



entertainment
software
association

Essential Facts

About the U.S. Video Game Industry





Foreword	5
Everybody Plays	7
Player Perceptions & Attitudes	10
Player Behaviors & Preferences	13
Games, Sports & Entertainment	19
Game Communities	21
Families & Video Games	27
Video Games & Accessibility	33
Spending Trends	37
Methodology	41
ESA Members	42
ESA & Our Partners	43

FOREWORD



Video games have secured their position as one of America's most beloved forms of entertainment. As you will see in reviewing this report, **205.1 million Americans now play video games regularly**. Today's gamers reflect every corner of society, encompassing every demographic. The defining question is no longer, "Do you play video games?" but "Which video games do you play?"

Video games, long perceived as child's play or a hobby, are nearly universally loved across Generation Alpha – perhaps unsurprisingly, **83% of kids ages 5-12 say they play video games**. For me, the most eye-opening statistics are found when looking at older generations. More than half of Generation X (ages 45-60) play video games every week, while 49% of Boomers (ages 61-79) play games weekly. And **more than one in three of the Silent Generation (ages 80 and older) play video games every single week**. We might start playing games when we're kids, but for many of us, they stay with us for our entire lives.

Video games also continue to bring families together and create meaningful entertainment experiences for American households. **82% of parents who play video games play with their children, and more than two-thirds agree that playing games offers more potential benefits** for their children compared to social media.

This year, for the first time, we asked players about the way their video game play intersects with other forms of entertainment. We learned that when it comes to sports, for example, **87% of players find that playing the video game version of a sport improves their real-life performance**. Young adults are using video games as a way to discover new TV shows and movies – and even for learning about new musical artists. Given the rich storylines and inspiring narratives of so many games, it's no surprise that video game IP is inspiring multiple blockbuster movies and critically-acclaimed TV shows, and that video game platforms are now serving as music venues for concerts and new music releases.

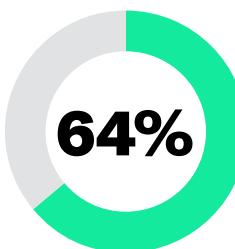
For decades, our industry has pushed the boundary for what is possible in entertainment. It's now pushing the boundary for what is possible *beyond* entertainment. From inspiring movies, music, and TV, to transforming sports, classrooms, and doctor's offices, video games have the momentum to inspire the next wave of innovation in the United States – all while continuing to bring fun and create memories in our homes.

Stanley Pierre-Louis
President & Chief Executive Officer
Entertainment Software Association



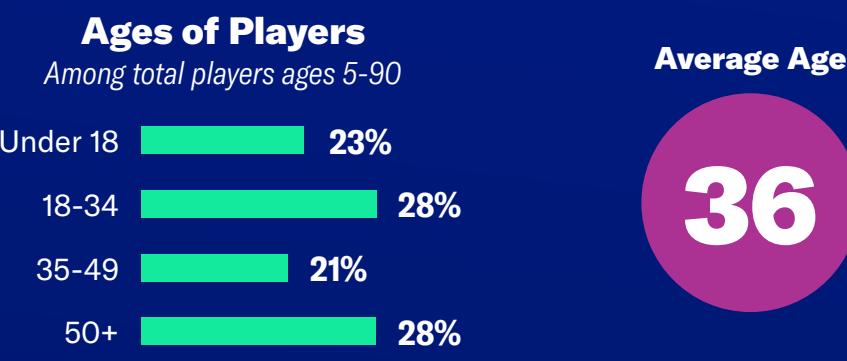
EVERYBODY PLAYS

Video games are America's favorite pastime.



of the U.S. population
reports playing video
games 1+ hour a week

Kids – and kids at heart – love to play video games.



Average Age

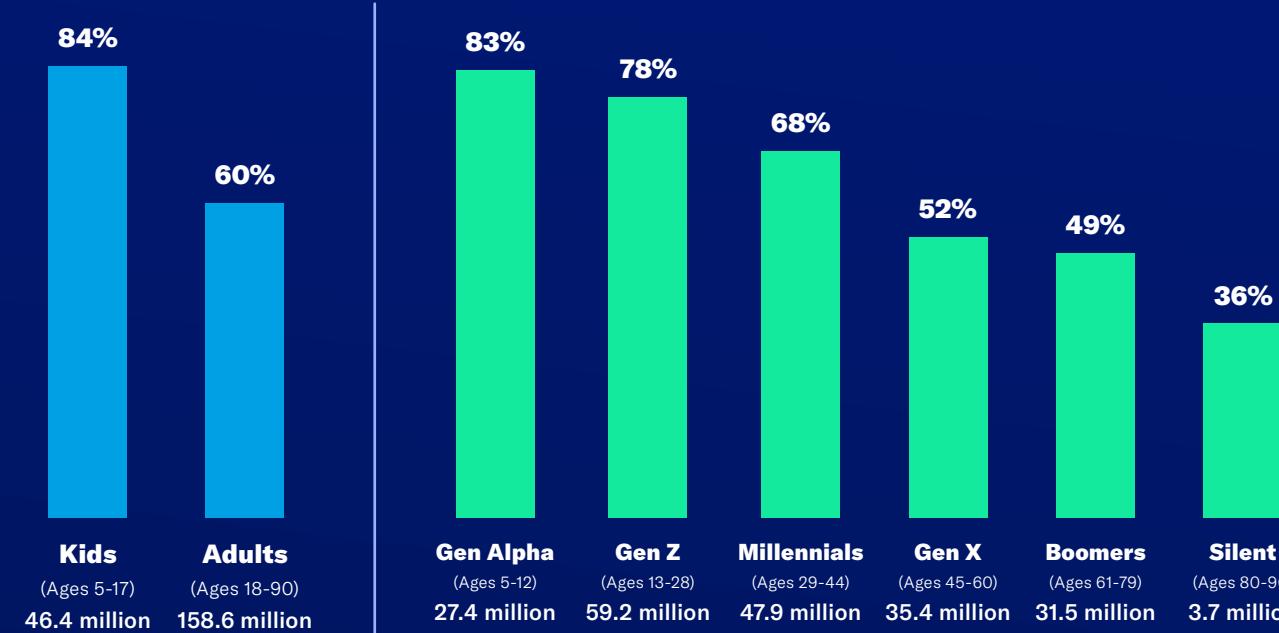
36

On average, players have been playing for

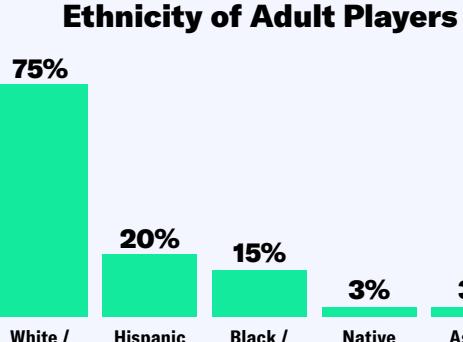
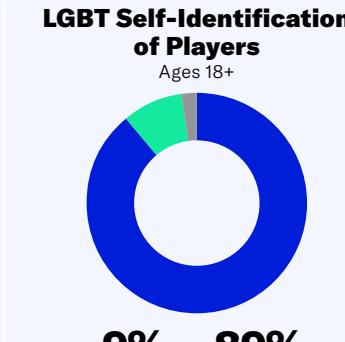
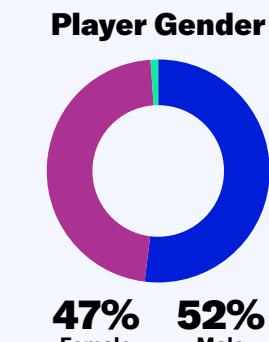
18

years

Percentage of Americans Who Play Video Games 1+ Hour Per Week (Any platform)

