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Best Games Updated by Ivan Spasojevic on December 27, 2024 What is considered to be a turn-based game? Why there are so many people who enjoy this particular style of play? And more importantly, which are the top 15 best turn-based games that you can play on your mobile device? What are turn-based games? First things first. What exactly is a turn-based game? Let's try to make this really simple without getting too technical about it. Let's use the one that pretty much everyone knows as an example, say chess. So in chess, player A goes first and only after they complete their move Player B can play. Simple right? I go, you go and so on. That kind of thing. We could say that a turn-based game has a certain structure that controls the flow of the gameplay and is split into phases. When it comes to video games, we use the term turn-based, to describe a wide variety of titles that follow this simple concept. It can be anything, from card games, simulators, board games, RPGs and the list goes on and on. Below you'll find a list of the top 15 best turn-based games for mobile devices. As always, we've tried to make our list as diverse as possible so that anyone can find a title of their liking to play on the go! Let's get right into it! Click Here To View The List » Another Eden The Cat Beyond Time and Space follows the story of a young boy named Aldo in his adventure to rescue his sister Feinne from the Beast-King. When a distortion in space-time occurred, Aldo found himself 800 years in the future. This turn-based mobile game mostly plays as a side-scrolling JRPG, and it involves travelling through the future, the present and the past. There are more than 80 chapters and a variety of characters that you can recruit through gacha mechanics to make your party stronger. Take a look at our tier list of the best characters in Another Eden if you decide to give it a go. In Marvel Strike Force 5, you can collect heroes and villains from the Marvel Universe, create powerful teams, and go up against Ultimus' legions in turn-based battles. There are various modes that you can participate in, such as Campaign, Blitz, Arena, Raids, Challenges, Alliance War and even Real Time Arena if you enjoy PvP. The battle mechanics are rather simple and easy to understand. Even though it was released back in 2018, several new characters are often released to keep things fresh. Legends of Runeterra is a collectible card game inspired by Magic: The Gathering where players face each other in one versus one battles. Both players start the match with the same number of health points, and the first to fall to zero loses. All the cards are inspired by the League of Legends universe, and many main characters from the popular MOBA are featured as Champion cards. Everything about it looks great and polished, and the overall quality is simply incredible. If you are a fan of deck-builders, Legends of Runeterra is a mobile turn-based game that you will enjoy. Master Duel is the digital form of the Yu-Gi-Oh! card game that's been going strong for over 20 years now. Build your very own deck and duel against other players from all over the world. Win prizes by participating in special events and tournaments, or try to climb the competitive ladder in ranked duels. Of course, you can always just play for fun against your friends or even AI. Try to come up with new strategies and combos that will give you the edge over your opponents and make you the number one duelist! Check out the best meta decks to climb the competitive ladder! As we've mentioned previously, the turn-based games category is wide, and it includes titles from various genres. Battle Chasers: Nightwar is a single-player J-RPG adventure featuring deep dungeon diving and a turn-based combat system. The story follows Gully's quest to find her long-lost father, a famous hero named Aramus who suddenly disappeared one day. A party of five rather unlikely heroes, each with their own unique abilities and style, will help Gully on her adventure. Dungeon Maker is a strategy game that blends elements from tower defence, deck-builders and rogue-like games. Create your own dungeon and try to come up with unique strategies to survive against hordes of enemies. Carefully place the traps and monsters that you have at your disposal, and unlock more elements the longer you survive. Each turn you can decide if you want to rest, fight, or upgrade the dungeon by picking fate cards. There are over 260 monsters and heroes and more than 240 relics you can collect along the way and many special events. Dragonheir was released in 2023 and got a massive following right away for being different from other similar gacha games. First of all, you'll wander freely through the world, and then most of your actions have a chance instead of just clicking through the content randomly and succeeding in everything that you try. The dice roll will remind you of the tabletop D&D, which is nice. Another awesome element is the number of heroes, as you can pick over 200 of them! Of course, we made a tier list of Dragonheir characters to help you pick the best ones since it's a tedious task for some. Now, once you pick your characters, combat is turn-based, and you'll have to position them and use their abilities accordingly. Graphics are super detailed, and you'll love how everything looks, from heroes that you will lead to the world around you. Claim free prizes by redeeming some of the Dragonheir codes in case you decide to give it a go, they should give you a nice advantage! You don't really have to be a Dragon Ball fan to enjoy Dokkan Battle. But if you are a fan of the legendary franchise, and you are looking for a turn-based game for mobile, then this title should be on the top of your list. Since its release in 2015, Dokkan Battle has created a huge online community that's still going strong to this day, with more than 350 million downloads and over 3 billion dollars in revenue worldwide. Its unique gameplay blends elements of card, board games and even tile-matching. There are hundreds and hundreds of cards with all the fan-favourite characters from the Dragon Ball universe, as