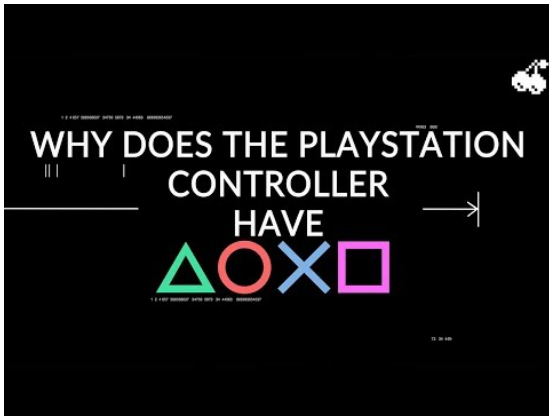


Why Does The Playstation Controller Have A Triangle, Circle, X, And Square?



Since video games existed there's been the need to make your avatar on the screen actually do things.

At first this was done with simple knobs and joysticks and when video games moved from the arcades to the living room this seemed to be the way things were going to stay.

But it wasn't.

And although many controllers share similarities there's one that stands out for a very specific reason and that's Sony's PlayStation controller. Why do the PlayStation controllers have Triangle, circle, X and square?



On top of that what inspired the other design choices for the gamepad?

To find this out we have to jump back to 1983 and look at Nintendo. After finding success in the arcade and digital toy side of gaming with the likes of Donkey Kong and their Game and Watch handhelds, they decided to enter the home console market, using inspiration from some of their Game and Watch digital toys for their control pad. The name of that home console? The Nintendo Entertainment System.

The simple gamepad of the NES helped set it apart from the competition. A 4 way directional pad on the left, 2 buttons on the right and start and select buttons in the middle. It was easy for anyone to pick up and understand. Something proven by a 4 year old me and my 60 year old grandma on numerous occasions.



The NES controller set a new standard for the games industry and as new systems were introduced from competitors the D-Pad quickly became a mainstay, with the face buttons varying in letters and numbers. Nintendo then introduced the Super Nintendo Entertainment System and evolved the gamepad again, in a way that still sees its influence to this very day. Two more buttons were added on the right and two buttons were added to each shoulder at the top of the controller.

The time of the Super Nintendo was also the time of a collaboration between Nintendo and an electronics company you might of heard of. Sony.

Sony were working with them to make a CD-ROM accessory that would be compatible with the SNES and began work on it all the way back in 1988, 2 years before the SNES even existed. At the Consumer Electronics Shows in June 1991 Sony announced the collaboration to the world. The very next day Nintendo announced at the show their partnership with Philips to make a CD-ROM accessory. A surprise to everyone... especially Sony.

This created an obvious conflict between Sony and Nintendo and spurred Sony on to make their own console, the PlayStation, which would release in 1994. The story of Sony and Nintendo's conflict is something for another day but an important thing to establish due to a reason some believe the PlayStation controller adopted the shapes of Triangle, circle, X and square.

In Super Mario World an enemy called a Magikoopa, or Kamek (depending where you're from), tries to attack you by firing some magic. How does that magic appear on screen? In the shape of a Triangle, circle and square, with what looks suspiciously like an X as well. Some believe this why Sony chose the shapes they did, but that's not the case and they have some very specific reasons for their shapes and colours.



How do we know this? From a 2010 interview with Sony engineer Teiyu Goto. Teiyu designed the PlayStation controllers and, whilst being interviewed in 2010, explained that the shapes and their colours were not just random, but something deeply thought out. He said:

Other game companies at the time assigned alphabet letters or colours to the buttons. We wanted something simple to remember, which is why we went with icons or symbols, and I came up with the triangle-circle-X-square combination immediately afterward. I gave each symbol a meaning and a colour. The triangle refers to viewpoint;

I had it represent one's head or direction and made it green. Square refers to a piece of paper; I had it represent menus or documents and made it pink. The circle and X represent 'yes' or 'no' decision-making and I made them red and blue respectively. People thought those colours were mixed up, and I had to reinforce to management that that's what I wanted.

The controller has evolved over the years to include thumbsticks, vibration and more but the shapes and a lot of the layout has stayed the same, making them a key part of PlayStation's brand identity and much more than a bunch of random shapes.

