

# How to install RetroArch on Xbox One or Series X/S

Microsoft's Xbox console is essentially a PC, which means downloading and installing not only games but other apps and tools is relatively easy.

Retro gaming enthusiasts will be happy to know that the developers have made RetroArch available for installation on modern Xbox consoles, so not only can you play the latest and greatest AAA titles on Xbox, but can take a trip down memory lane with tons of emulators. The best part is that you don't need to modify your Xbox – RetroArch can be downloaded and installed into the original Xbox stock.

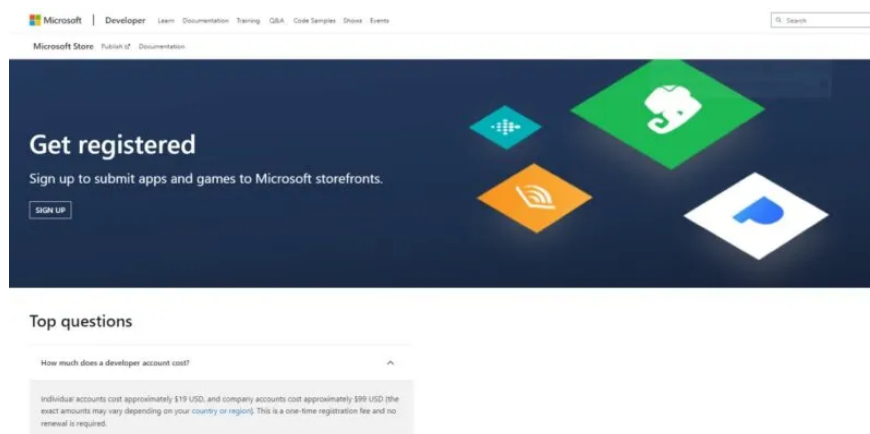
## How to enable Developer Mode on Xbox

**Note:** You will need a PC connected to the Internet to enable Dev Mode on your console.

Launch Microsoft Store and search for '**Xbox Dev Mode**', then, install it.

After installation, launch it. You will be greeted with some informational screens that you may want to take note of. Finally, you'll reach a screen called '**Activate Console**' with a unique alphanumeric code and website URL. At this point, switch to your PC.

To continue, you need to sign up for a developer account. Click the '**Sign Up**' button and sign in to your Microsoft account. These accounts cost around 20 USD. Fill in all required fields and make payment to complete registration.

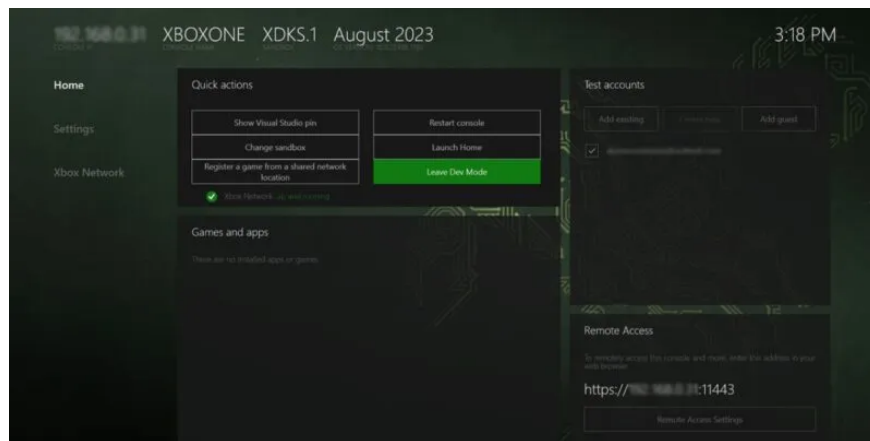


Next, go back to your Xbox and plug in the URL shown on the screen '**Activate Console**' into the browser Browse on PC. This will take you to a page where you need to sign in to your Microsoft account. Make sure you use the same Microsoft account you used in the previous step. After signing in, you'll be taken to the Microsoft

Partner Center.

Next, go to <https://partner.microsoft.com/xboxconfig/devices> and enter the activation code displayed on Your Xbox. Finally, click '**Agree and Activate**'. At this point, the page will reload and you will see your Xbox console listed. Your Xbox will also display a screen notifying you that the console has been activated.

Once activation is complete, return to your Xbox and launch the Dev Mode app. Click '**Switch & restart**' to enter Developer Mode. Your Xbox will automatically shut down and restart, although this process will take longer than usual. To return to Retail Mode, open Dev Home. In '**Quick Actions**', select '**Leave Dev Mode**' `/span>`. Your Xbox will then reboot into Retail Mode.



## Install Retroarch on Xbox

Now that Microsoft has removed emulators in Retail Mode, installing Retroarch on your Xbox console requires a bit of effort. This isn't too difficult, but you will need a PC connected to the same network as the Xbox console.