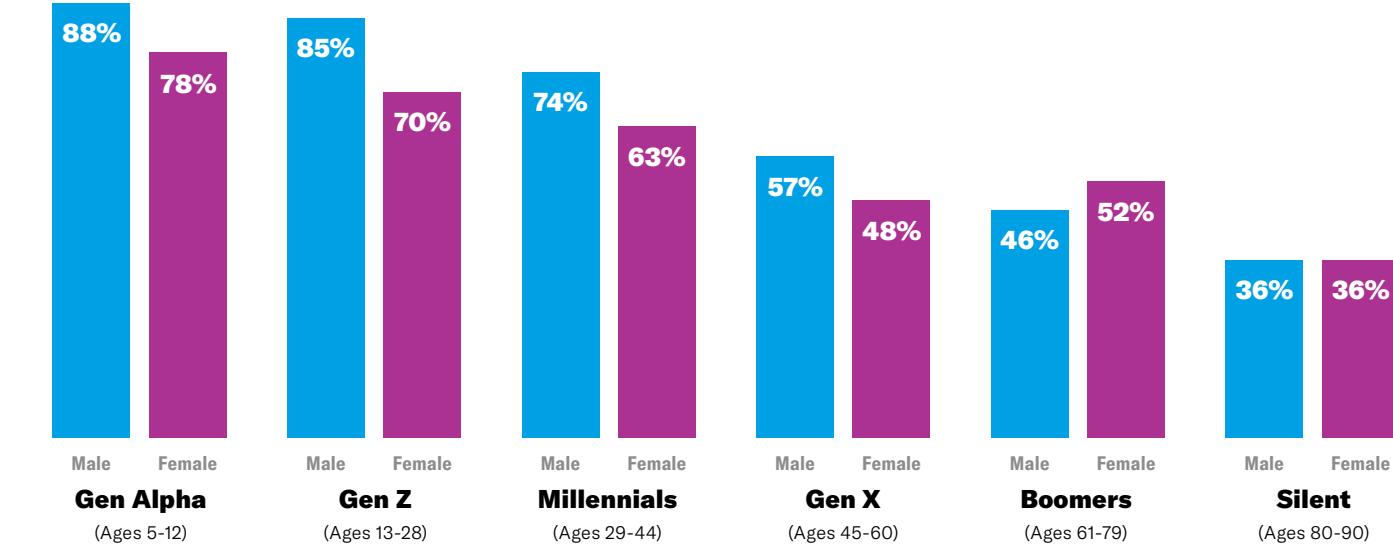


Players represent every demographic.



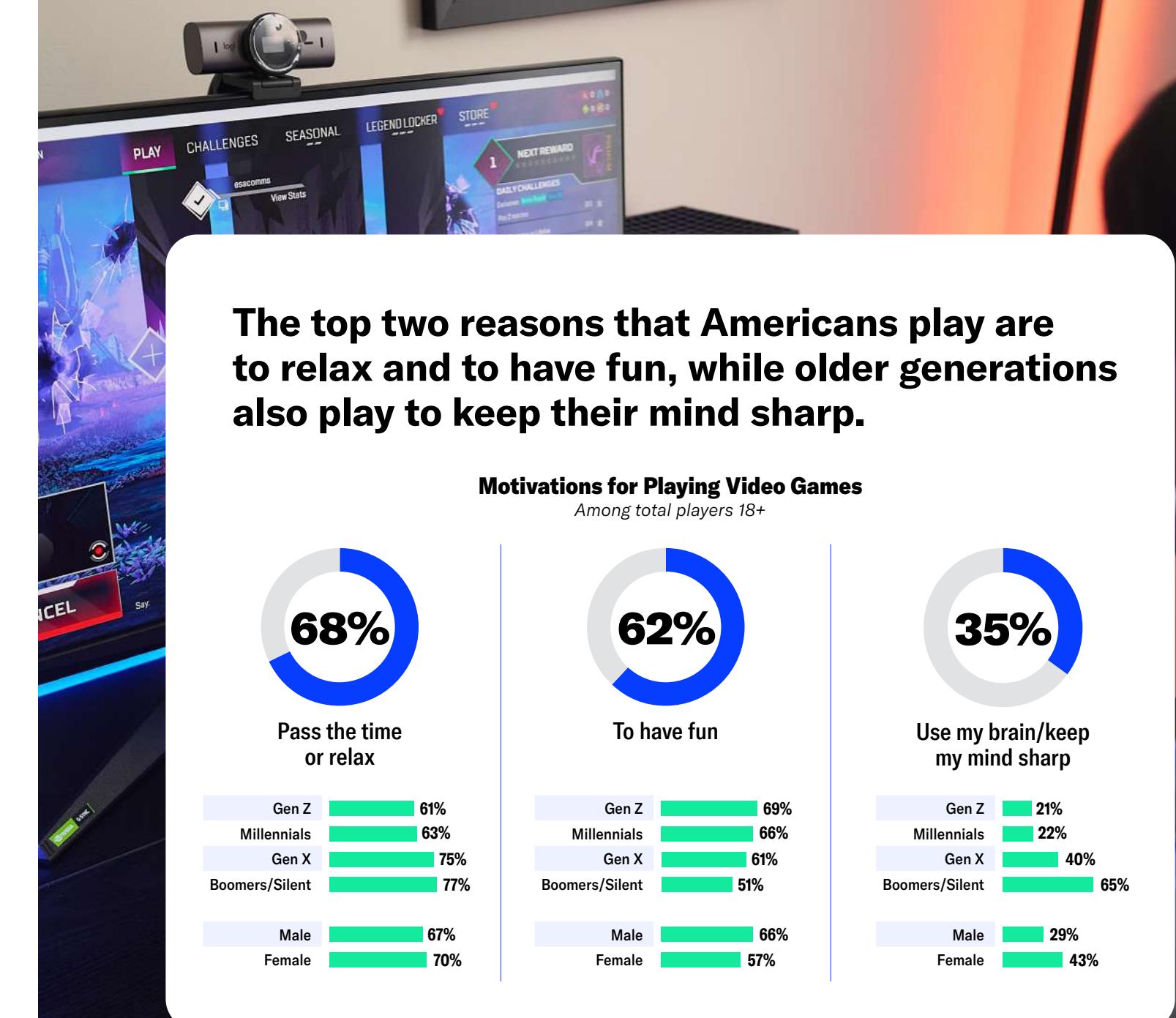
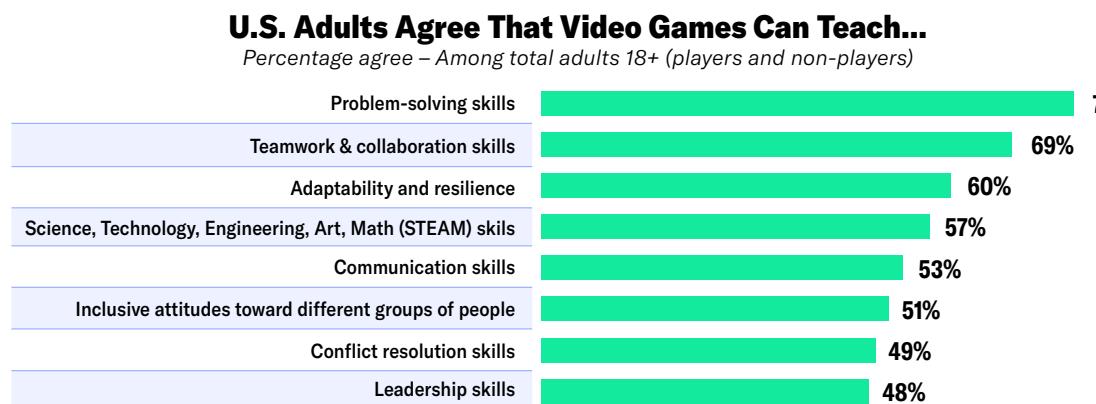
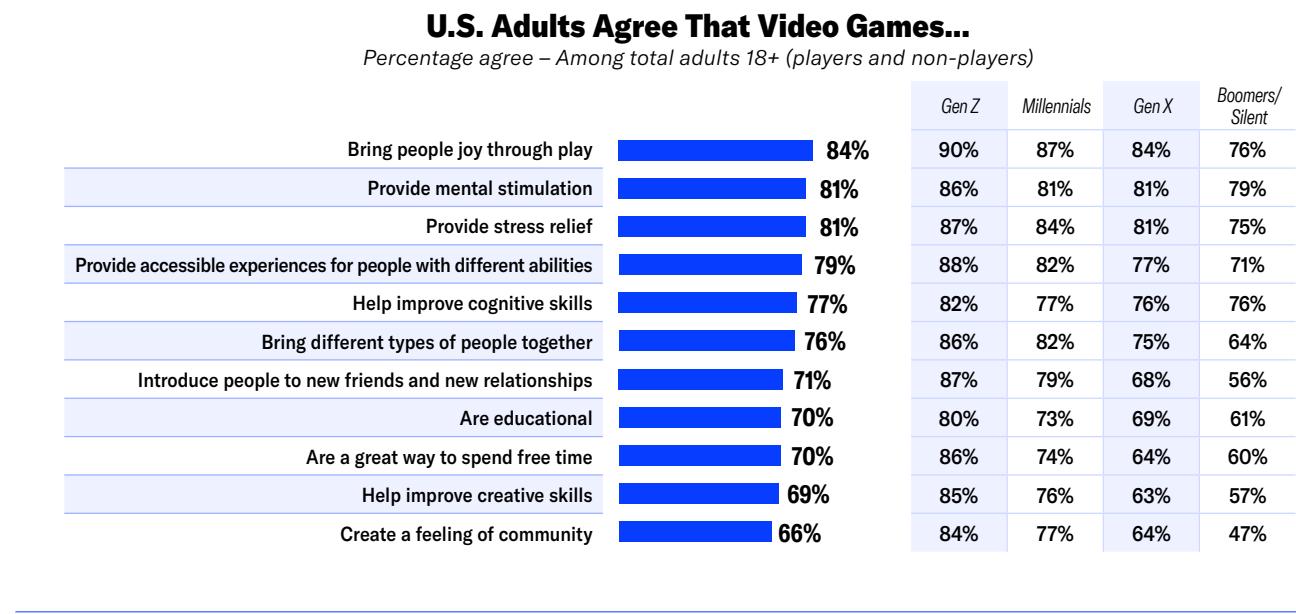
*Question allows for more than one selection

