlined with a humorous caption. Each entry is capped off by a box detailing reviews and other versions of the game. It should be noted that one of the entries is done by T.V. presenter and YouTuber "Guru" Larry Bundy Jr. and that one of the entries (that I did not include in the count of above) Ashen did was on a terrible game he made in his youth. Ashen also included an original terrible game that anyone can be played if you have a ZX Spectrum and input the code given in the book into the machine. Between every couple of entries are interviews with done with various people, asking what the most disappointing game they bought was. There is also an interview with Ste Pickford that goes over how it was like creating games during the period. I quite like TOGYPNHO. It's a nice, funny look at terrible games in a period that isn't looked at all that much in game history. It has actually made me want to look into the period some more and experience some of the good games on the ZX Spectrum and the like. However, there are two problems I found with it. The first problem was the first three entries. The games are of similar genres and so reading the entries (which are ordered alphabetically) one after another made it monotonous, though the following entries do break it up. The second problem was that, by the end, the entries became somewhat repetitive. After all, there is some many different ways Ashen can describe bad graphics and gameplay before it starts to wear on the reader.

I was a bit worried about how this book would turn out, being based on a video series but I've always been a huge Ashens fan, so I thought I'd give it a try. Yeah, it probably would work better in video format, but the use of screenshots and Ashens's sense of humour easily makes up for any

deficit. Definitely worth getting if you're an Ashens fan, and hey, worth a read even if you're not.

As others have mentioned, this book is only about half as long as advertised, with the other half devoted to listing its backers. This was tremendously frustrating, but I can only imagine how much more so it would have been if I'd paid \$20 for the physical copy. Otherwise the book's content is excellent. I just wish there was as much as it seemed.

This book combines little discussed gaming history and humor in a very fun book. Could only be better if Ashens himself did an audio narration. Buy this book!!

It's a solid, entertaining read, but it really kind of makes me wish he'd make this a regular video series again, as reading about crappy games just isn't as effective as seeing them in action.

Great present for a great computer geek :p

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