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SEGA
SATURN

**The definitive guide to
Sega's newest superconsole**

C O N T E N T S

Welcome to the Next Level... Sega's new 32-bit baby, the Saturn, hits our shores in August. But what is all the hoo-hah about? Well, we've put together this handy take-anywhere, conveniently sized booklet to explain everything you need to know about the beast. We'll explain the jargon, look at what you will be able to play and generally put things in a clearer perspective!

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The Story of the Saturn

Sega has always been an innovator and leader in entertainment technology. The Tokyo-based company revealed the first 16-bit console, the Mega Drive, in the late '80s. Sega then produced the Mega-CD, the first CD-ROM gaming console to be released world-wide.

One of the reasons for Sega's success has been its arcade range, but in the last couple of years it was becoming difficult to translate them onto the home units. Sega knew that the games people played in the arcades were what they wanted to play at home. The Saturn was proposed as the enabling technology to bring these high-powered games to your living room.

The original Saturn specifications were announced in 1993. However, when Sony announced the CD-based PlayStation-X, Sega's machine was exposed as hopelessly underpowered.

The original Saturn prototype was modified to slot on top of the Mega Drive, and was renamed the 32X.

The Saturn was completely overhauled, although the 32X architecture was still employed. Sega added new custom chips and a second processor, and settled on CD as the storage medium. The enhanced console's power lies between the AM1 board (*Virtua Fighter* and *Virtua Racing*) and the AM2 board (*Daytona*) and is in fact being used as a new arcade board, the Titan.

The result? Since the Japanese release at Christmas last year, the Saturn has sold 710,000 units...

Technically Speaking

Inside the Saturn is a veritable truckload of chips – there's more silicon here than in Pamela Anderson. For starters, we have the CPU, or in this case two Hitachi SH2 32-bit RISC processors – each running at 28.6 MHz, and between them clearing 50 million instructions per second. To help the main processors, there is another Hitachi chip, the SH1, as well as a Motorola 68EC000 (the same one that powers the Mega Drive). There are also dedicated sound and graphics chips. Memory size is a very chunky 36 megabits, which is rapidly filled by data streamed off the double-speed CD.

What this all means is that the Saturn has enough horsepower to move 500,000 unshaded triangles per second and display them from a palette of 16.7 million colours. The graphics co-processor handles scaling and rotation of sprites, as well as hardware scrolling. Sound can be streamed straight from CD, or generated using 32 PCM channels or 8 FM voices.

What you effectively have is an arcade machine for home use – Sega's arcade division has taken the basic Saturn design, added some extra RAM and is now using it in arcade machines. The Titan board will be first seen in the new *Golden Axe* game. Arcade hits should translate very nicely indeed – a prime reason for the Saturn's development. Be warned though, a sit-in *Daytona* costs over \$20,000, so don't expect the Saturn to perform arcade perfectly!

Victory Goal

There are no draws in the Japanese soccer league, as each game goes into overtime until a goal is scored. This goal is called the victory goal and hence the title of this soccer game. Apart from the bizarre team names like Grampus Eight, Verdy Kawasaki and Kashima Antlers, *Victory Goal* plays similarly to *FIFA '95*. You can select from five different viewpoints, which each boasts a zooming function. You can zoom during gameplay by using the control pad's top buttons, but the viewpoints can only be changed while the game is paused. Sound effects include some excellent crowd chants and there are enough different background songs to please everybody. If there's any criticism to be made it's the slowness of play, but it doesn't detract from what is an excellent soccer sim.



Daytona USA

This is the benchmark by which the Saturn will be measured. Sega's fantastic arcade hit is also the flagship for the 32-bit range, so its conversion has to be good. While it's not arcade perfect, it's pretty awesome compared to existing home system games. The pad controls take a bit of getting used to, but good news for die-hard *Daytona* freaks is that a steering wheel will be available soon. The graphics are impressive, but there is some sluggishness on the two more difficult tracks. The music is of great quality but immensely annoying.