well as others that are less popular. To keep things fresh, new cards and events are being added all the time. We have a Dokkan Battle tier list to help you out, in case you decide to give it a try. 4X are some of the better turn-based strategy games for mobile. The four Xs are actually abbreviations for eXplore, eXpand, eXploit and eXterminate, all key gameplay elements in this genre. In The Battle of Polytopia, you can select one of the available tribes and develop it into an empire that will rule the world. Of course, it won't be that easy! It requires a lot of strategy and planning. Fight against enemy tribes, discover new technologies and explore new lands. The auto-generated maps feature makes each game a unique experience. It can be played in single, or multi-player modes. If you are looking for something different, Hoplite is an old-school single-player roguelike dungeon crawler that was released back in 2013. Still, after all these years, it remains unique and really enjoyable. Hoplite's gameplay is very simple and easy to understand but at the same time very challenging. It requires strategic thinking and planning ahead, almost like a game of chess, as your every decision matters. The first levels are easy enough to give you the required time and experience to understand the game mechanics, but as you progress, the challenges will become much harder. Hearthstone is one of the most popular turn-based card games for mobile. It is a collectible card game where you have to create your deck using hundreds of different cards and compete with other players. Hearthstone is a great choice if you need a game to play when you have a few free minutes since the matches are pretty fast. And if you are a fan of this genre, make sure to check out our list of the best collectible card games on Android. Also, we've got an article on Hearthstone's Valentine's Day update. When one of the best board games ever created receives a well-polished, quality digital version, the result is nothing short of amazing. This is an excellent adaptation of Vlaada Chvátil's strategy classic, with tremendous replay value as every round plays out differently, even against the AI. If you are a fan of Civilization-type games, you are definitely going to enjoy this one. Warhammer 40K has never been more popular than it is now. One of the newest games from this turn-based tabletop found its way to mobile and the hearts of many players. We are talking about Tacticus, a strategy that won the GOTY title at the Mobile Game Awards by the choice of players in 2022. Of course, it's still regularly updated and active with new events being released now and then. You'll collect characters from different factions, and try to find the best possible synergy for your team. Then you can play various modes, including campaign, PVP Arena, Onslaught and a few others. Combat is turn-based and very tactical, as you'll have to figure out who plays before whom and then act accordingly. A lot of it is up to you, and I played battles that I've previously lost again, and with the right choices, I'd wipe out the enemy team. So, a lot depends upon you, if your enemy doesn't have 2-3 times higher team power. Well, the next legendary turn-based game on the list is well-known by any avid gamer. It is a grand strategy where you have to build your empire. In fact, you have to turn a small tribe into a powerful modern civilization. The most efficient way to build your empire is to manage your resources correctly and think a few steps ahead. In other words, it is a perfect game for improving your strategy and management skills. If that was not enough to convince you to download this beautiful game, make sure to check out our review. If you are already a fan of this complex strategy game but want to try something similar, we have a list of the best mobile games like Civilization for you! Slay the Spire brings together two seemingly totally different gaming genres as it blends elements of roguelikes and deck builders. The result is a very fun and addictive gaming experience. The gameplay is simple enough in a way that anyone can grasp, but at the same time, it requires strategic thinking. You feel that every decision matters. Collect hundreds of cards and build powerful combos as you climb the spire! All in all, Slay the Spire is a mobile turn-based game like no other that will keep you entertained for a long time! Picking the best character in Slay the Spire is not an easy endeavour, so we are here to assist you, as always. There are more guides for it, just look around a bit! Next Up : Top 20 best word games for Android phones and tablets Sign up! Get Pocket Gamer tips, news & features in your inbox Reddit and its partners use cookies and similar technologies to provide you with a better experience. By accepting all cookies, you agree to our use of cookies to deliver and maintain our services and site, improve the quality of Reddit, personalize Reddit content and advertising, and measure the effectiveness of advertising. By rejecting non-essential cookies, Reddit may still use certain cookies to ensure the proper functionality of our platform. For more information, please see our Cookie Notice and our Privacy Policy. Update 7 May 2025: Ascension added at rank #9. Here are our 10 Best Tactical turn-based Games for IOS iPhone: 1 View Similar Games PC Windows Mac OS Xbox One Playstation 4 IOS iPhone Android Nintendo Switch The Banner Saga 2 is a gripping Norse-inspired fantasy adventure that engages you with its exceptional narrative and captivating art direction. The game features a turn-based combat system that challenges your strategic thinking, new creatures and obstacles, and battles resolved through primary objectives rather than max-murdering the other side. Make difficult decisions that can lead to starvation, mutiny or death, while defying traditional conventions and rejecting typical rules of morality. The sequel is a must-play, with vastly improved combat, deep and rewarding narrative, and an immersive visual and sound design. What we like:Engaging narrative Captivating art direction Improved combat system New creatures and obstacles Battles resolved through primary