

ESRB Ratings Guide

The Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) ratings provide concise and objective information about the content in video games and apps so consumers, especially parents, can make informed choices. ESRB ratings have three parts:

- **Rating Categories** suggest age appropriateness;
- **Content Descriptors** indicate content that may have triggered a particular rating and/or may be of interest or concern;
- **Interactive Elements** highlight interactive or online features of a product, including users' ability to interact with each other, the sharing of users' location with other users, if purchases of digital goods or services are offered, and/or if unrestricted internet access is provided.

RATING CATEGORIES	CONTENT DESCRIPTORS (EXAMPLES)	INTERACTIVE ELEMENTS
	Language Suggestive Themes Violence	In-Game Purchases Users Interact Shares Location Unrestricted Internet



(Example placement of media. ESRB videos can be found [here](#))

As a supplementary source of information, physical (e.g., boxed) video games have Rating Summaries that provide a more detailed description of the content that factored into the rating assigned.

Rating Categories



EVERYONE

Content is generally suitable for all ages. May contain minimal cartoon, fantasy or mild violence and/or infrequent use of mild language.



EVERYONE 10+

Content is generally suitable for ages 10 and up. May contain more cartoon, fantasy or mild violence, mild language and/or minimal suggestive themes.



TEEN

Content is generally suitable for ages 13 and up. May contain violence, suggestive themes, crude humor, minimal blood, simulated gambling, and/or infrequent use of strong language.



MATURE

Content is generally suitable for persons ages 17 and up. May contain intense violence, blood and gore, sexual content and/or strong language.



ADULTS ONLY

Content suitable for adults 18 years and up. May include prolonged scenes of intense violence, graphic sexual content and/or gambling with real currency.



RATING PENDING

Not yet assigned a final ESRB rating. Appears only in advertising, marketing and promotional materials and related to a game that is expected to carry an ESRB rating, and should be replaced by a game's rating once it has been assigned.

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
- **Fantasy Violence** – Violent actions of a fantasy nature, involving human or non-human characters in situations easily distinguishable from real life
- **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
- **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 Content** – Non-explicit depictions of sexual behavior, possibly including partial nudity.
- **Sexual Themes** – References to sex or sexuality
- **Sexual Violence** – Depictions of rape or other violent sexual acts
- **Simulated Gambling** – Player can gamble without betting or wagering real cash or currency
- **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** – Explicit and/or frequent 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 Alcohol** - The consumption of alcoholic beverages
- **Use of Drugs** - The consumption or use of illegal drugs
- **Use of Tobacco** - The consumption of tobacco products
- **Violence** - Scenes involving aggressive conflict. May contain bloodless dismemberment
- **Violent References** – References to violent acts

NOTE: Content Descriptors are applied relative to the Rating Category assigned and are not intended to be a complete listing of content. When a Content Descriptor is preceded by the term “Mild” it is intended to convey low frequency, intensity or severity.

For the most up to date list of content descriptors and definitions, go to http://www.esrb.org/ratings/ratings_guide.aspx

Interactive Elements

- **In-Game Purchases** - In-game offers to purchase digital goods or premiums with real world currency, including but not limited to bonus levels, skins, surprise items (such as item packs, loot boxes, mystery awards), music, virtual coins and other forms of in-game currency, subscriptions, season passes and upgrades (e.g., to disable ads).
- **Users Interact** - Indicates possible exposure to unfiltered/uncensored user-generated content, including user-to-user communications and media sharing via social media and networks
- **Shares Location** - Includes the ability to display the user's location to other users of the app
- **Unrestricted Internet** - Product provides access to the internet

"Music Downloads Not Rated by the ESRB" - Warns that songs downloaded as add-ons for music-based games have not been rated and that their content has not been considered in the ESRB rating assignment

About Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB)

The ESRB is a non-profit, self-regulatory body established in 1994 by the Entertainment Software Association (ESA). ESRB independently assigns computer and video game content ratings, enforces advertising guidelines, and helps ensure responsible online privacy practices for the interactive entertainment software industry.