Virtua Fighter

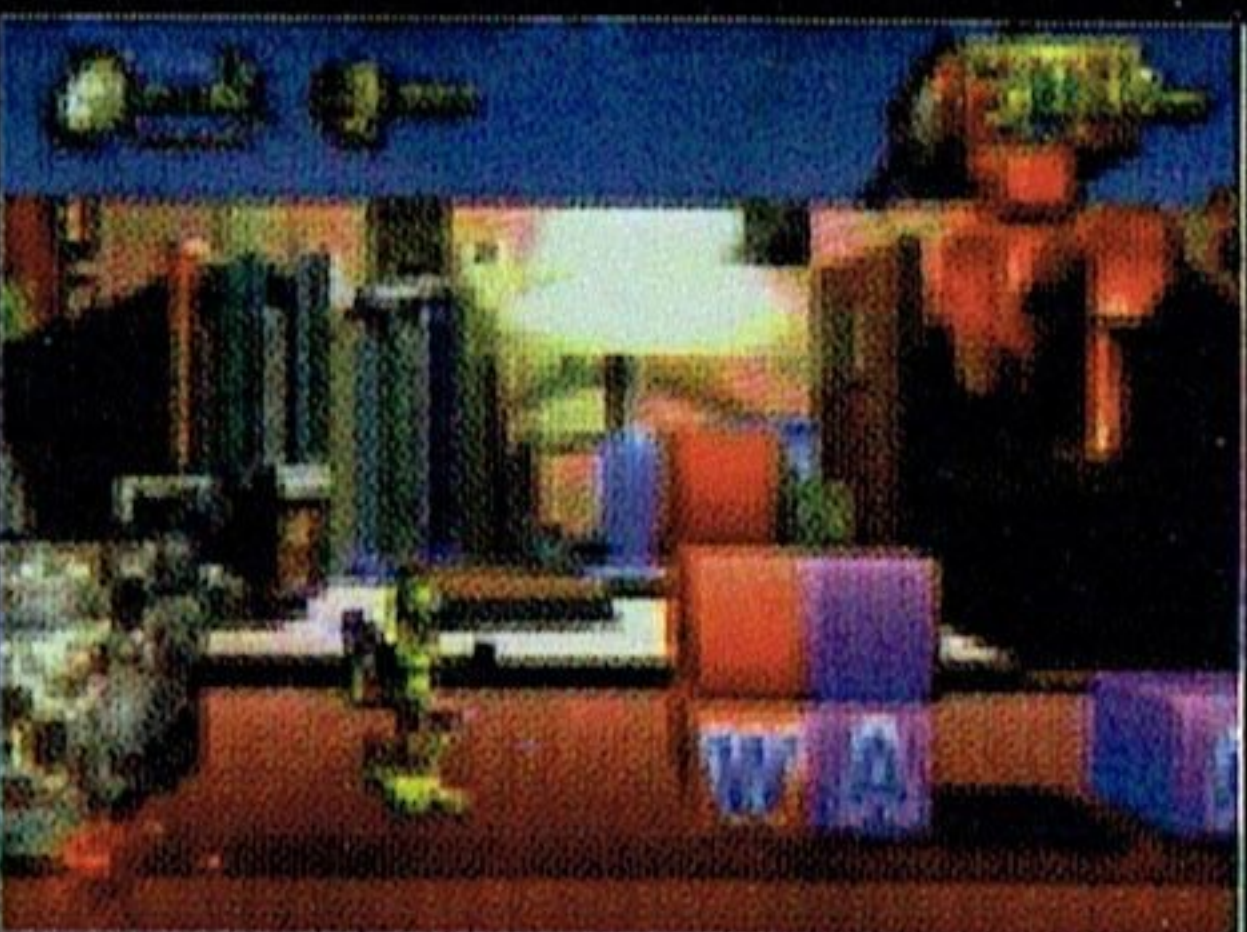
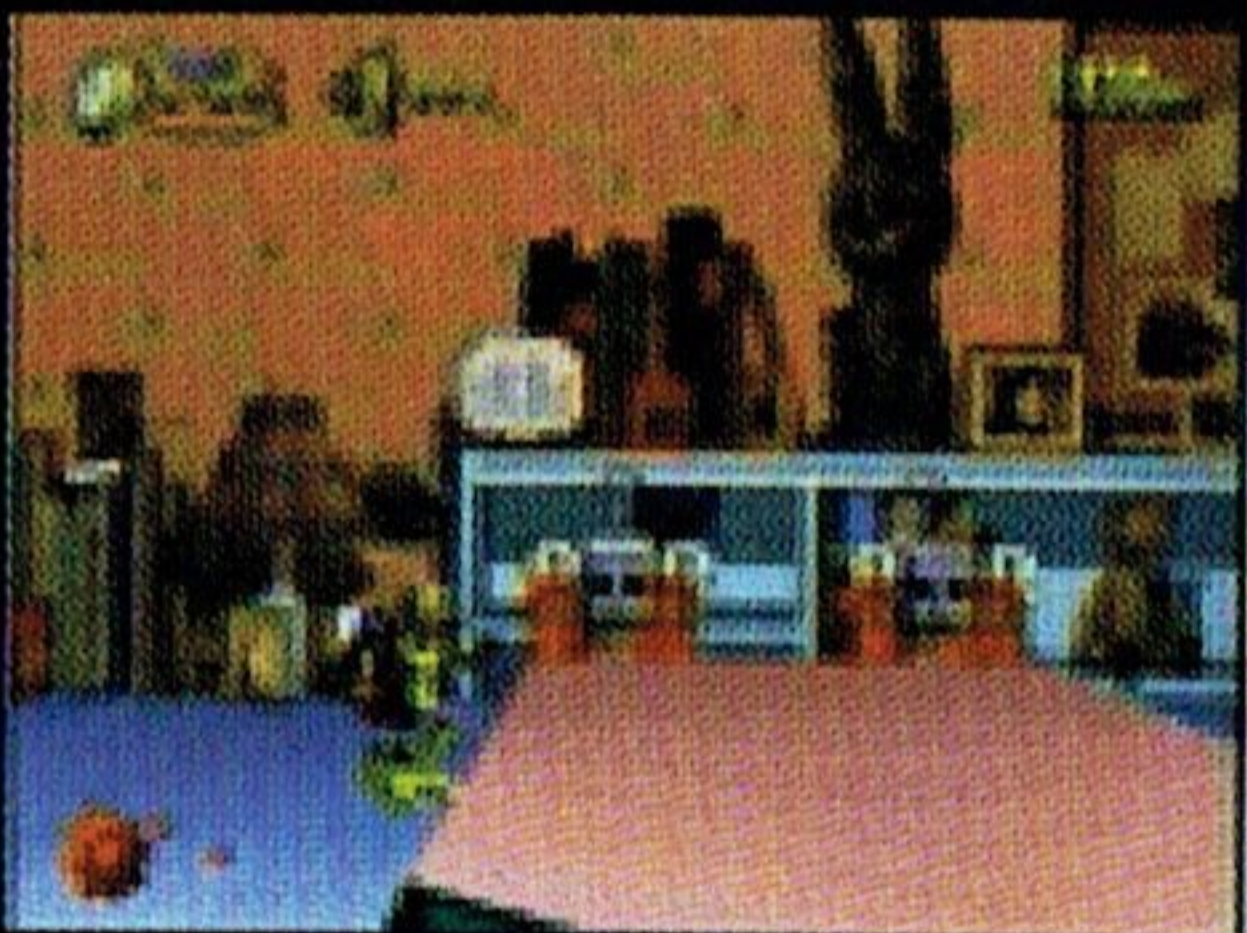
In Japan, one game alone assured the success of the Saturn – *Virtua Fighter*. Unlike *Mortal Kombat* and *Street Fighter*, VF is a true 3D game. The fighters consist of hundreds of polygons that have been assigned co-ordinates in three dimensions. Sega has used a revolutionary motion-capture technique that renders beautifully fluid actions. Each fighter performs kicks, punches, throws and bone-crunching specials with remarkable realism.

