
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute English

The business of eSports

The logo for BBC Learning English, featuring the letters 'BBC' in a white box above the words 'LEARNING ENGLISH' in white text on a teal background.

This is not a word-for-word transcript

Neil

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute English. I'm Neil.

Sam

And I'm Sam.

Neil

Now Sam, how would you define **eSports**?

Sam

eSports? Well this is essentially competitive video gaming. Individuals and teams take part in competitions where they play video games.

Neil

So just like me and my kids at the weekend?

Sam

Well, no! **eSports** is enormous. Tens of thousands of people turn up to watch these events. The players are professional and get paid huge salaries – the best ones are millionaires.

Neil

Well, maybe I'm not quite in that league yet! But the business of **eSports** is our topic for this programme. Before we press 'play' on the subject though, a question. Approximately how much was generated by **eSports** and video games in the last year? Was it...

a) \$130 million?

b) \$13 billion?

c) \$130 billion?

What do you think then Sam?

Sam

I'm going to say \$130 billion. It's a huge amount, but I think it's that successful at the moment.

Neil

OK, we'll find out if you're right at the end of the programme. Not so long ago the idea of making a living playing computer games would have seemed impossible. However, times have changed as technology has improved. **eSports** are even going to be included in the 2022 Asian Games. So it might not be long before they make an appearance at the Olympics. Gabriël Rau is a pro-eSportsman. He was interviewed for the BBC programme In Business. He thinks eSports are going to grow and grow, but does he think that's a bad thing?

Gabriël Rau, pro-eSportsman

It's becoming more of a normal sports thing with this generation about to have children and moving forward I feel like it might even become **a staple**. Might become as normal as sports are right now. I don't think it necessarily has to be a bad thing. It is **time-consuming** though, so I feel like, if you do want to introduce anybody, especially children, into video games, **discipline** is the way to go.

Neil

So, is the growth of **eSports** a bad thing?

Sam

Not, according to Gabriël. He thinks that people having children now have grown up with computer games and these are beginning to be seen in the same way as traditional sports. In fact, he thinks they will become **a staple**.

Neil

And what does he mean by that?

Sam

Something that is a **staple** is a basic element, something we expect. For example, in the UK we talk about potatoes being a **staple** food and football being a **staple** of the school curriculum.

Neil

But he does mention a disadvantage, doesn't he?

Sam

Yes. He speaks quite quickly but he says that it is **time-consuming**. It eats up a lot of time!

Neil

Oh yes, I know that from my own experience. I can start playing a game then find that many hours have passed and it's the middle of the night.

Sam

And that's why Gabriël goes on to talk about the need for **discipline**. This is having strict controls and restrictions and importantly sticking to them. So, for example, if you say you are only going to play for an hour every day, you have to stop playing after an hour, even if you want to carry on. That's **discipline**.

Neil

And he makes the point that this is important if you are introducing children to video games. Not everyone involved in **eSports** wants to be a player. It's now possible to study the business of **eSports** at university where you can learn how to manage **eSports** events. These are the thoughts of a student on one of those courses talking about her response to seeing a big **eSports** event.

Student of eSports studies

When you look at the background of how it all comes together and the people that spend all that time getting into it, for me I would love to **put something like that together**, not so much to play it but to **put that together** and create that experience for other people and that was just my main **aspiration** really.

Neil

So she doesn't want to play, does she?

Sam

No, she doesn't. She seems more interested in **putting together** an event, which means setting up and managing an event for others to take part in. That, she said, was her **aspiration**, her ambition.

Neil

Right, before we review the vocabulary, let's have the answer to our quiz question. Approximately how much was generated by **eSports** and video games in the last year?

- a) \$130 million?
- b) \$13 billion?
- c) \$130 billion?

What did you say Sam?

Sam

I thought \$130 billion.

Neil

And, for once, you're right so well done. The actual figure was approximately \$137 billion, which was more than the music industry when you include music sales and concerts. Right on now to remind ourselves of some words and phrases from today's programme.

Sam

Yes, we've been looking at **eSports**, the world of competitive video gaming.

Neil

We heard that it was becoming so normal that it might become a **staple**, an expected basic activity in the same way sports like football are.

Sam

But be warned, playing video games is very **time-consuming**. It eats up a lot of time.

Neil

So you need to have **discipline**. That means you need to have and keep to restrictions such as the length of time you play or the time of day you play. That is particularly important for children.

Sam

If you organise an event, you can say that you **put it together**.

Neil

And your ambition, your hope for the future is an **aspiration**.

Sam

And my **aspiration** is to beat my high score on my favourite game, so are we done now?

Neil

Yes, it's game over for today. We'll see you again soon and don't forget to look out for more from the BBC Learning English team online, on social media and on our app. Bye for now.

Sam

Bye everyone!

VOCABULARY

eSports

the business of competitive video gaming

a staple

a basic essential that is expected and common

time-consuming

using up a lot of time

discipline

the following of rules and restrictions

to put (something) together

to organise (something, such as an event)

an aspiration

a hope or ambition for the future