objectives What could be improved:Difficult for new players who did not play the first game Console controls are awkward and obtuse Environmental art can make combat harder to navigate Not very action-packed Characters can die without notice turn-based tactical battle strategy rpg combat narrative story grid fantasy hand-drawn 2 View Similar Games IOS iPhone Linux Mac OS PC Windows Xbox One In Chroma Squad, you become the leader of a group of five stunt actors who create their own Power Rangers-inspired TV show. Customize your studio, craft weapons, upgrade equipment, and fight in turn-based battles. Enjoy a branching storyline, skill trees, and a chiptune soundtrack. What we like:Simple mechanics Charming pixel art style Great soundtrack, Management sim elements Entertaining story What could be improved:Random crafting system Repetitive boss fights Luck-based mecha battles Lack of tutorial, Underwhelming difficulty for experienced strategy game players tactical turn-based rpg battle squad mech strategy crafting combat boss superhero isometric management fight pixel 3 View Similar Games IOS iPhone Playstation 4 Xbox One Nintendo Switch PC Windows Mac OS Experience the epic conclusion of The Banner Saga trilogy in a dark and desperate world-ending event. As you lead over 40 powerful heroes through tough odds, your decisions truly impact the game's outcome. The storyline concludes in a beautifully animated epic finale with a Grammy-nominated soundtrack that'll leave you feeling both triumphant and nostalgic. What we like:Excellent storytelling, art and setting Innovative custom battles A fitting end to the saga The series ages very well Grammy-nominated soundtrack What could be improved:Some outcomes of fights seem meaningless Lack of impact for decisions made earlier in the game tactical turn-based battle wave rpg strategy narrative combat fight story grid fantasy hand-drawn 4 View Similar Games IOS iPhone Mac OS PC Windows Xbox One Xbox Series X j Nintendo Switch Playstation 5 Massi is a retro platformer game with souls like features. Fully made in hand-made pixel art, fun, fast paced. Fighting, exploration, tight controls, puzzle solving, difficult boss fights. turn-based tactical strategy battle combat fight fantasy stealth cover rpg squad soundtrack metroidvania war souls 5 View Similar Games IOS iPhone Linux Mac OS PC Windows Experience the adventure of a lifetime as a steam-driven pirate crew in SteamWorld Heist. With its insane skill shots and turn-based strategy gameplay, this game lets you manually aim the guns of your robots and upgrade your recruits' unique abilities, weapons, and stylish hats. With a well-written story, engaging characters, and a challenging battle system, it combines the best of XCOM and Worms gameplay in a beautifully designed world of robot pirates. And with a soundtrack by Steam Powered Giraffe, this is a game you won't want to miss! What we like:Fun and challenging battle system Numerous items, weapons, and equipment to collect Engaging characters and well-written story Mixes XCOM and Worms gameplay perfectly Packed with content and replayability What could be improved:Lack of ability trees for customization Inability to customize preferred characters Linear progression with no choice in bonuses turn-based robots strategy steampunk tactical cover pirates 6 View Similar Games Linux Playstation 4 Android Mac OS PC Windows Xbox One Nintendo Switch IOS iPhone Live through an epic role-playing Viking saga where your strategic choices directly affect your personal journey. Make allies as you travel with your caravan across this stunning yet harsh landscape. Carefully choose those who will help fight a new threat that jeopardizes an entire civilization. turn-based tactical rpg strategy battle combat mythology grid narrative fantasy 7 View Similar Games PC Windows Nintendo Switch Xbox Series X/s Playstation 5 j Xbox Series X Android IOS iPhone Sunderfolk is a shared turn-based tactical RPG adventure where your phone becomes the controller. Inspired by gathering around a table with friends, it is built with a couch co-op experience in mind. Up to four players adventure across the magical and dangerous Sunderlands. cooperative tactical rpg turn-based tabletop local party couch class strategy campaign combat dragon 4-player team 8 View Similar Games PC Windows IOS iPhone Android Mac OS Linux Step into a Leviathan mech and command the Templar Knights in a thrilling battle against Xenos in Templar Battleforce! With extensive character progression, varied maps, and strategic turn-based combat, you'll be hooked. Recruit specialists, invent strategies, and snatch victory from the jaws of defeat in this immersive tactical RPG! Buy What we like:Addictive turn-based strategyExtensive character progressionInspiring squad customizationRich and varied mapsWell-explained combat mechanics What could be improved:Steep learning curveRepetitive musicLack of game modes turn-based tactical mech rpg strategy corridor-to-corridor capturing perma-death squad 9 View Similar Games early access Android IOS iPhone PC Windows In this cultivation 4X strategy game, your sect has been in peril, and so they open a portal—sending you, a young disciple and their last hope, inside. Stand tall as the new sect leader and guide disciples to rebuild what was lost. Sharpen your focus, master alchemy, and ascend to immortality. strategy 4x turn-based card building mythology tactical resource-management hex management asynchronous top-down sandbox board-game fantasy 10 View Similar Games Android IOS iPhone Nintendo Switch PC Windows Peace, Death! 