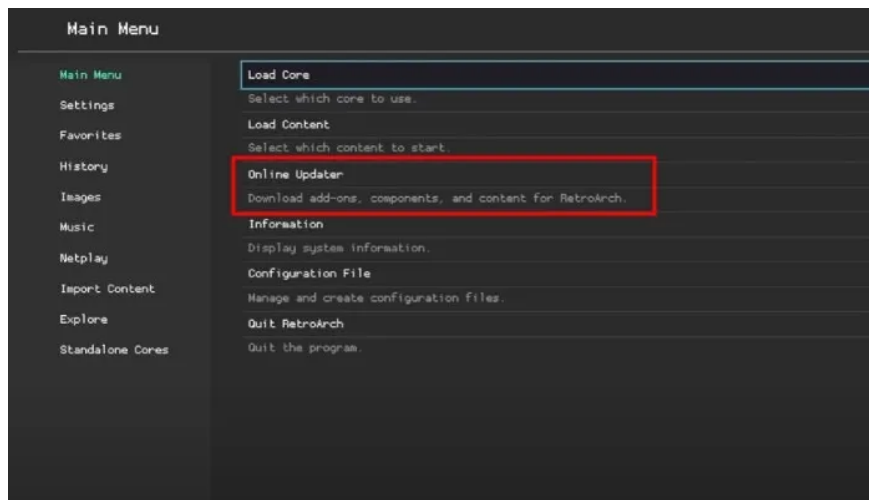
1. On PC, open a browser and navigate to the RetroArch download page. RetroArch is available for installation on a variety of platforms, including Windows PCs.
2. Scroll down until you see the Xbox Series/One download options. Download the Retroarch installer and the Visual Runtime Libraries UWP file.
3. Back to the Xbox console, open the Xbox Device Portal in Dev Mode. In the lower left corner of this screen there is an IP address. It should look like this **192.xxx.xxx.xx** with the numbers '**x? 39**'; different. Each IP address is unique, so make sure you have the correct number.
4. Switch to your PC. Put the IP address from the previous step into your browser. This will take you to the Dev Portal. This allows you to transfer Retroarch files that you downloaded to your PC to your Xbox console.

If you run into any difficulties, RetroArch has created a helpful step-by-step video on how to get Retroarch up and running on your Xbox console.

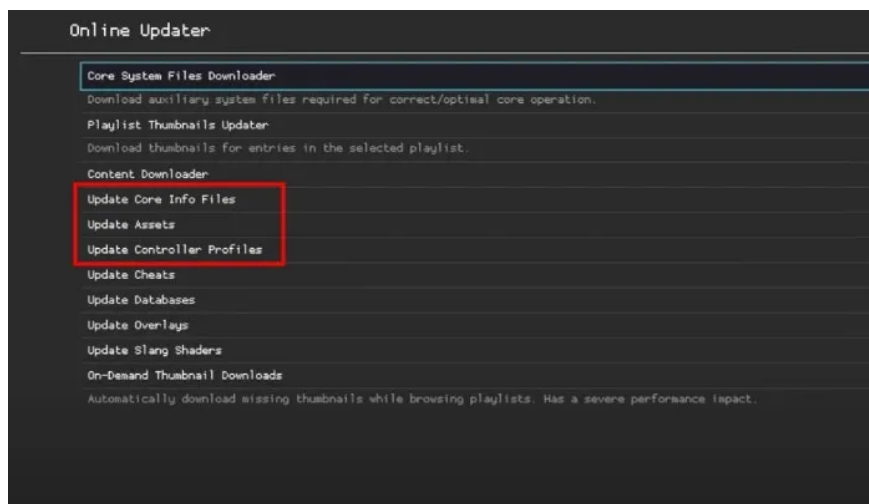
## Set up RetroArch

Before you start playing your favorite classic titles on your Xbox console, you'll need to do some configuration in RetroArch to ensure that you have the best experience possible.

In RetroArch's main menu, scroll down to '**Online Updater**'.



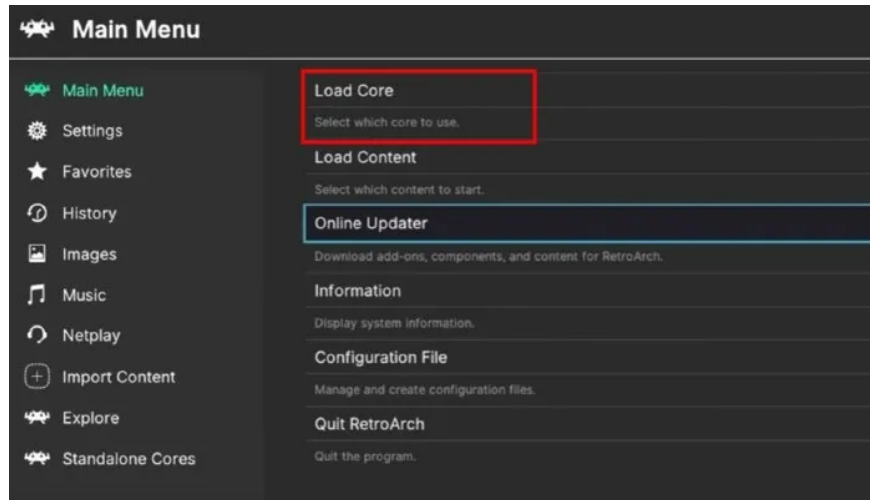
On the next screen, you will see a series of update options. It is not necessary to run all of these, but you should select '**Update Core Info Files**', '**Update Assets**' and '**Update Controller Profiles**' before continuing. Updating these will ensure that you are running the latest versions of all emulators and enjoy an overall smoother experience.



