




+ A GAMER'S » GUIDE, BY & GAMERS

What you need to know to 
keep gaming fun and challenging



alannah & madeline
foundation

Let's get gaming »

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We play games because they are fun and because we love a challenge. We love the stories, the characters, the art. We want to keep gaming that way. So, we asked teenagers to share their experience of growing up playing video games. We asked for their advice so that we can share it with you. And here it is — this is a Gamer's Guide to help you keep the fun and challenge in gaming.

Meet our experts

Our advice comes from the following experts.



Hamish, 16,
first-person
shooter



Sam, 17,
action-
adventure



Kayla, 18,
battle royale



Iluka, 16,
first-person
shooter



Robin, 17,
strategy



Kalani, 16,
first-person
shooter



Mitchell, 17,
simulator



Justin, 17,
racing



Baxtar, 14,
all-rounder



Peri, 16,
VR horror



Choosing a setup

You can play video games anywhere. At a friend's place on their console, at home on a laptop or a smartphone, in the back of a car. But, what should your gaming set up be? What works for you? Here are the different setups you can consider.

Mobile (phone/tablet)

Mobile gaming is a great place to start. There are many types of mobile games. It is a great place to try out lots of different game types and see which you enjoy the most.

Things to consider

Cost: \$\$\$\$

No. of games: ★★★★★

Quality of games: ★★★★★☆

Other features: Augmented Reality Games (like Pokémon Go).



"When I was younger, I was always on my iPad playing Minecraft: Pocket Edition"
— Peri, 16, VR horror



Mobile games to check out

Note: Most of the mobile games you'll want to play are on both iOS and Android platforms.



Terraria

A 2D game that combines resource collection and crafting with fighting some serious bosses. The game to go to after Minecraft: Pocket Edition.



Monument Valley

A cool puzzle game with graphics that twist your brain.



Spaceteam

A mobile game that you have to play with others. Your phones become the controls of a spaceship and you have to work together not to crash. It gets pretty crazy!

Links you'll need:

terraria.org
monumentvalleygame.com
spaceteam.ca
apple.com/app-store/
play.google.com

Pros

- Game anywhere, anytime
- Affordable games
- Lots of different types of games
- Shorter download times

Cons

- Games not as complex
- Lower game quality
- Playing with others is more challenging
- Watch your mobile data



Choosing a setup

continued

Console

Consoles are gaming devices that you connect to your TV or dedicated computer screen. You can start gaming for cheaper than a PC and you are ready to play right out of the box. But, console games are usually more expensive than those on other platforms.



The main three consoles:

PlayStation from Sony

Xbox from Microsoft

Switch from Nintendo.



Other consoles include:

- Wii & WiiU and Switch from Nintendo
- Oculus Quest from Facebook (VR console)
- Previous versions of PlayStation and Xbox.

Things to consider

Cost: \$\$\$\$

No. of games: ★★☆☆☆

Quality of games: ★★★★★

Other features: Amazing graphics.
Tailored Controller.



Console makers update their consoles every three to eight years. Older consoles are still great. The Nintendo Wii still gets a lot of play from people who bought it more than 10 years ago. PlayStation 4 and Xbox One will continue to be great consoles even with new versions available.

To decide which console is right for you, check out what games you can play on them and also ask what your friends are using. The biggest difference between consoles is the type of games they have. For example, only the Nintendo consoles will have Mario games, and the most recent Spiderman game was exclusive to PlayStation.



"My mates and I had like an hour argument one day about how Xbox and PS4 are different"
— Hamish, 16, first-person shooter

Console games to check out



Journey (PS4)

A unique indie game where you don't know where you are going.



Ori and the Blind Forest (Xbox)

A beautiful platformer with hand-painted artwork.



FIFA21

A new FIFA comes out every year. It is a great soccer game and awesome to play with friends or against the computer.



Animal Crossing (Nintendo Switch)

A world building game where you find an island and explore and build your own resort.

