

Video game accessories let you fine tune the feel, sound and seat of your game

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More Americans are playing video games than ever, and more are tuning in to watch live esports competitions, too. While you may not be a pro, you can certainly step up your game accessory-wise.

Many gamers already have. Sales of [video game](#) accessories such as controllers, headsets, steering wheels and other products hit \$2.3 billion in 2018, up 28% from the year before, according to The NPD Group Retail Tracking Service.

That's the highest sales totals since 2010 (\$2.4 billion), driven by sales of Microsoft's Kinect motion controller for Xbox 360 in November that year. The best-selling accessory each of the last two years has been Sony's DualShock Wireless controller for PlayStation 4, according to NPD.

But gamer communication has helped drive accessory sales in recent months, says Mat Piscatella, a games industry analyst at The NPD Group. "Fortnite" and other battle royale online games "were a big driver of this as communicating with friends while playing is a big part of the experience," Piscatella said. "Gaming ... is the new social hangout spot."

All ears for video game headsets

Want to chat with friends while gaming? There are plenty of headsets to choose from. Most gaming headphones are dark, but the economically

priced Turtle Beach Recon Spark (\$49.95) has a lighter-color touch of white and lavender. The headset has a 52-inch cable, delivers surround sound, is made with softer foam to make it more comfortable for glasses wearers, and works with PS4, Xbox One, Nintendo Switch, PCs and [mobile devices](#).

You can go wireless with ASTRO Gaming's A50 Wireless Headset and Base Station (\$299.99, choose either PS4/PC or Xbox One/PC), which lets gamers listen and chat—and streamers stream—in high-quality surround sound. You can further tweak the sound using its command center audio software. With wireless connectivity up to 30 feet, the headset has 15 hours of battery life when fully charged. A cushioned headband and ear cushions allow for extensive playing bouts.

Shoot and score with an NBA 2K chair

Speaking of comfort, why not have a special chair dedicated to gaming? Raynor Gaming is updating its Energy Pro chair so you can get one with the logo and color schemes of the 21 teams in the NBA 2K League.

The comfortable but durable chair (pre-order now, \$399; now available without team colors, \$329) is made with Outlast material, originally developed for NASA, which absorbs and releases heat so it stays cool as those online [game](#) battles extend into the night or early morning. Not into NBA 2K? There are plenty of other color schemes to choose from.

Looking for complete control

Standard controller not tactile enough for you? Or want to program some moves? You can choose from a variety of new controllers for your console.

ASTRO Gaming's high-end C40 TR controller for PS4 (\$199.99, also compatible with PCs), plays wired or wirelessly and comes with swappable analog stick caps. There are two programmable rear buttons, and you can also map functions to other buttons and adjust triggers. Configured button profiles and audio settings can be saved using online software. The controller has 12 hours of battery life, too.

If customization is key, Scuf Gaming's newest models, the Vantage controller for PS4 & PC (\$169.95) and the Prestige Xbox controller (\$159.95, also for PCs) each has a quartet of programmable (and removable) paddles on the underside. You can also swap out thumbsticks and adjust triggers to fit your hand and style.

The Vantage, Scuf's most advanced controller, also adds a pair of programmable buttons on the side of the PS4 controller and an audio adjustment bar. You can get up to 20 hours of gaming with the Vantage, up to 30 hours with the Prestige.

A mouse moving at the speed of light

If the mouse is your gaming device of choice, Razer's latest model, the Viper (\$79.99), is its fastest and lightest ever. Internally, the Viper uses infrared light for its optical switches—rather than traditional mechanical switches—to transfer player's moves, slicing precious fractions of milliseconds from gesture to on-screen response. The Viper's lightweight (69 grams, or 0.15 pounds) and Speedflex cable make it easier to perform fast sweeping swipes, too. You also get eight programmable buttons.

Razer also recently launched its own line of Respawn gaming drinks. Aimed to improve mental performance, Respawn drinks are sugar-free and made with 95 milligrams of caffeine, along with B vitamins, choline, green tea extract and ground ginger. You can buy flavors

individually—choose from Pomegranate Watermelon, Blue Raspberry, Tropical Pineapple or Green Apple—in boxes of 20 pre-measured mix packs (\$24.99) or in a starter kit with a Respawn shaker (\$54.98).

The better to see with ...

Lengthy gaming sessions can lead to tired eyes. Gunnar Optiks Torpedo Fit gaming glasses (pre-order now for \$79.99, expected ship date Aug. 13) block blue light from computer displays and devices—and 100% of UV light, too. You can see everything with the wraparound design; the frames are designed to fit well with gaming headsets.

Three nose bridges let you customize the fit. In addition to gaming glasses, Gunnar also makes computer glasses, reading glasses and sunglasses (with or without prescriptions).

Video gaming on the go

Sometimes, you have a road game. That's where GAEMS comes in. The makers of gaming environments initially targeted athletes, celebrities and military personnel who wanted an all-in-one case to transport their video game console and play while on the go.

The company's latest product, the Guardian Pro XP (\$699.99, available in the U.S. at GameStop stores, Amazon and online) is an all-in-one carrying case and multimedia control system that works with PS4 and Xbox One consoles and some micro ATX PCs.

Slip the hardware in and watch your game on the system's anti-glare 24-inch display. Listen to it on the built-in simulated surround sound system. And you can mount your webcam, microphone and any lights to the casing and stream out to the world. An HDMI output lets you capture

video, too. And the hardshell case keeps everything safe.

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