

Professional Gamer Training: Pro Gamers Spill Secrets



Gone are the days when professional online gamers are viewed as slackers in a dark room downing energy drinks one after another. Nowadays, professional gamers are viewed as “high-performance athletes”. Aside from having tremendous skills in gaming, they also possess balanced physical and mental fitness.

How does a professional gamer training regimen look like? **It involves a lot of hours playing the game with your team, and by yourself alone. It also involves a lot of planning, and reviews of your past games. And specialised targeted training drills.**

Being a professional gamer is a commitment to a future career. It’s easy to think that pro gaming is all fun and, pardon the pun, games. But it’s not all play for the pro gamer. There is always the pressure to win tournaments and to keep your top spot. And there are new players, both skilled and cunning, entering the field each day. So for a professional gamer, the training never stops.

How does a Professional Gamer Prepare Physically and Mentally?

The popularity of eSports is giving the industry its well-deserved legitimacy. Competitive gaming is now being recognized as an actual sport and its players are seen as true athletes. In fact, there are strong rumours circulating among gaming's elite that by 2024, there is a possibility that eSports will be part of the Olympics.

And just like those people playing traditional sports, eSports gamers are in every measurable way true athletes too. According to a study done by the German Sports University in Cologne, a professional gamer experiences the same tension and stress as traditional athletes. Therefore, they also practice the same extreme mentally and physically discipline that's required to succeed.

Myths about Physical Fitness of Esports Athletes

People used to think that gamers suffer from malnutrition because they are always in front of their computers, eating junk food and other unhealthy snacks. But i think we can consign this particular myth to the past.

Today, professional gaming teams give their physical the attention it needs with daily fitness regimes. Each player is required to go to the gym and workout daily. Aside from that, pro gamers also have their own nutritionist to tweak their diet for optimal performance.

The reason for this attention to physical health is simple: Competition in pro gaming is fierce. And professional gamers need every edge they can get. Gamers work on building their stamina levels to enable them to finish games that can last hours. They also need to work on perfect posture so they won't have any spine problems later in life.

Their hand-eye coordination, which should already be well above average, is also given special attention and training. As is the dexterity and flexibility of their wrists and fingers. And some games demand Pro gamers have good physical strength. For example, racing games that use full simulation setups can exert great physical stress as the body is thrown around in the cockpit.

The pro gamer needs to be ready for these extreme conditions just as an F1 driver would be.

The aggressive training regimens of top professional gaming teams have been in the spotlight in the past few years. But most gamers also highlight the importance of other physical training aspects. These include relaxing before a tournament. And how they can fall asleep quickly after training and tournament sessions. All these contribute to keeping their great physical health.

How Professional Gamers Maintain their Mental Health

Aside from maintaining great physical health, it's also important for professional gamers to take care of their mental health. They should be able to reach a professional level of mental fitness. This includes heightened reaction times, focus, being alert, mindfulness, Improved peripheral vision reactions, as well as calmness under stress. A large factor that determines mental gaming agility is the diet and nutrition of the gamer. Unfortunately, esports players have certain dietary requirements that are not being met by traditional supplements and vitamins.

For example, a consistent and balanced sugar level in the bloodstream is important for the mental endurance of online gamers. Most of the available 'gamer centric' supplements available nowadays will give a fast boost of energy, but this boost will be followed by hard hitting sugar crash.

This crash will sky rocket your reflex and reaction times and destroy your focus.

If your part of a competition that's scheduled to last all day, a sugar downer is the last thing you'll want to happen.

Aside from facing the challenge of fueling their body correctly, most esports players are subjected to different mental challenges. Most players notice that they experience more mood swings before, during and particularly after, gaming. This is a normal as the body is pumped full of adrenaline and stress hormone cortisol.

Fortunately, because gamers are doing computer-based activities, they can be easily monitored by their team's doctors and psychiatrist. This collection of physicians are able to determine the activities that affect the gamer's physical well being as well as mood. This data helps both doctor and psychologist better understanding of how to better train the gamer, and push them harder.

Combining them Together

Balance is the key to achieving optimal performance in eSport. It's critical for a player's mental health to know the value of relaxation. They need to learn to step away from the game from time to time. It's important to keep a support network outside the game. Have a social life, go out with friends, things like that.

