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other non-player characters. Underneath this Sim like gameplay is also mystery solving which requires players to visit key locations, uncover clues and question characters across the 12 episodic storylines. [Read Review] 8.1 User Avg (57 votes) BUY Released around the same time as The Sims 2 Singles Flirt Up Your Life takes clear inspiration from The Sims franchise and targets the sub-group of fans that spend the bulk of their time dedicating to relationship management, dating and romance. Limiting you to a single house of roommates, Singles Flirt Up Your Life features similar room customization, needs management and romance options as the various installments in the Sims series. What sets Singles Flirt Up Your Life apart though is that the relationship between the two roommates that you select is your ultimately your sole focus. With a preset number of characters with their own traits and backgrounds it's the matching of personalities that creates alternative and interesting gameplay for Singles Flirt Up Your Life. While selecting similar characters is definitely possible the real enjoyment of the game comes from selecting opposing personalities and attempting to make them work amongst balancing career and day to day tasks. [Read Review] 7.5 User Avg (63 votes) BUY Like other games on this page Ciao Bella opts for a stat and story focused life simulation and management game. Its simple design makes it particularly attractive for those that want a more casual offering in the genre or aren't able to achieve the higher system requirements that current day games demand. Following the story of Elena, Ciao Bella challenges players to guide her through the hectic requirements of day to day living across family, work and health. A central theme to the 13 chapter driven story is her relationship with Elio and the potential for a marriage proposal amongst a backdrop of family drama which requires players to travel around the city to resolve. Other activities include going out to eat, hitting the gym, working or relaxing at home which all require balance and have their own trade-offs. [Read Review] 7.1 User Avg (28 votes) BUY Sansar is a newer entrant in the life simulation genre and comes from the same creators (Linden Labs) that brought you Second Life. While similar in overall design to the experience offered by Second Life Sansar builds on the fundamentals with a fresh visual look and the inclusion of VR as it continues to grow in popularity. Sansar is also one of the limited number of Steam games like Sims for gamers who prefer to house all their games within their Steam library. For the Sims fan the attraction to Sansar is similar to that of Second Life with players who want to go from creating houses to creating entire worlds using self-created objects or those found within the Sansar store. In particular Sansar has established itself as home for fanatics of popular culture to recreate scenes from their favourite films and novels with entire worlds dedicated to Star Trek, Star Wars and other culture that has been meticulously created. This is paired with arguably one of the best avatar customisation systems of any life simulation title to recreate yourself or something entirely new in the Sansar universe which is used to play games, explore worlds and meet new people. [Read Review] 6.7 User Avg (5 votes) VISIT Avakin Life offers a game like Sims for Android (and iOS) with vast avatar customisation and house building alongside social oriented gameplay. This mobile game has attracted an audience of millions with its high-quality graphics which is able to bring your avatar and dream home creations to life within the palm of your hand. A vast range of home and clothing styles makes Avakin Life comparable to The Sims franchise in terms of raw item numbers especially when the regular updates are considered. The free price tag also makes Avakin Life an affordable virtual simulation pick and means you don't have to fork out extra money for the latest expansion content pack like you do in The Sims. As a social focused chat game though Avakin Life does lack life simulation and management elements, instead replacing it with social and community features where you'll meet and interact with other players and take part in fashion challenges. [Read Review] 6.5 User Avg (60 votes) GET GET RELATED PAGES: Games Like Avakin Life, Games Like Covet Fashion, Games Like Gaia Online, Games Like GirlSense, Games Like Habbo Hotel, Games Like Kim Kardashian Hollywood, Games Like Lady Popular, Games Like Line Play, Games Like Meez, Games Like Movie Star Planet, Games Like OurWorld, Games Like Second Life, Games