

# How I Discovered Final Fantasy X

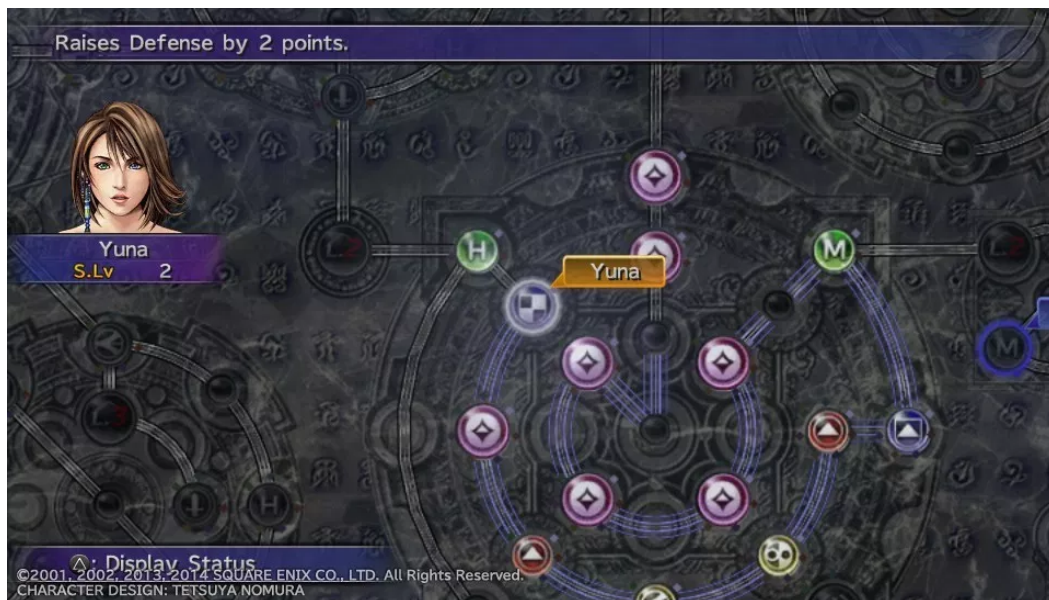


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It was early Spring and like many high school students, I would grasp at the opportunity to get fresh air as soon as the lunch bell rang. As the halls filled with people scrambling to their lockers, I would observe students leaving the school to head to the mall. "You are allowed to do that?", I wondered as I watched my peers with curiosity.

The concept of leaving school grounds at lunch was foreign to me because I was used to staying on school property for the whole day and never leaving unless it was for a field trip or if I got sick and had to be picked up by a parent.



As a teenager, I craved more independence and despite being surprised and confused by my peers who left school to hang out at the mall, I wanted to experience that too but was scared to take action. My thoughts were racing in my mind, "What if I got in trouble? I'd be grounded for life if my mom found out I was being influenced by my peers!" Thankfully my anxious thoughts were unfounded.



Later that year one of my girlfriends invited me out to try bubble tea for the first time. I was excited! Though there was a catch. I had to tell one of my teachers where I was going not only for my safety but also for my mom's peace of mind.

So, with everything squared away and permission granted, I went with my friend to the mall. I didn't know that one simple excursion would lead me to a video game that would be a part of my history as a gamer for years to come.



### *Final Fantasy X.*

I first spotted *Final Fantasy X* on a shelf at EB Games and as a gamer that just got a PS2 and loved RPGs, I couldn't resist checking out the back of the box and reading what the game had to offer. It was ironic that what sold me on *Final Fantasy X* wasn't the words printed on the back of the box, but instead this image of Yuna. I was captivated by her.

From that moment on, I wanted *Final Fantasy X* to be the first game in my collection. The cost of the game was \$19.99 so I took out the money I had on me and counted it. Unfortunately, I didn't have enough so I had to leave the store without it. I was disappointed that day!





That wouldn't be the last time *Final Fantasy X* and I would cross paths since a year later I received the game as a gift. I was grateful and ecstatic! I wasted no time in playing the game and immersing myself in its world.

Here's the kicker. I played the game without a memory card and treated my first playthrough as a challenge of sorts. How far would I make it before I died at a boss battle and had to start the WHOLE game over again? Well not far.



I was still new to playing RPGs and up until that point, I don't think I ever beat one. However, I kept trying. I devoted my weekends to *Final Fantasy X* and I don't regret a single moment.

I enjoyed that this was the first *Final Fantasy* title to feature voice acting as it increased the quality of storytelling, linearity making it easy to pick up and play, and the bond between Tidus and Yuna.



*Final Fantasy X* always makes me cry no matter how many times I replay it and it will be a part of my heart forever.

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