Although you can consider your teammates as your friends, it is still different to have connections with others who have different interests. It gives you more perspective about life and it gives you the opportunity to walk away from the stress that you are in.

Your body and mind are your most important weapon in conquering the top spots in competitive online gaming. That's why it should be your priority to make sure you take good care of yourself. Fortunately, the industry is also evolving and focusing on the physical and mental needs of its players.

What do the training regimens of esports players look like?

To stay competitive in the online gaming world, you must train hard for long hours honing your skills. It involves a lot of team games and solo gaming. Studying map layouts, character skills, and item attributes. And watching video of the competition to look for weakness. It also involves a lot of reviews of your past games, and other tournament matches.

Esports is no longer just about who's the most skillful, but who's the most well informed. For information, like in all sports, is power.

Most established professional gamers follow a strict daily schedule that combines practice and their other responsibilities.

Standard Training Day Schedule:

Wake Up! (Usually at 7AM)

Most competitive gaming matches take place in the morning. To prepare, pro gamers rise early with a morning wake-up call. Contrary to what amateur-players think, pro gamers do not stay up late and sleep late. They treat their sport like any other athlete: Professionally.

Hit the Gym (An hour between 7:30am to 8:15am)

Professional esports athletes have their own fitness coach to make sure that they have enough conditioning and physical activities. Most of these workouts involve a lot of cardio like running, and swimming, and some weight training that focuses on their back muscles, forearms and core.

Breakfast (8:15am to 9am)

Most of eSports teams have their own nutritionists and chefs to prepare nutritious food based on individual player's dietary needs. The diets are very strict and contain a lot of slow-releasing carbs to maintain energy throughout the day.

Video Review (9am to 10am)

Like a traditional sports team, their first agenda every day is to review their matches the day before. In here, the coach will point out the moves and strategies they could have executed better. They also talk about possible plans that they can execute in future matches or something that they can do in the latter practice.

3 hours of Team Practice (10am to 1pm)

After all the morning preparations, the teams will then proceed to their team practice. They play random games and apply what they had talked about earlier.

Lunch (1pm to 2pm)

Solo Targeted Practice (2pm to 5pm)

After Lunch, players will then do their solo targeted training. This is a good way for them to hone specific skills. Also, it may often involve some form of coaching.

Dinner 5 (5pm to 6pm)

Second Team Practice (6pm to 9pm)

After dinner, they will do another three hours of team practice. This is so they can play against other teams in different time zones. Additionally, the gamer switch roles and try out new characters so their knowledge about the game will get deeper.

Relax (9pm to 11pm)

How do players keep motivated?

Playing the same game every day for hours can be tiring and demotivating. That's why motivation and a positive mental attitude plays a huge part in the eSports industry. One has to maintain focus on the goal: winning.

Most teams in the west employ different tactics to keep their players motivated. Aside from huge bonuses, they're also awarded different perks such as free vacations, and equipment.

Asian teams differ drastically from their western counterparts. Children in asian culture are raised in a competitive environments. So Asian gamers are often fine with putting in almost double the time as their western counterparts.

It is branded into the minds of every team member that working hard is an essential component of winning. There are no shortcuts.

Esports teams train themselves to hold the absolute belief that, with enough training, someone can win

Do Players get a time Off?

Once a week, players have a day off where they can do whatever they want. Most are encouraged to meet their friends or to do some outdoor activities so they can have a proper break.

Normally, it is set on a Sunday or a Monday depending on the schedule of their matches.

Tournaments usually happen between Fridays and Sundays.

The Real Life of a Pro-Gamer: How Teenagers become Disciplined Professionals

If a decade ago, someone said to me that a teenager could earn millions by just playing video games, I would have laughed. But this is the reality now. Young esports athletes are dominating the industry raking in millions of dollars each year for themselves and for the company they play for.

It is no longer about rain-day entertainment and killing time. It's about building a career.

The world is now starting to recognize the legitimacy of this sport. Players are no longer unhygienic, lazy teenagers who munch on crackers or anything they can stuff in their mouth.

They are well-trained, physically fit players who can swiftly defeat an amateur online, and outrun an average person in real life.

The Life of Sacrifice

Living as a pro-gamer is not all about the limelight and prize money. It involves a great deal of sacrifice and perseverance. The obstacles of attaining greatness in this field are so many and so harsh, a person who's too sensitive won't survive.

