2024 has been an amazing year for roguelikes

The roguelike genre has turned from a relative niche into something much bigger. Roguelike games can be famously tough to crack into; generally, they have a high difficulty that means you'll bang your head against a wall as you learn how to play the game, puzzle out what strategies work best in the procedurally generated levels, and figure out how to overcome tough enemies or challenges. 2024 showed that the genre wasn't only a commercial force through hits like *Hades II* and *Balatro*, and also that a roguelike could be almost anything: from a poker variant to a flashy multiplayer action game.

Speaking of *Balatro*, it was undoubtedly one of, if not *the*, best games of the year. The game is supremely easy to pick up because of its roots in building traditional poker hands, but each round feels wildly different because of the clever and sometimes superpowered joker cards that can give you massive bonuses. The game is a perfect mix of skill, risk, and a little bit of luck, and it feels so good when you find a strategy that completely stacks the chips in your favor. I think I'll be playing *Balatro* for years to come, especially with whatever's cooking for the game's upcoming major update. And now that the game is out on mobile, I can play wherever I want.