Like SmallWorlds, Games Like Smeet, Games Like Star Girl , Games Like Stardom, Games Like The Sims, Games Like TimierMe, Games Like WeeWorld, Games Like Wooworld, Games Like Zwinky, Games Like Game Dev Tycoon, Games Like Prison Architect, Games Like Roller Coaster Tycoon, Games Like Theme Hospital, Games Like Virtual Families, Games Like Alter Ego, Games Like Village Life, Games Like Virtual Villagers, Games Like ArcheAge, Games Like EVE Online, Games Like GMod, Games Like IMVU, Games Like Ultima Online, Games Like Wurm Online, Games Like My Camer Love Show More By Phil Owen on April 24, 2025 at 12:11PM PDT GameSpot may receive revenue from affiliate and advertising partnerships for sharing this content and from purchases through links. The Sims franchise has had a monopolistic grip on the life sim genre for 25 years, and EA seems determined to keep it that way by turning The Sims 4 into a true forever game. We're in the 11th year of The Sims 4 now, and there's no end to its cycle of expansions and other DLC packs anywhere in sight. So it certainly seems as though The Sims 4 could theoretically be the only game you ever need. But where's the fun in that?One of the downsides of The Sims 4 being more than a decade old is that it's built on a foundation that isn't exactly modern—the Sims 4 launched before the PlayStation 4 and Xbox One did. That dated foundation puts some limits on what EA can do with it, and it also means you could seriously use a change of pace every once in a while. Ten years is a long time to play one game, even one that's refreshed this often.Fortunately, there are plenty of games out there that can scratch that same Sims itch even while being something that's pretty different—or, in one particular new case, by being very similar but trying lots of new stuff. Let's dive in. Or if you'd prefer to stick with what you already know, check out our recommendations for the best Sims 4 mods.Developer: InZoi StudioRelease Date: March 27, 2025 in early accessPlatforms: PCGenre: Life simThe Sims has had such an intense chokehold on the life sim genre that there has never really been any direct competition, but that streak ended with the early-access release of InZoi—which has positioned itself as a much more modern take on the genre with deep customization [link], more realistic graphics, and a simulation that is simultaneously more granular and larger in scale. Right now, however, InZoi is still very much a game that was just released in early access, and so it's a fairly hollow experience compared with The Sims 4. Even so, InZoi already does a lot of things you can't do at all in The Sims 4, and that more than makes it worth checking out.Developer: Colossal OrderRelease Date: March 10, 2015/October 24, 2023Platforms: PC, PS4, PS5, Xbox One, Xbox Series X|S, Switch for G51. PC only for CS2Genre: City builderDespite being the heir to Sim City's city-building throne, there's a certain portion of folks who look down on the Cities: Skylines games as being more of a "city painter" than a true building game, but I've never understood why that's such a bad thing. If I want to micro-manage all the granular details of how my town works, I'll play Dwarf Fortress or Workers & Resources: Soviet Republic. If I just want to chill out and build a huge and sprawling city with a huge public transportation network, I'll go with one of the Cities: Skylines games. It's that relaxed nature that makes this franchise scratch that Sims itch—it's hard to fail at Cities: Skylines, and as with The Sims, life usually goes on even when things do go badly. In a sense, Cities: Skylines is The Sims on a larger scale, a city-sized version of a dollhouse.Disclosure: Fanatical and GameSpot are both owned by Fandom.Developer: NintendoRelease Date: March 20, 2020Platforms: SwitchGenre: Social simIt's not the most sophisticated experience, but that's the point. The Animal Crossing franchise is a low-key homeowner experience, in which you've gotta do whatever sort of odd activities—like fishing, collecting various flora and fauna, and doing tasks for your neighbors—in order to pay your mortgage and expand the size of your house so you can decorate it with all the cool stuff you've collected in order to impress your neighbors and anyone who might visit you. So, yeah, Nintendo's little life sim about anthropomorphized animals is like The Sims, but there's a bit of crafting involved, and you will never die from laughing too hard. If you find it's to your liking, we also have picks for more games like Animal Crossing.Developer: ConcernedApeRelease Date: February 26, 2016Platforms: PCGenre: Life simIn Stardew Valley, you'll take over an old, dilapidated farm and turn it