

# Rom Hack?

A ROM hack is a modification of a video game, done by altering the ROM-File (read only memory) to change the graphics, text, level design or sound.

The extent of these modifications can range from small changes like giving a character a different art, to big ones like creating entirely new stories.

# Putting the Feminism in the Game

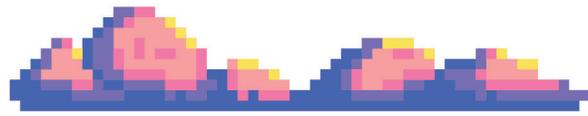
There are a few common types of feminist ROM hacks.

First are simple sprite swaps between characters, for example the Pauline Edition of Donkey Kong which was created by a father for his daughter. All it does is swap the character sprites of Mario and Pauline. In this version its Mario being saved by Pauline.



There are also a lot of hacks that change the dialogue of games.

The Series of Gender Neutral The Legend of Zelda Hacks by user EPMPK changes all gender-specific references to the protagonist Link to gender neutral ones.



# Queer and Feminist Rom Hacks



Super Goomba Bros.



Totoro - Mei is Missing

Super Goomba Bros. changes the Mario and Peach sprites of Super Mario Bros. to Goombas.

Totoro - Mei is Missing changes the levels, sound and graphics of Super Mario Bros. to have the game set in the world of the popular anime My Neighbor Totoro.

In a much more exhaustive effort, the Restoration Queen Hack of Fire Emblem: The Sacred Stones by tumblr users lizzledpink and glitteringworlds changes the at times sexist writing of the original game to a much more actively female and queer experience that brings protagonist Eirika and other female character to the forefront of the story.



Some games disadvantage female characters on purpose. The Gender Equality for Shin Megami Tensei if... fixes this in its game by removing the HP penalty for the female main character and removing all gender restrictions on equipment.



Last are two hacks that completely remake the game with new levels and a new story.

The Runaway Bride is a hack of Super Mario Bros. where as in the original game Princess Peach is kidnapped by Bowser. Peach waits and waits for Mario to show up and save her, but he is off on another adventures and isn't coming. On the day she is scheduled to marry Bowser she takes things into her own hands, becoming the titular Runaway Bride.



A Girls Journey has a similar scope of changes, but instead of changing the existing storyline of Super Mario Bros. with the same characters it tells its own completely new story. You play as a girl named Gabi and her partner Erica to save their best friend Alisa from Bowser.



## Where to go from here?

Because it has no profit incentive, ROM hacking offers an opportunity to feature much more niche and sometimes taboo topics and themes than commercial gaming products can.

There have already been quite a few truly inspired projects in this vein, but after about 40 years of ROM hacks it still feels like only a small variety of ideas have been explored.

More information:



[franja.neocities.org/queer\\_romhacks/queer\\_romhacks](https://franja.neocities.org/queer_romhacks/queer_romhacks)