

Publishing Guide

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About this Document

Welcome to Nintendo Switch, and thank you for bringing your content to our platform.

Whether you are a publisher with a portfolio of titles or a developer who wants to self-publish, this guide will be for you. We will try to explain in plain and simple words how you can publish your title(s) on Nintendo Switch, and cover both physical and digital release.

We hope you enjoy reading and find the information we provide useful. Please contact us if you have any questions.

Your Nintendo Team





Points of Contact

Nintendo of Europe GmbH (NOE), located in Frankfurt, Germany, is your point of contact for publishing in Europe, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand.

Note: NOE have multiple points of contact. During this guide we will point out the team responsible for each topic.

Account Management & Business Development Team:

Accountmanagement Publisher@nintendo.de

Agreements Team:

Agreements_Publisher@nintendo.de

Artwork Team:

Artwork_Publisher@nintendo.de

Digital Team:

Digital Publisher@nintendo.de

Ordering Team:

Ordering_Publisher@nintendo.de

Nintendo Co., Ltd. (NCL), located in Kyoto, Japan, is your point of contact for publishing in Japan.

Contact:

contact_publish@nintendo.co.jp

Nintendo of America Inc. (NOA), located in Redmond, USA, is your point of contact for publishing in the USA, Canada and South America and selected parts of the Middle East.

Contact:

ThirdPartyPublisher@noa.nintendo.com

For publishing in other markets, including Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korea, please contact your local Nintendo office.

Lotcheck

Contact at NOE: Contact at NOA:

Lotcheck@nintendo.de Lotcheck@noa.nintendo.com

Developer Support

For technical support related questions, please contact our developer support teams.

NOA & NOE Region: NCL Region:

support@noa.com ml-developer_support@nintendo.co.jp



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Nintendo Switch Publishing Guide CONFIDENTIAL



General Information

No Concept Approval – As a Nintendo Switch publisher, the decision which title you bring to the platform is with you.

Mature Content – For content targeted at adults some restrictions on sales and promotions may apply depending on the region and platform.

Age Ratings (ESRB, PEGI, CERO...) relevant for the territories in which you want to release are mandatory for your title.

Localization – Your title's in-game text can be English-only. However, depending on your content and sales region you may want to consider localization into more languages.

Free Content – If you would like to release content digitally free of charge, please get in contact with us.

Dual Distribution – You can publish your title digitally and physically. If you are doing both it can be either a simultaneous or a staggered release.

Digital Business Model & Revenue Share – The underlying business model for a digital release on Nintendo Switch is the agency model. Nintendo acts as a sales commission agent on behalf of the publisher and keeps 30% of net revenues (excl. VAT) as a commission. Publishers get 70% of net revenues.

Digital Pricing & Release Date – For a digital release, you decide your title's price, release date and time. Pricing is flexible and can be changed up or down at your discretion.

Cost of Goods & Minimum Order Quantities – For a physical release you will typically publish a title on a dedicated Nintendo Switch game card in a dedicated Nintendo Switch plastic case. Game cards are manufactured by Nintendo in Japan and have to be ordered from us. Please talk to us for the cost of the cards and minimum order quantities. Contact NOE (Ordering Team), NOA and/or NCL depending on the region in which you want to release.

DLC –On the Nintendo Developer Portal, we call it Add-On Content (AOC). Within this document we will call it DLC.



Getting Started

The Nintendo Developer Portal (developer.nintendo.com)

Your adventure with Nintendo begins here. The NDP and its affiliate websites are your main source of information for all things Nintendo Switch, and they play a central role in the process of publishing a title on the platform.

Here you can...

- Manage your organization's user accounts
- Order dev kit hardware
- Access technical documentation, SDK and middleware
- Get technical support on our forums
- Execute publisher agreements for all regions
- Register and manage your titles
- Submit a title to Lotcheck (certification)
- Release a title on Nintendo eShop

... and lots more.

Dev Kits

To create and release a title for Nintendo Switch you need to obtain special hardware from Nintendo:

EDEV – Very close to a regular Nintendo Switch. Required for testing, but can also be used for actual development. It can be used to show pre-release software at (public) events, too.