2 is a midcore turn-based logic game where you send clients to Hell, Heaven, or Purgatory and help members of the Reapers Union as they work towards their great cause! comedy memes turn-based point-and-click casual scroller funny 2d pixel humor arcade simulation tactical dark puzzle Not seeing your game? Who isn't familiar with the names of Legendary Characters of Ken, Ryu, Chun Li, Blanka, and Dhalsim from the Legendary Street Fighter video games. Almost everybody have played a game from this fantastic series and the ones who have played any Street Fighter games, are fans for life. Talking about the Street Fighter video game, Street Fighter is a 1987's fantastic hit Fighting Video game developed and published by the Legendary Japanese video game company Capcom. The game is very first installment of the globally popular video game series "Street Fighter" and it is available to play on PlayStation, Xbox, Nintendo and various other gaming consoles. Street Fighter offers characters from various locations of the world such as Japan, U.S. China, Canada, Thailand and Brazil, etc. Throughout the game, Street Fighter offers a highly competitive and challenging gameplay in which it allows two players to fight against each other, blast the opponents with fantastic combinations of attacks and whoever depletes the opponent's health bar, wins the game. It allows the players to play the game against each other or with the Game AI (Artificial Intelligence), keep on defeating the opponents and after winning, move to next round of the game. Just like the fighter characters, Street Fighter offers competitive matches on various locations of the game world and allows the players to defeat the opponents and enjoy the game. With a variety of characters, and their special fighting abilities, fighting styles and all the blasting action and thrill, Street Fighter is one of the best ever Fighting games till date and is known as the trend setter for this particular genre. When it comes to the best mobile strategy games, we're living in a golden age. Whether in terms of the remasters of classics like Company of Heroes or strikeout new IPs, like Bad North, reinventing classic game formats. What is true for strategy, will always be true, and so it often represents a realm with elegant simplicity at its heart. Look at Bad North and you'll see how that ancient strategic simplicity compliments the medium of mobile perfectly. But if scale is also what ye crave, mobile in all its great versatility can give you that. Titles like Plague Inc. or Rebel Inc. offer strategy on par with PC games, in short, because they are PC games! And as technology improves, the sky is truly the limit in terms of what strategy can accomplish, when paired with mobile as a platform. If you want to upgrade your on-the-go experience, check out our best portable gaming consoles guide for all the latest and greatest. The best mobile strategy games are: Play for free Raid: Shadow Legends Before you go complaining that Raid: Shadow Legends isn't a strategy game, go ahead and try and put together a decent team capable of taking on all of the content. Not easy, is it? Raid's particular blend of RPG is particularly strategic, as you strive to collect the best heroes and take on the most challenging foes. Play Raid: Shadow Legends on iPhone for free. Play for free Call of War: World War II Do you think that you'd make a good armchair general? Well, in Call of War: World War II, you take control of one of the major combatants in the Second World War and then you're responsible for navigating their way through the historic conflict. If you've ever thought that certain countries should have made different decisions, this is your chance to put those theories to the test. You'll be playing against an enormous number of other players, all of whom will be managing countries of their own. Everybody has to decide whether they want to invest time fortifying their army, bolstering their economy, or experimenting with new technologies. With games potentially lasting for months and months, you'll find yourself eager to load it up each day o see how your war is unfolding. Play Call of War: World War II for free. Play for free Conflict of Nations: World War III While Call of War puts you in the driver's seat for World War II, Conflict of Nations is all about navigating your way through a hypothetical World War III. This game gives you an enormous number of playable nations to choose from, and each one provides you with a unique experience, offering different strengths and weaknesses, with access to differing selections of resources. Games take months to unfold, and you can have multiple wars on the go at once, dipping into each one to make all the appropriate adjustments, then coming back at a later time, once the troops have had time to be deployed and the research time to be complicated. It's a game that offers a lot of nuance, and one you'll easily pour a huge number of hours into. Play Conflict of Nations: World War III for free. Play for free Mafia City So many strategy games see you running a historic empire, engaging in the wars of a fantasy realm, or strategizing your way through the Second World War, but not many of them put you into the shoes of a crime boss – and as we're sure you've guessed by this point, that is exactly the premise of Mafia City. In Mafia City, you'll be responsible for creating and maintaining different constructs throughout your city, training different types of units (such as bikers), and working either cooperatively or competitively with other players in order to expand your empire of crime. It's very easy to understand how this has been able to become one of the most popular online games on mobile. Play Mafia City on for free. Play for free Forge of Empires In the free-to-play game, Forge of Empires, you can enjoy not one, but two types of strategy gameplay. On the one hand, you're building a civilization that grows and evolves throughout history, giving you decisions to make about how you want to expand. On the other hand, you also go to war with other nations, with turn-based battles fought on an octagonal grid. At the start of the game, all you have is a small patch of wilderness where you start to build a small settlement. Over time, you'll develop a mighty empire, watching it pass through the different eras of real world history, and on and on into the distant future. It can be a very rewarding experience, and one that you might pour a huge number of hours into. Play Forge of Empires for free. Play for free Rise of Cultures Okay, so, we've mentioned Elvenar, we've mentioned Forge of Empires… we've got to mention Rise of Cultures too. All of these games were developed by Innogames, they also all focus on the strategic development