

9 Signs Video Gaming has become addictive

The American Psychiatric Association has identified nine warning signs to watch for when it comes to video game addiction. Although these can be helpful to better understand the severity of your own situation, it's important to always seek the advice of a professional.

1. **Preoccupation with video games.** The individual thinks about previous gaming activity or anticipates playing the next game; Gaming becomes the dominant activity in daily life.
2. **Withdrawal symptoms when gaming is taken away.** These symptoms are typically described as irritability, anxiety, boredom, cravings, or sadness.
3. **Tolerance** – the need to spend increasing amounts of time engaged in video games. This may be motivated by a need for completion of increasingly intricate, time-consuming, or difficult goals to achieve satisfaction and/or reduce fears of missing out.
4. **Unsuccessful attempts to control the participation in video games.**
5. **Loss of interests** in previous hobbies and entertainment as a result of, and with the exception of, video games.
6. **Continued excessive use of games** despite knowledge of psychosocial problems. The individual continues to play despite negative impact.
7. **Has deceived family members, therapists, or others** regarding their gaming.
8. **Use of video games to escape** or relieve a negative mood (e.g., feelings of helplessness, guilt, anxiety).
9. **Has jeopardized or lost a significant relationship, job, educational, or career opportunity** because of participation in video games.

If you meet five (or more) of the following warning signs in a 12-month period, you may have an addiction and should seek the help of a professional immediately.