Apple opens the App Store to retro game emulators

Apple is loosening its App Store restrictions and opening the marketplace up to retro game emulators. In an update on Friday, Apple announced that game emulators can come to the App Store globally and offer downloadable games. Apple says those games must comply with "all applicable laws," though — an indication it will ban apps that provide pirated titles.

The move should allow the retro console emulators already on Android — at least those that are left — to bring their apps to the iPhone. Game emulators have long been banned from iOS, leaving iPhone owners in search of workarounds via jailbreaking or other workarounds. They're also one of the key reasons, so far, that iPhone owners in the European Union might check out third-party app stores now that they're allowed in the region. Apple's change today could head that off.

Alongside the new rules on emulators, Apple also updated its rules around super apps, such as WeChat. It now says that mini-games and mini-apps within these apps must use HTML5, clarifying that they can't be native apps and games.

Outside the US, Apple seems to be responding to pressure from the European Commission. In another rule update today, the company said it will now allow music streaming apps in the European Union to include in-app links that point users toward outside purchases and mention pricing information. It will also allow developers to "invite users to provide their email address for the express purpose of sending them a link to the developer's website to purchase digital music content or services."

After the Commission called Apple’s anti-steering rules “illegal,” Spotify attempted to update its app with links to its website to purchase subscriptions, but it didn’t receive approval from Apple for weeks. Spotify still isn’t happy with Apple’s most recent change, however, as Apple is still planning to charge a commission on purchases made through outside links despite EU Commissioner Margrethe Vestager saying Apple must allow music streaming apps to communicate “freely” with users.

“Following the law is not optional, but Apple continues to defy that decision,” Spotify spokesperson Jeanne Moran tells *The Verge*. “Effective April 6th, the Commission can start noncompliance proceedings and impose daily fines. It’s time for decisive action to once and for all give consumers real choice.”

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