SDEV – It has more RAM than an EDEV and can be connected to an Ethernet network, making it more convenient for larger projects. You cannot use an SDEV in public.

You can also order game cards which can be used with an EDEV and SDEV (both can write data to game cards).

Note: NOE ships dev kits and game cards to destinations within the European Economic Area plus Switzerland and Norway only. NOA provides dev kits and game cards within The Americas, Australia and New Zealand. NCL provides dev kits and game cards within Japan and Asia.



Publishing Process Overview

You can publish your title digitally and physically. Here are the basic steps for a digital release:

Digital Release

- 1. Register as a publisher (digital)
- 2. Set up product and request a game code
- 3. Get age ratings
- 4. Submit title to Lotcheck
- 5. Submit digital assets for game page registration

After your title has passed Lotcheck and it has been registered on Nintendo's servers, it can become available for purchase on Nintendo eShop and on Nintendo's websites at the date, time and price set by you.

Note: You may also sell the digital version of your title to retail or directly to consumers. Please contact NOE (Digital Team), NOA and/or NCL separately for more information.

A physical release requires some additional steps:

Physical Release

- 1. Register as a publisher (packaged goods)
- 2. Set up product and request a game code
- 3. Get age ratings
- 4. Submit title to Lotcheck
- 5. Submit artwork for compliance check
- 6. Order Nintendo Switch game cards
- 7. Assemble physical product
- 8. Distribute product to market

After your product has been distributed to your target market(s), retail can start selling to consumers at the day and time agreed with you. You can also sell physical product directly to consumers.



Register as a Publisher

To publish a title on Nintendo Switch, you will need to register as a publisher with Nintendo by accepting the Nintendo Switch Content License and Distribution agreement. You will find it in the *ADMIN/Agreements* section on NDP.

This agreement covers digital publishing for every region (NOE, NOA, NCL). After accepting it, region specific addendums are available for publishing physical releases ("packaged goods"). Processing your retail publishing application can take up to 10 working days.

For a physical release outside the region in which your company is registered on the NDP, you will need to have either a local office or work with a local partner for publishing and/or distribution.

IMPORTANT! After you have accepted the agreement, please be sure to enter your payee information in the *ADMIN/Financial Information* section. Without it you cannot submit a title to Lotcheck.

Nintendo publisher agreements are by platform. Once executed, you can publish all your titles on Nintendo Switch.

If you need help during the registration process, please contact NOE (Agreements Team), NOA and/or NCL.

If you want to publish a title physically which has been published already digitally by another publisher, please let us know as this setup may require special handling.



Register a Product & Request a Game Code

Each title you want to release has to be registered with Nintendo. You can do this before, during or towards the end of the development of your title.

You register your title in the *MY PRODUCTS* section on NDP. Select *Create Product* and enter the information required. You will have to specify the type of your release (physical and/or digital), your target sales region(s), your title's name, etc.

It is possible to have only one version of your title and release it in multiple sales regions (for example NOA + NOE). You will have to create multiple products if you have a different version of your title for each target sales region.

Once your title has been registered, you will have to request a Game Code for it. A Nintendo Switch Game Code is a unique identifier which looks like this: HAC-P-XXXXX. Select your product and click *Issue Game Code*. Enter the required information. The code will be issued immediately.

Patches & DLC (Add-On Content) can also be set up through the product page in the *MY PRODUCTS* section.

IMPORTANT! If your title contains online features, you need to register them on the OMAS (Online Management System) website. Please do this right after you have set up your title in the *MY PRODUCTS* section on NDP. Access the OMAS website from the *OTHER SITES* menu at the top of the NDP site.

Working with Partners on a Project

You can collaborate with business partners on your title on NDP. To do this, simply add them via the *Members* sheet in the product section. (Note: Your partners will need to have Nintendo Switch developer status.) For example, a publisher who is working with an external developer on a title may want to have the developer assist with entering the detailed (technical) information required for Lotcheck submission.



Get Age Ratings

To publish a title on Nintendo Switch you need to have official age ratings for the territories in which you want to release. Examples of age rating systems are the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) in the U.S., Pan European Game Information (PEGI) in Europe and Computer Entertainment Rating Organization (CERO) in Japan.

