

You find yourself in a new place, with people you do not know. The past few years of my traveling life is littered with experiences like this, bonding with people of all age groups, regions, lifestyles, etc. Whether you play competitively, professionally, or even if it's just a hobby of yours in your free time, there's almost always some aspect of gaming that can unite us as people. This experience made me reflect on the other instances in my life where I made friends in places I did not expect to. I immediately thought back to 2014, where I moved to a ranch ten thousand feet up in the mountains, in order to take a breather from our hectic, high pressure society. Throughout my twenty-three years on this planet, I've had my fair share and more of new situations; the past three years, I've lived in five different states and met many eclectic groups of people. Just yesterday, I took a flight from Salt Lake City, Utah, to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to visit my family for a few days before embarking to Los Angeles, California for work. The man on my right helped me with the caves in Ocarina of Time, and the man on my left explained to me how he enjoys playing games on flights because it's more fun than reading to him. Being in a place of solitude and nature, the last thing I expected was for us to bond over something electronically, but lo and behold, within days, we were chatting during lunch and dinner about all of our favorite video games from our childhood. I put in my headphones, blasted the AC above me, and prepared to stick out the flight. I took out my laptop from my carry on and turned on my N64 emulator to play some Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time. Any of my 90's homies understand that this game is one of the cornerstones of the gaming scene. The moral of the story is that you never know where you are going to find a friend, and many times, gaming, in one way or another, can be a catalyst for you to develop these relationships. We understand that even though video games are becoming commonplace in today's society, there is still a slight stigma in our world regarding them. Here we were, three men from three completely different walks of life, time periods, and environments, enjoying one common thing: video games.