Percentage Who Play Video Games 1+ Hour Per Week – Generation by Gender (Any platform)



PLAYER PERCEPTIONS & ATTITUDES

Games are fun – and they also support mental, social, and emotional health.



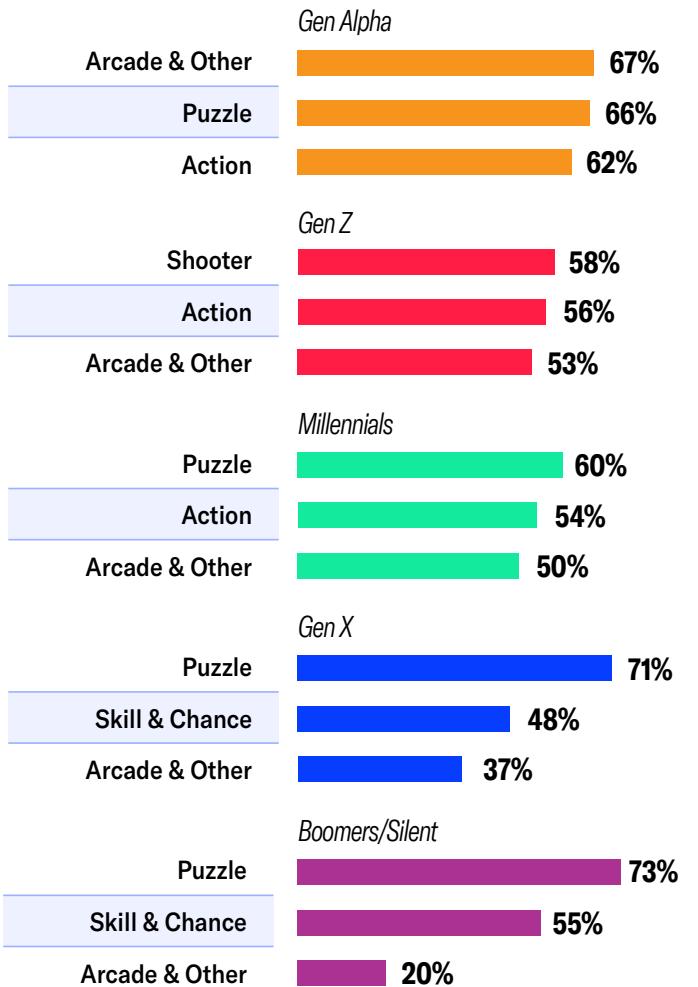


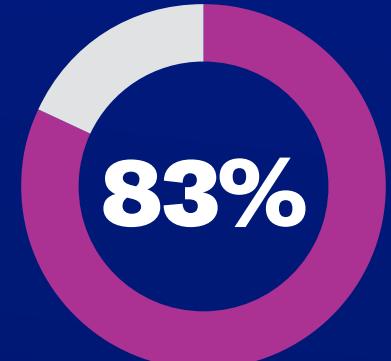
PLAYER BEHAVIORS & PREFERENCES

With numerous options, countless game titles, and multiple devices, there is a video game for everyone.

