

Introduction

This page is dedicated to beginners for helping them to easily play arcade games on Batocera.

Arcade has long been the most complicated of emulations due to its very own nature: arcade machines don't all use the same hardware, so they all have to be emulated independently. Imagine you want to play 5 different arcade games, you could have to use 5 different hardware emulators, whereas playing 5 different SNES games will only need the one and only SNES emulator.

That's why MAME has been invented: MAME is kind of a meta-emulator, it brings all the different emulated hardwares of arcade machines into one system, making it simpler for the user to play arcade games without any knowledge of the underlying arcade machine on which the games are launched. It is no small feat and this is why MAME is so complicated to use.

General MAME Principles

There are only two main principles to know to get a good grasp of how to use MAME on your recalbox: Romsets and BIOS/driver files

Romsets

A romset is a set of all the different game roms emulated by a MAME version. A romset contains parent game roms which are roms corresponding to the 'main' version of a game and clone game roms which are 'alternative' versions of a parent rom. As you can guess, in most cases we will discard all clone roms and only use the main (or parent) ones.

Most of the code used to make those game roms playable is included in the MAME emulator. Sadly this means that there is a strong and close relationship between a MAME version and the game roms versions : When MAME releases a new version, game roms may need to be updated to fit to the new emulator version.

To keep it simple: if you use a certain MAME emulator, say version 0.78, you also have to get your hands on and use the 0.78 version of the romset. Some games from another romset may work with your version but **the only way to be sure that the most games are working is to use only a MAME version in conjunction with the romset of the same version.**

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In addition to having a version number, romsets can be found in three different flavours :

* **Non-merged**: All ROMs can be used standalone because each zip contains all the files needed to run that game, including any files from 'parent ROMs'. This is the recommended format. * **Split**: Some ROMs that are considered clones, translations, or bootlegs also require a "parent ROM" to run. The parent ROM is often the first or most common variant of a game. In some cases the parent is not the most popular or best working version of the game, however. For example, in a Split set pacman.zip (a clone), will not work without puckman.zip (its parent). * **Merged**: Clones are merged into the parent ROM zip, meaning that more than one game is stored per file. Merged ROM sets are not recommended.

For Batocera the recommended type of romset is the non-merged version

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For recent versions (such as the one used by fbneo, see below) there are less and less modifications of game roms, so it is sometime possible to use an older set and still have most of the games playable.

BIOS / Drivers Some of the game roms from a romset may additionally need BIOS files, the most well known case being neogeo games. Let's use that as an example : If you want to use neogeo games, you'll have to copy the needed bios/driver file (in that case _neogeo.zip_) in the same folder as the game. That's all !

Of course if you use different subfolders for your games (genre subfolders or hardware type subfolders for instance) you'll have to copy the BIOS file in every folder containing games which may need it. **Given that they are pretty small sized, it's better to copy them all in each of your subfolders.**

Where do i find the BIOS files do you say ? Well it's very simple : they are included in your romset ! So if a game doesn't launch and goes back right away to the Emulation Station screen, just try to find the relevant BIOS file and copy it in the game folder.

Arcade Emulation on Batocera

As this page's 'Arcade Emulators' section explains it, there are several arcade emulators included in Batocera. Just using two of them will be enough for running the majority of games on your Raspberry Pi.

Those two systems are :

* Mame

- _mame/romset version : _ 0.78
- _roms folder : _ mame

* FBNeo

- FBNeo is kind of an alternative version of MAME (emulating less arcade machines), but it follows exactly the same principles which I just explained
- FBNeo version : _ FBNeo0.2.97.44 this corresponds to MAME 0.187
- _roms folder : _ fbneo

Now some games will only work on Batocera with Mame and some others only with FBNeo.

As a guideline, please use the

[Best Arcade4ReCalbox](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1F5tBguhRxpj1AQcnDWF6AVSx4av_Gm3cDQedQB7IEck/edit?usp=sharing) document to get the correct emulator to use for each game

Let's configure arcade emulation on Batocera !

First download the full romsets for both emulators : romset 0.78 for Mame and latest romset 0.2.97.44 for FBNeo.

You may rather download each game one by one because full romsets are quite large, but it's usually not easy to find individual roms and to be sure that they are in the right version. Full Romsets are the only way to avoid headaches !

You're now just a few steps away from playing some awesome arcade games on Batocera.

Copy of Bios/drivers

First we are going to copy BIOS/drivers files from our romsets. Contraty to other systems, these files must not be copied into the bios folder but inside the dedicated roms folder.

* Get these BIOS/Drivers files from your MAME 0.78 romset and copy them into the mame roms folder: _acpsx.zip, cpzn1.zip, cpzn2.zip, cvs.zip, decocass.zip, konamigx.zip, megaplay.zip, megatech.zip, neogeo.zip, nss.zip, pgm.zip, playch10.zip, skns.zip, stvbios.zip, taitofx1.zip, tps.zip_

* Copy these BIOS/Drivers files from your FBNeo (0.2.97.44) romset and copy them into the fbneo roms folder, I only needed three of them: neogeo.zip, pgm.zip and skns.zip

Copy games

* Now check the

[BestArcade4Recalbox](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1F5tBguhRxpj1AQcnDWF6AVSx4av_Gm3cDQedQB7IECK/edit?usp=sharing) document and locate which system is the best for the game you want to play :

- if it's in the mame tab, copy the game rom file from your complete 0.78 romset to the mame roms folders
- if it's in the fbneo tab, copy the game from your complete FBA 0.2.97.44 romset (or any other close to that) into the fbneo rom folders
- if it's in the 'not found or not working' tab, well guess what ?