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Circle, X, Square & Triangle Explained – Product Reviews Net

The control pad surely has evolved over the years. From the simple two button rectangle-shaped SEGA Master System and Nintendo (NES) controllers to multi-button and comfortable controllers such as the Playstation and Xbox with their shoulders and distinctive color assigned buttons. But ever wondered what the symbols and icons represented on a PS3/PS2/PSX controller mean? Apparently they do have a meaning.

Sony engineer Teiyu Goto recently spoke to 1up and explained the reasoning behind choosing icons instead of standard 1,2 or A, B, X, Y buttons.

Goto goes on to say that they wanted something that gamers would actually remember, coming up with the now well-known iconic Circle, X, Square & Triangle buttons.

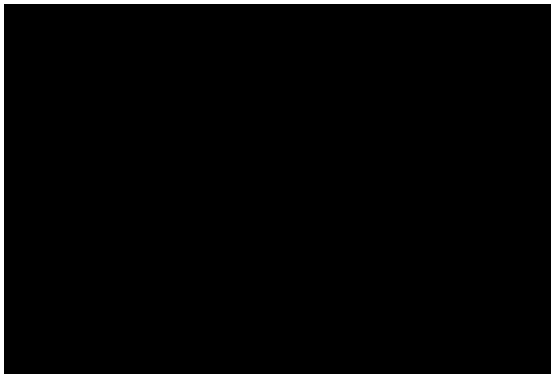
According to the interview, Triangle stands for 'viewpoint,' which represents one's head or direction with the color green. It is not mentioned in the article, but I'm guessing it was made green for go.

The Square button refers to 'a piece of paper,' which would be used to represent menu's and/or documents. The reason it is pink is also not known, but they couldn't make it white and therefore went for something of similar color.

The Circle and X buttons now seem pretty obvious. They both represent 'yes' and 'no,' for decision making—just like you would do on documents that have tick-box-like boxes.

Goto says initially, management thought he had mixed the colors up, but he assured them that is what was what he intended.

Also in the article, Goto mentions that upper management wanted to keep the original PlayStation controller almost similar to that of the Super Nintendo, but he fought to get the new design implemented and won in the end.



I personally prefer the Xbox 360 controller, which to me is a lot more comfortable than the PlayStation's evil-twin. If you feel the same, you can now have someone to blame for the design that has been around since the start of the PlayStation one's birth.

The entire interview can be found via 1up. Make sure to check it out as it is quite an interesting read.

What do you make of the current state of control pads that are out there today? You never know, maybe in the future we will not need control pads, especially as the Move and the Kinect are soon to be making a mark on the console world.

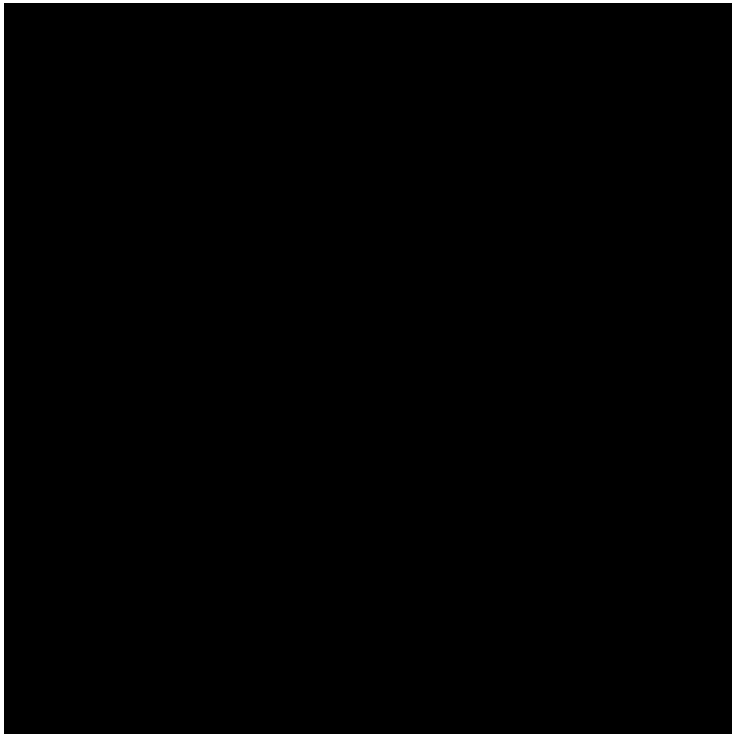
Remember the N64 controllers? Yuck!