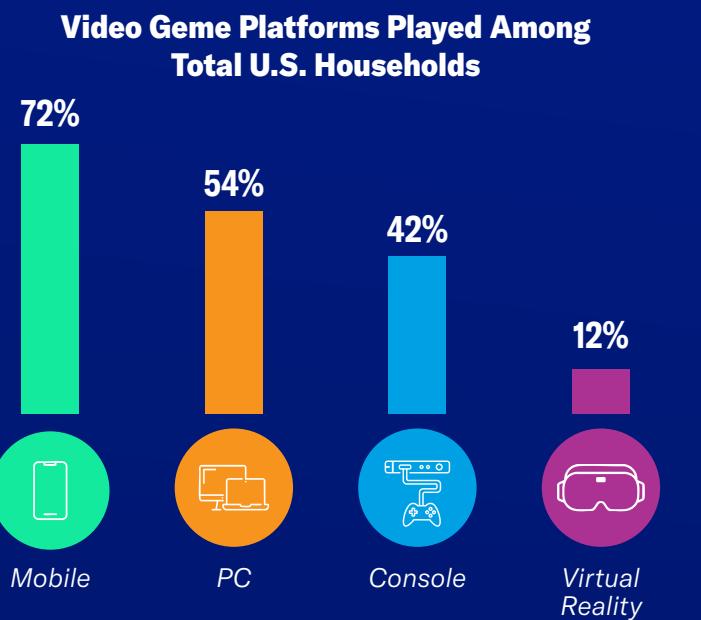
What Different Generations Are Playing

Top three genres played regularly by total players 8+



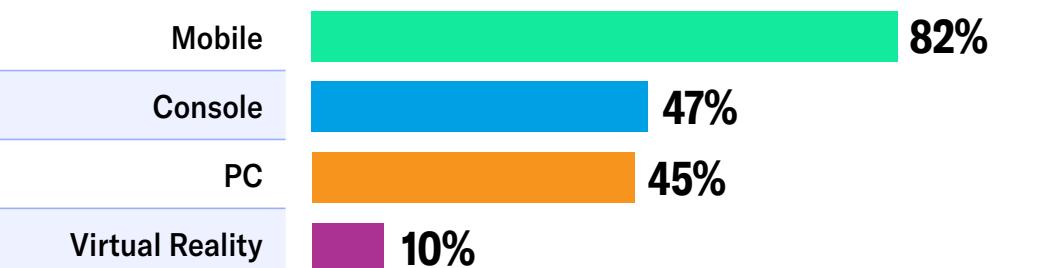


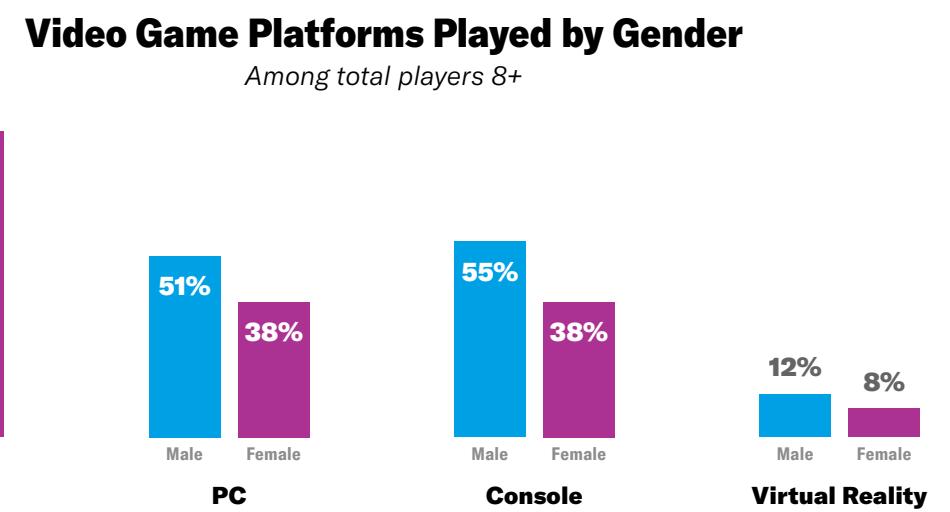
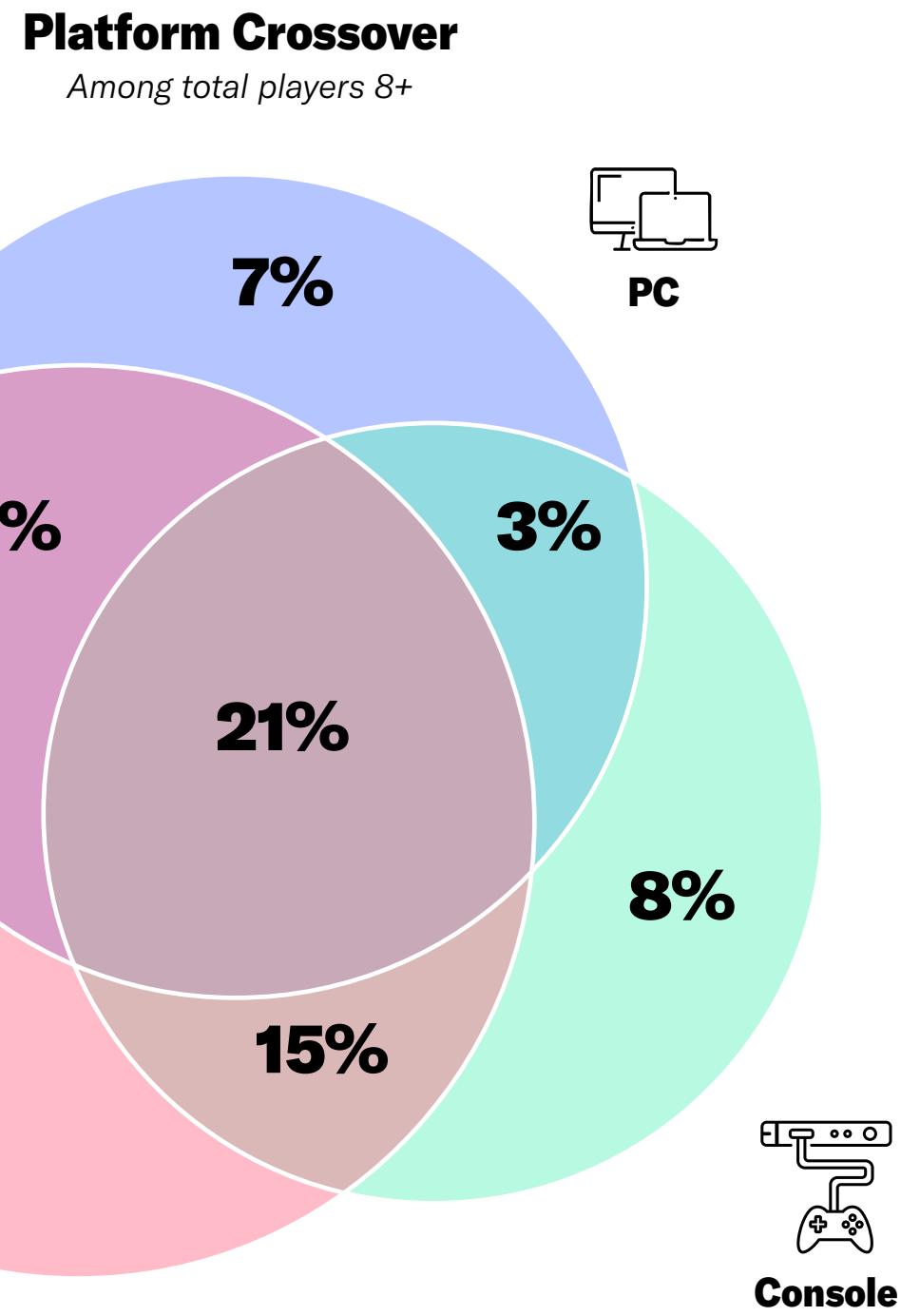
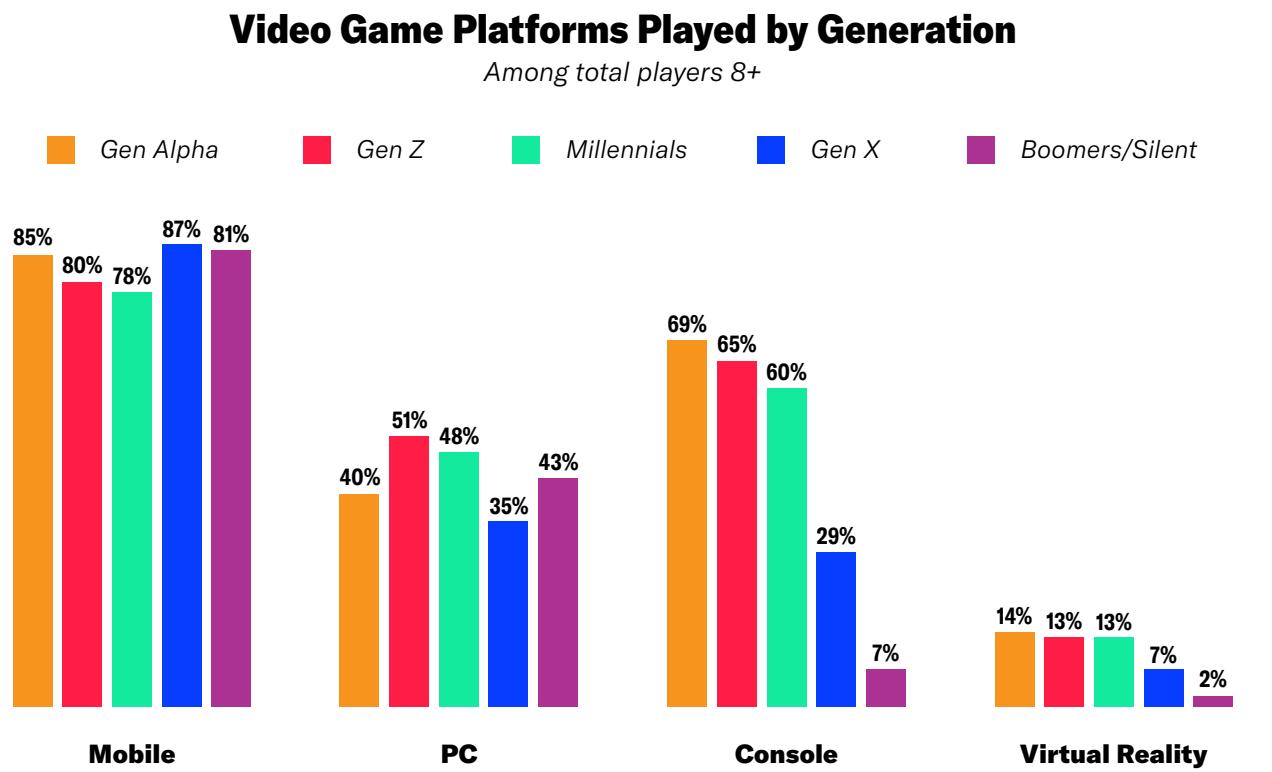
of U.S. households have played
at least one video game device
in the past 12 months



Video Game Platforms Played Among Individual Gamers

Among total players 8+

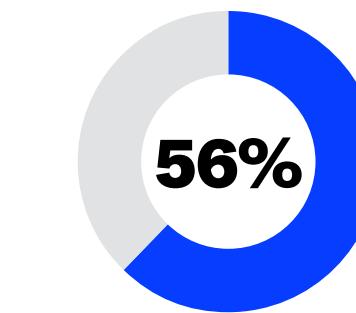




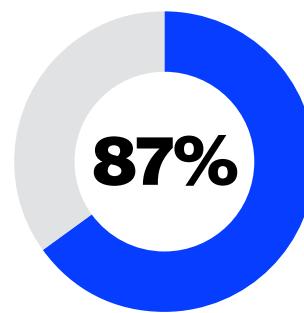


GAMES, SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Taking video games to the real-life field.



of players 18+ who play sports in real life
play a video game version of the sport



believe playing a video game version of a
sport improves real-life performance

Among players 18+ who play a video game
version of the sport

Younger generations discover other forms of entertainment through video games.