For starters, parents won't understand why you're doing it. It would take a great deal of explanation for them to get why you're "wasting" hours of your life "playing" a game. While there are some supportive parents, most will leave you alone, forcing you to work twice as much just to support your path.

Fans are unforgiving. While the number of people that will support you can boost your ego, one mistake and the fans will leave you. They won't let you forget your mistakes. You'll be taunted and your mistakes will be etched into your fans' mind.

Lastly, in eSports, money only flows to the best of the best pros. While we keep on talking about pros earning millions, they're not just your typical pros, they belong to the top tier. And there are only a few sharing millions of dollars as prizes. And if you can't be one of them, it's challenging to live financially purely on your gaming income.

But despite all of these challenges, the rising popularity of eSports and the respect it gets from people is validating its legitimacy as a financially lucrative career path every day.

Prone to Injuries

In the past, tournament players were prone to arm injuries due to the repetitive arm movements that they performed for hours. Fortunately, teams nowadays are providing physical therapy and rigid workouts to make sure their gamers are physically conditioned and maintained.

Additionally, the general consensus is eSports is for younger players because of their flexibility and dexterity. That's why it's common to see older players switch to another career once they are over the age of 25.

But advances in different training regimens prolong the career lifespan of players in the industry.

Being Recruited is the Key

Being able to cross the threshold between being a casual player to a professional often comes is to being recruited into an actual team. It's similar to being scouted for a local basketball or soccer team.

There are several organized professional teams that are always on the lookout for new players. These teams pay a monthly salary for their players in addition to other bonuses.

Unless you have enough money to spare, it is almost impossible to play in a professional arena without the support of an established team and sponsor. Their support pays for everything that you need. Your equipment, training, accommodation, and even food.

High-Intensity Training

Working or studying while being a pro player is very difficult as your opponents are already putting in more hours than you. This industry is becoming an all-out full time engagement. The way players now speak about the hard work and the time spent training proves the level of intensity pro gamers suffer just to reach where they are right now.

And for some, it takes them at least a year to be on the same level as the more established players. That's equivalent to thousands of hours of playing the whole year without a break.

In terms of intensity, Chinese teams take intensity to other worldly levels. They don't even count a game as a training session if one of their team members is not present. So when they say each individual has thousands of hours of practice, they don't account the hours when a player plays without the other team members.

This kind massive volume of training gives them a huge advantage in the international arena. They put in almost twice as much training time as their western counterparts and as a result, they dominate most of the online game tournaments, sometimes taking almost half of the available spots in the finals.

Growing Number of Fans

The main reason that attracts more young players to be a professional gamer is the increasing prize money in international tournaments. This is brought upon by the exponential increase in the number of fans watching the games.

This allows sponsors and brands to capitalize on the exposure they could get. A single tournament today can easily fill a stadium with a capacity of 15,000. With that huge number of people interested in eSports comes huge purchasing power. It's understandable why PC and console brands from all corners of the globe are willing to spend big money and prizes, and sponsorships for professional teams.

Being Popular is a Double-Edged Sword

When you become a professional gamer, you'll a nice ego boost. Your team will invest in promoting you personally, including your social media presence. At times, you will be working with your own digital marketing team for you to ensure that you stay relevant, and known online.

Streaming games and updates about your life is not optional. You will be required to be more personable with your fans, and tell them about you. In a way, you are opening up your personal life to your fans. Because, as a gamer, you need to be able to relate to them. And they need to see you as a person more than a gamer.

But because of this, it exposes a player to the harsh reality of being popular. They are subjected daily in a sea of hurtful words, unfair criticisms, and just pure bashing. While in real competitions, fans can cover up the boos from the haters. But online, it's impossible to filter out the hate you'll naturally attract. It's something all celebrity professionals must deal with.

This type of abuse happens daily and players sometimes are more vulnerable online than offline. That's why an important aspect of the team's dynamics is to continuously train them to deal with the negative side of public relations.

Things to Be Aware Of

This industry is rooted in the idea that anyone can get success if you have the right skills and attitude. This grass root approach enabled passionate individuals to enter the eSports industry and succeed.

But eSports also puts gamers in vulnerable financial positions with teams and sponsors in charge of pay.