* PLAY ! (or not)

Further Tricks

* If you want to hide your BIOS files in Emulation Station, edit their metadata with the select menu

* Remember, if you want to use subfolders in your roms folders, just make a copy of BIOS/drivers files into every subfolder and then move your game into the subfolder

* Read [Advanced Arcade on Recalbox \(EN\)](#)

This page is the follow-up to [Easy Arcade on Recalbox \(EN\)](#)

BestArcade4Recalbox

You can find here a list of the most important mame games and their working status on mame and fba_libretro :

[BestArcade4Recalbox](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1F5tBguhRxpj1AQcnDWF6AVSx4av_Gm3cDQedQB7IECK/edit#gid=131171669&vpid=A179)

ClrMamePro

In order to verify the roms your have, you can use clrmamepro, and use the [Check-your-roms-version-with-clrmamepro-\(EN\)](#)

All the arcade systems on the Recalbox

You have now access to up to 4 systems in last version of Recalbox (mame, imame4all, piFba, fba libretto) and one "fake" system Neogeo. You can chose the core you want to use in [recalbox.conf](<https://github.com/recalbox/recalbox-os/wiki/recalbox.conf-%28EN%29>)

piFBA _Recalbox (all versions)_ * piFBA is the most optimized FBA emulator on Recalbox but has a far less better compatibility list than fba_libretto. Use only if you own a pi0/1 or if a specific game has performance issues on fba_libretto * It uses the FBA romset version : **FBA 0.2.96.71** which is based on MAME 0.114 (April 2007) * Size : 3.62GB * Romsets emulated : 684 (no clones in this) * _roms folder : _fba * You can find the list of compatible games in your recalbox at [/recalbox/share/roms/fba/clrmamepro/piFBA_gamelist.txt](https://raw.githubusercontent.com/digitalLumberjack/recalbox-buildroot/recalbox/board/recalbox/share/roms/fba/clrmamepro/piFBA_gamelist.txt) * You can find the .dat file with rom checksum for clrmamepro at [/recalbox/share/roms/fba/clrmamepro/fba_029671_od_release_10_working_roms.dat](https://raw.githubusercontent.com/digitalLumberjack/recalbox-buildroot/recalbox/board/recalbox/share/roms/fba/clrmamepro/fba_029671_od_release_10_working_roms.dat)

imame4all _Recalbox (all versions)_ * imame4all is recommended for older games that does not run in piFBA * It uses the mame romset version : **0.37b5** (July 2000) * Size : 1.86GB * Romsets emulated : 2 270 (includes clones etc...) * Active Sets 2241/2241 * Parents 560/560 * Clones 990/990 * Others 690/690 * BIOS: 1 * Samples: 35 * CHDs: 0 * _roms folder: _mame * You can find the list of compatible games in your recalbox at [/recalbox/board/recalbox/share/roms/mame/clrmamepro/imame4all_gamelist.txt](https://raw.githubusercontent.com/digitalLumberjack/recalbox-buildroot/recalbox/board/recalbox/share/roms/mame/clrmamepro/imame4all_gamelist.txt) * You can find the .dat file with rom checksum for clrmamepro at [/recalbox/share/roms/mame/clrmamepro/imame4all.dat](<https://raw.githubusercontent.com/digitalLumberjack/recalbox-buildroot/recalbox/board/recalbox/share/roms/mame/clrmamepro/imame4all.dat>) * If a game doesn't work with imame4all (MAME 0.37b5 romsets), you can try `lr-mame2003` with a MAME 0.78 ROM set

lr-mame2003 _Recalbox (since v3.3.0-beta-11)_ * lr-mame2003 is more recent mame emulator than imame4all. It brings new games compatibility and is only available on RPI2 * It uses the mame romset version : **0.78** (December 2003) * Romsets emulated : 4,705 * Active Sets 4705/4705 * Parents 1042/1042 * Clones 2039/2039 * Others 1624/1624 * BIOS: 15 * Samples: 56 * CHDs: 56 * _roms folder: _mame * You can find the list of compatible games in your recalbox at (coming soon)_ * You can find the .dat file with rom checksum for clrmamepro at [/recalbox/recalbox-os/master/wiki/dat/mame2003.dat](<https://raw.githubusercontent.com/recalbox/recalbox-os/master/wiki/dat/mame2003.dat>)

libretto FBA * libretto FBA is a libretto version of FBA. It brings new games compatibility and is only available on RPI2. For exemple, it's the only one can lauch capcom [CPSIII](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CP_System_III#List_of_games) games.

Recalbox (since 6.0) * It uses the FBA romset version : *FBA 0.2.97.44* which is based on MAME 0.189 * You can find the changelog at [fbalpha changelog](<https://www.fbalpha.com/view/240/>) * You can find the list of compatible games in your recalbox at [/libretto/libretto-fba/blob/master/gamelist.txt](https://gitlab.com/recalbox/recalbox/blob/master/package/recalbox-romfs/recalbox-romfs-fba_libretto/roms/fba_libretto/clrmamepro/fba_libretto_gamelist.txt) * You can find the .dat file with rom checksum for clrmamepro at [/recalbox/recalbox-

os/master/wiki/dat/fba_0.2.97.42.dat](https://gitlab.com/recalbox/recalbox/blob/master/package/recalbox-romfs/recalbox-romfs-fba_libretro/roms/fba_libretro/clrmamepro/FB%20Alpha%20v0.2.97.42.dat)

Neogeo system The Neogeo system is not an emulator itself. You need to configure the core to use in [recalbox.conf](<https://github.com/recalbox/recalbox-os/wiki/recalbox.conf-%28EN%29>). This will allow you to visually separate the NeoGeo games from the other arcade games, they will appear as a dedicated system in Emulation Station

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Last update: **2020/05/10 14:19**