RetroArch will take some time to download, extract, and apply each file, so please be patient.

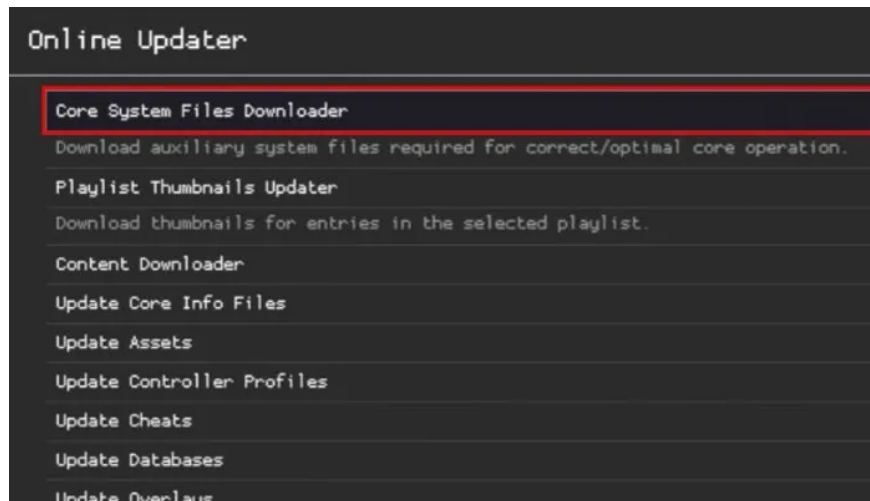
## Download RetroArch cores

RetroArch calls emulators 'core', so from now on the article will refer to them that way as well. There are many cores for many types of console games. You should download several cores to see which one you like better. To download core, select '**Load Core**'. The next screen will display the full list of available cores. Just select the ones you want to start downloading.



## Download system files

Scroll to the top of the page and select '**Core System Files Downloader**' to view a series of ZIP files corresponding to the specific console (e.g. PSP, Gamecube). Selecting one will download the BIOS file for that system. This is not absolutely necessary, but having a BIOS file can provide better emulation performance.

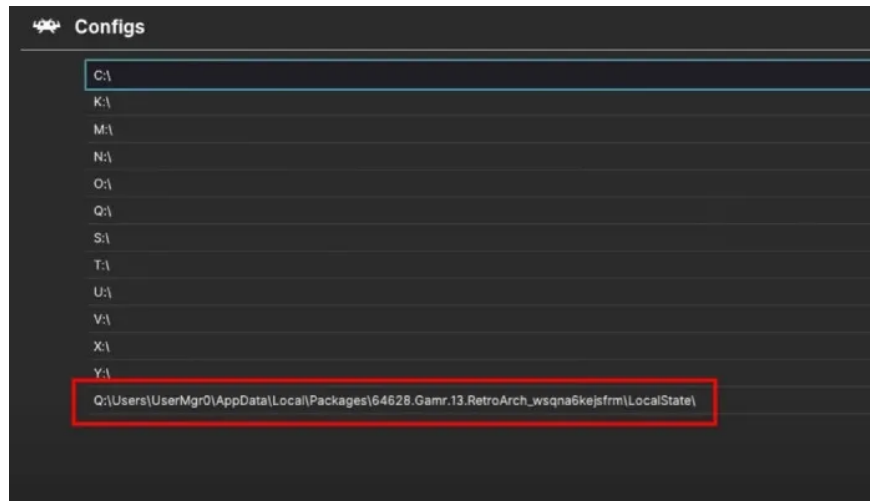


## Set up the correct folders

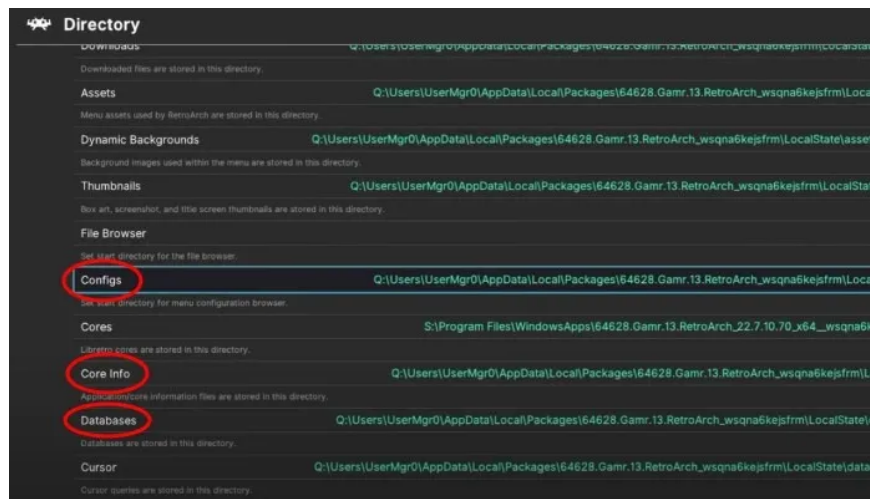
In most cases, all appropriate folders are selected automatically. However, there are rare cases where RetroArch hasn't made the right choice. Unfortunately, if that's the case, you won't be able to launch any emulators or play any games.

