Bandai RX-78

The Bandai RX-78 is a home computer manufactured by Bandai, released in July 1983 in Japan at a price of 59,800 yen. The name is directly derived from the **RX-78-2 Gundam** mecha from the 1979 anime series “Mobile Suit Gundam”, earning it the nickname “Gundam Computer”.

The RX-78 features a Sharp LH0080A (Z80A clone) CPU at 4.1 MHz, 30 KB RAM, 8 KB ROM (IPL), and a Texas Instruments SN76489A PSG sound chip with 3 tone channels + 1 noise channel. Graphics use a unique 6-bitplane layered architecture providing 192×184 pixels with 27 colors (3 intensity levels per RGB channel). The system has two cartridge slots, two proprietary joystick ports, a full QWERTY keyboard, and a cassette tape interface.

Only approximately **20 titles** were released, including the flagship *Mobile Suit Gundam: Luna Two no Tatakai*, a BASIC interpreter (BS-BASIC v1.0), a Z80 assembler, and various games. The RX-78 was a commercial failure — at four times the price of the Nintendo Famicom (released the same month) and with a tiny software library, it could not compete. Bandai, a toy company, lacked the software ecosystem needed to sustain a computer platform. The machine is now **extremely rare** and highly sought-after by collectors.

The MAME driver for the RX-78 is marked as NOT_WORKING but is partially functional. Some games may have display or input issues.

This system scrapes metadata for the “rx78” group(s) and loads the `rx78` set from the currently selected theme, if available.

Quick reference

- **Emulator:** MAME, RetroArch
- **Core:** MAME, libretro: MAME
- **Folder:** `/userdata/roms/rx78`
- **Accepted ROM formats:** `.bin`, `.zip`, `.7z`

BIOS

MD5 checksum	Share file path	Description
	`bios/rx78.zip → ipl.rom`	RX-78 Internal Program Loader ROM (8 KB)

The `rx78.zip` BIOS file must match the version of MAME used in your version of Batocera. You can verify your BIOS files from the Batocera menu: **GAME SETTINGS > MISSING BIOS CHECK**.

ROMs

Place your Bandai RX-78 ROMs in `/userdata/roms/rx78`.

Software was distributed on ROM cartridges (8K/16K/32K) and cassette tapes. Only about 20 titles exist, including games, a BASIC interpreter, and development tools.

Emulators

MAME

MAME (Multiple Arcade Machine Emulator) is the only emulator that supports the RX-78.

RetroArch

RetroArch (formerly SSNES), is a ubiquitous frontend that can run multiple “cores”, which are essentially the emulators themselves. The most common cores use the libretro API, so that's why cores run in RetroArch in Batocera are referred to as “libretro: (core name)”. RetroArch aims to unify the feature set of all libretro cores and offer a universal, familiar interface independent of platform.

RetroArch configuration

RetroArch offers a **Quick Menu** accessed by pressing `[HOTKEY]` +  which can be used to alter various things like RetroArch and core options, and controller mapping. Most RetroArch related settings can be altered from Batocera's EmulationStation.

libretro: MAME

The libretro version of MAME can be used to emulate the RX-78. It uses the same BIOS and ROM sets as the standalone version.

Controls

The RX-78 has a full QWERTY keyboard and two proprietary 8-pin DIN joystick ports.

See also

- Bandai Super Vision 8000 — Bandai's earlier console (1979)

Troubleshooting

Emulation issues

The MAME driver is marked as NOT_WORKING. Known issues include BS-BASIC COLOR command problems, display corruption during scrolling, and joystick issues in some games.

Further troubleshooting

For further troubleshooting, refer to the generic support pages.

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