Links you'll need:

xbox.com

playstation.com

thatgamecompany.com/journey/

orithegame.com/blind-forest/ea.com/games/fifa

nintendo.com.au/nintendo-switch/animal-crossing.com/new-horizons/

Choosing a setup

continued

PC

PCs are a really popular way to play for dedicated gamers. As you get older, you can get set up with powerful gaming computers or even build one yourself! The quality of gaming on PCs is well regarded as the best. PCs are a great next step for avid gamers beyond mobile and console.

Things to consider

Cost: \$\$\$\$

No. of games: ★★★★★

Quality of games: ★★★★★

Other features: Best way to game online with friends.



"With a PC it's a different feeling all together, it's a bit more full on."
— Kalani, 16, first-person shooter

PC games to check out

There are too many to list and so many arguments about what some of the best games are. But, here are three you *must* play.



Portal 2

A puzzle game that brings the fun of a first-person shooter to an amazing game world with amazing game mechanics.



NBA 2K20

Every year there is a new season and a new update to this basketball game that each year is more and more realistic.



Legends of Runeterra

A new release in 2020 that brings classic League of Legends stories to a strategy card game.

Links you'll need:

store.steampowered.com/
thinkwithportals.com/
nba.2k.com/2k20
playruneterra.com/

Pros

- Best variety of games
- Excellent access to indie games
- Access to early release games
- Flexible control options — controller, keyboard, mouse

Cons

- Cost (a base level gaming PC will cost you \$1,000-\$1,500)
- You need a dedicated space for your gaming PC
- Physical setup — make sure you are comfortable



Best cross-platform games

A cross-platform game is one that is made to play on mobile, console or PC. Most games can be played on more than one platform. These are three of the best ever.

Minecraft: Unlimited possibilities.

Stardew Valley: A really fun resource gathering, farming exploration game.

Rocket League: Soccer, with cars!

Types of games

There are many different types of games. You'll find that there might be certain styles of game you prefer to play - and that is cool. We recommend playing lots of different types of games because you never know when you might find something that you really like. It is handy to know how we describe different games.

TYPE

DESCRIPTION

EXAMPLES

(search for them in Google)



World building sandbox

A game that offers players a wide range of choices to create and shape the game world

Minecraft (G)



First-person shooter (FPS)

You control a character who shoots enemies and targets

Plants Vs Zombies: GW2 (G)



Sport

Video games that simulate sporting events and leagues

NBA 2K20 (G)
FIFA (G)



Role playing

A game where you take on the role of adventurers seeking to complete tasks

The Legend of Zelda (G)
Pokémon Sword and Shield (PG)



Simulator

A game that allows you to experience a real-life activity like flying a plane

SimCity (G)
Flight Simulator (G)
Farmville (G)



"For strategy games I really like the feeling of building something up. It feels like a role play."

— Robin, 17, strategy



Types of games

continued



"Finding different games is probably a key thing to gaming because they are all such different experiences."
— Baxtar, 14, all-rounder



TYPE

DESCRIPTION

EXAMPLES

(search for them in Google)



Strategy

These are games that require skillful planning, critical thinking and problem solving

Portal 2 (G)
Civilisation (PG)



Platformer

You overcome obstacles and challenges as they move across the screen

Super Mario Bros (G)
Crash Bandicoot (PG)
Sonic the Hedgehog (G)



Action and adventure

Games that include both problem solving of adventure and action of combat

LEGO Games (Batman, Indiana Jones etc.) (PG)
No Man Sky (PG)



Indie games

Video games made by independent people, not large companies — these games are often unique and different

Untitled Goose Game (G)
Fall Guys: Ultimate Knockout (G)



"One type of game that I think is quite good is indie games. Because they are all very unique. They are good for people who don't have many other people to play with. They're not created by big companies - they are often very creative."

— Robin, 17, strategy



Did you know?

Back in 2009 a Swedish coder called Notch created a little sandbox indie game called Minecraft. Yep, in the beginning, Minecraft was an indie game!



