

Affiliates

Batocera aims to be a “plug and play” console-like system, with all the emulator installation and configuration already done for you. With that said, it may not be suitable to everyone in every situation.

Batocera has an amicable relation with various other related projects and forks, which it shares resources and devs to and from with. In no particular order, here are a few of them and why they might be better suited for a particular situation:

As this article is on the Batocera wiki, and this article tries to remain as unbiased as possible, there may be biases toward Batocera itself. In order to get a true feeling for each alternative, it's best off to try them out yourself.

Recalbox



The original project that Batocera forked off of. Batocera owes a lot of the groundwork and foundation to [Recalbox](#), you may still come across a string or two in Batocera's source code mentioning Recalbox. Recalbox and Batocera both use Buildroot as their base, and build on top of it.

Recalbox focuses on having as lightweight as possible a background operating system, and is more specialized in its fewer targeted platforms. If you're a particular fan of retro hardware in addition to retro software, the Recalbox RGB Dual kit is an easy and convenient way to get your old displays working with the emulation OS. Comparatively, it is [much more complicated to do that with Batocera](#).

Feature-wise, Batocera and Recalbox have near parity. You can configure emulators from the main menu EmulationStation, folders are automatically set up for your ROMs to go into, pre-set hotkeys used to exit emulators when wanting to switch games, automatic controller configuration, etc. One place Batocera shines in comparison to Recalbox is the inclusion of many more systems (as of September 2022), such as PS3, Xbox and Wii U. However, Batocera is considered more unstable than Recalbox by some.

Retrobat



Have you ever wanted to install Batocera as an application on Windows? [Retrobat](#) is as close to that as you can get!

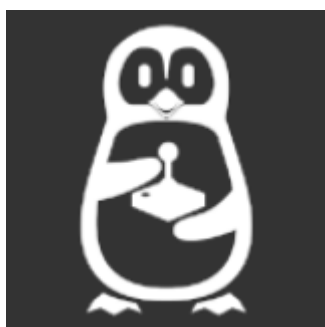
Retrobat installs itself as an application which can be launched inside of Windows. It includes its own

batch of emulators that are also Windows-specific. One downside is that some emulators have much worse performance in Windows compared to Linux, such is the nature of running inside of the restricted Windows environment. This may improve as time goes on, and for most users the differences are unnoticeable anyway. Conversely, the opposite is true for a few of the emulators which target Windows specifically, but that threshold grows smaller as more software targets Linux instead.

Retrobat also features its own tool, Retrobat GUI, which can assist with organizing your ROM collection among other things. Don't forget to [RTFFAQ!](#)

Retrobat uses the same version of ES as regular Batocera and features much of its functions.

RetroLX



[RetroLX](#) is an up-and-coming fork of Batocera that aims to completely overhaul its built-in emulators with a modular packaging system, theoretically allowing for more minor updates to individual systems being possible.

Being a Batocera fork, it still has all the features of Batocera as they were at **v31**, but may have received more since then.

It receives active development, but isn't as popular as Batocera yet.

AmberELEC



Formerly known as 351ELEC, [AmberELEC](#) is the lightweight distribution focused on supporting Anbernic's 35X series handhelds!

This uses Batocera's EmulationStation with minor modifications, should be very familiar to anyone who's already used Batocera. Although Batocera supports some of the devices that AmberELEC does, AmberELEC specialises in them, and is able to use purpose-built versions of the emulators that function better on this particular hardware.

There are alternatives to AmberELEC as well, and exploring what OSes these handhelds support is a rabbit hole in of itself.

EmuELEC



EmuELEC is an emulator OS designed for amlogic chipsets. Based on CoreELEC and Lakka, it uses Batocera's EmulationStation and a few of its own emulators.

Although Batocera supports some of the devices EmuELEC supports, Batocera can only be considered supporting them as beta software. EmuELEC is able to specialize in supporting its target hardware.

EmulationStation Desktop Edition



A version of EmulationStation that was forked off of the abandoned original code of the main ES version, [ES-DE](#) is the modern standalone version of EmulationStation that makes using the application a breeze! It runs as an application in basically any popular OS available right now.

It features its own enhanced version of the theming engine that's much easier to work with, but unfortunately is not compatible with the existing Batocera themes. More will surely be coming in the future though as this version gains popularity!

Just note that this is strictly the frontend. You'll have to set up and configure the emulators yourself before it can launch anything, and there isn't any universal hotkeys you can use to exit the emulators unless you use another external tool to set that up (ES-DE aims to be a completely separate entity to any other software on the OS, it is just a launcher). Unlike the original ES, most emulators should be automatically detected and added to the list of available emulators, saving a lot of time setting up `es_systems.cfg` in comparison to the original ES.

RetroDeck



[RetroDECK](#) is an installable version of ES-DE packaged with a hand-picked selection of emulators designed to run alongside Steam on the Steam Deck handheld. It aims to provide a console-like experience on the handheld just like Batocera.

[Batocera itself supports the Steam Deck](#), but RetroDECK allows for installation in SteamOS itself, which some may prefer if they primarily play Steam games on the handheld. It utilizes Flatpak, allowing it to appear just as an ordinary package to install via Valve's Discover store.

Just like with any operating system, there are of course many other alternatives than the ones listed here. The best way to find out is to go out there and search for them!

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