of your own civilization, and they're all among the best in their genre. But what sets this game apart from Innogames other offerings? Well, we're glad you asked. As the title may suggest, the focus of this game is not just on the building of great empires, but on the cultivation of their cultures. Among the many buildings you can create, different ones factor into that culture in different ways, and depending on the type of culture you want to have for your own little empire, you'll enjoy different benefits. In general, there's more of a focus on the 'little people' too, in that you can set workers' schedules and deploy them in ways that are most beneficial to you... though they'll need time to rest too. Play Rise of Cultures for free. Company of Heroes Created by the geniuses at Feral Interactive, this is a smart adaptation of the iconic WW2 RTS. A touch interface is always going to be inferior to mouse when being adapted from the latter to the former, but Feral have done a really admirable job. Check out our Company of Heroes review for more details! Bad North One of the best strategy games for mobile – and in general – Bad North is a wonderful lesson in how minimal design and strategy pair so well. The game is essentially a Viking tower defence, as you position your units to repel invaders, appearing out of the fog to burn the settlement on your island. You travel between these little landmasses, picking up gold and stragglers, always one step ahead of the massive Viking fleet snapping at your heels. The overall strategy aspect of the game is based in risk vs. reward. Can I defend one more island this turn? If things go wrong and units die, you lose them forever, which can cut short a pretty costly investment in upgrading them, and giving them items. Each of the beautiful little islands is also procedurally generated, and for each house you defend, you get gold for upgrades, thereby completing an extremely satisfying gameplay loop. Bad North is absolutely one of the best strategy games on mobile: a playful exterior and aesthetic, which belies a surprising degree of strategic depth. Want to hear more? Give our Bad North review a look. Rebel Inc. Following in the footsteps of its predecessor, Rebel Inc. shares the same excellent design pedigree. As the newly appointed administrator of a region that's just suffered a major war, your job is to try and help the population rebuild, while also keeping local insurgents in check. It's full of tough choices and challenging tactical game-play as you struggle to pin down enemy insurgents and prevent them from doing too much harm. If you're struggling to get a handle on the game, try our guide of Rebel Inc. tips and tricks. Dealing with the concept of reconstruction is never an easy feat, and the subject matter could be considered slightly controversial given the recent events that have inspired it. But Ndemic has treated the topic with as much care and attention as they can, even consulting with real-world experts on the subject. For more in-depth analysis, see our Rebel Inc. review. Plague Inc. If someone heard the name Plague Inc. they might assume this game was about defending humanity against a pandemic. How wrong they would be. Considered by many as the superior prequel to Rebel Inc. (though Rebel Inc. is still proper good), Plague Inc. has you create a pathogen, and work to spread it across the world, ending civilisation as we know it. Topical, eh? The game is a unique mixture of strategy and realistic simulation, and it's definitely worth checking out, no matter your strategy tastes. Kingdom Rush: Vengeance The latest entry in the acclaimed Kingdom Rush tower defence series has caused no small amount of controversy, which is likely to continue with its inclusion in this list. It all depends how bothered you are by the game's slightly-too-persistent micro-transactions. They are the only blemish on what is otherwise a stellar real-time strategy experience. The in-app purchases are completely optional and unnecessary, but they're just a tad too pushy. But if you're willing to look past that, you'll find another excellent tower defence game, and one with plenty of humour and content to last you a decent amount of time. Dominations This game deserves to be loved and known for the quality of play it provides, as well as its relatively tasteful monetisation. Dominations is essentially Civilization meets Clash of Clans, with empires spanning the Iron Age to space age, with wonders to build, raids to conduct, and all the usual trappings. There is a certain likeness to established powerhouses, but the devil is in the details, and Dominations gets them spot-on. Playing it to a satisfying conclusion without shelling out serious bucks will take patience, but the emulation of all of recorded human history and conflict is pretty satisfying to play through. Like all your strategy with a dash of history too? Our best mobile war games list has your back. Iron Marines The iron marines are a space-trotting, world-saving team of elite squads tasked with putting out fires and defeating hostiles wherever needed. The elevator pitch for the game would be Starcraft but not? There is a home-base which usually has to be fortified and defended, additional refineries to secure more resources, and a handful of units. From these simple, intuitive elements, the game ekes out a good sense of micromanagement, and delectable real-time tension. Its enemies have unusual abilities and synergies, and its difficulty is no joke, especially on the higher levels. Yet the game also retains Ironclad Studios' sense of long-term planning and strategy present in its tower defence titles. Reigns: Game of Thrones Considered by many to be the best version of Reigns, this game adapts the classic game formula into the setting of George R.R. Martin's ruthless fantasy world. Reigns: Game of Thrones is not only the best mobile Game of Thrones adaptation, it also brings a wonderful degree of complexity to what is, otherwise, a very simple game system. You may only be swiping left or right, but in Westeros's atmosphere of betrayal and court intrigue, even these minor decisions can have massive consequences. Subterfuge