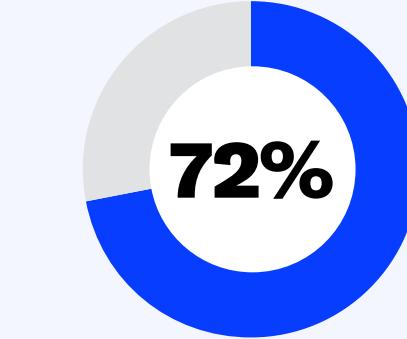
Video Games Led Me To...
Among players 18+

	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Boomers/ Silent
Discover a new song because of a video game I played	39%	30%	13%	3%
Discover a TV show or movie to watch because of a video game I like to play	28%	24%	11%	3%
Discover a video game because of a TV show or movie I watched	28%	23%	11%	3%

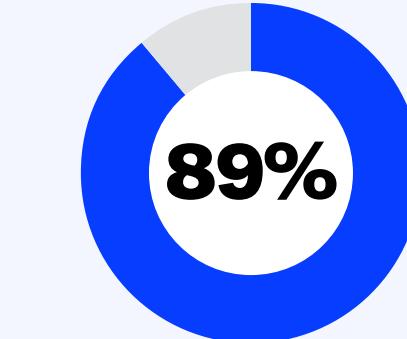


GAME COMMUNITIES

Games are better together.



of total players (ages 8-90) have ever
played video games with others
(online or offline)



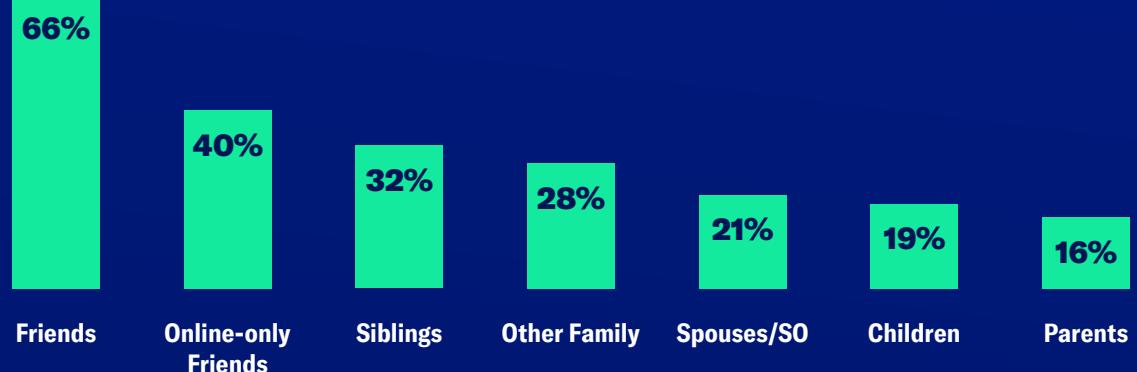
of total players (ages 8-90) have
played video games online
(alone or with others)

55%
of all players
(ages 8-90) play
video games
with others
weekly

Games bring family and friends together.

Who Players Are Playing With

Among 72% of players 8+ who play with others



79%
of Gen Alpha and Gen Z
play with their friends

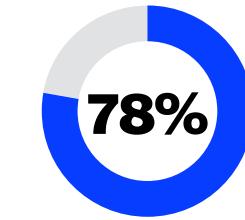
78% of all players believe video games can introduce them to new friends and relationships. Gen Z feels it the most strongly (**89%**), while the majority of Boomers and the Silent Generation (**60%**) agree.

55%
of Gen Alpha plays
with their parents

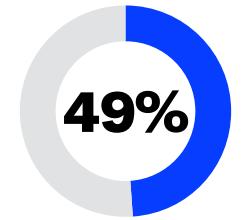
Younger players use games as a way to meet new people and build new relationships. Gen Z (**70%**) and Millennials (**61%**) have met people through video games they would not have otherwise met. These players (**Gen Z at 63% and Millennials at 49%**) also say they met a good friend or significant other through video games.

When It Comes To Staying Connected, Players...

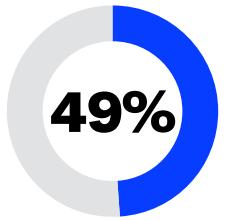
Among adult players 18+



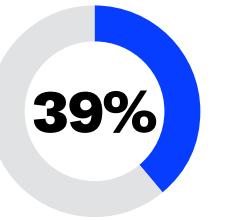
Agree that playing games can introduce people to new friends



Say they have met people through video games they otherwise would not have met



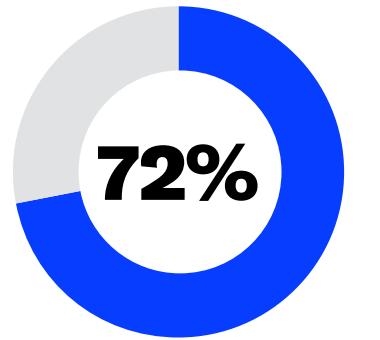
Say video games have helped them stay connected to friends and family



Say they have met a good friend, spouse, or significant other through video games



Players use in-game chat to improve their gameplay.



of online players 8+ have used communication tools like in-game text and voice chat to talk to other players

How Players Typically Communicate While Playing Online

Among 72% of online players 8+ who have ever communicated during game play

	Used	Most Preferred
Platform/in-game text chat	57%	34%
Platform/in-game voice chat	52%	37%
Discord (text or voice chat)	26%	15%
Over audio/video service	22%	11%

Top 5 Reasons Players Communicate With Others Online

Among players 8+ who communicate online

- ① Improve their gameplay
- ② Get information about games they play
- ③ Be part of a community
- ④ Learn new skills
- ⑤ Find new games to play





Top Three Reasons Parents Love Video Games For Their Kids

1

Their kids enjoy them

2

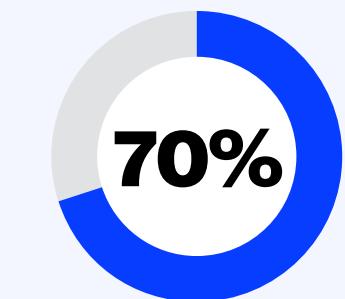
Video games are a form of entertainment

3

They teach skills like problem solving and creative thinking

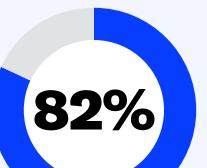
FAMILIES & VIDEO GAMES

Families who play together have fun together.

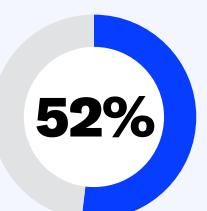


of parents play video games, compared to 60% of total U.S. adults

Of Parents Who Play...



play video games with their kids



play video games with their kids at least weekly

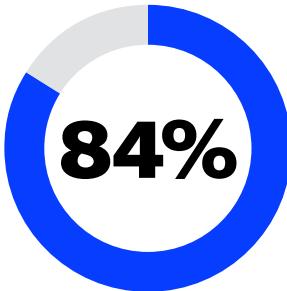
Reasons Why Parents Play Video Games With Children

Among 82% who play with their children

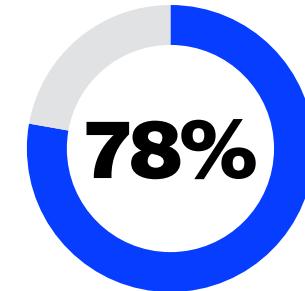


With video games, parents are in control.