Source: Gizmodo

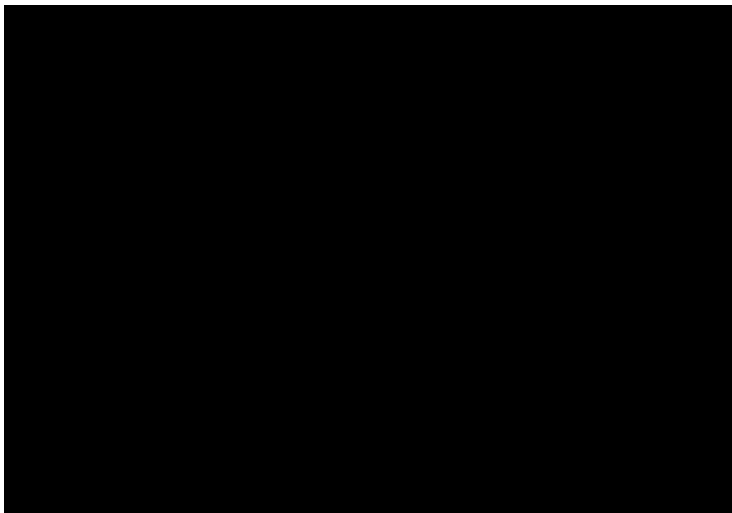
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Why does the PlayStation controller have triangle, circle, X and square on its buttons?

From the very first years of gaming, an integral part of the experience it offers gamers has to do with its use controller, of the controller that displays the player's movements on the screen. And maybe from his time Atari there are no particular differences between the controllers and their nature, however there were some controls which had their own distinct character. Undoubtedly, one of them was his controller first PlayStation, which stands out for its features fire buttons (triangle, circle, X and square) and behind this option there is some story and in fact in this charming story of the past is involved the name of... Nintendo!



In 1983 Nintendo launched the Nintendo Entertainment System, which may have one simplified gamepad, but there was hidden all his "magic". The adoption of the classic D-Pad on the left along with the classic fire buttons on the right, made the NES controller a highly worthwhile and easily accessible suggestion to the gaming friends of that time. The D-Pad of the Nintendo Entertainment System was not long in coming mainstream, strongly influencing the design and subsequent controls that followed the competition. In the early 90s, Nintendo released the successor of the NES, named Super Nintendo, further developing the concept of the gaming controller.



However, the historical company at that time was considering the possibility of entering dynamically in the digital world rou CD-ROM, even asking Sony (which was a pioneer at the time) to develop one additional accessories which would be connected to its consoles. Eventually, the deal between the two companies led to shipwreck and Nintendo chose to work with Philips. At CES 1991 Nintendo announced the deal with Philips to the surprise of Sony, which was unaware of the the slightest. Relationships between the two companies have not been the best since then, although the incident prompted Sony to launch the first PlayStation, forever changing the of gaming history.



The “Bad languages” So they think that Sony somehow “inspired” the design of its own controller from the successful Nintendo game: Super Mario World. In this iconic title, there was an enemy named Magikoopa or Kamek, who when attacking Mario used to launch various... “magic”. How was that magic? But of course they had the shape of a triangle, a circle and a square but also a shape that looked like... X. These are the words of the μύ “myth”, but the reality is probably completely different, as the answer for the shapes on the buttons of our PS controller is given by the design manager of Sony, Teiyu Goto, who designed the first controller for the Sony console. According to Goto, both colors as well as shapes it was not at all randomly, as the logic behind their design was to differentiate Sony from the other companies that at that time used simple letters on the buttons of the controls. Sony’s intention was to create something that would be simple for gamers to remember, which is why the combination of icons and symbols was preferred. Each of them has 4 characteristic shapes and a specific one meaning. For example, the triangle refers to the “direction”, while the square plays the role of paper (essentially reflecting a piece of paper), while the circle and X represent the “Yes” or “no” in a decision (which is why the color is red and blue respectively).

Whichever version you think is better, the truth is that the PlayStation controller has left its mark on the history of gaming, being a “symbol”...

Source: Digital Life! by www.digitallife.gr.

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