

2008 MediaWise[®] Video Game Buying Guide



In years past, we have provided parents with a list of games we recommend for kids in addition to a list of games that you should make sure kids avoid. This year our list has been expanded to include brief descriptions as well as a list of games for younger children and a list for teens.

GREAT GAMES FOR KIDS

Recommended E-rated Games

All Star Cheer Squad sends players through a year in the life of a cheerleader. Players learn cheers, create routines and attend practices with the ultimate goal of being the captain of cheer camp's champion squad. When used with the Wii console, players can use the Balance Board to incorporate movement and exercise into their game play. Available on Nintendo DS and Wii.

Animal Crossing: City Folk begins with players setting out to live life in a colorful virtual town filled with something different to do and new people to meet at every turn. Time passes in 24-hour increments and can be set up to mimic real life down to the minute. Available on Wii.

FIFA Soccer 09 has received praise for giving gamers near-perfect control over movement and feel. For example, bigger players are more likely to use their strength, while smaller players rely on quickness. Gamers can also create a custom player and develop their skills over a four-season period. Available on Nintendo DS, PC, PlayStation 2, PlayStation 3, PlayStation Portable, Xbox 360 and Wii.

Hasbro Family Game Night lets parents and children come together to play classic Hasbro board games with new age video game technology. Players can create their own game room filled with familiar Hasbro originals with a new twist. Games include: CONNECT FOUR Power Chips, BOGGLE Portal Cubes, Reverse YAHTZEE and BATTLESHIP Barrage, among others. Available on PlayStation 2 and Wii.

High School Musical 3: Senior Year DANCE! lets fans experience the energy, fun and music of the *High School Musical* movies. Gamers can choose to be their favorite character from the movie or create their own player. Either way, *High School Musical* fans will enjoy dancing to 29 songs from the movies alongside their favorite characters. Compete with friends in dance-offs or play together in dance duo. Available on Nintendo DS, PC, PlayStation 2, Xbox 360 and Wii.

LittleBigPlanet is a revolutionary game that requires both brains and teamwork to explore, collect and solve puzzles. The most anticipated feature is the ability to build entire levels, which can be shared throughout the world via the PlayStation Network. NOTE: Although the game's included content comes with an E-rating and is suitable for children, not all player-generated content is appropriate. Parents should monitor and be aware of the levels their children are accessing on the PlayStation Network. Available on PlayStation 3.

Nancy Drew: The Haunting of Castle Malloy finds Nancy travelling to Ireland to be the maid of honor at her best friend's wedding. The groom goes missing and Nancy has to track him down by interviewing characters, solving puzzles and collecting tokens to pay for clues from the fortune teller. This game has complex characters and plot lines without unnecessary violence. Available on PC.

NBA LIVE 09 is the fourth edition to the *NBA Live* line of games. The game lets players work toward their dream of becoming NBA superstars. One of the most exciting aspects is the *Live Dynamic DNA*. This feature allows the player to update the game to match the NBA player's real life performance. Available on PlayStation Portable, PlayStation 2, PlayStation 3, Xbox 360 and Wii.

NCAA Basketball 09 is a new title for the popular NCAA March Madness franchise. The game offers a new feature, which challenges gamers to replicate a school's style of play by rewarding players for accurately playing with the same method and tempo as the real-life teams. *NCAA Basketball 09* will also feature Division I coaches providing real-time, in-game instruction and feedback to help players mimic their team's style of gameplay. Available on PlayStation 2, PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360.

Samba de Amigo gives a new twist to the music game genre. Players shake maracas to the tune of catchy Latin beats with the goal of matching the designated height and patterns in rhythm with the music. Available on Wii.

Recommended T-rated games

Guitar Hero World Tour is expanding with drums and a microphone for its latest edition of the game allowing for a complete four-piece band (previous versions included guitar and bass instruments). The new guitar has a touch pad located on the neck that allows a player to alter notes by sliding up and down the strip. It is rated T for lyrics and mildly suggestive themes. Available on PlayStation 2, PlayStation 3, Xbox 360 and Wii.

Rock Band 2 brings back everything that was popular in the original *Rock Band* adding 84 new songs from AC/DC, Metallica, The Talking Heads, Journey, Modest Mouse and others. Players can still enjoy their original Rock Band favorites by transferring their previously downloaded songs to the new game. Rock Band 2 also introduces a new online mode. The game is rated T for lyrics and suggestive themes. Available on PlayStation 2, PlayStation 3, Xbox 360 and Wii.