Playing on your own

Playing with friends can be fun, but you can have an entirely different experience when you play games on your own. You can really let your imagination run wild and enjoy the world or story of the game.

Some games are designed to be immersive and played with headphones on to maximise the experience through sound. Some games worth checking out to play by yourself are: Journey, Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild, Pokémon Sword and Shield and a whole bunch of different mobile games.

Our experts say:

"Sometimes you just want to be by yourself and immerse yourself in it."

— Peri, 16, VR horror



"It's just immersing yourself in it, analysing the narrative."

— Kalani, 16, first-person shooter



Playing on your own Vs. playing with friends

Playing online

You can play with or against your friends in online games like Minecraft, but also in games like Among Us or Sea of Thieves. You may get a choice of playing 'co-op' (with your friends against computer-controlled enemies) or 'competitive' (playing against other people).

"I try and play with as many friends as possible and we make a party chat and just and have fun and laugh about what happens during the game."

— Hamish, 16, first-person shooter



If you want to play with friends in this way, here's what you'll need:

- a multiplayer/online game of your choice
- a good internet connection
- a way to communicate — you could use the in-game chat or create a party chat with your friends. Ask your parents about the best way to do this!

Options for online game chat include using another device, like a phone next to your computer if it is with just one other friend (simple and lo-fi), using a voice chat like Skype, or using in-built chat offered on consoles or in-game. For gamers who are 13+ other options become available like Discord for PC.

Remember to keep it respectful.

Staying safe while online



When we play video games we are able to play with all kinds of people from all over the world. Usually it is with friends, but sometimes we can play online and there are people we have never met. The chat in public channels can get out of hand sometimes. There might be things that are said in there that are rude or abusive or make you feel uncomfortable.

Our experts have some advice on how to keep online gaming enjoyable.



Know who you are playing with

"Know who you are adding. Create invite only settings."
— Justin, 17, racing

Privacy



"If you are playing online, don't give up any personal information. Be wary of background noise too, if your microphone is on it can give away information that you might not want to share."
— Iluka, 16, first-person shooter



Switch servers

"If I see something, or if someone says something I would either switch servers, or block that person."
— Peri, 16, VR horror



Mute the voice chat

"It's as simple as turning the chat setting off... I stay away from it, just because I don't want to deal with it."
— Hamish, 16, first-person shooter



Play offline

"Playing by myself means no trolls and no people to destroy your things that you have created."
— Justin, 17, racing

Trust your gut

"Trust your gut if the vibe is not right."
— Iluka, 16, first-person shooter



Block or mute a player

"With all these games it's very easy to mute people."
— Sam, 17, Action-adventure



Streamers and YouTubers

So you want to get some ideas about what you can build in Minecraft, tips on how to beat the next boss or even discover new games? Platforms like Twitch, Mixer and YouTube are full of people streaming their gameplay, showing tips and reviewing new games.

We asked our experts who they keep an eye on, and here are a few good YouTubers to follow. You can find them by typing their names into the YouTube or Twitch search.



"Sometimes if I see a cool Minecraft house on YouTube I'll be like oh I want to build that!"
— Peri, 16, VR horror



Streamers to check out

PrestonPlays

Always posts interesting and fun new games to check out.

DanTDM

Short for Dan - The Diamond Minecart. He is a first class Minecraft vlogger.

Ninja

The biggest Fortnite streamer.

Lachlan

An Australian streamer who started with Pokémon-style games.

Stampylonghead

A hilarious Minecraft YouTuber.

"It's been pretty good, some of my favourite games I've found through watching YouTubers, it's how I discovered new games."

— Baxtar, 14, all-rounder



A few things to remember

Find a YouTuber or streamer that *you* like, there are heaps of good creators out there.

"Explore a game that you like and you want to watch. Then you just find a person that you think is entertaining for you."

