Video Games CANADA



# 2026 Essential Facts

## ABOUT THE CANADIAN VIDEO GAME INDUSTRY

# Table of Contents


Foreword ..... 3
Key Findings ..... 4
Canada Plays ..... 5
Canada's Video Game Industry ..... 12
The Benefit of Play ..... 14
The Social Fabric ..... 17
Game Ratings ..... 20
Conclusion ..... 21
Appendix ..... 22


Methodology

The 2026 Essential Facts survey was conducted by Burson, using the Leger Opinion online panel to survey 1,650 adults, 250 children (aged 6-12), and 250 teens (aged 13-17) between October 1-16, 2026 in Canada. The adult audience was weighted by age and region. All respondents played video games within the past four weeks on a device they own.

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# Foreword

Welcome to the 2026 Essential Facts report. This release marks an exciting milestone as we introduce our new name: **Video Games Canada.**

We chose this name because clarity matters. Whether we are meeting with policymakers, collaborating with our international partners, or speaking with the public, our new identity makes it clear who we are and what we stand for: the creators, studios, and publishers that power Canada's incredible video game industry.

For decades, our local talent has punched above its weight, producing some of the world's most iconic and beloved games. What began as simple entertainment has grown into a cornerstone of our creative identity and a major economic engine across the country.

What stands out most to me this year is the ambition of the next generation. More than half of the teens we surveyed, along with a large volume of adults (52% of Gen Z and 44% of Millennials), want to build their careers in this sector.

Growing up, I had a passion for video games, but never imagined my career path would lead to championing the video game industry. Today, our kids look at this craft with big ambitions and see a world where technical skill and creative storytelling offer rewarding careers right here in Canada.

The findings also show how deeply games weave into everyday Canadian life. Players are dedicating time each week to interactive worlds, using gameplay as a form of self-care, to reset, shake off stress, and share meaningful moments with family. In fact, 91% of players tell us games actively help them relax and support their mental wellbeing, and for eight in ten parents, jumping into a game with their kids every month has become a favourite household routine.

Across the board, Canadians told us they are proud of home-grown talent: 68% say Canadian-made games matter, and over three-quarters want our country to match or exceed international investment in the video game industry, so we remain a global leader.

I hope this year's data sparks fresh ideas and inspires you to jump into one of your favourite single-player titles, or to try a new multiplayer experience with friends and family. Most of all, I look forward to us shaping the future of Canadian games together.

**Paul Fogolin**
*President and CEO*
Video Games Canada

# Key Findings

Canada is a global powerhouse in interactive entertainment, and Canadian video game players want that leadership to continue. With deep pride in home-grown studios and their national and global impact, sustaining Canada's international edge through continued investment remains a clear priority.

This pride is also inspiring the next generation. Young Canadian respondents see a professional future in the sector, viewing video games as a launchpad for digital creativity, technical innovation and rewarding careers.

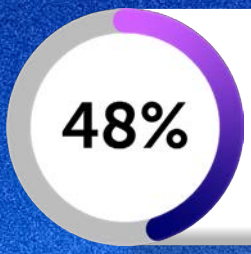
At home, video games remain an important part of everyday life. Canadians are dedicating more time to play, relying on video games to decompress, support their mental wellbeing and share meaningful moments with family and friends.

*Unless otherwise noted, findings throughout this report reflect the views and behaviours of surveyed respondents who played video games within the past four weeks.*

# Canadian Players

## The Canadian Video Game Landscape

Video games continue to be a popular form of entertainment in Canada. Nearly half of Canadians play video games, while participation among children and teens remains especially high.




**of Canadians adults report playing video games in the past four weeks**

*among surveyed ages 18–64*

**88%** of adult players play at least weekly

*34% report playing every day*

**93%** of children and teen players play at least weekly

*42% report playing every day*

**Average Age**

**39**

Adult participation is measured among Canadians aged 18–64. All other figures reflect surveyed video game players aged 18–64 or 6–17, as indicated. Weekly play includes daily, several times weekly and once-weekly play.