To double check that RetroArch has chosen the correct path:

1. Select '**Settings**' from the left menu.
2. In the main window on the right, scroll down to '**Directory**' and select it. On the next screen, you will see a series of folders (for example, C:).



3. Find the folder with the string after it; this is the RetroArch folder installed on your Xbox console and is usually the last folder listed.
4. Select this folder, scroll down and select '**Configs -> Use This Directory**'.
5. Go back and select '**Core info**', select the RetroArch folder, then select '**Info -> Use This Directory**'.
6. Go back again and select '**Databases**', select the RetroArch folder, then select '**Database -> Use This Directory**'.



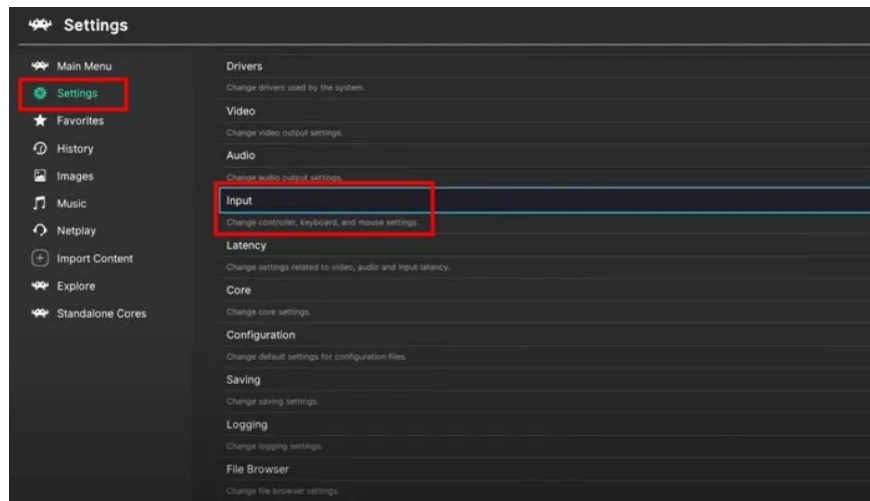
## Set up hotkeys on the Xbox game controller

There's one more thing you need to do before you can play your favorite classic games – assign a hotkey. You don't need to map any buttons; All buttons are assigned automatically and accurately.

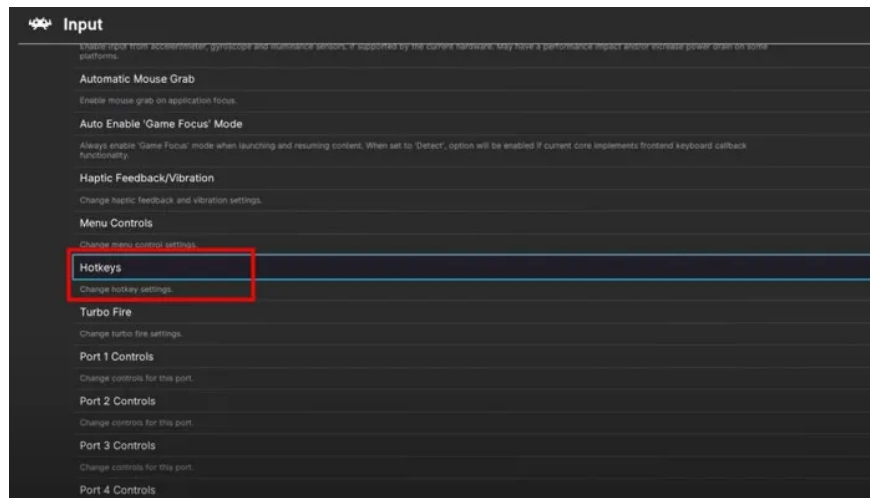
A hotkey is a button or combination of buttons on your Xbox controller. This button will exit the game you are playing and return you to RetroArch's main menu. Without hotkeys enabled, you'll have to quit RetroArch and relaunch it from your Xbox console every time you want to start a new game.

To set up hotkeys:

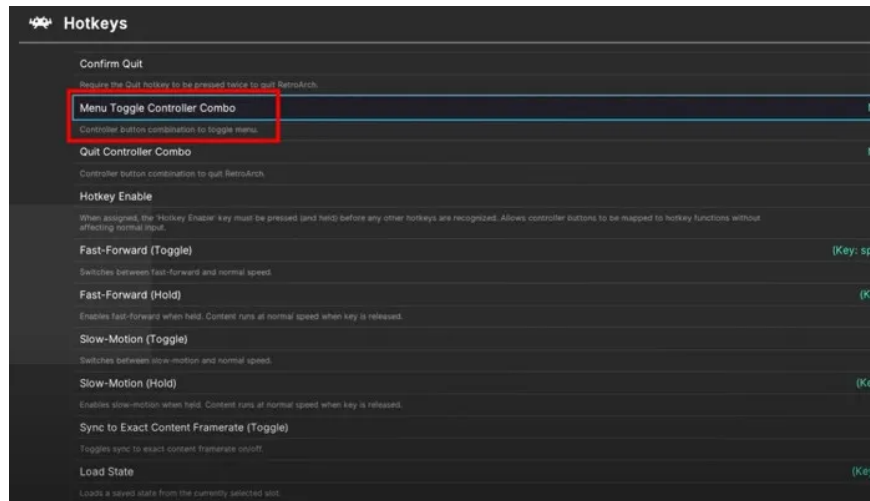
1. Select '**Settings**' from the menu on the left, then scroll down and select '**Input**'.



