

Easter Eggs in Coding !!!1!

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Table of Contents

- What is an Easter Egg in Coding?
- Easter Eggs in Video Games
- Easter Eggs in Programming
- Easter Eggs in Hardware/Firmware
- How to Make Your Own Easter Eggs

What is an Easter Egg?

- A hidden message, image, or feature hidden in software (i.e. Excel, Mariokart), or any electronic medium.
- Term was coined around 1980 by Steve Wright, then-Director of Software Development @ Atari.



What is an Easter Egg? (Cont.)

- Not all Easter Eggs are harmless fun, some may cause vulnerabilities due to lack of documentation.
- Easter Eggs have important cultural impacts influencing:
 - User Experiences
 - Marketing & Brand Identity
 - Creativity within the Development Community
 - Legacy & Tradition

Easter Eggs In Video Games

- First *TRUE* Instance of an Easter Egg was actually in the 1973 Video Game "Moonlander"
- Since there Conception, TONS of Easter Eggs have been created and implemented within video games
- CHEAT CODES & ARGs ARE NOT EASTER EGGS!!!

Examples of Easter Eggs in Video Games

- "Xyzy" in *Colossal Cave Adventure* (Remember this)
- "Chris Houlihan's Room" in *A Link to the Past*
- "Psycho Mantis Reads Your Mind" in *Metal Gear Solid*
- The Konami Code: 
- Literally any *COD Zombies* Easter Egg

Easter Eggs in Programming

- Computer Software Easter Eggs are secret responses that occur as a result of an undocumented set of commands
- In the early days of computing (80s-90s), Easter Eggs were widely celebrated and created but after the 2000s large corporations like Microsoft party pooped and banned them for "Security Reasons"

Examples of Easter Eggs in Programming

- "EMACs Doctor" In the EMACs IDE
- "Sudo make me a sandwich" in Unix CLI
- "Secret Commands" in the Google Browser
- Placeholder Variables: "Plugh", "XYZZY", "FOOBAR"
- "Import this" in Python

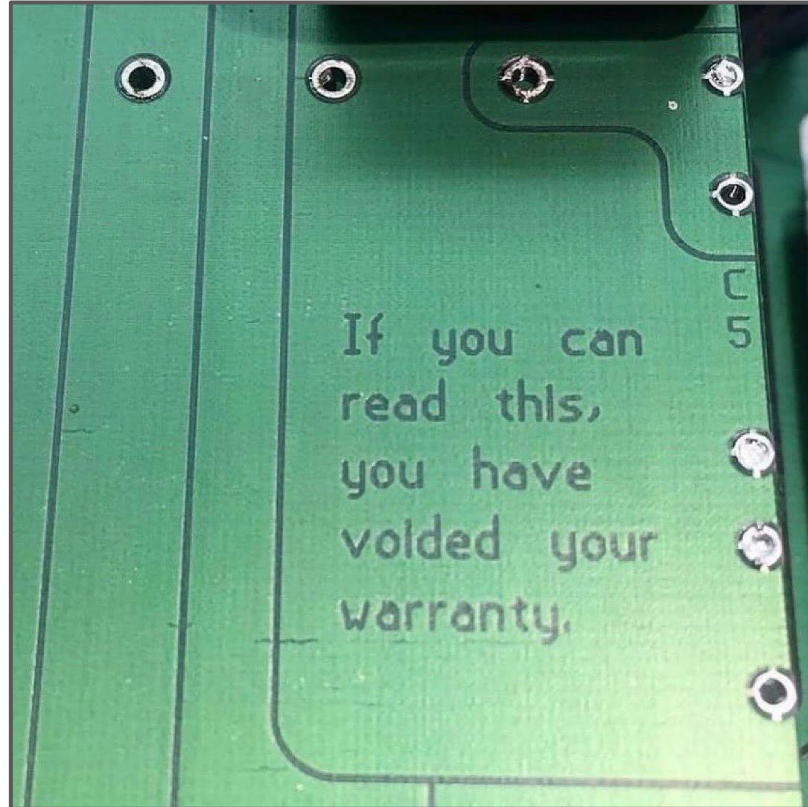
Easter Eggs in Hardware/Firmware

- Easter Eggs aren't only reserved for software, plenty of hardware developers join in on the fun too
- Easter Eggs in Hardware are much more rare, more resources have to be allocated.
- Easter Eggs can also be found in Firmware but are just as rare as Hardware eggs due to Memory constraints and trigger mechanisms