CANADA PLAYS

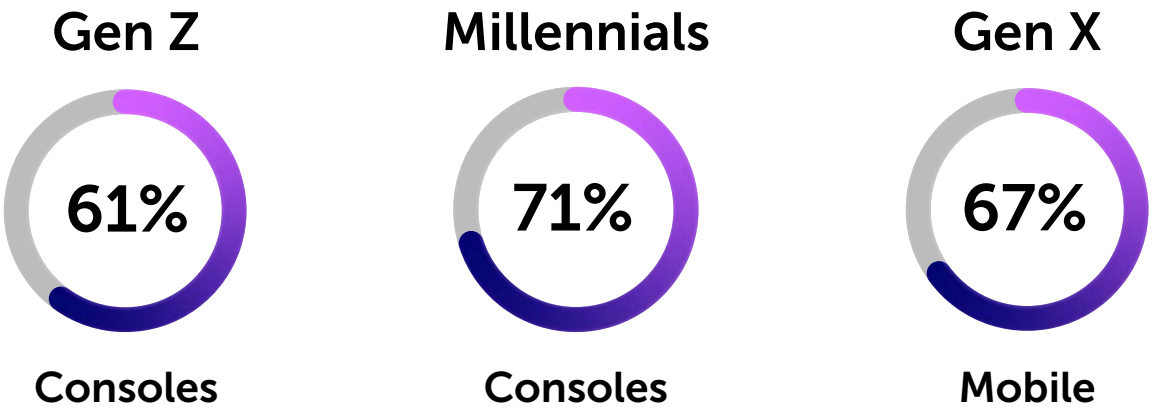
# Who Plays Video Games

**Video games are enjoyed across generations, with players of different ages embracing their own ways to play.** Consoles remain particularly popular among younger adults, while Gen X players show a stronger preference for mobile games, highlighting the diverse ways Canadians engage with video games.

## Age / Generation Breakdown




## How Generations Play




GENERATIONAL INSIGHT

### Millennials lead in console play.

71% of Millennial players report playing on consoles, compared with 61% of Gen Z and 49% of Gen X.

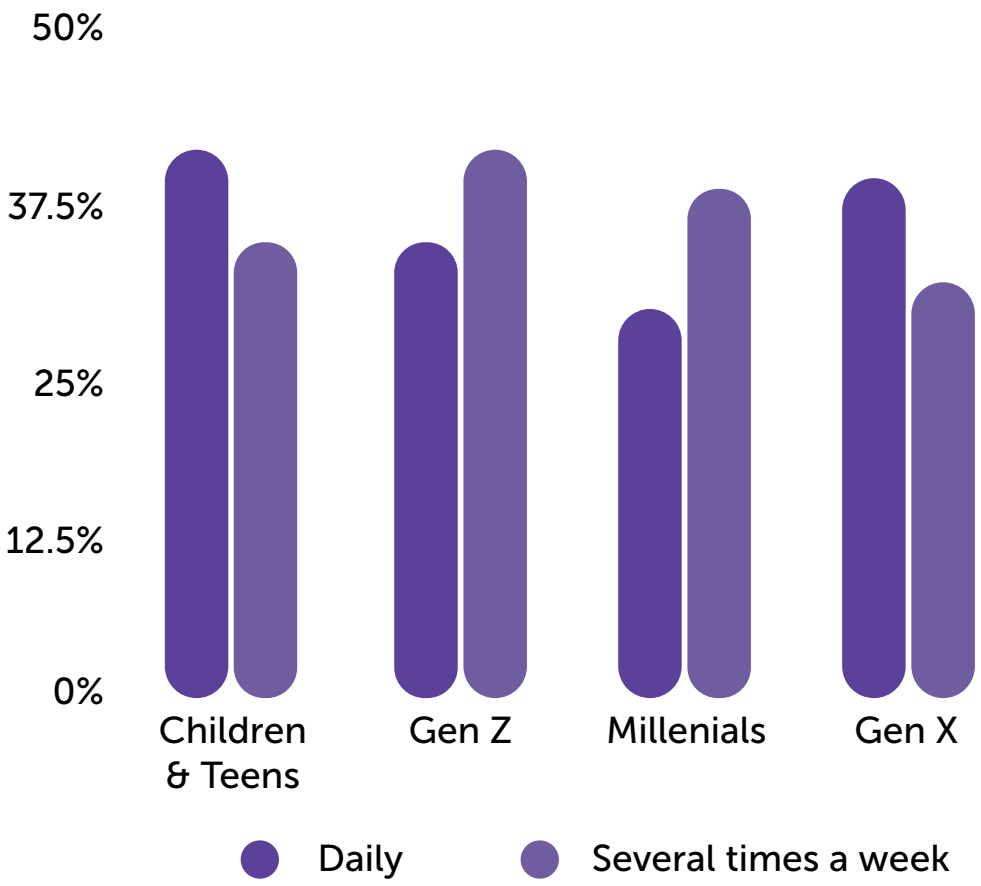
Among surveyed adult video game players aged 18–64. Generational percentages represent the share of adult players in each generation. Platform percentages reflect use within the past four weeks. See Appendix for generational definitions.

