

## ESRB Game Ratings & Content Descriptors

The Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) ratings are designed to provide information about video and computer game content, so you can make informed purchase decisions. ESRB ratings have two parts: **rating symbols** suggest age appropriateness for the game, and **content descriptors** indicate elements in a game that may have triggered a particular rating and/or may be of interest or concern.

To take full advantage of the ESRB rating system, it's important to check both the **rating symbol** (on the front of the game box) and the **content descriptors** (on the back of the game box).



Titles rated **EC - (Early Childhood)** have content that may be suitable for ages 3 and older. Contains no material that parents would find inappropriate.



Titles rated **E (Everyone)** have content that may be suitable for ages 6 and older. Titles in this category may contain minimal cartoon, fantasy or mild violence and/or infrequent use of mild language.



Titles rated **E10+ (Everyone 10 and older)** have content that may be suitable for ages 10 and older. Titles in this category may contain more cartoon, fantasy or mild violence, mild language, and/or minimal suggestive themes.



Titles rated **T (Teen)** have content that may be suitable for ages 13 and older. Titles in this category may contain violence, suggestive themes, crude humor, minimal blood and/or infrequent use of strong language.



Titles rated **M (Mature)** have content that may be suitable for persons ages 17 and older. Titles in this category may contain intense violence, blood and gore, sexual content, and/or strong language.



Titles rated **AO (Adults Only)** have content that should only be played by persons 18 years and older. Titles in this category may include prolonged scenes of intense violence and/or graphic sexual content and nudity.



Titles listed as **RP (Rating Pending)** - have been submitted to the ESRB and are awaiting final rating. (This symbol appears only in advertising prior to a game's release.)

## ESRB Content Descriptors

- **Alcohol Reference** - Reference to and/or images of alcoholic beverages
- **Animated Blood** - Discolored and/or unrealistic depictions of blood
- **Blood** - Depictions of blood
- **Blood and Gore** - Depictions of blood or the mutilation of body parts
- **Cartoon Violence** - Violent actions involving cartoon-like situations and characters. May include violence where a character is unharmed after the action has been inflicted
- **Comic Mischief** - Depictions or dialogue involving slapstick or suggestive humor
- **Crude Humor** - Depictions or dialogue involving vulgar antics, including "bathroom" humor
- **Drug Reference** - Reference to and/or images of illegal drugs
- **Edutainment** - Content of product provides user with specific skills development or reinforcement learning within an entertainment setting. Skill development is an integral part of product
- **Fantasy Violence** - Violent actions of a fantasy nature, involving human or non-human characters in situations easily distinguishable from real life
- **Informational** - Overall content of product contains data, facts, resource information, reference materials or instructional text
- **Intense Violence** - Graphic and realistic-looking depictions of physical conflict. May involve extreme and/or realistic blood, gore, weapons, and depictions of human injury and death
- **Language** - Mild to moderate use of profanity
- **Lyrics** - Mild references to profanity, sexuality, violence, alcohol, or drug use in music
- **Mature Humor** - Depictions or dialogue involving "adult" humor, including sexual references
- **Mild Violence** - Mild scenes depicting characters in unsafe and/or violent situations
- **Nudity** - Graphic or prolonged depictions of nudity
- **Partial Nudity** - Brief and/or mild depictions of nudity
- **Real Gambling** - Player can gamble, including betting or wagering real cash or currency
- **Sexual Themes** - Mild to moderate sexual references and/or depictions. May include partial nudity
- **Sexual Violence** - Depictions of rape or other sexual acts
- **Simulated Gambling** - Player can gamble without betting or wagering real cash or currency
- **Some Adult Assistance May Be Needed** - Intended for very young ages
- **Strong Language** - Explicit and/or frequent use of profanity
- **Strong Lyrics** - Explicit and/or frequent references to profanity, sex, violence, alcohol, or drug use in music
- **Strong Sexual Content** - Graphic references to and/or depictions of sexual behavior, possibly including nudity
- **Suggestive Themes** - Mild provocative references or materials
- **Tobacco Reference** - Reference to and/or images of tobacco products
- **Use of Drugs** - The consumption or use of illegal drugs
- **Use of Alcohol** - The consumption of alcoholic beverages
- **Use of Tobacco** - The consumption of tobacco products
- **Violence** - Scenes involving aggressive conflict

Additionally, online games that include user-generated content (e.g., chat, maps, skins) carry the notice **"Game Experience May Change During Online Play"** to warn consumers that content created by players of the game has not been rated by the ESRB.

### **ESRB Helps Parents Choose the Right Games for Their Families**

The ESRB rating system is designed to give parents the information they need to evaluate a computer or video game before making a purchasing decision. The ratings are not meant to recommend which games consumers should buy or rent or to serve as the only basis for choosing a product. Rather, parents should use the ESRB ratings in conjunction with their own tastes and standards and their individual knowledge about what's best for their kids.

ESRB recommends that parents learn about games before making a purchasing decision. Game reviews printed in newspapers and publisher web sites can be excellent sources of information. To search for games that are appropriate based on age categories and content, [use our online ratings search feature](#).

ESRB also urges parents to talk with their children about their favorite games. Playing the games with your children helps stimulate those discussions, and playing games as a family can also be a fun way to spend time together.