Exactly as advertised, Subterfuge is a subtle, long-term game of expedient alliances and stone-cold betrayals, filled with the irrefutable logic, and the uncertainty shrouded in fog of war. A turn just means giving subs and bases a command which will take hours to fulfil, so while it is real-time like warfare is real-time, in Subterfuge the theatre of war sees its stage advance slowly. Its scale is just grand enough to be deeply satisfying, but be warned that it takes some serious time investment to get a game fired up. The leaders provide asymmetrical player powers, but even these super-units can be captured and bartered. Barring these modifiers and special cases, the bases and subs are more or less identical. The game is simply a question of position, resources, and force, but these factors are always shifting because of partial information and precarious alliances. Rymdkapsel Space-base-building and defence are Rymdkapsel's specialities, alongside some spatial puzzling a la Tetris, and 'exploration'. Its minimalism is more than just stylistic, going instead to the core of every action, option, and goal. Perhaps the most satisfying bit is the constant packing problem for expanding the base. New buildings can be of any type, and can be placed anywhere the player chooses, but also must have predefined dimensions. A tightly knit base might come across as more defensible, but reaching and researching far-flung monoliths gives permanent global passive bonuses. The game is a logistics and timing puzzle that for all its stripped-down design, has a really keen sense of efficiency, and management. Fallout Shelter Launched at the exact time as Fallout 4's announcement, Fallout Shelter began a tradition in mobile of publishers dropping games with no warning that has perpetuated even today. But over the past few years, Bethesda has also developed it into a fun little simulation game, including mini-dungeons, as well as seasonal events. In the game, you play as the Overseer of a newly founded vault; the bombs have just fallen, and you have to set survivors to work, managing needs such as power, food, and water, but also exploring the wasteland for loot. Tropico In Feral Interactive's wonderful port of Kalypso's classic strategy game, you rule! Become the self-styled dictator of a Caribbean island nation, and build a society based upon your whims. Tropico features the same setting, the same strategy play, but also the same humour that the series is so well known for. All of that PC goodness, packed into your mobile. Clash of Clans It's hard to understate the important role that Clash of Clans has played on the mobile platform as a whole, spawning both a sackful of copycats, and a successful card battler re-imagining of its formula; Clash Royale. In this tower defence, you must build your town, and rally a force of heroes, warriors, and wizards to defend it. The multiplayer scene is also still pretty active, with leagues of players across the globe still battling for supremacy. Rome: Total war "Gods... I hate Gauls" the immortal words from perhaps one of the most beloved strategy games of all time. Rome: Total War was brought to mobile in all its glory by Feral Interactive, who has since also ported the expansion sequels; Barbarian Invasion, and Alexander. Total War's highly successful formula mixes RTS strategy with turn-based campaign play, giving you the absolute best of both worlds. The Escapists 2 Have you ever felt like busting out of prison? Yeah, me neither. But if you ever do, the Escapists 2 offers a wonderful chance to break out of a variety of prison-based sandbox maps. You know what they say, when in prison, do as the prisoners do. You'll attend roll call, do prison chores, and gain accomplices, all the while plotting your dastardly jailbreak. Clash Royale Released some time after Clash of Clans, this game represented a re-imagining of the formula, as you collect cards and use them to build a battling deck with which to face opponents. Just like the original, Clash Royale also features a pretty heavy emphasis on multiplayer, allowing you to join leagues, and face off against opponents around the world to earn trophies. It may differ to Clash of Clans, but there's just as much fun to be had. Kingdom Two Crowns In this side-scrolling micro-strategy game, you play as a monarch atop a steed, who must travel their kingdom, securing it from greed and hostile forces. Kingdom Two Crowns is brilliantly original, and considering it is just a side-scroller, manages to do so much with relatively little. In some ways it reminds us of Reigns in terms of its wonderful simplicity, albeit with slightly more of a boots-on-the-ground perspective. Definitely one of the best Android strategy games. The Bonfire 2 This RTS-survival game sees you build a settlement, and then defend it from monsters who attack during the night. It's a little similar to Kingdom: Two Crowns, as you balance building your town, and looking after the defences to fend off any monstrous incursions. As your town gets bigger you can even contact other settlements, and cultivate friendly relations. For more info, see our Bonfire 2 review. Xenowerk Tactics Firaxis' XCOM set the bar for turn-based, squad-level strategy games in general, and still remains a highlight on mobile that few have managed to challenge. Xenowerk Tactics, a sequel to the twin-stick shooter Xenowerk, probably won't give XCOM a run for its money, but it's a decent tactical strategy game, and one making use of more modern design tools. Placed in charge of a corporate-owned private military force, your job is to go in and clean up after an experiment goes horribly wrong. There's squad management, base development, and tactical battles, which, while still hectic and satisfying, can sometimes feel a bit more arcade-y than pure strategy. There's a really tense tug-of-war between the need to secure your objective, and the need to preserve resources, especially when those resources are your veteran troops. Definitely worth checking out if you're looking for games like XCOM on mobile. Ticket to Earth While an excellent turn-based strategy game, much of Ticket to Earth's appeal and potential rested