Among Parents Whose Children Play Games...



are aware of
ESRB ratings



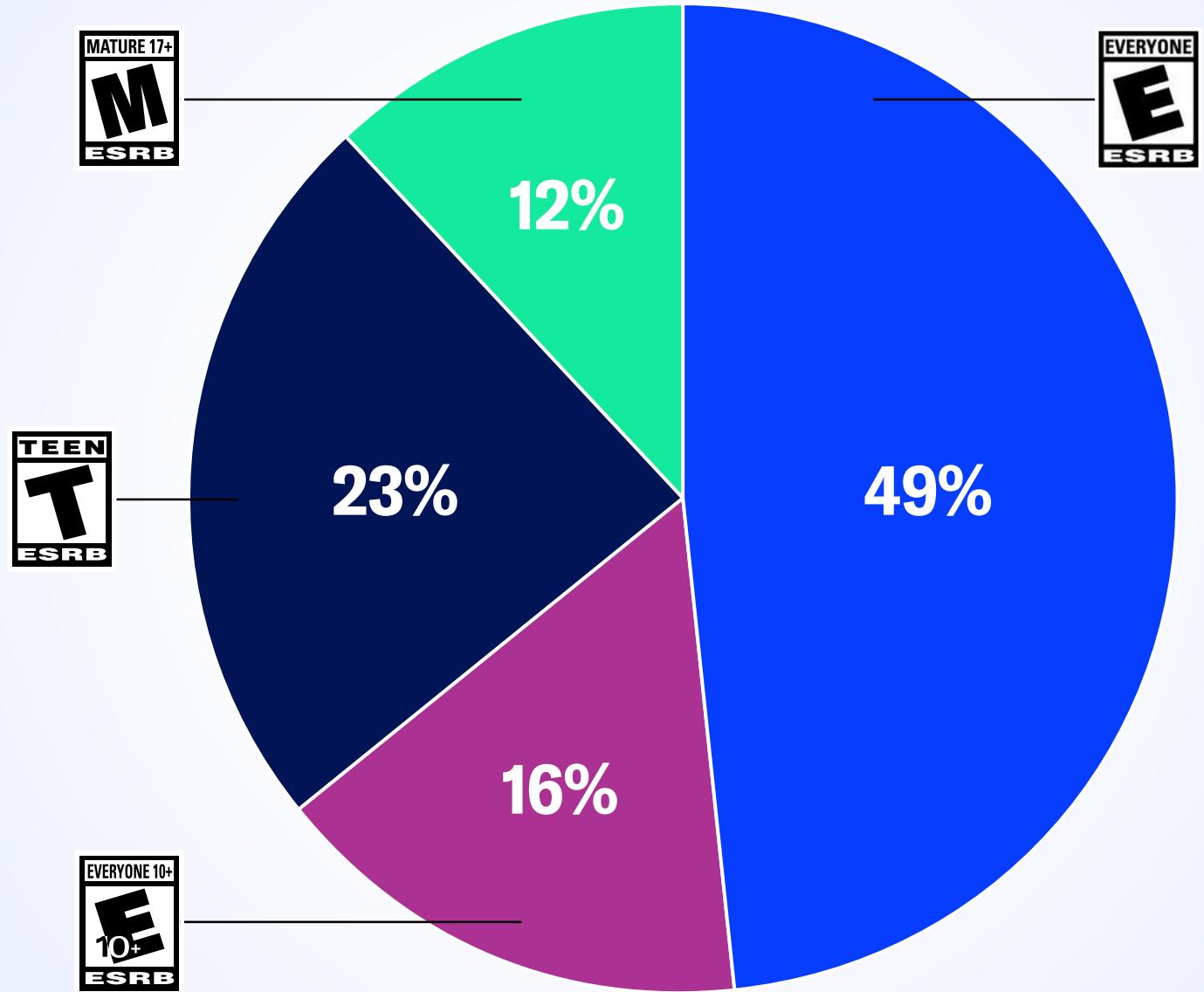
regularly use
ESRB ratings

Source: ESRB

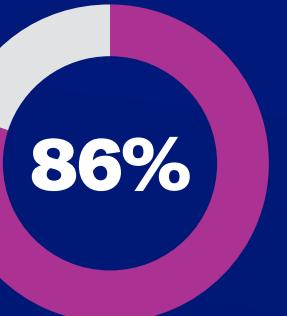
Of 4,861 video game ratings assigned in 2024,
88% were rated E, E10+, or T

Source: ESRB

ESRB Ratings Assigned in 2024



NOTE: Includes ratings assigned for boxed (physical) video games and downloadable titles playable on consoles
Ratings numbers provided by the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB)



of parents use at least one parental control setting on their kids' video game devices in the home

Source: ESRB

Top 5 Parental Control Settings Used By Parents on Video Game Devices

- ① Set Time Limits
- ② Manage Spending on the Device
- ③ Block Games Based on Age Ratings
- ④ Get Reports About Children's Game Play Activity
- ⑤ Restrict Communication With Other Players

Source: ESRB

Parents Agree That Playing Video Games Offers More Potential Benefits Than Social Media

Percentage agree – Among all parents

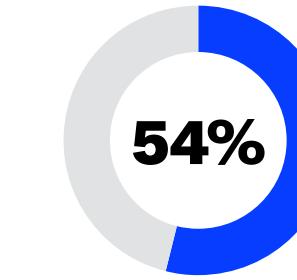
I'd prefer my child(ren) spend time playing video games rather than spend time on social media

70%

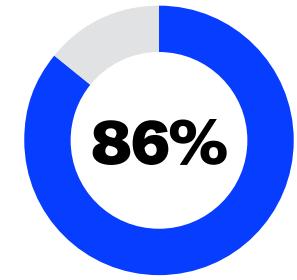
I believe playing video games offers more potential benefits for my child(ren), compared to social media

67%

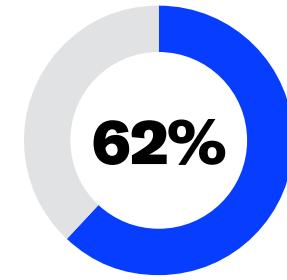
Parents are in control of the digital purse.



of parents have ever purchased in-game content for their children



of parents who have purchased in-game content for their children require approval for purchases



of parents use parental controls to limit in-game spending

Top 5 Types of In-Game Content Purchased by Parents for Their Children



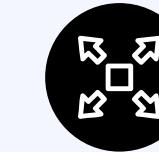
1. In-game currency



2. Character skin or other customization items



3. Season pass/battle pass



4. Expansion packs

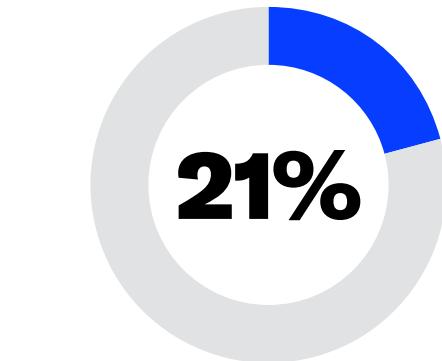


5. Additional maps/levels



VIDEO GAMES & ACCESSIBILITY

Everyone should be able to experience the power of play.



of adult players report having a disability

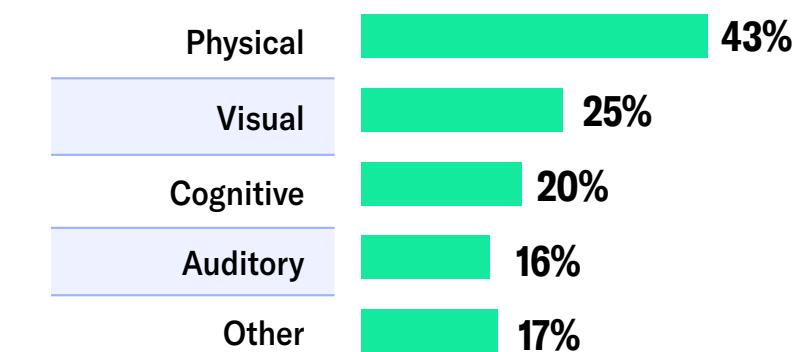
Generational Breakdown of Adult Players Who Report Having a Disability