Rock Revolution is the latest addition to the rock n' roll game genre. Similar to *Guitar Hero* and *Rock Band*, players channel their inner rock stars by playing drums, guitar or bass. One add-on to this game is the Jam Mode that allows players to create their own music. This game is rated T for lyrics and tobacco reference. Available on Nintendo DS, PlayStation 3, Xbox 360 and Wii.

Shaun White Snowboarding* allows players to test their boarding skills on four massive mountains. As you get better you can purchase new boards that will give you better speed and more air. The game is rated T for lyrics, mildly suggestive themes and mild violence. Available on Nintendo DS, PlayStation 2, PlayStation 3, PlayStation Portable, Xbox 360 and Wii.

Spider-Man: Web of Shadows allows players to explore in a free-roaming, open-ended environment. Gamers can choose to play as the red, heroic, web-slinging Spiderman or the precarious and destructive black anti-hero Spiderman. *Web of Shadows* is rated T for animated blood, drug references, mild language, mildly suggestive themes and violence. Available on Nintendo DS, PC, PlayStation 2, PlayStation 3, PlayStation Portable, Xbox 360 and Wii.

*The Wii version is called *Shaun White Snowboarding: Road Trip*. On the other systems it is *Shaun White Snowboarding*.

GAMES TO AVOID FOR CHILDREN

Blitz The League II is not your friendly football video game. Players can target which part of their opponent they wish to demolish. Steroid and drug use is encouraged, and wins are celebrated with hookers in a hotel room. The game is rated M for blood and gore, strong language, suggestive themes, use of drugs and violence. Available on PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360.

Dead Space is one of the latest titles in the survival horror genre of video games. The setting is hundreds of years in the future after mankind has used all of earth's natural resources. During the mission players, stranded on a crippled vessel, must destroy nightmarish creatures while trying to rescue any survivors and escape the ship. If caught the creatures will not just kill you, but dismantle your limbs and decapitate you. Dead Space is rated M for blood and gore, intense violence and strong language. Available on PC, PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360.

Fallout 3 is set in a post-nuclear world. The survivors must navigate their way through a world with giant insects, raiders, slavers and super mutants. Player's kill whatever is in their path with guns and explosives. This game is rated M for blood and gore, intense violence, sexual themes, strong language and drug use. Available on PC, PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360.

Far Cry 2 is set in an unnamed African country being torn apart by two warring groups. The gamer's mission is to kill The Jackal, an arms dealer who is supplying to both sides of the conflict. Blowing peoples heads off is a regular occurrence in this game. The game is rated M for blood, drug references, intense violence, sexual themes and strong language. Available on PC, PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360.

Gears of War 2 finds Marcus Fenix and the Delta Squad battling the Locust Horde for the survival of humanity. The game's main weapon is the Lancer Assault Rifle, which combines a rifle with a chain saw. The game is rated M for blood and gore, intense violence and strong language. Available on Xbox 360.

Left 4 Dead finds the player in a city where a new and highly powerful rabies virus is quickly spreading. Victims become grotesquely disfigured and launch vicious attacks on the uninfected. In this co-operative multiplayer action game the gamers fight for survival. The game is rated M for blood and gore, intense violence, and language. Available on PC and Xbox 360.

Legendary is the story of Charles Deckard, a thief who breaks into a New York museum and opens what turns out to be Pandora's Box, unleashing all of the world's evil and destroying all humans in its path. Deckard must defeat the newly unleashed beasts and reseal Pandora's Box to make society safe once again. *Legendary* is rated M for blood and gore, and intense violence. Available on PC, PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360.

Resistance 2 finds Nathan Hale fighting the same Chimera alien race he did in the original *Resistance* game. This version is set in the United States instead of Europe. The Chimera obliterates cities and kills civilians by the thousands. The game is rated M for blood and gore, intense violence and strong language. Available on PlayStation 3.

Saints Row 2 is the second edition to the open-world, gang-affiliated, shoot 'em up game series. This game has expanded with new locations to explore and new vehicles to steal including motorcycles, boats, helicopters and planes. In the game, the player can choose to beat up strippers, slit rival game members throats, shoot cops and more. *Saints Row 2* is rated M for blood and gore, intense violence, sexual content, strong language and use of drugs. Available on PC, PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360.

Silent Hill: Homecoming is a "first-person shooter" game. The gamer plays Alex Shepherd, a recently discharged soldier who returns home to Shepherd's Glen. He finds that people are disappearing, the streets are shattered and strange creatures are roaming the town. Near the end the player is faced with a choice to shoot his mother in the head or let the rack rip her in half. The game is rated M for blood and gore, intense violence, language and sexual themes. Available on PC, PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360.