on the assumption that Robot Circus would finish the final three chapters of the game. The developer certainly took its time, but nearly three years later episode four was finally released as a free update in October 2019. With a unique take on turn-based tactics, a genuinely engaging story, and plenty of challenge to boot, the finally-finished Ticket definitely deserves your attention, and can be considered one of 2017's silent stunners. Egypt: Old Kingdom Clarus Victoria is back with a second entry in its turn-based strategy series based on different historical periods of Egypt. The first game focused on the prehistoric history of the area, while this new game focuses on the 'Old Kingdom' period, which lasted around 400 years, ending in 2,100 BC. Back then, the capital of the nation was Memphis, and it is here that the player must work to try and develop their civilisation. Resource management is key, as you also try to assimilate the other Egyptian tribes through either diplomacy or warfare. It's a niche-style strategy game on a very niche topic, but a breath of fresh air, and an excellent pick for those looking for something a little bit different. Euclidean Skies Euclidean Skies is a significantly different game to its predecessor, and the raw ambition it shows makes it all the more compelling. Even the art style is different; more vibrant and aggressive, bringing the world to life in a way that's unexpected, but also fantastic. This is a must-buy for fans of puzzle tactics games, and while some of the charm is lost in the shift away from Euclidean Land's simplicity, there's plenty of character in this boisterous new chapter. Six Ages: Ride Like the Wind Some strategy gamers will absolutely love Six Ages' blend of forced immersion. Fans of King of Dragon Pass, which this serves as a spiritual sequel to, will already be familiar with it. But Six Ages features a smoother interface, and a fresh setting in a new culture. Forgoing the traditional control and power fantasies of strategic empire-building is a hard habit to give up. But for those willing to make the sacrifice, Six Ages holds a wealth of wonder that few games can match. It wants to tell you a tale of gods and humans, of mysteries, and the mundane, while still taxing your tactics. It's a bold goal, and the narratives that it weaves are unlike anything else in gaming. If you like strategy, text-based narrative games, be sure to also check out our Silmaris review. Darkest Dungeon Even years after its release, Darkest Dungeon remains resurgent as one of the most inventive, and seductive, turn-based dungeon crawlers. All you need do is look at the gorgeous art style, the wonderfully rendered characters, and the host of eldritch horrors that they face in their descent through the manor's many dungeons. Just like the forbidden knowledge of its Lovecraftian subject matter, Darkest Dungeon tempts you into just one more run, then proceeds to kick you in the teeth for it. If you enjoy building a party of unique rogues and reprobates and sending them into a dungeon in search of riches, only to meet grisly deaths and insanity, this is the game for you. Red Hook announced recently that it is still working on Darkest Dungeon 2, so there's no better time to jump into this wonderful nightmare. XCOM: Enemy Within Still the golden standard for turn-based tactical gameplay, XCOM: Enemy Within offers extreme, squad-based combat, constantly challenging your ability to scrape victory from defeat. Players make decisions in both the overworld and the in-between scenarios, deciding which soldiers to recruit, and what tech to research, which is every bit as important as the choices you make in the heat of battle. The game has the hallmark lustre of a AAA production, and pushed to the brink storyline; conventions which work in its favour. Keep your squad intact, do the mission, and save the world, piece by piece. Polytopia Taking the crown for best Civ-lite, Polytopia shines as a simple, yet satisfying approach to civilisation building. The game works to miniaturise that genre experience, with tribes that are separated by a single technology, and a map that has been foreshortened to a grid of 256 squares. Units and tech are the same for everyone, but the simplicity of this means a shorter list of decisive, vexing choices. There is no diplomacy system, but victory is determined by points and not necessarily conquest. The game's blocky, loose art-style, and simple interface make it an easy game to learn, but a hard one to put down. Undoubtedly one of the best Android strategy games. Invisible Inc. The future came and went, and it has been cruel to all but a select few supra-national, extra-territorial megacorps. Your ragtag bunch of spies and specialists scour the globe for intel and supplies so they can make one final run: to wipe their identities from the omni-vigilant database, and live off the grid in peace. Each run escalates if the agents are detected by guards, cameras, or drones, yet the stealth aspect of the game is only one kind of risk calculation among many. Invisible Inc's AP and power systems mean that even successful runs can be tight, and sometimes making a clean escape is a failure if the team did not steal enough resources. The game's generous learning curve belies an experience in which knowledge can lead to perfect play. Imbroglio Of all Michael Brough's excellent, sparse designs, Imbroglio has the most player-driven customisation and controlled random inputs. Here is ample proof that roguelikes can offer as much strategic challenge as the classics. Each character has their own ability, and weakness, and the 4×4 grid on which the game unfolds is filled with tiles doubling as weapons. Swiping towards an enemy will activate that tile and fire its ability, with every slain enemy adding experience to the weapon responsible. The goal of the game is to collect treasure, which heals your character, and cause the walls of the grid to change configuration. Enemies spawn quicker and quicker as the turn count increases, so the whole affair is a race against time to level-up the sixteen tiles, while staying healthy, and collecting treasure at a steady pace. Even with