7 cool indie games from GDC 2025

The Game Developers Conference, an annual gathering that brings thousands of game developers to San Francisco, has just wrapped up. While most of the event is about networking and interesting talks about game design and technology, there were also a bunch of unreleased indie games that we got to check out. Yes, much of video games in 2025 will probably be defined by the Nintendo Switch 2 and *Grand Theft Auto VI*. But based on the games we played, there might be some really fun smaller titles that could be huge hits this year, too.

Here are a few of our favorites that we're looking forward to.

Dreams of Another

Dreams of Another is a shooter, but you use your gun to *create* the world around you instead of destroying it. The game's graphics have a dreamy, deconstructed quality to them, and when you shoot things, the colorful, unfocused scenes you see will solidify into things like buildings and people. Unexpectedly, my brief demo ended with a more traditional shootout against a sentient manhole cover. (I even lobbed a couple grenades to try and destroy it.) But I'm intrigued by the overall concept, and I look forward to seeing what developer Q-Games does with it in the final version of the game.—JP

In *Faraway*, you play as a shooting star and try to make constellations. The game requires just pressing and holding one button to spin around other stars, create a trail, and

essentially play a celestial game of connect the dots. It’s a simple concept, but I was impressed by it immediately. In just a 10-minute demo, I was really starting to get the hang of using my shooting star’s momentum to perfectly swing around a star to make elaborate and high-scoring constellations. That’s all the time it took to make *Faraway* far and away my favorite game of the show.—JP

Haste: Broken Worlds

Haste: Broken Worlds is kind of like a 3D version of the classic mobile game *Tiny Wings*. You play as Zoe, a girl who runs forward at blinding speed through procedurally generated levels. Like with *Tiny Wings*, there are rolling hills you can launch from for added height, and if you time your fall right into the curve of another hill, you’ll get a satisfying “perfect” message and a boost to a meter that lets you pull out a hoverboard. The game has a roguelike structure, so you’ll get to pick and choose different types of levels to tackle as you make your way through a run. On the show floor, I was awful, dying within the first few levels before I had to hand the controller to the next person in line. But as soon as I got back to my hotel room, I downloaded the game’s free demo on Steam.—JP

Herdling tasks you with herding mysterious, fluffy beasts. In my demo, the character starts in a dark city before quickly coming upon three adorable beasts that reminded me of a big goat mixed with *Sesame Street*’s Mr. Snuffleupagus. Your goal is to get them out of the city and out to wilder pastures. You coax the animals forward from behind with a magic stick, and while they generally follow your directions, they are sometimes difficult to direct. More than once, my herd of three walked right into a wall. By the end of the demo, however, I really started to care for my fluffy friends, especially since you can name them — though I can only imagine

the cruel ways the developers will pull on my heartstrings over the course of the full adventure.—JP

Hotel Barcelona

This is sort of the video game equivalent of a supergroup. Goichi “Suda51” Suda (best known for off-kilter games like *Killer 7* and *No More Heroes*) has teamed up with Hidetaka “Swery65” Suehiro (the writer and director behind *Deadly Premonition* and, more recently, *The Good Life*) on an extremely challenging and roguelike game set in a world inspired by slasher movies. In the short time I had with the game, I died multiple times, but the twitchy action felt very satisfying, especially once I got the hang of the controls. There’s a neat feature where you can fight alongside a ghost image of your previous run, which seems like it will come in handy. What I didn’t get to experience was the inevitable surreal twist the two creators have put on the horror setting, but the core is solid.—AW

My Arms Are Longer Now

Slapstick comedy games are really coming into their own of late. And if you loved *Untitled Goose Game* or *Thank Goodness You’re Here*, this is definitely one to keep an eye on. The name really says it all: you control an unseemly long and stretchy arm and attempt to… do things, most of which are illegal. The level I played took place on a moving train, and you were tasked with stealing items from passengers while remaining undetected (probably because of how terrifying the arm is). There’s a puzzle element to it; at one point, I needed to take a briefcase from a sleeping businessman, only to find it was chained to his wrist. It’s absurd, of course, but that’s exactly the appeal.—AW

To a T is a delightful game about a teenager permanently stuck in a T pose. The game is from *Katamari* series creator Keita Takahashi, so, of course, it’s wacky and silly. My demo featured an elaborate tooth-brushing sequence, musical numbers, and a talking giraffe. But the demo also hinted at the character’s fear of school and bullying over their T-pose condition. I was surprised how much that made me care for the character, and if the story sticks the landing, it could make a game that might have been pure silliness something more thoughtful. It’s out on May 28th.—JP

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