CANADA PLAYS

# A Weekly Ritual

**Video games are a regular part of life across age groups, but playing habits differ.** Among surveyed players, children and teens are the most likely to play daily (42%), closely followed by Gen X adults (40%). Meanwhile, Gen Z adults are the most likely to report playing several times a week (42%).

## How Often Canadians Play




### GENERATIONAL INSIGHT

**Gen X adults play more frequently than you might expect.** 40% report playing video games daily, compared with 35% of Gen Z adults and 30% of Millennials.

Among surveyed adult video game players aged 18–64 and child and teen players aged 6–17. Daily and several-times-weekly figures are separate response categories.

CANADA PLAYS

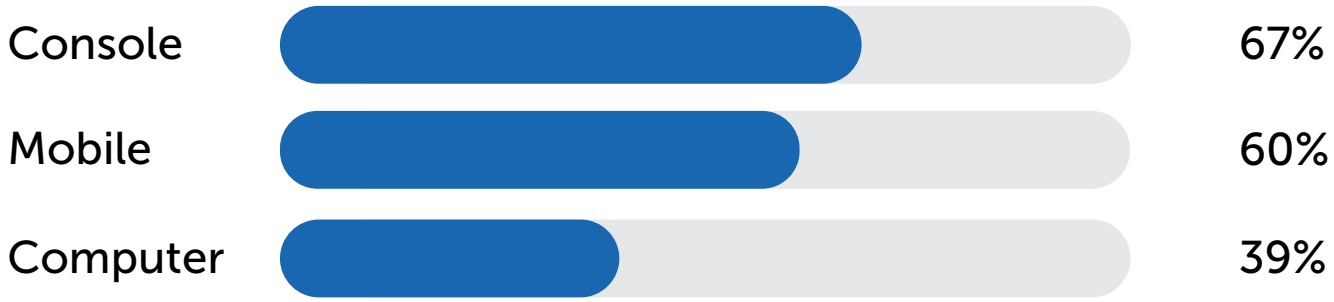
# How Canadians Play

**Mobile devices and consoles remain the most common ways to play.** Among surveyed adults, 60% played on a mobile device and 60% played on a console in the past four weeks. Among surveyed children and teens, consoles remain the most used platform (67%).