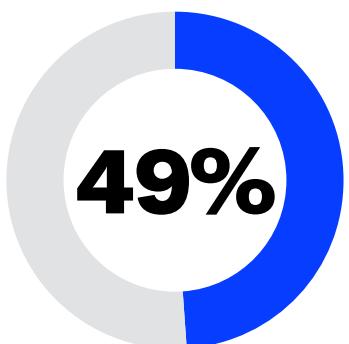
Of the 21% of adult players who report having a disability

Gen Z	10%
Millennials	19%
Gen X	33%
Boomers/Silent	26%

Challenges Faced While Playing Video Games

Among players 18+ with disabilities



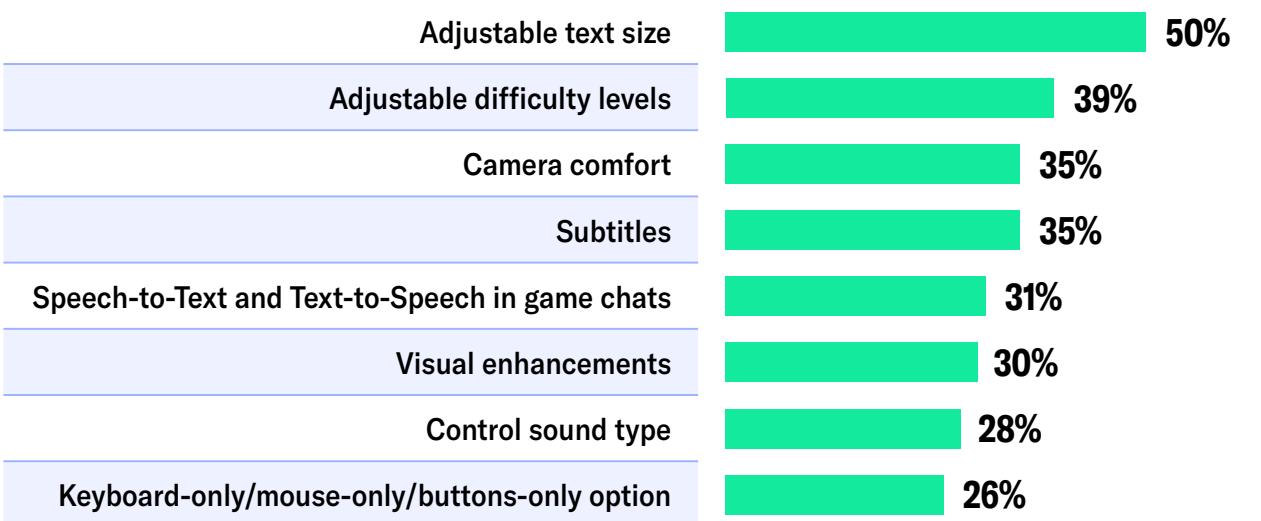


of players with disabilities rated overall accessibility to be extremely/very important

More than half of players with disabilities think video games are **very accessible**.

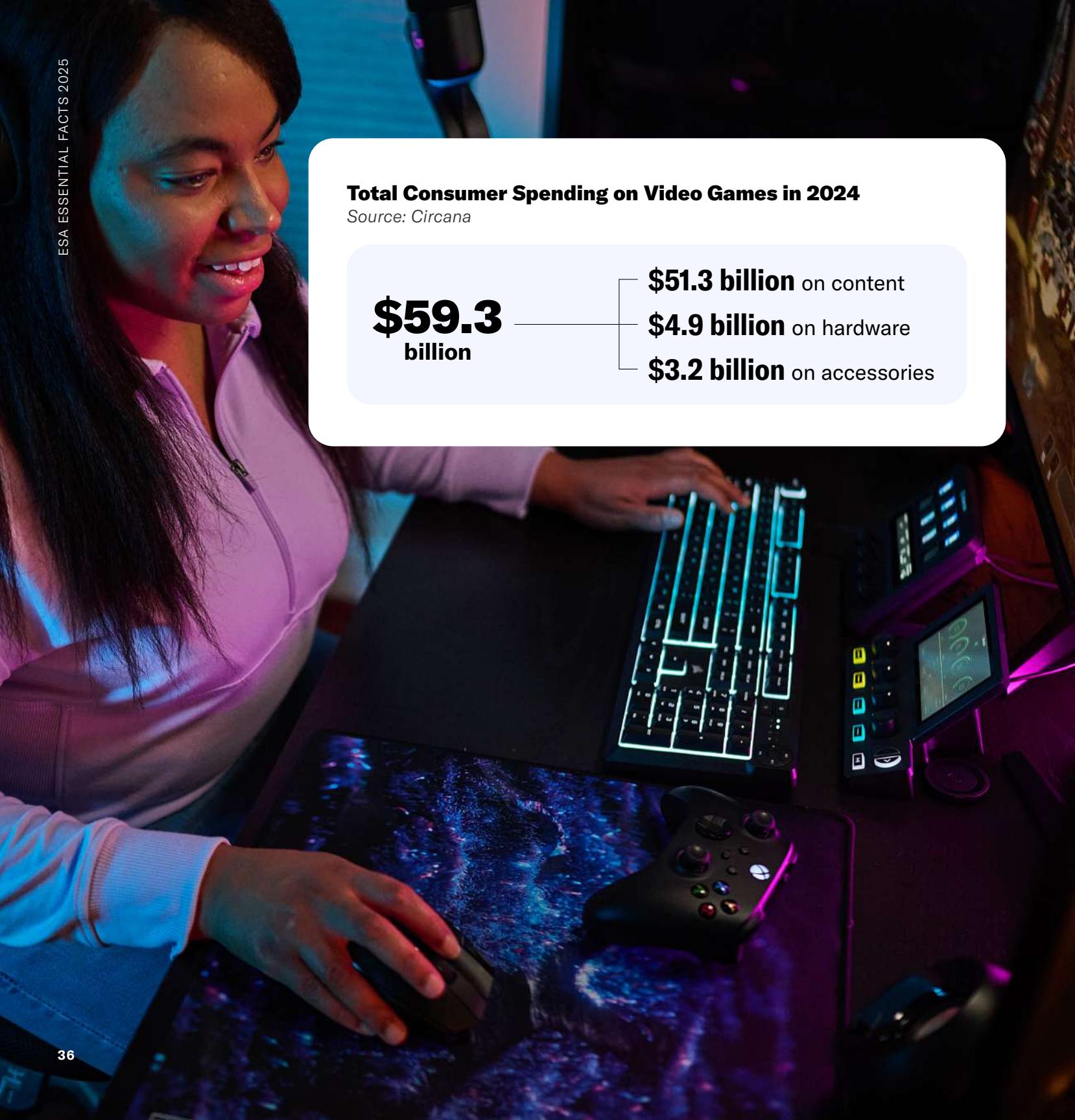
Most Important Types of Accessibility in Video Games

Among adult players with disabilities who rated overall accessibility to be extremely/very important



