

## ***Video Gaming for Seniors***

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Even though video gaming seems to be a hobby enjoyed primarily by younger people, the majority of video game players happen to be adults according to surveying by the Entertainment Software Association (ESA). (1) Video gaming can be an enjoyable and beneficial hobby for seniors. Findings by the ESA state that people from the Baby Boomer generation ages 55-64 play mostly video games of the puzzle, card, and board game genres.

Puzzle video games and virtual tabletop games are easy to learn, even for people who normally do not play video games. These types of games can also provide stress relief and relaxation for players. How can video games improve cognitive ability, especially for seniors with dementia and Alzheimer's? Strategy and puzzle games often have activities that exercise the brain, and they require the use of a person's memory.

According to a study, playing these types of games may improve memorization for one specific task. (1) However, training from playing a video game based on memory may not improve cognitive abilities for other tasks. Another study suggested that seniors had improved their memorization and attention after playing a specifically designed game with 3-D graphics. The difference in playing a video game designed with a 3-D environment as opposed to one with 2-D graphics is that 3-D games can train people on how to determine and interact with spatial relations. (2)

Studies about cognitive improvement aside, playing video games may be a new, interesting hobby for seniors. One reason is that games can reduce boredom, especially if the player is alone. Additionally, players are required to use skills that require memorization, quick response, and multitasking. This actively exercises the brain for a brief amount of time. (3) However, it is recommended that seniors partake in physical activity in addition to mental training. Video games can be a good social activity, especially if seniors want to do something fun with friends or loved ones from various age-based generations. Finally, seniors can use video games, especially games for personal computers and mobile devices, to train themselves on using technology that they may not be familiar with.

Sources:

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3) Nichols, Hannah. "How Video Games Affect the Brain." Medical News Today, MediLexicon International, 10 July 2017, [www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/318345](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/318345).