

# THE ONE OVERLOOKED ASPECT OF VIDEO GAME IMMERSION



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The player camera in video games is a criminally-overlooked feature. It can mean the difference between killing that difficult boss and dying to him because the camera glitched out and you were staring into your character's nostrils.

In this article, we look at how camera work in gaming plays a significant role in terms of immersion and gameplay.

There are usually two types of cameras in video games. You have your fixed-point camera views like in first person shooters, racing games and side scrollers where your camera is dependent on where your character is looking, and you have your free-camera games where you can adjust the camera regardless of your character's sight like in third person shooters, or adventure games.

Looking at the whole concept from a gameplay perspective, we see that these camera controls are what separate entire genres. And getting the right camera angle is quintessential to the overall gameplay experience of a shooter. If you've ever played any FPS competitively, chances are you're acquainted with the Field of View (FOV) slider. It's claustrophobic and nauseating to even imagine playing an FPS at 71 FOV. This is why a lot of PC (and nowadays, even console) players straight up go looking for an FOV slider before they dive into their first multiplayer match. Having a wider field of view lets you see more of the environment which yields significant benefits for your performance in matches. Thus it is vital for devs to incorporate this feature into their games if they sense even a small chance of their games becoming a

competitive title.

From a third person shooter or adventure game perspective, camera controls and mechanics are crucial to providing an immersive experience for gamers. The shake of the camera when you're sprinting, the flinch when you get shot, and the ability to pan across the large, gorgeous vistas that you will be exposed to, all lend to the feeling of immersion. This one feature is one of the mainstays of these titles and if you end up breaking immersion, you risk losing one of your biggest USPs. Take the latest God of War game for example. The whole game takes place in one camera shot – no cuts. This allows for all cutscenes and animations to blend seamlessly with the actual gameplay, thus creating a feeling of immersion like never before. And it works amazingly for proving the game's technical mastery as well, once you realise that all those particle effects, detailed character models, and physics are all in-game, you become more aware of those even when you're playing. This lends to the coherence of a game's visual consistency and it is great for gamers to realise they aren't being tricked by pre-rendered videos.

Video games have come a long way since the days of old. With all these innovations, it becomes paramount for developers to nail the basics even better than before. The camera will become more of a superstar in the coming titles, especially for VR.

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# 5 Unique Games for Android

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*Mobile gaming often comes under fire for being repetitive cash grabs. With so many Clash of (insert buzzword) floating around the Play Store, it's hard to not think that gaming on Android is just a saturated mess. But I was pleasantly surprised with a couple of games, even more so because of the fact that they are available for free and on mobile.*

## 1. HELLO YOGURT

Don't let the title fool you for it is easily one of the most unique games on this list. Essentially, you're following a bacterium through the digestive system of a person. An idea such as this is enough to captivate anyone but the constantly changing environments and the brilliant soundtrack adds a layer of depth unseen on most platformers on mobile. You have to make it through each layer of the human digestive system, collecting coins whilst unlocking new features on your journey. The design is light hearted and the mechanics are simple enough to catch anyone's attention.

## 2. MUSIC RACER

While most racing games on the platform are pushing towards realistic visuals and controls, Music Racer takes a step back. But it adds something rather unique for players. Select music from your phone to a racing track, let the level load and voila – the lights on the stage and the collectibles are all in sync with the song you selected. The visuals are charming with a shade of neon on every

element of the environment. The aesthetics are lifted from vaporwave artworks and while I wouldn't recommend this game to anyone who is prone to epilepsy, I can safely say that this game is made to entice those looking to fit their favourite songs to picturesque visuals.

## 3. HOCUS

With gameplay similar to Monument Valley, this puzzle game will perplex you beyond belief. The minimalistic charm of the visuals tasks you with moving a red square to the end of the geometric levels. The levels can get quite frustrating but the feeling of putting your neurons to the test and making it to the end is rewarding beyond belief. Hocus also comes with an inbuilt level editor which gives you the chance to create absurd levels and share with your friends and for others to play.

## 4. INSTLIFE

Life simulator's are generally turn offs for most handheld gamers but Instlife, being free and all, is a very enjoyable experience. You get to live each turning point of your character's life, make decisions which affect his/her moral compass. And there are a lot of intricate decisions you get to make. What made the app stand out for me were the bare minimum visuals, displaying everything in list view. The cathartic experience of viewing every change and decision of your character's life resembles the drab and task oriented nature of real life.

## 5. LOL KART

Now to lighten the mood comes in the strangest cart racer available on any platform. The cartoony visuals are similar to The Simpsons and the animations are absolutely hilarious. It also allows for online multiplayer. I wanted to add this game here not because it has unique mechanics but because of its wacky aesthetics.

Asif Ayon just bought a new phone. Send him instructions on how to root it at asifayon@live.com