## Among Adult Players (18–64)




## Among Child and Teen Players (6–17)




### GENERATIONAL INSIGHT

**Mobile games connect generations.**

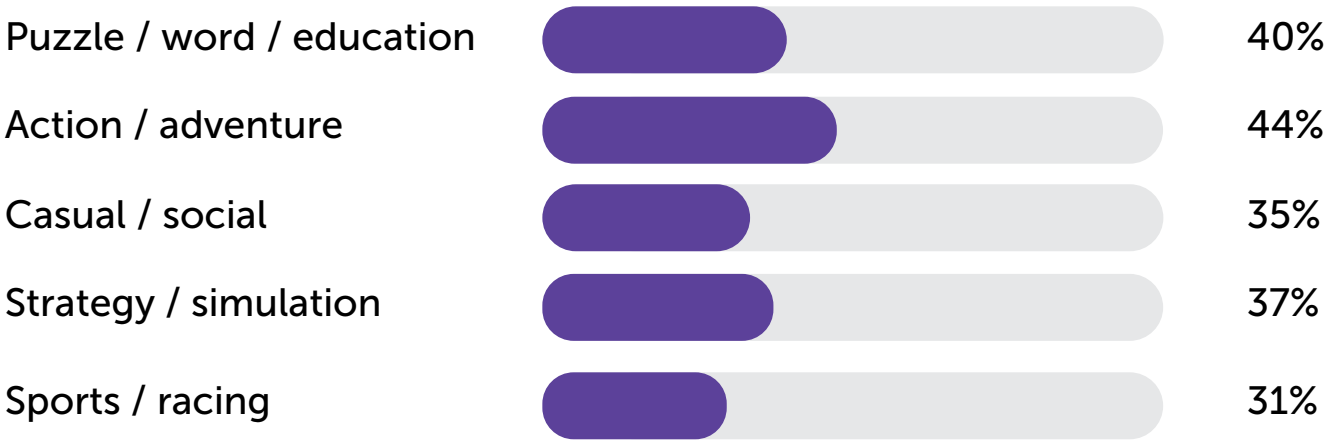
60% of surveyed adult players and 60% of children and teens report playing video games on mobile devices, showing remarkably similar usage across age groups.

Among surveyed video game players aged 18–64 and 6–17. Respondents could select multiple devices used in the past four weeks; percentages may total more than 100%.

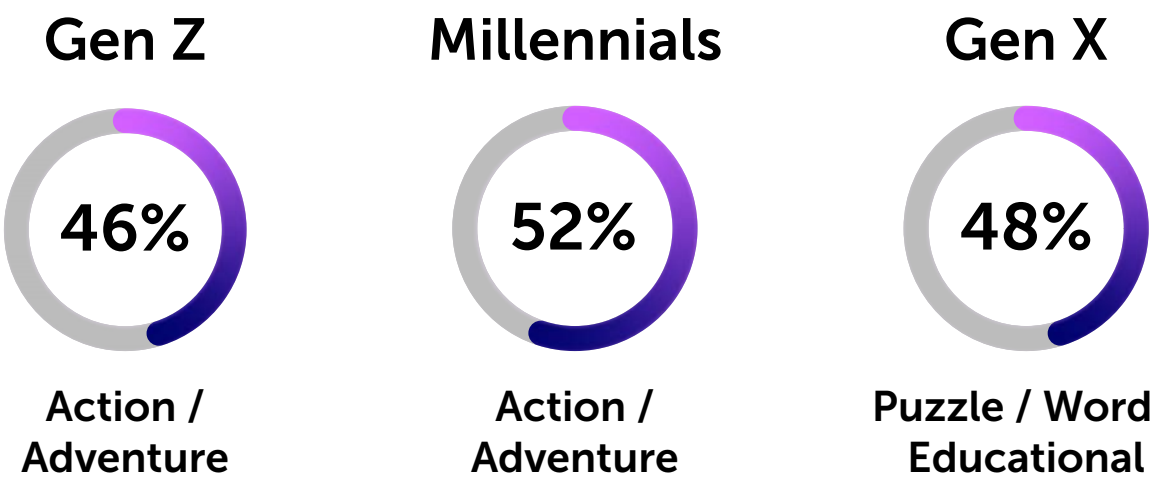
# A Game for Every Kind of Player

**Action and adventure games are the most popular genre among surveyed adult video game players (44%),** followed by puzzle, word and educational games (40%), strategy and simulation games (37%), casual and social games (35%), and sports and racing games (31%).

## Among Adult Players (18–64)




## Favourite Genre By Generation




Among surveyed adult video game players aged 18–64. Respondents could select multiple genres; percentages may total more than 100%.

CANADA PLAYS

# Canada, coast to coast

Adult video game participation and preferences vary by province and region.



## British Columbia

| 47% | 64% | 39.5 |
|---|---|---|
| play video games | play mobile | average age |

Most played game genres (adults)
Action / Adventure 44% Strategy 43%



## Alberta

| 54% | 65% | 38.4 |
|---|---|---|
| play video games | play mobile | average age |

Most played game genres (adults)
Strategy 43% Puzzle / Word / Educational 43%



## The Prairies

| 47% | 68% | 39.3 |
|---|---|---|
| play video games | play mobile | average age |

Most played game genres (adults)
Action / Adventure 46% Puzzle / Word / Educational 44%

Among Canadian adults aged 18–64 for participation rates; among surveyed adult video game players for platform use, average age and genres. Platform and genre figures reflect reported use.

