

# Video Games and Consoles - UK - 2021

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## This report looks at the following areas:

- The short-, medium- and long-term impact of COVID-19 on video games and consoles.
- The type of static or portable console owned by consumers and how long they have had them for.
- How often gamers play video games, whether those habits have changed since a year ago and what their motivations are for playing games.
- Whether console owners have bought accessories or had energy drinks while gaming and their preference for well-known games or less-known ones.

Of the consumers who play games on their static console, 35% said in May 2021 that they are playing more than a year ago and 46% are playing about the same. This is significant as England removed key social-distancing rules in April 2021 but in the following month the vast majority of gamers had not reduced their usage compared to during the first 2020 lockdown.

The statistic indicates the COVID-19 lockdowns caused such growth in consumers' gaming habits that the market is set to be significantly boosted even in the long term. Furthermore, 40% of people who have either a static or portable games console say they do not expect to reduce the amount of video games they play post-COVID-19. Therefore, even though we expect there to be some drop-off as concerns over the pandemic ease, the overall gaming industry is set to be in a much stronger position than it was before COVID-19.

One of the issues that has arisen from the pandemic though is that Xbox and PlayStation have struggled to meet the demand for their latest consoles. Despite the devices being out since November 2020, the PlayStation 5 (PS5) and Xbox Series X remain out of stock at the time of writing. PlayStation has warned that the stock shortages will last until 2022, which is set to limit some of the growth the market could have had in 2021.



"The success of the gaming industry has remained strong in 2021 and in fact many consumers are playing games more or the same amount in May 2021 compared to the height of the first UK lockdown in May 2020."

– **Zach Emmanuel, Consumer Technology Analyst**

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Some 73% of console owners who have bought gaming accessories to improve their performance are also subscribed to a game-streaming service. With these accessories helping to provide an edge in gaming on a static or portable console, it is likely these players will want a similar experience when game-streaming on a mobile device. Therefore, it could be appealing if game-streaming platforms were to offer a premium service that included a gaming accessory for a smartphone or tablet upon sign-up.



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