2. On the next page, scroll down and select '**Hotkeys**'.



3. Select '**Menu Toggle Controller Combo**' to go to the page where you can specify your hotkey combination.



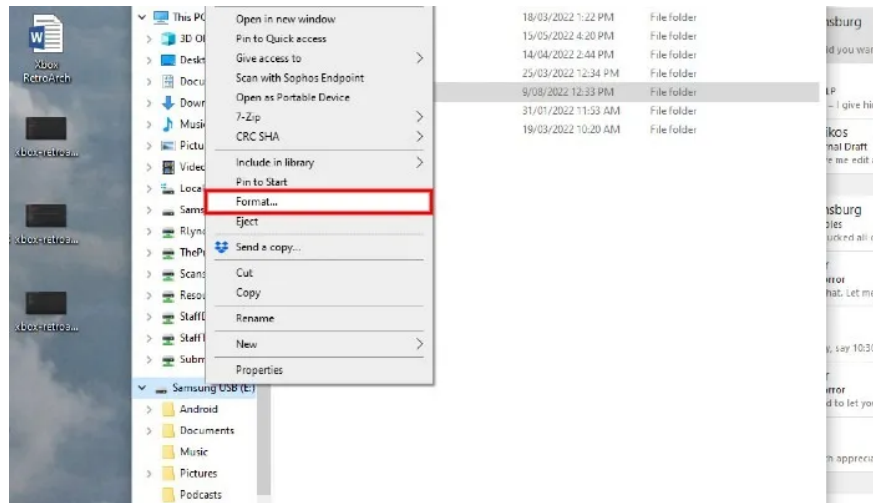
4. Choose whichever combination you think will work best from the available options. For example, I prefer the combination **Start + Select** because that is the default hotkey combination for RetroPie.



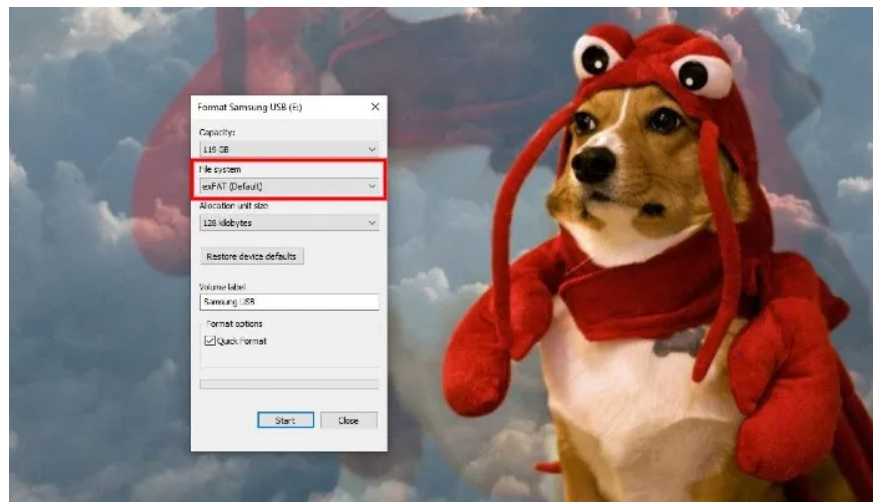
## Prepare a USB flash drive

At this stage, switch to your Windows PC and perform the following steps to prepare your USB flash drive.

1. Plug the flash drive into your computer.
2. When your USB shows up in the left column of the File Explorer window, right-click on it and select '**Format**' from the drop-down menu.



3. This will open a new window that allows you to change a series of parameters, but there's only one you need to pay attention to. In **'File system'**, click the drop-down menu and select **'NTFS'**.



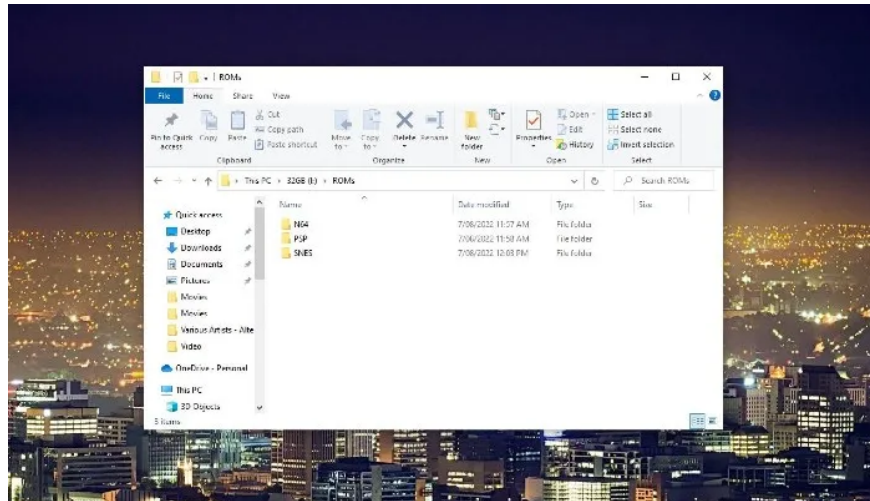
4. Rename your volume in the box labeled **'Volume label'** if you want. The article recommends something like **'Xbox'** or **'Roms'**.