**ACCESSIBLE
GAMES
INITIATIVE**

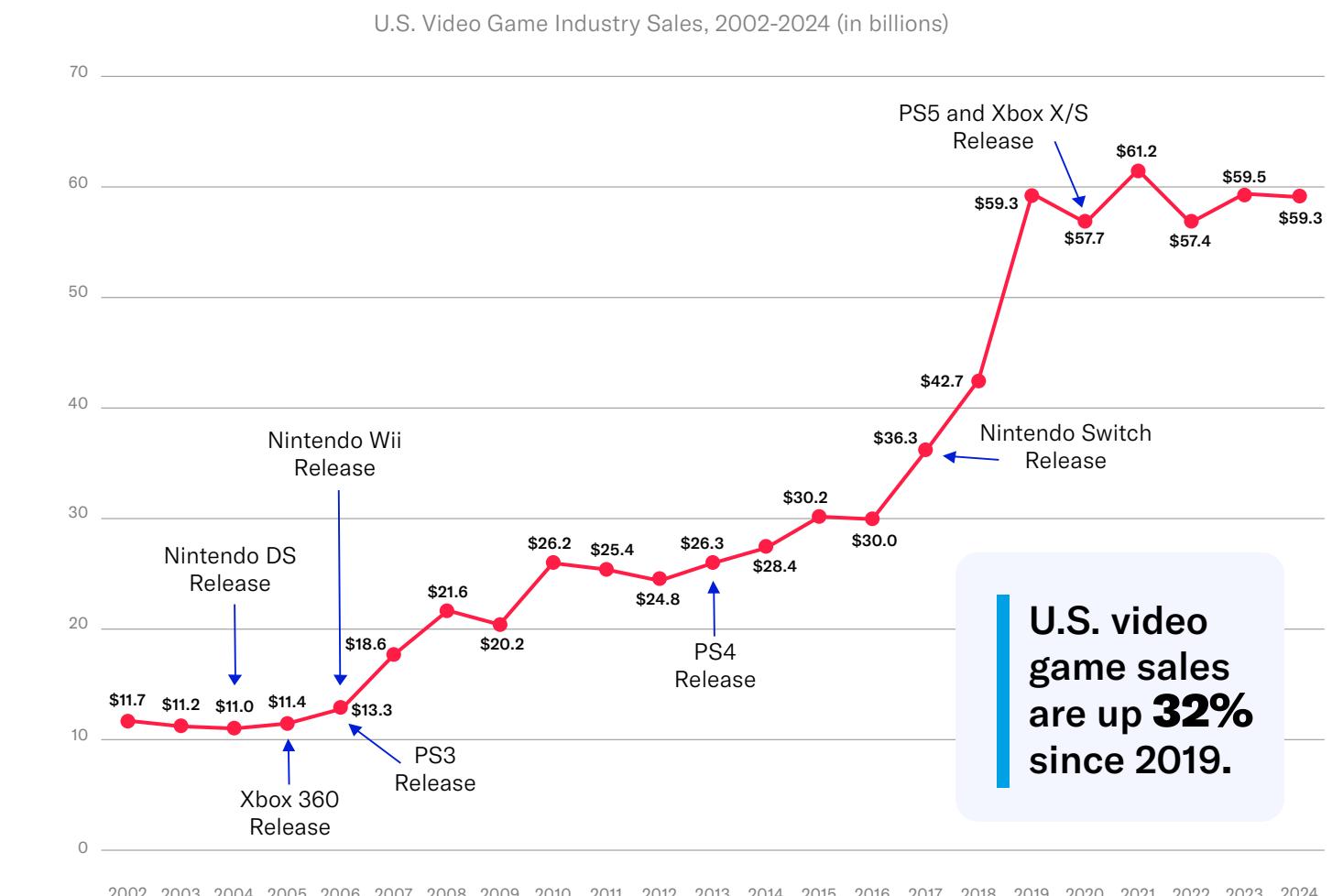
In March 2025, the ESA launched the **Accessible Games Initiative**—a new tagging system to provide players with clear information about the accessibility features available in video games. Visit accessiblegames.com to view the tags and learn more.



SPENDING TRENDS

The business of games.

Video games have been an important driver of the U.S. economy for decades, now outpacing consumer spending on movies, TV, and music combined.



Top Games in the United States in 2024

Console & PC Full Game – Top Grossing**		Mobile – Top Grossing*	
Rank	Title	Rank	Title
1	Call of Duty: Black Ops 6	1	MONOPOLY GO!
2	EA Sports College Football 25	2	Royal Match
3	Helldivers II	3	Roblox by Roblox Corporation
4	NBA 2K25	4	Candy Crush Saga
5	Dragon Ball: Sparking! Zero	5	Last War: Survival
6	EA Sports Madden NFL 25	6	Whiteout Survival
7	Call of Duty: Modern Warfare III	7	Coin Master
8	EA Sports FC 25	8	Township
9	Elden Ring	9	Pokemon GO
10	EA Sports MVP Bundle	10	Jackpot Party – Casino Slots

*Mobile title and spending data provided by Sensor Tower, Inc.

**Source: Circana





METHODOLOGY

YouGov conducted a 20-minute online survey in the U.S. from February 11-25, 2025 among 5,000 total respondents recruited from their proprietary online panel.

n=4,000 Gamers (including n=757 kids/teens, n=3,243 adults) who spend at least 1 hour/week playing video games on a smartphone, tablet, PC, console, or VR headset

n=1,000 Non-Gamers (adults) who either don't play video games or spend less than 1 hour/week playing

Data is weighted to be representative of the overall U.S. population in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, education, census region, and the distribution of players vs. non-players, as defined above. 18+ respondents were asked about all members of their household in order to size players as young as 5 years old. Players aged 8-17 were asked to complete the survey under the supervision of a parent.

Amazon
 Bandai Namco Entertainment
 Capcom U.S.A.
 Disney
 Electronic Arts
 Epic Games
 Konami Digital Entertainment, Inc.
 Microsoft Corporation
 Netflix
 Nexon America
 Nintendo of America
 Riot Games
 Roblox
 Sony Interactive Entertainment
 Square Enix
 Take-Two Interactive
 Tencent America
 Ubisoft
 Warner Bros. Games
 Wizards of the Coast

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Entertainment Software Association theesa.com

Founded in 1994, the Entertainment Software Association (ESA) has served as the voice and advocate for the U.S. video game industry for more than 30 years. Its members are the innovators, creators, publishers, and business leaders that are reimagining entertainment and transforming how we interact, learn, connect, and play. The ESA works to expand and protect the dynamic marketplace for video games through innovative and engaging initiatives that showcase the positive impact of video games on people, culture, and the economy to secure a vibrant future for the industry for decades to come. For more information, visit the ESA's website or follow the ESA on X @theesa or Instagram @theesaofficial.

Entertainment Software Rating Board esrb.org

The Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) is the non-profit, self-regulatory body for the video game industry that assigns age and content ratings to video games and mobile apps to help parents decide which are appropriate for their family. ESRB also ensures companies responsibly market their products, as well as protect their users' privacy.

Circana circana.com

Circana is a leading advisor on the complexity of consumer behavior. Through superior technology, advanced analytics, cross-industry data, and deep expertise, we provide clarity that helps almost 7,000 of the world's leading brands and retailers take action and unlock business growth. We understand more about the complete consumer, the complete store, and the complete wallet so our clients can go beyond the data to apply insights, ignite innovation, meet consumer demand, and outpace the competition.

YouGov business.yougov.com

YouGov is a global research, data, and analytics group. Our mission is to offer unparalleled insight into what the world really thinks and does. With operations in the U.S., the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, India, and Asia Pacific, we have one of the world's largest research networks. Above all, YouGov is powered by reality. That stems from a unique panel of 29+ million registered members across 55 countries, encapsulating some 18 million shopping trips and millions of interconnected data points. Our unique approach to recruiting and engaging with our panel, combined with our state-of-the-art technology platforms, enables us to deliver real-world, real-time insights that lead to better decision-making and a competitive advantage for our clients. As innovators and pioneers of online market research, we have a strong reputation as a trusted source of accurate data and insights. Testament to this, YouGov data is regularly referenced by the global press, and we are consistently one of the most quoted market research sources in the world.

Sensor Tower sensortower.com

Sensor Tower is the leading source of mobile app, digital advertising, retail media, and audience insights for the largest brands and app publishers across the globe. With a mission to measure the world's digital economy, Sensor Tower's award-winning platform delivers unmatched visibility into the mobile app and digital ecosystem, empowering organizations to stay ahead of changing market dynamics and make informed, strategic decisions. Founded in 2013, Sensor Tower's mobile app insights have helped marketers, app, and game developers demystify the mobile app ecosystem with visibility into usage, engagement, and paid acquisition strategies. Today, Sensor Tower's digital market insights platform has expanded to include Audience, Retail Media, and Digital Advertising Insights (formerly Pathmatics), helping brands and advertisers understand their competitor's advertising strategies and audiences across web, social, and mobile.



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601 Massachusetts Avenue NW | Suite 300 | Washington, DC 20001
theESA.com