Typically, by the time you obtain age ratings your title will be content complete. It will be one of the last steps prior to submitting it to Lotcheck for certification.

For a digital only release, you can obtain age ratings using the International Age Rating Coalition (IARC) rating system. When using IARC, you will get a certificate with all assigned ratings for your target sales territories instantly. There is no fee for age ratings received via IARC. Please note that CERO is not part of the IARC system. (Refer to "Digital Release in Japan" later.)

You can get age ratings using IARC directly on NDP from within the *Age Rating* section of your release. There, click the *Get IARC Rating* button to start the IARC process.

Age ratings obtained via IARC cannot be used for a physical release. For a physical release you will need to contact each rating agency in each respective sales region separately for the certificates. This process can take several weeks to complete. You will then have to provide all your age ratings and their certificates within the *Age Rating* section of your release.

Please refer to the *Age Rating Guidelines* in the *PUBLISH* section on NDP for more information.



Submit Title to Lotcheck

About Lotcheck

Your title needs to be tested for platform compatibility and guideline compliance before it can be released. This testing is performed by Nintendo's global Lotcheck teams at NOA, NOE and NCL. Platform compatibility ensures that your title will run without a problem on a retail console in a consumer environment, and guideline compliance ensures that basic standards are met when it is running on our platform. If your title fails testing, you will need to submit a revised version until it can pass for release.

Lotcheck Submission

Before you submit your title to Lotcheck, please be sure to read the latest Lotcheck submission guidelines available on NDP.

A Lotcheck submission for a regular title will typically take up to 7 working days. It is a good idea to plan with at least two submissions and time to fix any potential issues in-between.

While your title is being tested by Lotcheck you can track its current status in the *Releases* section of your product on NDP.

Your main point of contact ("NDP Licensing Contact") will be the Lotcheck team responsible for the region you are located in ("Lead Licensing Region").

Demos, DLC and patches have to be submitted to Lotcheck, too. Testing times for DLC and patches are typically shorter than for a regular title.

Lotcheck is free of charge.



Submit Title to Lotcheck

Preparing your Title for Lotcheck

To submit a title to Lotcheck, you will have to provide detailed information about your release.

To do this, go to the release info sheet (also called the "Application Information Sheet") in the product section. There, select your release. The product you originally created will be your "Initial Release".

You will have to enter general release information, specify features your title is supporting (for example languages, input devices, play modes, special system features, etc.), confirm guidelines and describe test scenarios for our certification team based on the features your title is using. Enter your age ratings

and certificates, and upload your ROM image file.

This process can be time consuming. Please make sure that the information you provide is as accurate as possible.

Submit

When all required information has been entered correctly and the ROM image file has been uploaded, you are able to click the "Submit" button to start the Lotcheck submission.

IMPORTANT! Please make sure that you have provided your payee information in the *ADMIN/Financial Information* section. You cannot submit your title to Lotcheck without it.

Release Info **Features** Guidelines **Test Scenarios** Age Rating **ROM Upload** Issues You must complete the above tasks before you can submit.



Submit Digital Assets & Artwork

By the time you submit your title to Lotcheck, you should submit its digital assets for a digital release and/or all of its printed artwork materials for a physical release to Nintendo for review. NOE, NOA and NCL will check the assets and materials relevant for their region and get back to you with feedback.

Digital Assets

These include basic information about your title (such as name, release date and time, release countries, age ratings, price, description, etc.) as well as visual assets (game icon, screenshots, videos, banners, etc.) visible on Nintendo eShop, Nintendo's websites (Nintendo-Europe.com, Nintendo.com) and other Nintendo channels.

You submit your title's digital assets via the NCMS (Nintendo Content Management System) website. Access NCMS via the *OTHER SITES* menu at the top of the NDP site.

It can take up to 5 working days for Nintendo to provide feedback on a digital assets submission. For NOE specific digital

assets and NCMS submission related questions, please contact NOE's Digital Team. NOA and NCL will assist you with NCMS submissions for their regions.

Artwork

With Nintendo the term "artwork" covers the printed parts mandatory for a physical release (title sheet, game card label) and other optional printed parts of your product (manual, registration card, stickers, special packaging, etc.). The digital templates for the title sheet and game card label have to be obtained from Nintendo for each region of release.