5. Click the **'Start'** button and your USB flash drive will be formatted and ready to go.

## Transfer ROMs

1. Open your newly formatted USB flash drive and create a folder named **'GAMES'** or **'ROMS'**.

2. Inside that folder, create subfolders for each console you want to emulate on your Xbox. For example, if you plan to run Super Nintendo games, create a folder called **'SNES'**.

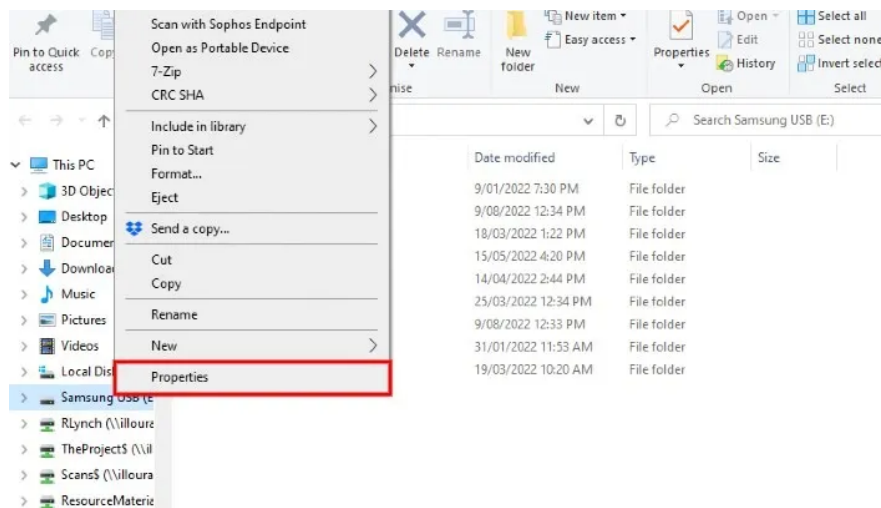


Once you have created all the subfolders dedicated to your console, start transferring your ROM files. It goes without saying but you'll want to put your ROMs in the console subfolder they're linked to. Therefore, the Gameboy Advance ROM will be placed in the GBA folder, etc.

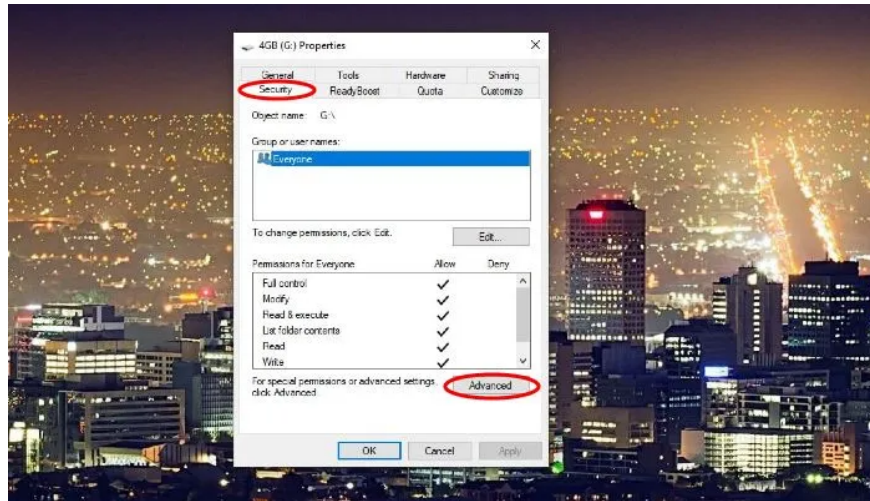
## Prepare USB for Xbox

Now that the ROM is on the USB, you need to do one more thing before plugging it into your Xbox console – navigate some technobabble menus to make sure the Xbox can read the USB and play your ROM.

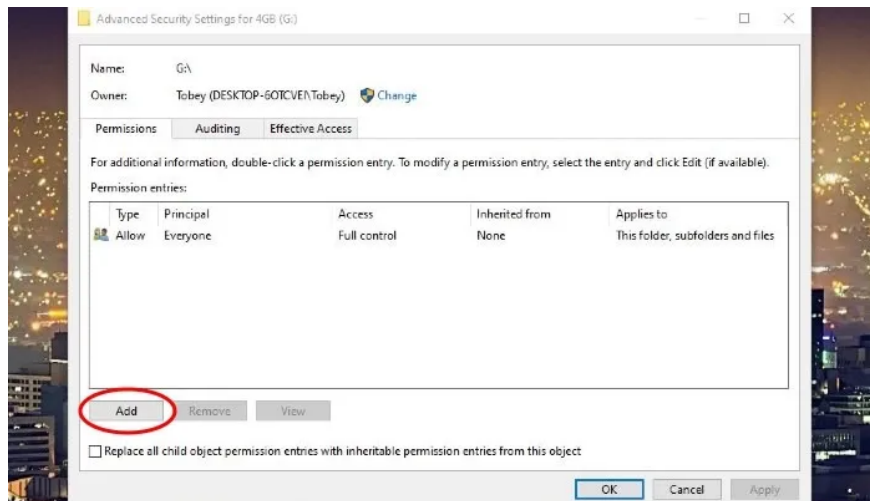
1. In the File Explorer window, locate the USB drive in the column on the left side and right-click on it, then click **'Properties'** in the context menu.



