



Highlands Regional Library Cooperative

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VIDEO GAMES AT THE LIBRARY Frequently Asked Questions

What's the difference between video games and CD-ROM games?

CD-ROM games must be installed on a home computer in order to work. Video games are developed for video game consoles, and don't need to be installed. Just pop the disc in and start playing! Four popular game consoles are Nintendo GameCube, Nintendo Wii, Sony PlayStation and Microsoft Xbox.

What kinds of video games are available?

There are several different "genres" of video games (just like there are different genres of fiction). Some of the most popular genres include:

Role-playing game (RPG). You are playing as a character in a different world, often where magic works. You have to figure out how the world works and then figure out how your character can get what s/he wants within the rules of the world. You're often on a quest for something.

Puzzle game. You're trying to solve a series of puzzles, and the difficulty level increases as you make your way through the game.

Racing game. Pick out a car and start racing! Burnout, Need for Speed, and Grand Turismo are popular racing series.

Sports game. You're playing sports, but from the comfort of your own living room. There are popular sports games based on golf, football, snowboarding, and many more.

First-person shooter. You spend a lot of time doing battle and shooting people. Many of these are rated M for Mature (they can get pretty graphic).

How are video games rated?

The Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) provides a rating system. Games rated E are suitable for everyone. E10 games are suitable for kids 10 and up. Games for teens and up are rated T. Games for kids 17+ are M for mature.

How can I find information about video games?

Use your collection development skills. You don't have to know everything about video games (or even like them) to develop your collection. You just need to know where to find information – from your library patrons, from reviews and game descriptions on sites like www.gamefly.com, and from your local video game store.

*Serving the Counties of
Bergen, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic,
Somerset, Sussex and Warren*



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Which console(s) should our library buy for?

To start your collection, buy one or two games for each game console. Once you have the games, you'll start getting feedback from your patrons about what consoles they'd like to see more games for. In Long Hill, we found out that most kids seem to have either Nintendo GameCube or Nintendo Wii, so we're buying more of those.

We do not, however, buy games for the portable video game consoles like PSP (PlayStationPortable) or Nintendo DS. This is partly because we think portable games would be much more likely for people to misplace or lose, and partly because we have limited resources and can't collect games for every console, so we're focusing our efforts on home video game consoles.

Which games should our library purchase?

When you're starting your collection, buy one or two games of each genre type. Then pay attention to library patron comments and how the games are circulating. If your RPGs are always checked out, you may want to buy more RPGs.

Where can we buy video games?

I usually go to my local GameStop to buy video games for our library. They have a good selection and usually the store clerks are helpful at pointing out which games are the most popular. GameStop also sells used copies of games, so I often buy them used and save a few dollars that way. Amazon.com and Baker&Taylor also sell video games.

What kind of a budget should we set aside?

Higher-end (and more popular) games can top out as high as \$60, but you can also find cheaper games that are still popular. I think a budget of \$800-\$1,000 per year is a good starting point.

Who is checking the video games out?

Teens, children, and moms all seem to be excited about the prospect of borrowing video games from the library instead of buying games.

How do kids find the video games?

Our video game collection is a browsing collection. Kids and moms know where the video games are located and they choose from the games that are currently available.

Do you have any problem with theft?

We keep the video game cases in the teen area, but we keep the game discs at the front desk. When people want to check out a video game they just bring the case to the front desk and we give them the disc. This cuts down on the possibility of theft.

What's the loan period?

At Long Hill Library, we circulate video games for 2 weeks, the same as we circulate CD-ROM games. There is no fee to check them out, and the overdue fine is 10 cents/day. This is a choice your individual library must make.

Other questions? Contact Mary Martin, Long Hill
Township Library, director@longhilllibrary.org