You submit PDF files of your printed parts to Nintendo for review. It can take up to 7 working days for Nintendo to provide feedback on an artwork submission. During peak season (Aug – Oct) feedback can take up to 10 working days.

For NOE region related questions on artwork and artwork submissions, please contact NOE's Artwork Team. NOA and NCL will assist you for their regions.



Digital Release

After your digital assets have been reviewed and your title has passed Lotcheck, it will take up to 5 days to register them on the Nintendo eShop servers.

Once the registration is complete, your product page can go live on Nintendo eShop on Nintendo Switch and Nintendo's websites and your title can become available for purchase at the date and time set by you. (Please note: Your product page cannot go live before your title has passed Lotcheck.)

You can release a title any day of the week and at any time. Launch price is entirely up to you and can be changed later.

Sales Channels

Customers will be able to purchase your title on Nintendo eShop for Nintendo Switch (on-device) and from Nintendo's official websites (Nintendo.com, Nintendo.co.uk, Nintendo.de, ...). Purchasing a title on the web will trigger a download to the console. You can also sell download codes of your title on sales channels of your own choice.

Digital Release in Japan

Please contact NCL if you want to release on Nintendo eShop in Japan. Requirements are as follows:

Age rating: You need to obtain an age rating from the Computer Entertainment Rating Organization (CERO). Please refer to the CERO website (www.cero.gr.jp) for more information.

Communication: All communication with NCL should be in Japanese language.

Customer support: Please ensure that at least email communication can be done in Japanese language.

Nintendo eShop: Store metadata such as your title's description has to be in Japanese language.

In-game text: Japanese language is not required, but may be recommended depending on the nature of the title.

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Countries

On Nintendo Switch you can release digitally in any of the following countries:

Country	Currency	Language	Country	Currency	Language	Country	Currency	Language
Austria	EUR	German	Lithuania	EUR	English	South Africa	ZAR	English
Belgium	EUR	Dutch, French	Luxembourg	EUR	German, French			
Bulgaria	EUR	English	Malta	EUR	English	Australia	AUD	English
Croatia	EUR	English	Netherlands	EUR	Dutch	New Zealand	NZD	English
Cyprus	EUR	English	Norway	NOK	English			
Czech Republic	CZK	English	Poland	PLN	English	USA	USD	English, Spanish
Germany	EUR	German	Portugal	EUR	Portuguese	Canada	CAD	English, French
Denmark	DKK	English	Romania	EUR	English	Mexico	MXN	Spanish
Estonia	EUR	English	Russia	RUB	Russian	Brazil	BRL	Portuguese
Finland	EUR	English	Slovakia	EUR	English			
France	EUR	French	Slovenia	EUR	English	Japan	JPY	Japanese
Greece	EUR	English	Spain	EUR	Spanish			
Hungary	EUR	English	Sweden	SEK	English			Legend
Ireland	EUR	English	Switzerland	CHF	Ger, Fre, Ita			NOE
Italy	EUR	Italian	United Kingdom	GBP	English			NOA
Latvia	EUR	English						NCL

Countries of release can be configured on the NCMS website.



Nintendo EShop

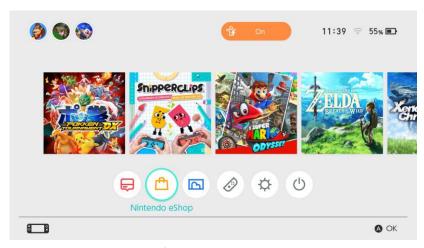
Nintendo eShop on Nintendo Switch is the primary place for Nintendo Switch users to purchase software digitally. It can be accessed from the HOME Menu of the console.

A Nintendo Account is required to access Nintendo eShop. Users must be at least 16 years old to create a Nintendo Account. Nintendo Account holders who are 18 years or older can create special Nintendo Accounts for children which they can supervise. They can restrict eShop purchases for child accounts.

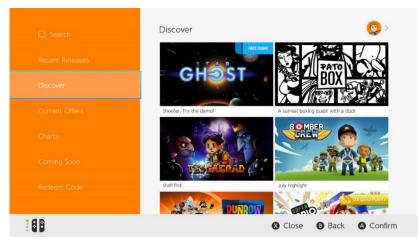
Users can pay with credit card, PayPal or prepaid Nintendo eShop Cards (available at retail).