its large number of weapons and characters to unlock, Imbroglio is accessible, rewarding both sustained interest, and focused strategic approaches. The Banner Saga Though many would see The Banner Saga as an RPG first and a strategy game second, both those aspects play an important role in the experience. The world is ending... seriously! The sun has stopped in the sky, stone monsters are invading, and nobody really knows what to do except run. So you run, making hard decisions along the way, and occasionally fighting for your lives in turn-based combat. The Banner Saga is a fantastic Norse-themed narrative strategy game, that will truly test how far you're willing to go to survive. Civilization VI Though Civ VI is only available on iOS, this turn-based strategy game from the classic 4x series, is well worth a look. Take the role of your favourite historical leader, and martial a civilisation to greatness, building cities, researching technologies, engaging in diplomacy, and just generally crushing any who oppose you. Civilization has endured so long due to the amazing consistency of its game format, and Civ VI is no exception. Check out our Civilization 6 tier list while you're here as well. War of the Visions: Final Fantasy Brave Exvius Following in the similar footsteps of Fire Emblem: Heroes, War of the Visions is a turn-based tactical RPG, that will see you collecting heroes and battling to save a beleaguered nation. Taking a good deal of influence from the turn-based combat of Final Fantasy Tactics, the game also contains a fair deal of gacha-esque mechanics, allowing you to gather heroes and create the perfect roster to suit your tactical needs. Star Traders: Frontiers As the captain of an interstellar star-ship, Star Traders: Frontiers lets you take the wheel on your own destiny. Want to be a pirate? Okay. Want to be a trader? That's fine. How about a bounty hunter? No problem. Star Traders is a fantastic open world RPG, which is also buffed by pretty great turn-based combat. Well worth a look-see. Fire Emblem Heroes Bringing together all the best familiar faces from the famous strategy series, Fire Emblem Heroes lets you a build a band of fighters, mages, and archers to wage war against opponents in turn based combat. The game is basically Fire Emblem's take on the gacha genre, letting you unlock characters from across the setting, and while it is initially quite easy, the longer you play, the more it factors in difficulty. Final Fantasy Tactics: War of the Lions Though an oldie to some extent, Final Fantasy Tactics: War of the Lions is a great little turn-based tactics game on mobile. Originally launched in 2007, mobile received its very own version a few years later. If as with Banner Saga, you enjoy the deep investment of narrative RPGs with a complement of tactics-based play on the side, this game is the perfect fit for you. Heroes of Flatlandia If you want a turn-based strategy game with plenty of units, a lovely little map, and a solid fantasy setting, you could do far worse than Heroes of Flatlandia. With four distinctive races to play as, a range of magic and special abilities, and online multiplayer, it's a solid choice if you've got a little time on your hands. Warhammer Quest: Silver Tower This tactical RPG is based within the Warhammer setting of Age of Sigmar, and sees you gather a party of champions to take on the many trials of the Silver Tower. While you can equip your heroes with armour and weapons, what Silver Tower specialises in, is short tactical micro-battles, letting you dip in and out of the game at will. See our Warhammer Quest: Silver Tower review for more info. XCOM 2 Collection The XCOM 2 Collection on iOS was one of our mobile games of the year for 2020, and Feral's port of the classic tactics title is truly excellent. In our XCOM 2 review we called it "a great way for new players to discover what makes the series special", and whether it's the high difficulty, the action-filled setting, or its smart tactics play, the game really is a summary of all that is great in XCOM. The game finally received an Android release in July 2021, allowing even more people to play and enjoy it. FTL: Faster than light The game that spawned a thousand clones, FTL: Faster Than Light is an excellent top-down spaceship simulator roguelike. Basically, as with Crying Suns, you're in command of a starship on an important mission to save the galaxy, but along the way you happen upon all sorts of dangerous encounters. How you approach each of these is what makes FTL so clever, as you balance resources on your ship to prolong your survival. When you do die, however, it's for real. FTL is as punishing as it is smart. Bloons TD 6 Join millions of other players as you craft your perfect defense from a combination of awesome Monkey Towers, upgrades, heroes, and abilities. Play with friends in up to four player co-op, challenge yourself by taking on fearsome boss bloons, and battle through multiple maps in this fun, vivid strategy game. Elvenar Sometimes a strategy game allows you to enjoy the thrill of leading an army into war, but other times they're all about building and developing an empire of fantastical cities, and that's exactly what you do in Elvenar. The fantasy setting gives it a unique twist, setting it apart from the wealth of modern day city-building games that are available to mobile gamers. In Elvenar, you have three main objectives: to complete quests, to explore, and to research. There's an endless supply of quests to complete, with some of them based around progressing the game's story, and others being generic tasks which loop over time. Research will help your city to grow bigger and stronger, while exploration helps you to find new lands to cultivate. If you're looking for a new free-to-play game to be your new addiction, Elvenar might be an excellent choice. And those are all the games we have! If you're really into your simulation strategy, our list of the best mobile war games might be for you. Also, be sure to check out our best mobile card games if you like a little synergy-based play, and read about Scrambly if you want to start making money while playing mobile games. Despite