Although control is limited to punch, kick and guard, the set-up allows for intricate gameplay. Mastery doesn't come easily but persistence is rewarded with a highly playable fighter that offers much more 'depth' than its 2D cousins.



Clockwork Knight

In the fine tradition of Sega's other famous platform hero comes Pepperouchau, the Clockwork Knight. You take the role of the wind-up toy who has to rescue his girlfriend, stolen after all the toys have come alive at midnight. The game is set in the rooms of a beautifully drawn house. Like most platformers, the hero can jump or attack to avoid enemies. Pepperouchau's weapon of choice is a large wind-up key that he can use to fend off enemies and open up toy boxes. The Saturn shows off its beefy colour capabilities both in the stunning intro and during the game. When it comes to the crunch though, this is just another standard platformer and anyone over 12 will finish it over a couple of nights.



Pebble Beach Golf

Pebble Beach Golf is really a multimedia presentation of the famous course with a bit of a game thrown in.

Featuring bundles of full-motion video and starring the Barney Rubble-esque Craig Stadler, this disc is as slick as TV coverage. Gameplay is fairly standard – select a club, adjust your stance and hit the small white thing.

There are plenty of options and gameplay variants (Skins, Tournament and so on), and up to four players can take part. However, there's only one course, so long-term value is suspect.

Once you've mastered the 18 holes on the hardest settings, the game will just gather dust. Still, golf-heads should check it out.



Panzer Dragoon

Of all the games released with the Saturn, *Panzer Dragoon* is perhaps the most impressive. It's a 3D shoot 'em up, but what sets it aside from the crowd is the breathtakingly smooth texture-mapped polygon graphics. You take on the role of a dragon rider who must liberate his planet from an evil empire. It's a fairly thin storyline, but it allows the designers to create some amazing enemies, some are instantly recognisable, like the sandworms from *Dune*. There are four viewpoints from which to use the action – you'll need to use them all to finish the game. If you want to impress your friends with your shiny new Saturn, look no further than *Panzer Dragoon*.



Deadalus

Doom has spawned many imitators – a few have come close to the original's playability, most have fallen by the wayside. *Deadalus* falls somewhere between these two extremes, and at first glance bears more than a passing resemblance to *Alien Versus Predator* on the Atari Jaguar.

You must infiltrate the space station *Deadalus* and destroy all renegade robots, collect a key to exit the level and then go onto the next one. And the next... And the next... This repetitiveness is the game's main downfall. It has very atmospheric graphics and sound effects, but it lacks continuity and seems a bit jerky. This game will only appeal to those who need an urgent *Doom* fix on Saturn.



Astal

Although no release date has been confirmed for *Astal*, its quality ensures it an early position in the software line-up. The graphic wizardry shows once and for all how far the 32-bit machines are ahead of 16-bit consoles – check out the amazing hand-drawn backdrops. Gameplay is similar to *Wonderboy*, but offers many new twists. The story is very Japanese – boy and girl with strange powers are separated, boy sets off to rescue her. The boy, Astal, has many attacks in his



repertoire including a sumo throw, an overhead fist and the ability to throw things he finds lying around – including massive trees. After the first level, he can free his companion, a purple parrot with magical properties. Platform fans should definitely check this out ahead of *Clockwork Knight*.



A c c e s s o r i e s

Steering Wheel

Designed specifically for *Daytona*, this should be one of the first Saturn accessories released.