into a fresh and thriving one. It's a simple premise, but after eight years of steady updates from the single developer who makes it, Stardew Valley is an incredibly robust open-world experience that's grown so much over the years. You can make friends and start a family. You can explore a mysterious cave that goes on forever and is full of valuable items. You can grind up your skills so that you're more effective at farming or fighting off baddies. And, most importantly, you can do basically anything else you can think of that would make sense in this context—like fishing, cooking, building, and more. If you dig it, you can also expand your experience with a wide array of Stardew Valley mods.Developer: Paradox Development StudioRelease Date: February 14, 2012/September 1, 2020Platforms: PC, Mac, Linux for both; PS5 and Xbox Series X|S for CS3Genre: Grand strategy and role-playingIf you love The Sims but sometimes feel as though it doesn't have enough religious scandals, succession crises, or murder, then Crusader Kings may just hit the spot. This grand-strategy franchise is different from most in that you're not controlling a nation, but rather the individual in charge of it—you've gotta keep the people of your realm happy, keep foreign foes at bay, and try not to get murdered by your family members who think they should be in charge instead of you. And, yeah, there's plenty of WooHoing going on here as well—but if you sleep with the wrong guy's wife in Crusader Kings, you might find yourself buried alive or tossed in an oubliette (best not to Google that one unless you enjoy nightmares). While the first two games are famously inscrutable, Crusader Kings 3 is pretty well streamlined and approachable by comparison.Developer: MaxisRelease Date: September 4, 2008Platforms: PC, MacGenre: Life sim, strategyThe Sims 4 has been around for a long time, and a lot of folks have had the same game running for years—I've had a vampire dynasty going for a few years myself, and it's really cool that I have this whole little universe with a robust history that I've witnessed from the beginning. But the world doesn't really change much over time—it's just the people who are different from one era to the next. But Maxis, the studio that created The Sims, has a game that will give you more of a longitudinal perspective on civilization: Spore. In Spore, you begin as a primordial, single-cell organism and grow from there into land animals, then intelligent beings who create a society, and eventually you'll take over your home planet and head into outer space—instead of living through the life of a person, you're living through the life of an entire species.Developer: Frontier DevelopmentsRelease Date: November 5, 2019Platforms: PC, PS5, Xbox Series X|SGenre: Management simPets in The Sims are great, and I bet it'd be pretty fun to have an all-pets world. That's not really an option in The Sims 4 even with mods, but fortunately we've got Planet Zoo to keep us occupied. Planet Zoo is exactly what the name implies: a zoo builder. But what makes it of particular interest to us, beyond our enjoyment of building stuff, is its emphasis on caring for the animals and meeting their needs—it really does have the feel of a The Sims: Animal Edition in that way. And it's got that same relaxed vibe that makes The Sims work so well. Planet Zoo is a treasure in its own right, but it certainly scratches a lot of itches for simmers.Developer: Humble ReedsRelease Date: June 8, 2024Platforms: PC, Switch, Xbox Series X|SGenre: Casual management simIf zoos make you feel weird, Kamaeru: A Frog Refuge is a palatable alternative that more or less hits the same sweet spot for simmers. This indie delight has you play as a pair of conservationists who are trying to turn some local wetlands into a preserve for frogs—basically, you're building a little town for them, with little frog houses and frog chairs and stuff. Very adorable, very unstressful, and the chilliest game on this list.Developer: Bethesda Game StudiosRelease Date: November 10, 2015Platforms: PC, Xbox One, Xbox Series X|S, PS4, and PS5Genre: Open-world RPGWhile Fallout 4 is mostly just a story-based open-world RPG, there's one particular aspect of the game that proved surprisingly compelling for me: setting up little villages all over the wasteland. And with mods (including on the console versions), you can remove most of the limits on building—restrictions on the amount of stuff that can go into a single settlement, or on where you can build a new town, can be removed easily, and let you turn the Commonwealth into a whole new Sims world that you can manage. hilariously, you only have to play a new game for about 15 minutes