For example, one of the things that you should be aware of is your contract. If you're recruited into a team, make sure that someone you trust reads the contract for you. And make sure that you have one. Remember, after all, this is a business. You need to have security so you will not find yourself in an awkward position of not knowing where you stand.

Your contract should specifically detail the expectations and the things that you have to achieve. Also, it should list all the perks that you'll be getting including bonuses and monthly salary.

There are also some illegal and unethical problems in the industry. It is not uncommon to hear that a professional team has been approached to throw the game because of gambling bets made on matches. This might be a future predicament for you but remember your goal. This isn't all about the money, but your reputation as an online gamer.

There is also the practice to monetize through brand placement on a player's social media accounts. It is normal to see some brand names on their handles. It's a bit uncomfortable for some, but this is also a way for gamers to earn the support of sponsors. But this practice is patterned to how big brands also infiltrate traditional sports.

Camaraderie Amongst Competition

Although the level of competition in the eSport's community is extremely tight, its spadded out a foundation for a very tight-knit community to grow and flourish. Everyone can relate to the struggle of a newly minted pro gamer. And players from different teams criss-cross borders and times zones to embrace the noob in welcoming arms.

Majority of these players experienced no support from their friends and families. It is a familiar scene to them to be questioned about their choices and to be branded as lazy and without direction. They also know how difficult it is financially to continue playing and training by yourself.

And because of this, a lot of pro gamers are talking publicly about their experiences in the hopes of inspiring budding players. And also, they are hoping to remove the stigma about the players who want to make gaming their actual career.

Greatest Obstacle

Aside from the above-mentioned difficulties, one of the worst to overcome is Gender. Esports is dominated almost entirely by male players. You can count on your hand the number of female players who appeared on the finals of any online game tournaments.

Once, one of the most accepted reasons is the world of online gaming is wildly sexist. Most of the slurs are gender-based. This is the reason why female players are sometimes wrongly discouraged from playing.

Also, male players can be quite protective of their gaming world. They think of it as a man's world.

Fortunately, eSports landscape has vastly changed.

Nowadays, there are top female players who are trying to let the world know that girls can be great tournament gamers. They debunk all those myths about girls playing online games. They are showing everybody that girls should rightfully be viewed as equals. And that they can, and do, compete with the best eSports athletes in the world.

A budding Industry

The eSports industry is still quite young and mostly based on the passion people have for gaming. Aside from the few pro players who are sharing the top prizes in tournaments, most players are just hobbyist who play for fun.

At its purest form, this industry is competitive because of the nature of the games, and it feeds the natural need of people to be on top and dominate the competition. It also gives people the feeling of achieving something and winning a battle. And it teaches gamers a way to deal with mistakes and failure: that is to come back stronger and better.

Just like anything in life, to be successful, you must consistently give 100% dedication and hard work. You should also be ready to sacrifice some things in your life. Nowadays, this industry has a lot of opportunities waiting for those who are willing to take this path.

In Conclusion

Training to be a pro gamer can be gruelling. It's not the same as playing games as a hobby. It takes the level of difficulty and dedication to a notch higher.

If you are dead serious in making it, you need to practice. And practice hard. The start getting the attention of recruiters. Invest hours of practice and honing your skills. Create a huge network and following by sharing your ideas online and working on your own personal brand.

All of these will be worth it once you are playing professionally. And by that time, those who doubted you and disrespected your choice will take their words back as they see you making your dreams a reality.

Related Questions:

Are there training camps for a budding professional gamer? Yes, there are many training camps for specific online games that offer 1-2-1 coaching. Additionally, you can learn through video tutorials.

Are there any other careers in esports aside from being a player? Yes! There are many other fields in esports fit for those who don't want to play anymore. You can stream some fights, be a commentator, a blogger, or write helpful guides regarding the game.

Do I need professional gaming equipment to be successful in this field? If you want to have the full gaming experience, then you should have professional equipment. Also, some games require a faster processor so you might want to update what you have now.



Nick Sinclair

Having played games since the golden age of the Commodore 64, Nick finally took the plunge and studied Creative Game Design in university. After 3 years of "Study", Nick co-founded a games company where he soon discovered his true calling: writing about games. 11 years later Nick writes about a tower of topics, but gaming is always stacked neatly at the top.