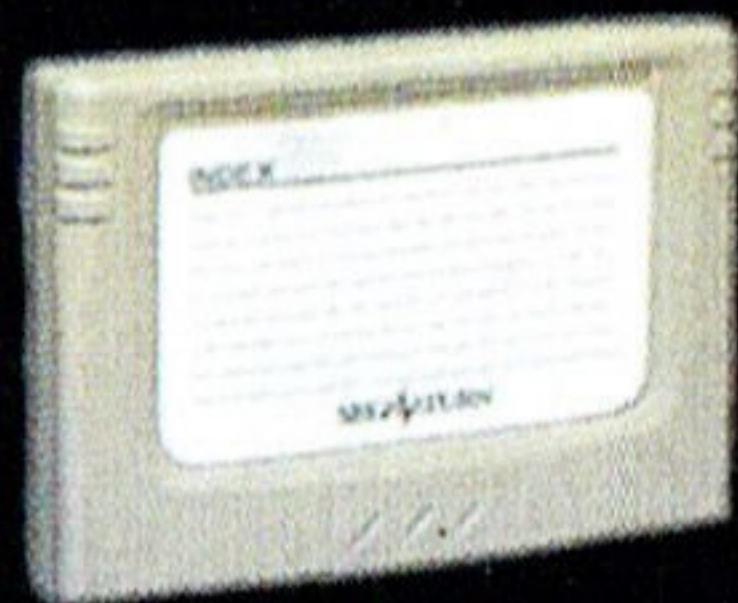


Six-Player Multi-Tap

Allows up to four extra players to participate in games like *Victory Goal* and *Pebble Beach*.

Virtua Stick

Similar to the Mega Drive's six-button Power Stick. Ideal for fighting games.

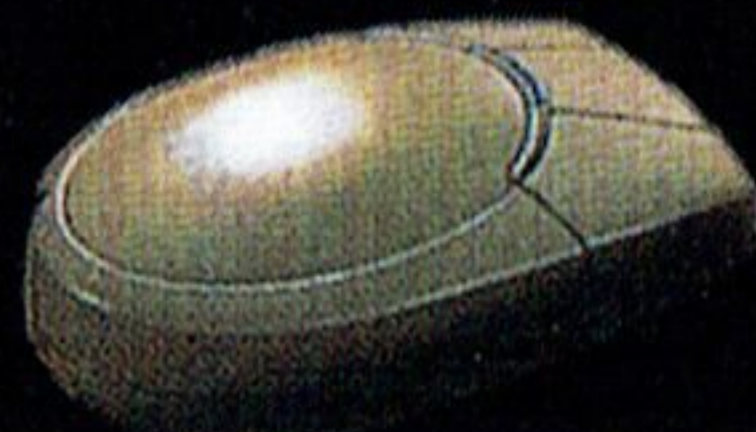


Memory Cartridge

Expands the in-built battery-backed RAM to 128K, allowing more game positions and high scores to be recorded.

Mouse

Similar to a PC mouse. Will be used for pointer-based games.



Saturn in Australia

Sega has slated early August as the release date for the official PAL Saturn. (NTSC versions have been available for a couple of months but as these are 'grey imports', Sega won't repair them if anything goes wrong. They may also be incompatible with officially released games.) The retail price is set to be \$799, including *Virtua Fighter* and an eight-button control pad. The first batch of games will all retail for \$89.95. Of the accessories released so far in Japan, only the steering wheel add-on and the Virtua Stick will be released here initially.

Other accessories which may be released in the future include a keyboard, floppy disc drive, hard disc drive, video CD adaptor and infra-red control pads.



Release Schedule

According to Sega, 'What you can play in the arcades today, you will be playing at home on Saturn tomorrow.' Judging by the release schedule, this could well be true. As yet, Sega hasn't announced any RPG releases, but you can bet there'll be loads made for the Japanese market.

At Saturn Release

Virtua Fighter

Clockwork Knight

Pebble Beach Golf

Victory Goal

Daytona USA

Panzer Dragoon

Deadalus

August

Mortal Kombat II

NBA Jam Tournament

Edition

Parodius

WWF Raw

September

Revolution X

October

Real Yumemi

November

Dracula X

December

Alien Trilogy

January '96

Magic

Teenage Mutant Hero

Turtles

February '96

Probotector

March '96

3D Olympics

Date TBA

Shinobi X

Golden Axe: The Duel

Ecco Saturn

Myst

Doom II

Bug

Virtual Hydlide

Virtua Racing Saturn

Real Baseball

NHL All-Star Hockey

Blackfire

Solar Eclipse

Title Fight 2



**Thanks to
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