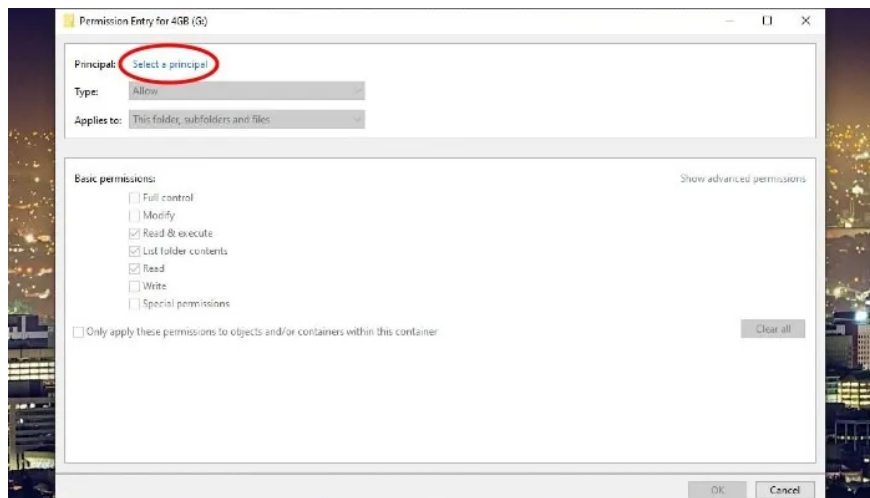
2. In the new window that appears, click the tab labeled **'Security'**. Next, click the button labeled **'Advanced'**.



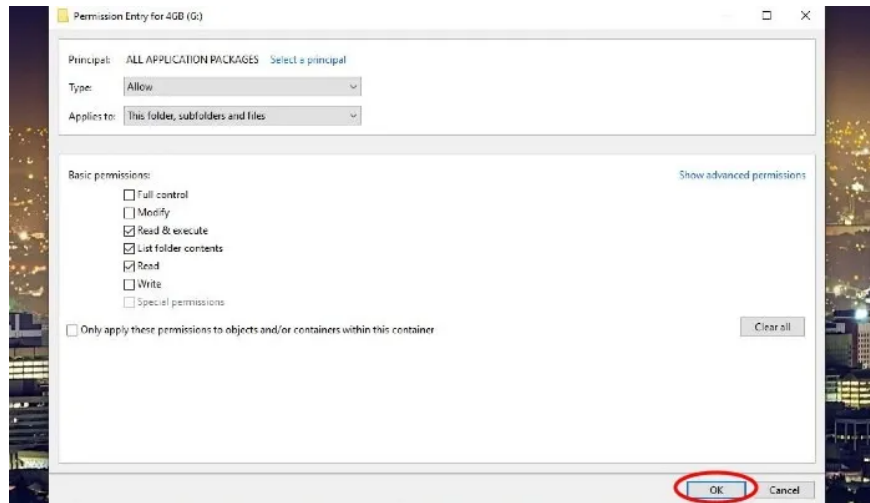
3. This will open a completely new window. Here, click on the 'Add' button.



4. Click 'Select a principal'.

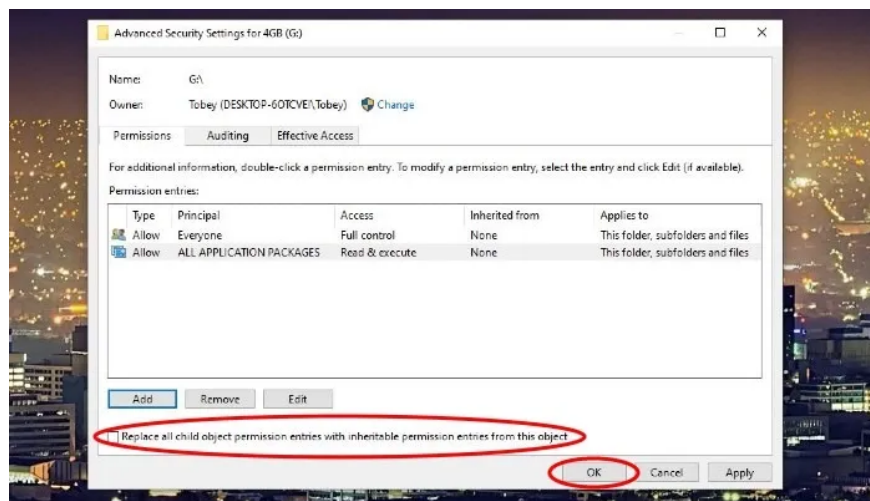






8. You will now see a window labeled '**Advanced Security Settings for Your\_USB**'. In the '**Permission entries**' section, make sure you see '**ALL APPLICATIONS PACKAGES**' in columns '**Principal**' and '**Read & execute**' in column '**Access**'.

9. Check the box labeled '**Replace all child object permission entries with inheritable permission entries from this object**' at the bottom of this window. Finally, click '**OK**'.

