

## Video Games Based on Fairy Tales by Joelle Lafargue

References to fairy tales in video games is not an uncommon occurrence, as developers enjoy being able to hearken back to old stories and legends. The world of fantasy in video games allows for all sorts of references and twists on the usual fairy tales. These can vary from lighthearted fun to dark and depressing. Here's a list of a variety of video games both old and new that should appeal to those interested in fairy tales and all their possible twists and turns.

**Kingdom Hearts Series**  
**Publisher: SquareEnix**  
**Date: 2002-Present**



Probably the most well-known title on this list, the Kingdom Hearts series has been a long running one, a collaborative effort between Japan's legendary Video game company SquareEnix, and Disney. The Kingdom Hearts Series follows the story of Sora, a young boy from Destiny Islands and his adventures traveling the various Disney worlds, helping to save their worlds from the monstrous Heartless who seek to destroy the worlds and plunge them into darkness and individuals who seek to control them. These worlds vary from that of Hercules to the Little

Mermaid to Sleeping Beauty and to Cinderella, and they cover many of the popular Disney franchises, which are, of course, often based on fairy tales.

As you can see, the Kingdom Hearts series is extensive and provides a lot of content, although as the series progresses it does play less attention to the fairy tales of Disney, with perhaps the exception of Birth By Sleep, which contains worlds for Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty and Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. These games would appeal to anyone who enjoys Disney's take on fairy tales, SquareEnix's Final Fantasy series, and adventure role playing games. Age wise it's appropriate for all ages and available on various systems.

**The Path**  
**Published by: Tales of Tales**  
**Released: 2009**

An artistic take on Red Riding Hood, The Path follows the tale of five sisters of varying ages who are told to go to 'Grandmother's House'. Though following the path seems to be the way to 'win' the game, it is soon discovered by the player that instead you must investigate the woods surrounding it to win, visiting the hidden locations, and finding each girl's 'wolf'. Extremely symbolic and atmospheric, this game leaves a great deal to interpretation, but leaves you desperately wanting more. Even calling it a 'game' is debatable in a way, as it's more of an experience. Available on PC and Steam, this game is best played by those who love to analyze symbolism, though the implications in some parts of the game mark is as best for 16+ in age.

### The Witch's House

**Published by: Fummy**

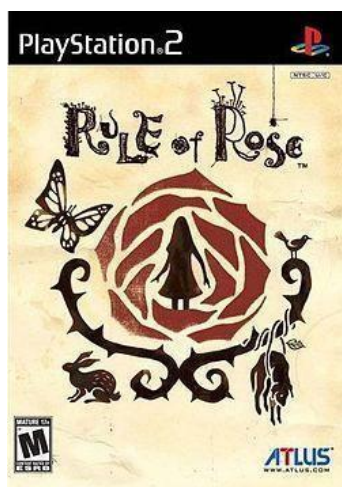
**Released: 2012**

A freeware RPGMaker game from Japan, *The Witch's House* is a survival horror game. You play as Viola, a young girl who finds herself trapped in the Witch's House and must find the way to escape from it before she is killed by the various traps and monsters lying in wait for her. The story is reminiscent of Hansel and Gretel and other stories dealing with outwitting witches, and takes a good deal of items regarded as innocent, sweet and feminine and twists them to the macabre. The deaths can be very violent for an RPG maker game which uses graphics similar to that of the SNES or GBA games, but when one compares to the original Grimms' fairy tales, these are not too far off. Due to the rather graphic nature of some of the deaths, plus a rather disturbing plot twist I'd recommend that this game be played by 15+ year olds and up. A great aspect is that it's a free game for anyone to play.

### Rule of Rose

**Published by: Punchline**

**Released: 2006**



Another survival horror game, *Rule of Rose* tells the story of young Jennifer, who upon investigating an abandoned orphanage after being lead there by a young boy finds herself trapped on a blimp in the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Inside this blimp she finds herself a prisoner of the Red Crayon Aristocrats and the Princess of the Red Rose, a group of young children who rule the others with fear and an iron fist. On the pains of death, she must appease the Aristocrats with the aid of her dog Brown, and survive long enough to unravel her memories of her forgotten past. The motifs in the game as each month goes by are told like fairy tales or fables, with mermaids and blue birds of happiness, and the creators specifically were influenced by the likes of the original Grimms' tales to capture the cruel nature of the children. This game has an intense atmosphere and dark subject matter, thus it would be best for 17 years old and up, but is perfect for those who love fairy tale deconstructions and dark atmospheres.

### Odin Sphere

**Published: Atlus**

**Released: 2007**

Created by Vanillaware and published by Atlus, *Odin Sphere* is an absolutely gorgeous side- scrolling beat-em-up role playing game, taking place in a fantasy world that is the combination of Norse mythology and fairy tales. It follows the entangled stories of 5 young heroes: Gwendolyn, a young Valkyrie who wants nothing but her father Odin's approval, Cornelius, who is turned into a rabbit-like Pooka and must find a way to return to a human form and stop an imposter from destroying his home, Oswald, a shadow knight who sold his soul to the Queen of the Underworld for more power, Mercedes the young fairy

princess who is forced to take the position of queen when her mother is killed, and Velvet, the princess of a ruined kingdom who tries to stop the oncoming apocalypse. Mixed into the game are motifs from Sleeping Beauty, the Frog Prince as well as Norse Mythology and folklore. It does deal with some dark subject matter, and some of the character designs are a little suggestive, but over all this game is great for those who love classic beat- em-ups with RPG elements and a sweeping romantic narrative. Recommended for ages 14 and up. It is available on Playstation 2 and PSVita.

### **Okami**

**Published: Capcom**

**Released: 2008**

If you love Japanese folklore, fairy tales and mythology, Okami is for you. Amaterasu, Goddess of the Sun manifested in the shape of a wolf, re-awakens to find that the land of Nippon has been overrun by the forces of darkness. Regaining her lost abilities to change the very fabric of reality and revive the beauty of nature in the world, Amaterasu travels across the land, saving people and gaining praise for the gods again. The art style of the game is reminiscent of Japanese paintings, the music gorgeous and the gameplay fun and dynamic. Many of the characters you meet in the game are based on Japanese fairy tales, including the tale of Sparrow and the woodcutters wife, Kaguya, Princess of the Moon, the old man and the palace of the dragon god, and many other stories. There are some points where the game can be a bit suggestive, but overall it is safe for ages 14+, and perfect for anyone who enjoys the *Legend of Zelda* and other adventure games.

### **Conclusion**

As one can see, fairy tales are a popular element to include in video games. With varied retellings and re-workings, from the more docile touch of Disney to the macabre twist of Rule of Rose, fairy tales will continue to supply game designers with wonderful and magical adventures for gamers to enjoy. Being willing to open your interests to freeware games as well as look into games on PC for your clients to play with is a valuable asset one should not ignore in regards to new content, as long as you properly review any ratings and reviews associated with them.