CANADA PLAYS

# Canada, coast to coast

Adult video game participation and preferences vary by province and region.



## Ontario

**49%** play video games

**62%** play mobile

**39.3** average age

Most played game genres (adults)
Action / Adventure 44% Puzzle / Word / Educational 42%



## Quebec

**43%** play video games

**60%** play console

**38.4** average age

Most played game genres (adults)
Action / Adventure 46% Strategy 39%



## Atlantic Canada

**46%** play video games

**74%** play console

**41.1** average age

Most played game genres (adults)
Puzzle / Word / Educational 40% Action / Adventure 38%

Among Canadian adults aged 18–64 for participation rates; among surveyed adult video game players for platform use, average age and genres. Platform and genre figures reflect reported use.

MADE HERE. PLAYED EVERYWHERE.

# Canada's Video Game Industry

Canada remains a global leader in interactive entertainment. Surveyed video game players recognize the importance of the domestic video game industry and support maintaining Canada's competitiveness on the world stage.

**Canadian-made video games matter to players.** More than two-thirds (68%) of those surveyed say it is important that video games created by Canadian developers are available to play.

**68%** say Canadian-developed games are important

**32%** say they have knowingly played a Canadian-developed game

REGIONAL INSIGHT

**46%** of surveyed Quebec players say they have knowingly played a game developed by a Canadian studio
*versus 32% nationally*

**Players recognize the industry's economic contribution.** Six in ten video game players (61%) say the Canadian video game industry is important to Canada's economy. **Support for maintaining Canada's competitive position remains strong.** More than three-quarters (77%) of surveyed video game players believe Canada should invest the same amount as, or more than, competing countries in support of the video game industry.

**61%** believe video games matter to Canada's economy

**77%** support equal or greater investment

Among surveyed adult video game players aged 18–64. Importance and investment figures combine favourable response categories. Canadian-game recognition reflects respondents who reported having knowingly played a Canadian-developed game.

MADE HERE. PLAYED EVERYWHERE.

# A Generation Imagines a Career in Games

**Young Canadian players see professional opportunity in the video game sector.** More than half (54%) of surveyed teens express interest in pursuing a career in the video game industry.

**54%** **of teen players are interested in games careers** *among surveyed ages 13–17*

**40%** **of adult players are interested**
*52% among Gen Z adults*

## Skills People Associate with Video Game Careers



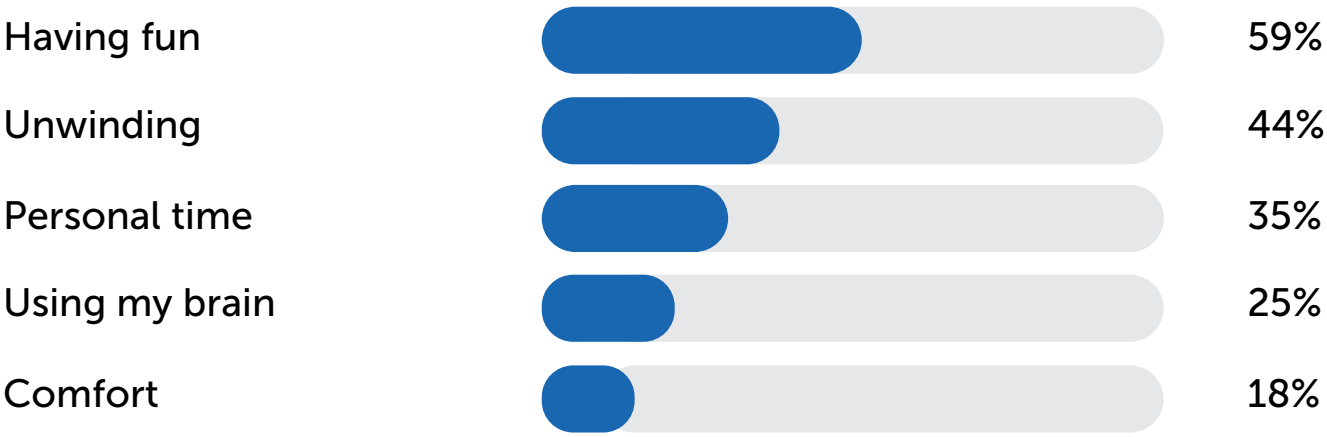

Among surveyed teen video game players aged 13–17 and adult players aged 18–64. Career interest combines very and somewhat interested responses. Skills percentages reflect multiple selections by adult players.