Titles purchased can be played by all users on the console. If they are removed from the console they can be downloaded again.

Which regional storefront a user can access depends on the country setting of the user's Nintendo Account.



Access Nintendo eShop from the HOME Menu



Nintendo eShop main menu (Discover section selected)



Nintendo EShop

Nintendo eShop's main sections are as follows:

Search – Search the shop by title name, keyword, price range, genre, demo availability and more filters.

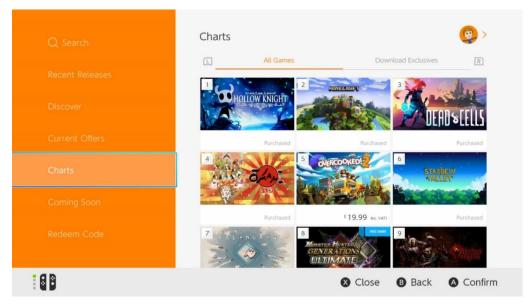
Recent Releases – 60 slots with recently released titles, sorted by release date (most recent first). The list can be extended by users to show all available titles with a customized sort order.

Discover – A section curated by the Nintendo eShop team to help users find great content.

Current Offers – All titles available at a discount, sorted by number of downloads (highest first).

Charts – Two categories (All Games & Download Exclusives) each with the 30 best selling titles over the last two weeks. Sorted by number of downloads (highest first). Paid titles only.

Coming Soon – All upcoming titles sorted by release date (titles closer to release first). Titles must have passed Lotcheck, and



Nintendo eShop main menu with Charts section selected

they must have been registered on the eShop servers. Titles available for pre-purchase are also listed here.

Redeem Code – Enter a prepaid card code or a download code.

Please note: Section names may differ by region and country.



Digital Sales & Marketing Tools

Nintendo offers various tools you can use to help you with selling and marketing a (digital) title. Please note that there may be regional differences in availability and how these tools can be used. Please contact NOA, NOE (Digital Team) and NCL respectively if you need further information.

Demo

You can create and distribute a demo of your title on Nintendo eShop to promote its full version; you can release it whenever you want. The publishing process for a demo is the same as for a regular title. Titles with a demo will be marked accordingly on the storefront. Users can use the *Search* feature on Nintendo eShop to search specifically for titles with demos. When they play a demo users are automatically subscribed to the News channel of the full version (if a channel available).

Pre-Purchase

You can make your title available for purchase before release. It requires your product page to be live and your ROM to have passed Lotcheck. A title available for pre-purchase will appear in

the "Coming Soon" section and will be marked accordingly on its product page. Customers will be able to purchase and download the title, but not be able to play it before the date and time set by you. A pre-purchase can be set up on the NCMS website.

Temporary Discount (Price Promotion)

You can lower the price of your title temporarily. A title that is temporarily discounted will appear in the "Current Offers" section on Nintendo eShop and will be marked accordingly on its product page. You can set up a special offer on the NCMS website. Please note that there are guidelines for a sale you will need to follow. Temporary discounts are also possible for DLC.

Owner Discount

If you have one or more titles already available on Nintendo eShop, you can set up an owner discount. For example, a customer who already owns title A can purchase title B at a discount set by you. An owner discount can be configured on the NCMS website. It can be used with full games and DLC.



Digital Sales & Marketing Tools

Download Codes for Promotional Use

Download codes for promotional use are intended to be used with media, mainly for product reviews. They are 16-digit codes which can be used to download the full version of your title for free from Nintendo eShop. They are provided to you free of charge after your digital assets submission. The codes will be activated when your game page on Nintendo eShop goes live.

NOE will provide you 250 download codes (200 for Europe, 50 for Australia). NOA will provide you 200 download codes.

If you would like to use download codes to promote your title prior to release, for example to distribute them to media to get reviews written in advance, please make sure that you set your release date so you have enough time for your pre-release activities. A good idea is to plan with three weeks between ROM/digital assets approval and release.

It is possible to purchase additional download codes for promotional use from us (contact at NOE: Ordering Team).