— Iluka, 16, first-person shooter

YouTube can be distracting and it's easy to keep watching videos for hours and hours. Don't forget to balance the time that you spend watching videos with the amount of time that you want to spend actually playing!

YouTubers often band together to have groups who come into each other's videos and play against each other, this is a good way to find other YouTubers you may like.





What healthy gaming looks like

Balanced gaming

Gaming is something that can take up a lot of your time if you let it. And because it's so fun, it's tempting to want to play all day everyday, but you've got to remember to balance it with other things in your life.

Check out a few ways that gamers make sure they keep it balanced and healthy.

Exercise

"I'm sitting on my laptop all day for school... so I'll go outside for an hour and go for a walk or a run, then come back and play some games, then eat dinner and do some homework after that."

— Sam, 17, action-adventure



No game days

"I have no game days. For me that's Tuesday, Thursday or Sundays - I just won't play."

— Sam, 17, action-adventure

Other commitments

"You've got to make sure you've done everything that you need to do like chores, it makes it more fun when you can just relax knowing you've done everything."

— Peri, 16, VR horror



Take breaks

"I have to remember to take time to drink water. I take 20 minutes, in between matches... Oh and never turn down dinner!"

— Iluka, 16, first-person shooter

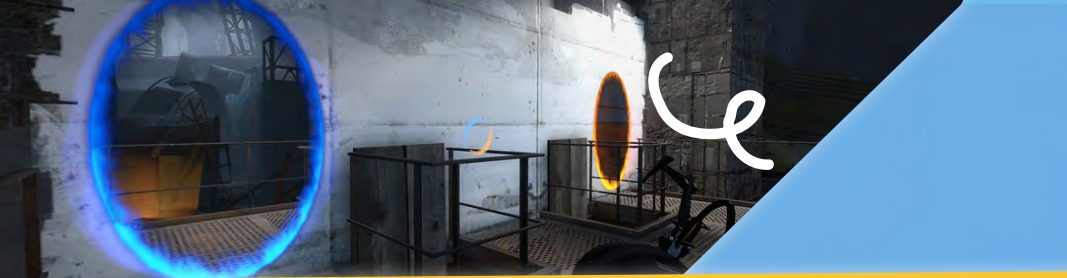


Time management

"Usually I just plan the time I need to do the homework and plan when I can play my games."

— Iluka, 16, first-person shooter





What healthy gaming looks like

continued

Managing your emotions

Emotions run high when you're gaming! It can be a great feeling when you win... but it can also be really frustrating or upsetting when you lose.

Make sure to keep a few things in mind while you're playing.

You're going to lose sometimes

"You definitely gain a lot of resilience when you lose."

— Hamish, 16, first-person shooter



Be respectful in the chat

"Have banter but...no-one likes a toxic chat!"

— Sam, 17, action-adventure



Excuses, excuses...

"If you lose, don't just say 'oh they're hacking' or 'oh they're using something' when the fact is... the person that beat you is probably just better than you."

— Hamish, 16, first-person shooter

Relax, it's supposed to be fun!

"At the end of the day it's a game. It's pixels on a screen."

— Sam, 17, action-adventure



What healthy gaming looks like

continued



Help your parents understand

Your parents want what's best for you, but there's going to be things about gaming that they might not understand. Here are some ways that our experts bring their parents along for the journey.

Help your parents understand the games you play

"Just talking to them and explaining to them about games."
— Mitchell, 17, simulator

Play a game with your parents

"It gives the parent an opportunity to actually experience gaming firsthand with their child as well."
— Hamish, 16, first-person shooter

Let them know that you're playing with other people

"Try and have a conversation or even show them why sometimes you can't just pause an online game and that you would be letting your teammates down if you left."
— Iluka, 16, first-person shooter



Talk about the benefits

"Some games can be educational and some have education settings. Sims for example can be really creative."
— Justin, 17, racing





Level 1, 256 Clarendon St
South Melbourne VIC 3205
T: 03 9697 0666
W: amf.org.au
E: info@amf.org.au