

# ESPORTS

A person is shown in profile, wearing a headset with a microphone and glasses, focused on playing a game. They are seated at a desk with multiple computer monitors. The leftmost monitor displays a colorful game interface with a blue orb and a character. The other monitors are blurred, showing abstract light patterns. The background is dark with numerous out-of-focus light spots in shades of blue and green, creating a bokeh effect. The overall lighting is dim, with the primary light sources being the screens and the bokeh lights.

BY M.G. HIGGINS

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# On the Rise

People enter an arena. Music blasts and lights flash. Finally, the game begins. Big screens show the action. Announcers call out plays. Fans cheer for their favorite players.



It could be a pro basketball game. But there is no court or hoops. Instead, ten players sit in chairs. They stare at screens and work the controls. Their fingers move at lightning speed. This is the world of esports.

## The Gaming Life

Esports is short for electronic sports. It is also called competitive **gaming**. The players are professionals. For them, gaming is a career. Their moves must be fast. The timing must be perfect. Mistakes can cost them the win.

Pro gamers practice for hours each day. They have little time for anything else. Not all players can handle this lifestyle. But the payoffs can be huge. Top stars earn millions.



**FAST FACT:** An estimated 380 million people watched esports in 2018. The number of viewers is predicted to keep growing.

# Big Business

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Pros who play esports compete in contests. Hundreds of these events are held each year. Many happen online. Some take place in arenas. Ticket sales bring in millions of dollars.

Game companies make big money. Ad deals boost their earnings. **Sponsorships** increase sales. Some companies even own teams and **leagues**.

More people want in on the action. Famous celebrities now **invest** in teams. Schools offer programs for students. The popularity of esports continues to grow.

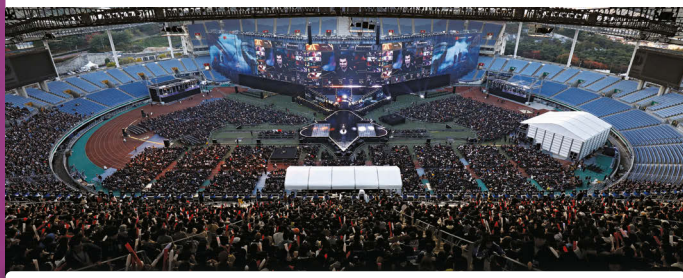




**FAST FACT:** There were nearly 600 major esports events in 2017. Ticket sales brought in around \$59 million.

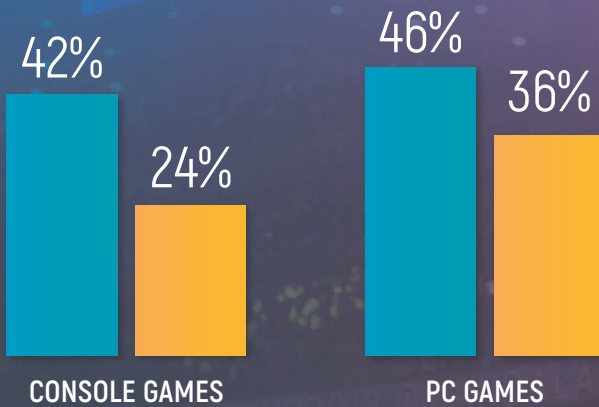
## ESPORTS IN SOUTH KOREA

Esports is especially popular in South Korea. It is a national pastime. Contests there can draw over 100,000 fans. Top gamers are big stars. TV channels have shown tournaments since 2000. Companies compete to place ads. The nation sets an esports trend for the world.



# Internet Users Who Played Online at Least Once a Month in 2018

● Male ● Female



**FAST FACT:** In 2018, over 178 million people played video games in the U.S.

# Sport of Today

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Some say esports is not a real sport. Players are not true athletes. They sit in chairs and only move their hands. All the action happens on screens. But fans love the events. Most are gamers too. Esports is their sport of choice.





# ESPORTS

Esports is more than just professional gaming. There are hundreds of contests, serious cash prizes, and millions of fans. Pro gamers have been working hard since the 1970s to build their skills and win big. The esports industry isn't perfect, but it's definitely on the rise.



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