before somebody tries to recruit you to run a settlement—so you don't have to deal with the story too much if you don't want to.Developer: Gameloft MontrealRelease Date: December 5, 2023Platforms: PC, PS4, PS5, Xbox One, Xbox Series X|S, Switch, all Apple devicesGenre: Action-adventure, life simThere are two main types of gameplay in Disney Dreamlight Valley—there's the adventuring side of things, where you explore the world and find cool stuff and meet famous Disney characters. And then there's the part where you take control of the titular valley and rebuild it into a thriving little town for both yourself and your Disney pals to live in. You can build and decorate the town and the houses within however you like, but instead of having normal human neighbors, you'll be rubbing elbows with folks like Buzz Lightyear and Moana. If you think this sounds like it could have been called Disney Stardew Valley, you'd be right, but there ain't nothing wrong with that.Developer: Live Motion GamesRelease Date: June 9, 2022Platforms: PCGenre: Construction simIf you enjoy building houses in The Sims but want to take your home-building experience to a whole new level, Builder Simulator may be the game for you. Unlike The Sims, where building a wall involves a couple clicks of the mouse, Builder Simulator puts you in a first-person perspective and makes you build the house by hand—pouring cement, putting down individual bricks and tiles, and painting every wall stroke by stroke. If you aren't a construction worker by trade, Builder Simulator will probably give you a new appreciation for all the nonsense that goes into it.Developer: Microbird GamesRelease Date: July 18, 2024Platforms: PC, Xbox Series X|SGenre: Action/adventure, role-playingAt a glance, Dungeons of Hinterberg is exactly what the name implies: a dungeon crawler. Indeed, by day you'll explore the oddly stylish world and delve into a wide variety of strange dungeons in search of treasure and fortune. But at night you'll return to Hinterberg, where the game turns into a bit of a social sim—it's structured like a Persona game, more or less. The relationships you form in Hinterberg will be crucial to your success, both because it's good to have friends and also because you can learn a lot from your fellow adventurers—to find every secret that this game holds, you'll need to get popular.Developer: CandyWriterRelease Date: September 29, 2018Platforms: Browser, iOS, AndroidGenre: Life simThis text-based indie and its sequel are very simple: You're presented with a player character at birth, and you decide what they do as they get older and eventually die. For every year of the character's life, you'll be given a decision prompt and the ability to do lots of stuff like dating, going to school, getting a job, gambling away all your money, and so on. The interface is low-key—you pick an action and the game tells you what the immediate result is, and sometimes there will be further consequences later. It's like a Sims Lite, in a sense, since you get to experience a whole lifespan in a much shorter time than it takes for a sim to die of old age. And the best part? The Buildif games are both free and playable in any web browser and on mobile. For all those who wanted more freedom in The Sims games, The Sims 3 is their dream come true. The game offers more playability and more freedom as compared to its predecessors. While playing the game, it literally feels like the series has grown up to provide more entertainment and possibilities to the players. For example, the Sims in the game are no longer bound to the dollhouse mechanics. They now have Personalities, Life Goals, Body types and Hairstyles, and they can now move more freely in the game world, thanks to the revamped game mechanics. Furthermore, The Sims 3 allows the players to customize the environments with ease and enjoy going through millions of new ways to create the world of their dreams. There are loads of new features added in the game such as New and Unique Skills, more new Careers, New worlds to explore, the fantastic Build and Buy modes and the freedom to create whole new worlds, etc. The Sims 3 offers a huge bunch of Expansion Packs as well that provide with additional game features such as new Quests, Careers, Locations, Social Interaction, New Skills, etc. The Expansion Packs include World Adventures, Ambitions, Late Night, Showtime, Pets, Generations, University Life, Supernatural, Seasons, Into the Future and Island Paradise. Each and every Expansion pack offers loads of new and exciting things and enhances the player's fantastic experience with the game. The Sims 3 provides various Stuff packs and Editions as well to add up more