# The Benefits of Play

Entertainment, enjoyment and relaxation remain the primary motivations for video game play. Many surveyed players also associate video games with positive impacts on mental wellness and stress management.

**People have fun playing video games.** Among surveyed adults, having fun is the most frequently cited reason for playing video games (59%), followed by unwinding (44%) and personal time (35%).

## Top Reasons Adults Play




GENERATIONAL INSIGHT

## Different reasons to play.

Gen X players are more likely to cite unwinding (53%) and exercising their brain (31%) than Gen Z players (37% and 18%, respectively).

Among surveyed adult video game players aged 18–64. Respondents could select up to three primary reasons for playing.

# For Many Canadians, Video Games are Self-care

**Video games continue to be an important way to relax and manage stress.** Nine in ten surveyed adults (91%) and teens (90%) report that they often or sometimes play video games to relax, manage stress or improve their mood.

**91%** adult players often or sometimes play video games to relax, manage stress or improve their mood.

**90%** teen players report playing for the same reasons.

**Most surveyed players believe video games can positively impact mental wellness.** More than three-quarters of adults (78%) and nearly seven in ten teens (69%) believe video games can have a positive effect on mental wellness.

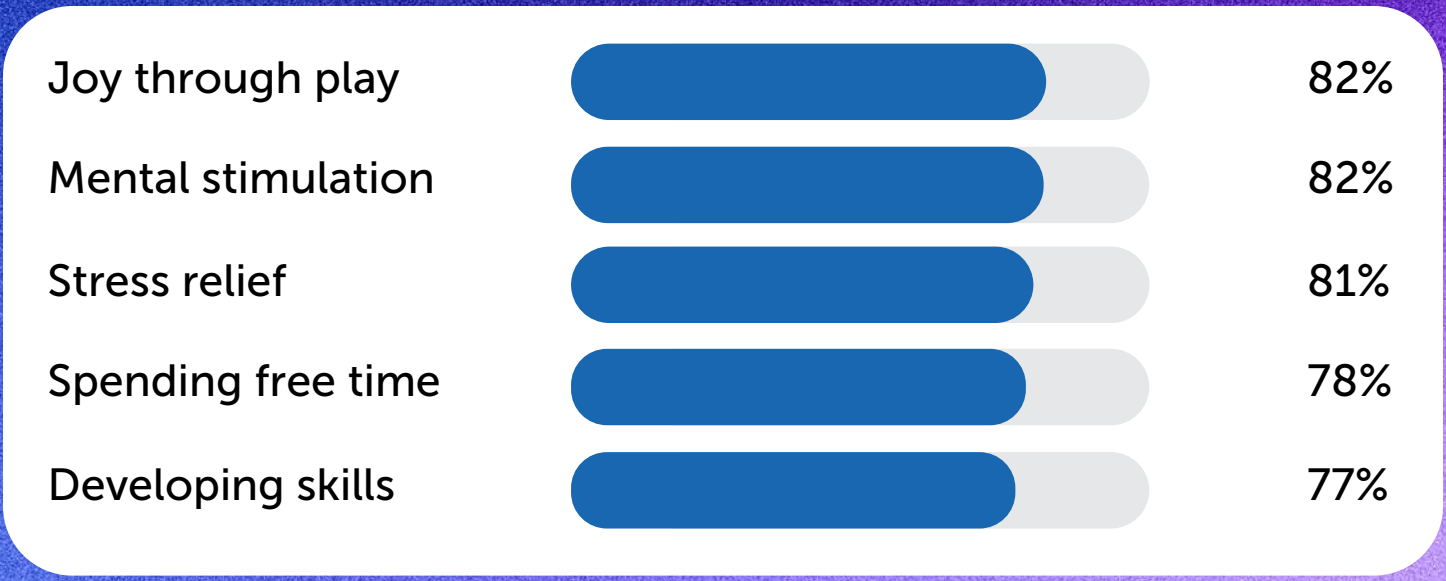
**78%** of adult players believe games can benefit mental wellness

**69%** of teen players feel the same

Among surveyed adult video game players aged 18–64 and teen players aged 13–17. Stress-management figures combine often and sometimes responses; mental wellness figures reflect positive responses.