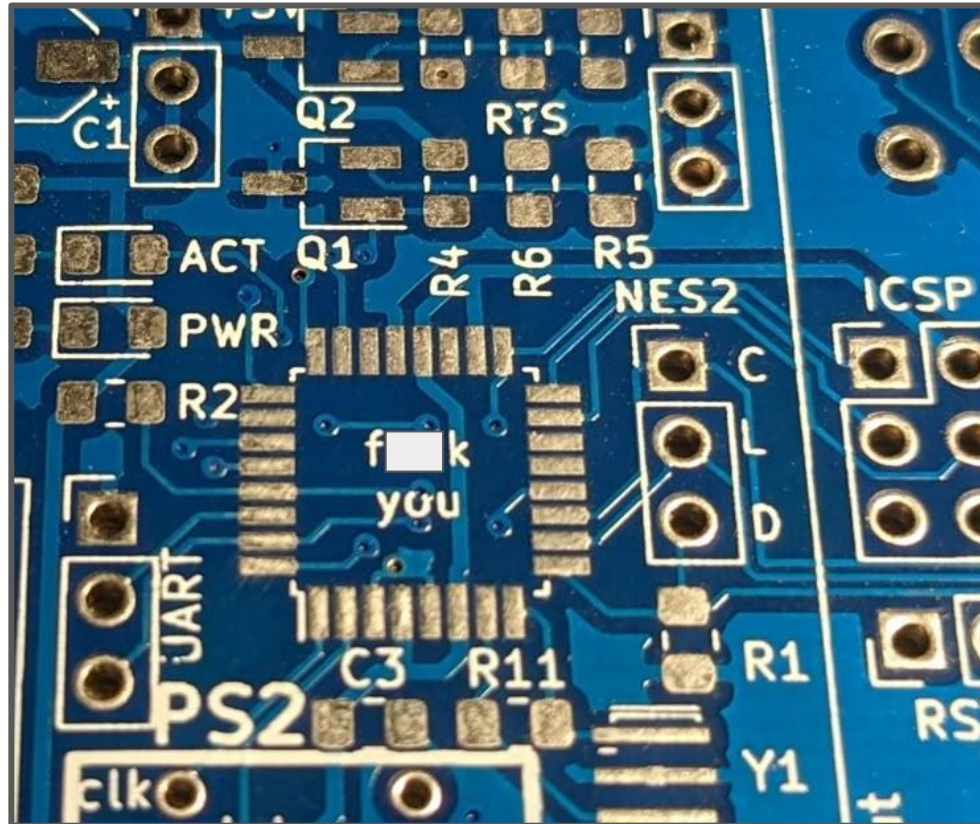
Examples of Easter Eggs in Hardware/Firmware

- Silicon (Chip) Art (Russian CVAX, Waldo)
- PCB Silkscreen Secrets (Vias arrangements)
- Oscilloscope Games in Firmware
- Macintosh SE Team Photo
- Silicon Graphics O2 Flight Sim

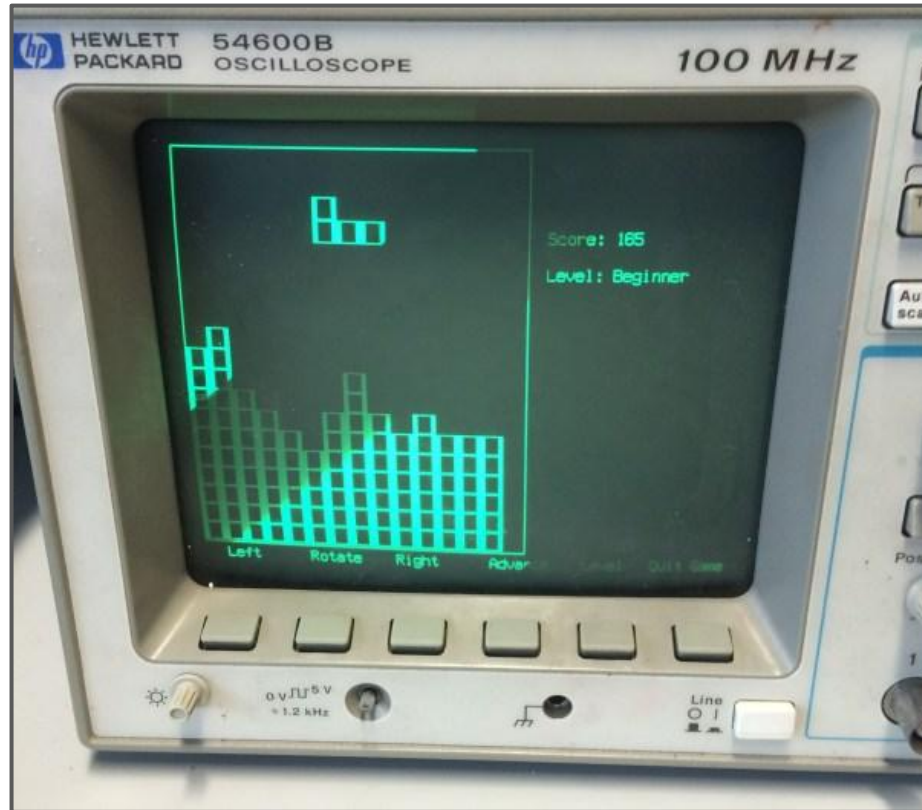
Text placed on the solder mask of a PCB



Hidden silkscreen text



HP Tetris Oscilloscope Game



How to Make Your Own Easter Eggs

- Two rules:
 - DO NOT Compromise your system for the bit
 - Have fun!

!Sources!1!!

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[2] TechBuzzOnline Contributors, "Exploring Programming Easter Eggs: A Complete History and Implementation Guide," *techbuzzonline*, Apr. 03, 2025.

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[3] "Easter Eggs in Code: Fun, Festivity, and a Few Serious Bugs," *Home*, Apr. 18, 2025.

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[1] "Chris Houlihan's Room," *Zelda Dungeon Wiki*, 2025.

https://www.zeldadungeon.net/wiki/Chris_Houlihan%27s_Room

[2] eeggs.com, "Easter Eggs - Eeggs.com," Eeggs.com, 2026. <https://eeggs.com>