spice to the Gameplay. In general, The Sims 3 is the most amazing Life-Simulation and Social networking platform for all the players around the world. Do try it out if you have played The Sims 1 and 2, you will definitely feel the difference. (Image credit: Maxis, Electronic Arts) For the past 25 years, any list of games like The Sims has been mostly wishful thinking. There hasn't been anything truly like The Sims series—until now. In 2025 we're finally getting some true Sims competition that mimics the full suite of character creation, Build Mode, and Live Mode simulation that the series has dominated for decades. There are now two games like The Sims in early access that you can play right now with at least one more scheduled to launch in 2025. I'll lay out which games you can expect to play and when and a few bonus options for games that aren't exactly like The Sims but do capture at least part of that experience while we wait for more to launch. Games like The Sims [Image credit: Krafton]InZoiRelease date: 2025 (early access) | Developer: InZoi Studio | Steam Related Articles The first genuine competition to The Sims series has finally launched and Krafton's life sim is just as pretty as I expected. The character creator is gorgeous and the build mode, after I got used to it, is incredibly pretty too. InZoi came out the gate with some features that have long been pain points for Sim fans: decent wedding ceremonies, pregnancy gameplay, and an open world with drivable cars. At the beginning of early access, InZoi did feel a little empty, in my opinion. It's clearly a good foundation on which InZoi Studio has a lot of plans to build, according to the InZoi roadmap. My biggest concern for InZoi right now is that it may continue prioritizing development of its various AI tools instead of creating custom swatches and patterns for us to play with. (Image credit: Ellepeck Games)Tiny LifeRelease date: 2023 (Early access) | Developer: Ellepeck Games | SteamTiny Life is still in early access with a small development team but it already meets so many parts of the quintessential Sims experience. You can build homes and community lots, create families with silly traits and goals, and manage their unpredictable life journeys in an open world with multiple neighborhoods. The pixelated art style won't be to everyone's taste but I already had a surprisingly good time digging into Tiny Life's early access version. It makes keeping an eye on traits and relationships pretty easy so I always felt like I was able to appreciate its funny moments of simulated weirdness. The open world is also great, bringing a bit of old Sims 3 nostalgia for those that miss it. Keep up to date with the most important stories and the best deals, as picked by the PC Gamer team. (Image credit: Electronic Arts)The Sims 3Release date: 2009 | Developer: Maxis | SteamSince there are still very few true options for games like The Sims to play I am going ahead and recommending The Sims 3. I've been returning to it myself in the past year and honestly having a blast. Visually, The Sims 3 may have aged like milk—though I do have a soft spot for the chunky old homes if not the characters—but the way it forces you to play is still great. Unlike The Sims 4, which always asks for permission before sending your Live Mode story spiralling in a new direction, The Sims 3 very deliberately throws speedbumps at you. I really enjoy being forced to react to burglars, unlikely romantic attraction, and other chaos. It's a matter of taste definitely, but if you're someone constantly feeling bored of The Sims 4 and not sure what you want to do in game next, The Sims 3 is my answer. Games kind of like The SimsWhile we wait for more Sims-like to launch, I'll also recommend some games that capture the same vibe as just part of The Sims experience. And I promise not to pretend that Stardew Valley is like The Sims just because it's a life sim—it isn't. Upcoming games like The Sims (Image credit: Paratives Team)ParalivesRelease date: 2025 (early access) | Developer: Alex Massé & Paralives Studio | SteamParalives has been in the works for a long time from a small team and finally plans to reach early access in 2025. It leans even harder into stylized visuals than The Sims 4 does, with characters that almost look painted. The big appeal of Paralives for me is its very adaptable build system that lets you do things like resize windows (imagine that), turn objects like tables and lamps into different size variants easily, and grid-free wall construction. On the simulation side Paralives looks like it's definitely going to lean into developing a character over time by growing skills, changing jobs, and more.