Download Codes for Kickstarter & Re-Sale

You can purchase download codes for use with Kickstarter and for re-sale through channels of your own choice. Contact NOE (Ordering Team), NOA and NCL for more information.

Bonus Codes

It is possible to give away a custom code with the purchase of a title on Nintendo eShop. For example, customers may use that code to get access to (exclusive) content either within the title itself or outside the title. It is possible to offer bonus codes for a limited time only. Bonus codes can be set up on the NCMS website.

Bundle

Set up a bundle consisting of Game + DLC or DLC + DLC. A bundle can be configured on the NCMS website.



Digital Sales & Marketing Tools

DLC/Free to Play/Service related Monetization Tools

The following tools may be useful for titles which feature DLC or require other means of monetization. You can configure them on the NCMS website.

Season Pass (Pre-Purchase of DLC) – For a title with multiple DLC, you can set up a Season Pass which enables users to purchase selected DLC ahead of release.

Consumable Service/Item – Set up items which customers can purchase and use in your title. Examples: Virtual currency, a health potion in an RPG, a special weapon in an action game.

Service (Subscription) Ticket – Set up content which users can only access within a set time period. Example: Temporary access to an unlimited amount of songs in a Karaoke title.

Product Page on Nintendo Websites

At the same time your Nintendo eShop game page goes live, a product page will appear on Nintendo.com, Nintendo-Europe.com (i.e. Nintendo.fr, Nintendo.co.uk, Nintendo.de, ...) and Nintendo.co.jp. The page uses the assets you provided with your Digital Assets submission on the NCMS website.

Customers can purchase your title directly from its web based product page. You may want to link to local versions of the page from your title's official website.

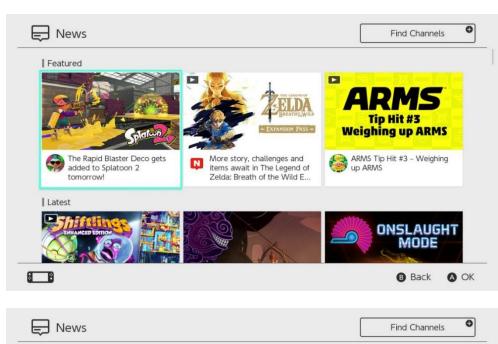


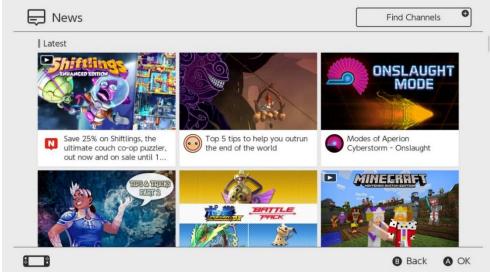
News

News, available from the HOME Menu, is the primary channel on Nintendo Switch for users to get updates about new and existing content for the platform. Nintendo's own editorial teams are updating the channel with News articles, from information about new releases to developer interviews and regular features. This includes both Nintendo and 3rd party titles.

Publishers can create their own title specific News channels which users can subscribe to. When a user purchases (or plays a demo of) a title he/she will be automatically subscribed to its News channel. A News article can contain text information, a video, screenshot and link to a Nintendo eShop game page. You can create a News channel on the *NCMS* website and post News articles for your title using the *BCAT* website, which is available from the *OTHER SITES* menu on NDP. An article can typically be posted within only a few days. A separate News guide for publishers is available.

We recommend that publishers create News channels for their titles with content relevant for their customers. Please contact NOE (Digital team), NOA and NCL for more information.







Download Monitoring, Payments and Reports

Download Monitoring

Once your title has been registered on the Nintendo eShop servers, you can monitor its download figures using the so called "Shop Sales Tools" (SST). Access the SST via the OTHER SITES menu on NDP or https://sst.mng.nintendo.net/shoptools.

As a company admin, you may create and manage SST accounts for your organization in the "Grant Account Management Permission" tab on the SST website.

If you are not the company admin on NDP, please contact your company admin to receive access to SST.

If you are not sure who your company admin is, please visit this page: https://developer.nintendo.com/register/contact-admin

Payments

Payments are issued within 30 days after month's end.