# The Benefits of Getting into the Game

**Perceived benefits extend beyond entertainment.** More than eight in ten surveyed adults associate video games with joy (82%), mental stimulation (82%) and stress relief (81%).




REGIONAL INSIGHT

**Video game players in Atlantic Canada are among the most likely to say they play video games to relax and manage stress.**

Among surveyed adult video game players aged 18–64. Percentages combine strongly and somewhat agree responses.

# The Social Fabric: Family, Friendship & Community

Video games create opportunities for connection among family members, friends and broader communities. Across age groups, surveyed players use video game play to share experiences, maintain relationships and build new connections.

**Video games help young people stay connected.** Seven in ten surveyed teens (70%) say video games help them stay connected with friends and family. More than two-thirds of surveyed teens (68%) say video game play has helped them make new friends.

**70%** of teen players say games help them stay connected

**68%** of teen players say games helped them make friends

**74%** of surveyed adult players agree video games can bring different types of people together

**63%** agree video games can build community and encourage social connection.

GENERATIONAL INSIGHT

## Younger adults are more social in play.

59% of Gen Z adult players report playing with friends, compared with 43% of Millennials and 27% of Gen X.

Among surveyed teen video game players aged 13–17 and adult players aged 18–64, as indicated. Adult agreement percentages combine strongly and somewhat agree responses.

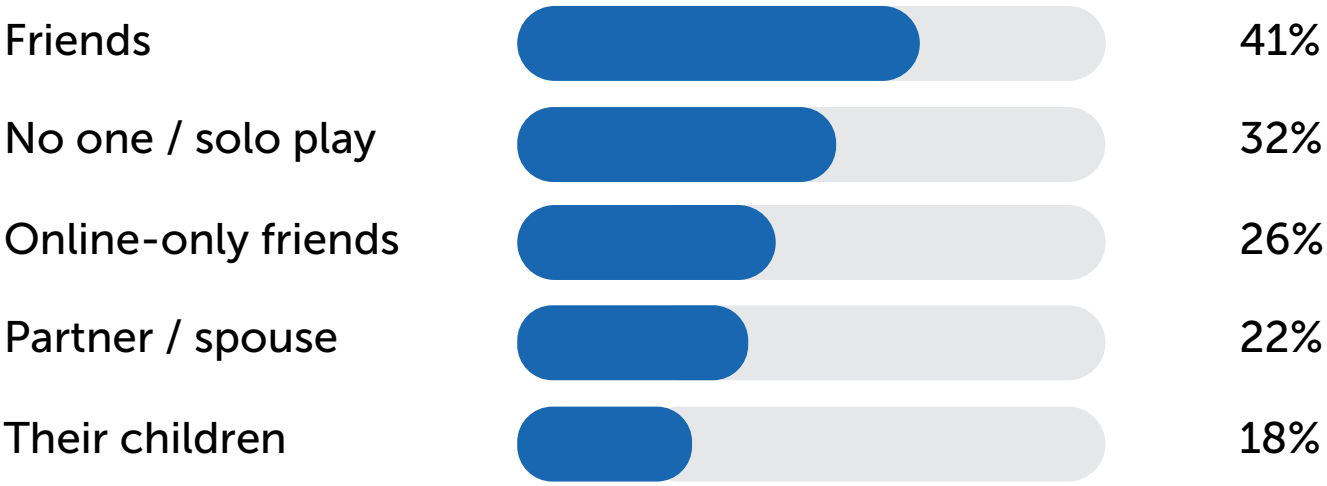
BETTER TOGETHER

# Connection on Their Terms

**Social interaction remains an important part of video game play.** Among surveyed adults who play online, 35% cite social interaction as one of the primary reasons they participate in online video game experiences.

