

Brand spanking new Nintendo hardware on its way! Read all about the amazing new 3D 32bit system exclusively in TOTAL!

VIRTUAL



Space Pinball: Looks pretty odd when it's still, but when it's in action, erm, it's still odd.

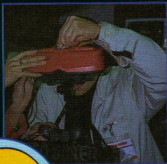


Nintendo have finally unveiled the legendary Virtual Boy! After the concept of a 32 bit system has been touted around for something like a year, most people (including the TOTAL! team) assumed it was going to be a head mounted display, like the VR machines you find in arcades.

As you can see from the pictures, that isn't quite the case. Yes, the Virtual Boy has twin monitors, that you stare straight into, just like a VR headset, but there is no motion

tracking equipment, and at the moment the early pre-release unit simply sits on a table top. You have to lean over and peer into it, like those saucy picture shows Victorian gentlemen would often peruse, but this time it's not such a cheap thrill. Nintendo are working on a shoulder-strap to enable the gameplayer to move around as they're playing the 3D games. Teleroboxing would be especially good for that.

Left: Try to imagine this lot as a red 3D outline on a black screen. Intrigued?



Above: No shoulder strap yet so you have to peer down into the Virtual Boy.



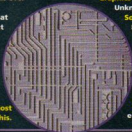
The display unit used comprises of two near identical monitors, each displaying a red image on a black screen. Both images are slightly different, and when brought together, produce a 3D illusion, previously known as stereoscopic 3D. One possible problem is that with this (not quite finished) version it seems that much of the 32 bit processing power is taken up with displaying two images simultaneously.

The Virtual Boy boasts one of the best joypads ever. Attached by a couple of cables to the main

VIRTUAL BOY Tech specs

The technical specifications of the Virtual Boy are a pretty closely guarded secret and Nintendo, protective as ever over their new products, certainly aren't saying what lurks inside the machine at this point, but as ever, TOTAL! has the lowdown, and were you to take one of the little suckers apart, you might find it looks something like this:

The Virtual Boy almost certainly won't look like this.



Main CPU: 32 bit NEC processor, either a V810 or V820

Graphics processor:

Unknown custom unit

Sound processor:

8 bit stereo chip

Display unit: Twin oscillating reflection monitors, combining image to produce stereoscopic 3D.

Joypad: Eight button left or right handed.

Battery life: Seven to eight hours of play.

BOY UPDATE

unit, its twin pistol grips and double movement key are comfortable for left or right handed players. Innovative button positioning and design mean that even though the games themselves aren't complete, controlling them was a joy in itself.

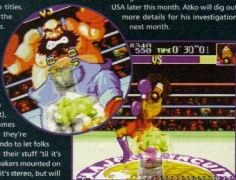
In an innovative departure from traditional polygon-based 3D, Nintendo are developing a bunch of new games, and so far they all seem to be based on top existing Nintendo titles. *Mario Bros VB* is a version of the multi-million seller, *Mario Bros*. *Space Pinball* is oddly 3D in appearance (sorry, it's impossible to describe - it really does look 'odd'), and *Teleroboxing* is fairly similar to the tremendous *Punch Out*, but the characters are robots.

These three are the first batch (none are actually finished yet), and we were surprised the games were shown at this early stage - they're not finished and it's unlike Nintendo to let folks like us get our grubby mitts on their stuff 'til it's complete. Sound comes from speakers mounted on the unit, and like the Game Boy it's stereo, but will hopefully sound a little more impressive than the Game Boy because of the way the larger speakers are mounted.

All in all, the Virtual Boy is a bit of a strange case. It's already being referred to as the "Japanese Product" by certain parties, and there's no official UK release date announced yet.

However, if you remember, the Game Boy got mixed reactions when it was launched, and the new VR32 system will be backed up by more plenty more new games when it is unveiled in the

USA later this month. Aiko will dig out more details for his investigation next month.



The Virtual Boy's Teleroboxing looks like a proper 3D version of Punch Out.