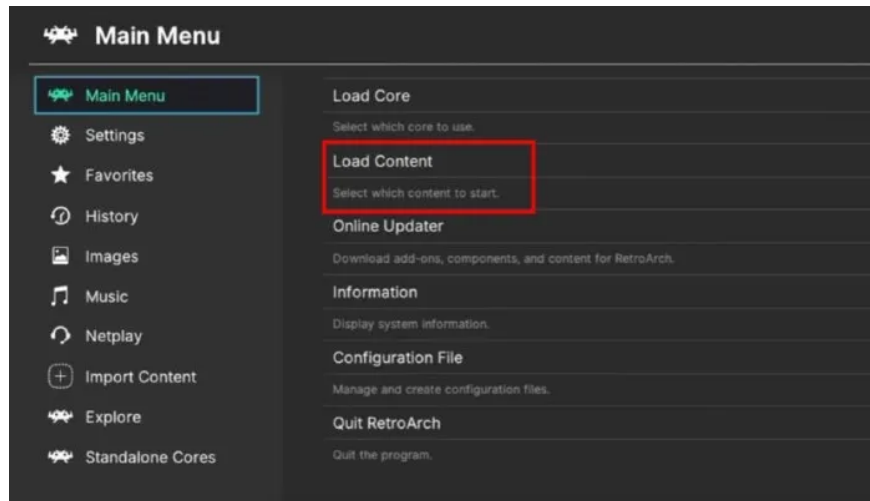


10. A few more windows will appear warning you about security issues and asking if you want to continue. Select **Yes ->Continue** to complete.

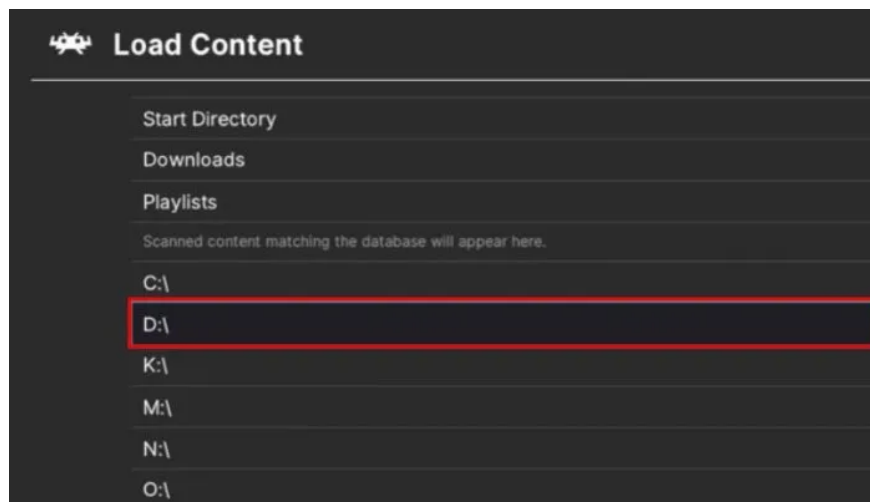
11. At this point, your USB is ready to be unplugged from your PC and plugged into your Xbox console.

## Launch RetroArch on Xbox

1. After plugging the USB into your Xbox, fire up RetroArch.
2. On the main menu, select '**Load Content**'.



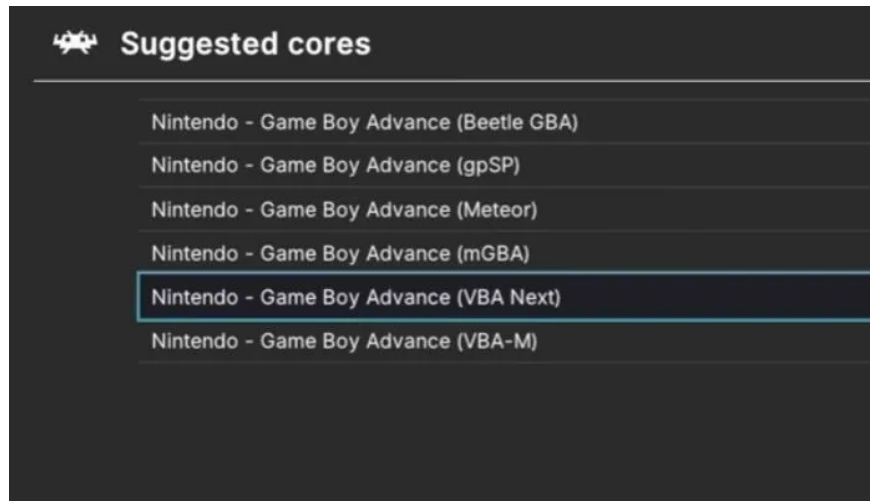
3. You will be taken to a new page displaying a series of folders. Scroll down to drive :D and select it, as this is where you will find the contents of your USB.



4. You will now see a folder named '**GAMES**' or '**ROMS**' depends on the name you have chosen. Select that and you will now see the console-specific subfolders you created earlier.

5. Select one of the subfolders to display all your ROMs for that console.

6. Select ROM to select the core you want to use to run that game. There are usually a few to choose from, so feel free to experiment.



It is done! You are currently running emulators and classic games on your Xbox console. Wishing you happy hours!

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