**35%** of adult players report enjoying the social interaction of online video games

## Who Adult Players Usually Play With




GENERATIONAL INSIGHT

## Solo play is more common among Gen X.

45% of Gen X adult players report typically playing alone, compared with 26% of Millennials and 19% of Gen Z.

Among surveyed adult video game players aged 18–64. The online social-interaction figure reflects adults who play online. Respondents could select multiple playing companions.

# A Reason to Gather

**Video games offer opportunities for families and friends to spend meaningful time together.** Among surveyed adult players, 71% identify fun and entertainment as a benefit of playing together, while 55% value the quality time it creates. Many also recognize the benefits of communication, teamwork and shared learning.

**71%** cite fun as a benefit of family play

**55%** say they enjoy spending quality time together

## Other Benefits Adults Identify




REGIONAL INSIGHT

**Video game players in Atlantic Canada are among the most likely to report positive perceptions of family and community connections through video game play.**

Among surveyed adult video game players aged 18–64. Respondents could select multiple perceived benefits of playing video games together.

# Good Play Starts with Good Information

**Awareness of video game ratings remains high.** More than three-quarters (77%) of surveyed video game players are aware that a video game rating system exists.

**77%** are aware of a game rating system

*Among surveyed adult video game players.*

## Ratings Inform Game Selection

**69%** of parent player respondents say they always or sometimes check ratings when selecting games for their child.

Among surveyed adult video game players aged 18–64. Rating-checking behaviour is based on parent players who responded to the question (n=447) and combines always and sometimes responses.

# Conclusion

Canada's video game industry continues to play an important role in the country's cultural, creative and economic landscape. Video game players recognize the industry's contributions and express strong support for maintaining Canada's position as a global leader in interactive entertainment.

The influence of video games extends beyond entertainment alone. Surveyed players report turning to video games to relax, connect with others and spend quality time with family and friends. At the same time, many young Canadians view the industry as a source of future opportunity, seeing careers in video games as a pathway to creativity, innovation and technical achievement.

As Canada's video game industry continues to evolve, it remains well-positioned to inspire the next generation of talent while delivering meaningful experiences for millions of video game players across the country.

# Appendix

## Research Methodology

### About the Survey

The 2026 Essential Facts research was conducted by Burson using the Leger Opinion online panel between October 1 and 16, 2026.

The research included 1,650 adults, 250 children aged 6–12 and 250 teens aged 13–17 in Canada. Adult survey responses were weighted by age and region.

Unless otherwise indicated, findings describe surveyed video game players who reported playing video games within the four weeks preceding the survey.

### Understanding the Results

Video game participation: The national and regional participation figures represent the proportion of Canadians aged 18–64 who reported playing video games within the previous four weeks. These estimates are distinct from findings describing surveyed video game players. The regional participation results used a sample of 760 Canadian adults aged 18–64.

Adult players: Adult player statistics reflect respondents aged 18–64 who played video games within the past four weeks. The principal adult player survey base was 1,322 respondents. The number of respondents may vary by question depending on eligibility and response.

Children and teens: Findings for younger players reflect surveyed children aged 6–12 and teens aged 13–17, with 250 respondents in each group. Where presented together, these findings represent respondents aged 6–17.

Generational breakdown: Generational findings compare adult video game players across Gen Z, Millennials and Gen X. These three groups account for 95% of the surveyed adult player population. The remaining 5% consists of Baby Boomer respondents within the survey's 18–64 age range and is not shown separately in the generational charts.

Combined responses: Certain percentages represent combinations of related response categories, such as "very" and "somewhat" interested, "strongly" and "somewhat" agree, or "often" and "sometimes." These combinations are identified in the accompanying text or chart notes.

Multiple-response questions: Where respondents could select more than one answer, percentages may total more than 100%. Figures relating to devices, game genres, motivations, playing companions and perceived benefits may reflect multiple selections.

Rounding: Percentages are generally presented as whole numbers. Totals may vary slightly from the sum of individual responses because of rounding.

# Appendix

Interpretation

The results reflect the opinions, behaviours and experiences of surveyed respondents. Findings concerning the perceived benefits of video games, mental wellness, social connection and the video game industry represent respondents' reported experiences and views.

Comparisons between adults, children and teens should be interpreted in the context of their respective survey populations and question bases.

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