

Signs of Gaming Disorder



Constantly think about gaming or gambling.



Unable to reduce amount of time played or have tried unsuccessfully to stop.



Feel the need to spend more and more time gaming.



Lying about how much you play.



Spending more money than you intended or money that was intended for other purposes.



When you cannot play you feel anxious, depressed or angry.



Playing is creating conflict with family or friends.



Gaming is affecting school and/or work.



Minnesota Alliance on Problem Gambling

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Follow us @MinnesotaAPG
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As the state advocate for problem gambling, we are available for community presentations.

Minnesota gambling helpline
1-800-333-HOPE (4673)

Made possible by a grant from the Minnesota Department of Human Services.



Gaming Disorder

When video games turn into gambling





Gaming Disorder

Convergence of Gambling and Gaming

Technological advances in video and online gaming and the ability to play on a global level have allowed gaming participation to grow at a rapid pace in the past ten years. Most teenagers, both girls and boys, play video games. It is a significant part of world culture and entertainment. Game designers have begun embedding gambling elements into games and continue to market to underage customers and adults with no regulations. Like gambling, gaming is a good form of entertainment for most. But for some, gaming can become addictive and can negatively impact their lives.

What is Gaming Disorder?

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines gaming disorder as when a person's gaming behavior has significantly impaired their personal, family, school or work life. Normally, this pattern has been evident for at least 12 months.

How can Gaming look like Gambling?

The addition of loot boxes and the ability to make microtransactions in online games can cause a player to spend more money than intended, just like in gambling. The uncertainty in the outcome of opening those loot boxes is similar to playing casino games and can cause similar reactions to those who are unable to stop gambling.

Loot Boxes/Microtransactions

- Loot boxes are in-game purchases made with small amounts of real money (microtransactions).
- More valuable loot boxes can be purchased with larger amounts of real money.
- Most are mystery boxes where the contents are not revealed until paid for. This resembles games of chance, like slot machines.
- Players can feel pressured to buy loot boxes to keep playing or to move up a level.
- In-game purchases do not equal in-game currency (example: \$5 of real money equals 250 gems). This is meant to confuse players as to how much real money they are using.
- Disclosures about loot boxes are confusing to younger players.
- Game developers have admitted that they use psychological manipulation to get players to spend more time and money.

(Federal Trade Commission Report – 2019)



Do you or someone you know spend too much time and/or money playing video games?

Steps to help with a gaming problem:

- Take the topic of video game addiction seriously. Gaming is different than it was years ago.
- Gaming feels safe to the gamer you love. Do not immediately remove it from their lives.
- Understand that gaming isn't the main problem. There may be other issues that need to be addressed.
- Remember that confrontation isn't the solution; empathy is.
- Get out of the house for serious conversations.
- Reducing or eliminating game time will be difficult. Be patient.
- Seek professional help.

**Recommendations provided by GameQuitters.com*