Your bank's location will determine the currency Nintendo will transfer the funds in. Please review the schedule provided within the financial section for details.

Revenue Reports

Revenue reports are published on NDP (Admin/Payment Reports) within 30 days after month's end.

Users with the "Company Finance User" role will receive an email when new reports are available. The reports are available in PDF and CSV formats.

If you have any questions about SST, payments and reports, please contact NOE (Agreements team), NOA and NCL for more information.



Physical Release

As with a digital release, for a physical release you decide price, release date and territories. You are in control of ordering and printing of all required parts, assembly and physical distribution of your product. Nintendo Switch game cards with your title preinstalled have to be purchased from Nintendo. (The Nintendo Switch specific plastic case will have to be obtained from an official supplier.)

Forecast & Planning

When you plan a physical release, we strongly recommend that you contact NOA, NOE (Ordering Team) and NCL to let us know your expected game card size and required quantity and discuss production timeline and time to release with us.

Ordering Game Cards

Please place your order of game cards with NOA, NOE (Ordering Team) and NCL for each of their regions respectively. You can place your order before your title and its artwork have been approved.

Game card production will start when:

- 1. We have received your payment
- 2. Your title has passed Lotcheck
- 3. Your title's game card label has been approved
- 4. You have provided a pickup schedule

Pickup Schedule: Nintendo Switch game cards are manufactured by Nintendo in Japan. When they are ready you will have to pick them up from Osaka Airport. You will need to arrange pickup with your forwarding company, and we need to know who will pick up the goods and when.

Production Time

On average it will take about 3.5 weeks to manufacture your game cards. Time will vary depending on game card size, quantity and the period of the year. During peak season (Aug – Oct), production times can increase significantly. Always check with our teams for the latest schedule.



Promotional Materials & Support

PR & Marketing Materials

We kindly ask you to submit promotional materials which use Nintendo trademarks and terms (such as "Nintendo Switch™", "Joy-Con™", "TV mode", ...) to us for a compliance check. Such materials can be a press release, a game trailer or a TV/print/online advertisement.

Please obtain the latest official marketing guidelines and related assets (images, logos, line arts, trailer intro, ...) from us. Contact NOE (Digital Team), NOA and NCL respectively.

Promotional Support by Nintendo

Nintendo may decide to feature your title on the Nintendo Switch News channel, its websites, its social media channels and as part of other activities. Please let us know if you do not want to be included in any of our promotional activities.

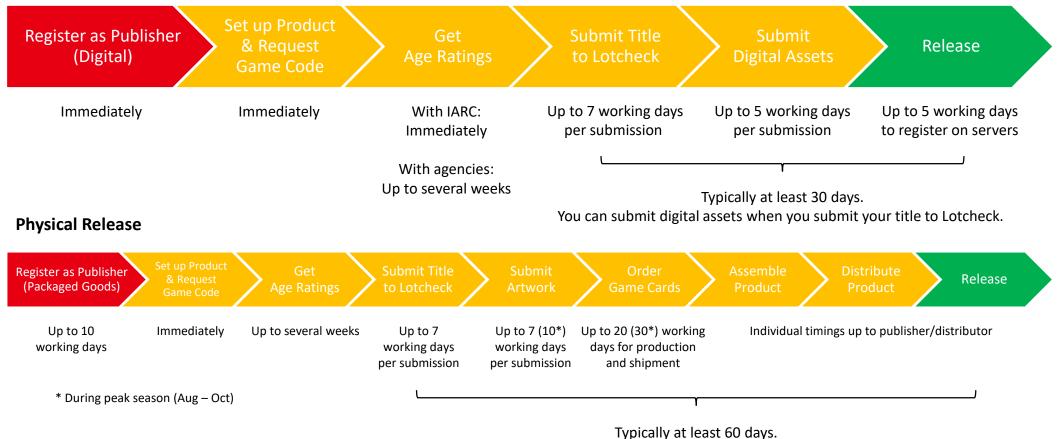
You are welcome to approach NOE (Account Management Team), NOA and NCL about promotional support opportunities.

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Publishing Process Timelines

Digital Release



You can submit artwork and order game cards when you submit your title to Lotcheck.



Version History

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Initial release

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