

### The UK's new system for videogames rating

PEGI is the Pan-European Games Information system. Following the Government's decision to adopt it fully in the UK, you will be hearing and seeing a lot more about it.

### PEGI is the only system which protects children online and offline

Games are increasingly being played over the internet. Used in 29 European countries, only PEGI can protect children by providing a single age rating system.

### PEGI is future-proof

The PEGI system has been designed to provide consistent ratings regardless of technological advances and the predicted rise of games made available online.

### PEGI can prevent game publishers distributing unsuitable content to children

The ratings body can ban a publisher's entire output for infringement of its standards.

### PEGI fully assesses all game content

Playing "samples" of a game is not enough. PEGI identifies and categorises every element before granting an age rating.

### PEGI has support from all stakeholders

PEGI enjoys the support of the entire UK games industry as well as the country's leading children's charities, retailers and trading standards professionals.

### The UK's Games Industry – the country's most dynamic and creative industry

Some coverage in the media might have you believe that the world is awash with violent games. That simply is not true. The reality is that millions of Britons enjoy playing games and the overwhelming majority of them are not in the least violent. Just six per cent of games are actually 18 rated each year in the UK.

Most games are suitable for all - with sports, action and management simulations all proving enduringly popular. Next time you visit your local high street games shop, or online retailer, please take a quick look at the diverse range of today's games.

The UK videogames industry is one of the country's greatest success stories. From a standing start less than two decades ago it has now risen to outstrip numerous major entertainment rivals. The UK is also the games capital of Europe, with more games sold here than any other country on the continent. We are the biggest developer of games throughout the EU – and now the fourth biggest maker of games after the US, Japan and Canada.

### Here are some other facts about games which you might not know:

The average age of a UK videogames player is 33 and more than one in three voters in Britain describe themselves as active gamers.

- In 2008, 82.8 million videogames were sold in the UK - with a total value of £1.9 billion. Each year, around £370 million is invested in games creation in the UK.
- Some 35 per cent of videogame software sold in Europe is developed by UK studios. The European videogame market now accounts for more sales than the US market, totalling £6.2 billion compared to the US market's £5.8 billion and the Asian market at £6.3 billion.
- Making a game for a current generation console typically costs up to £15 million and can take a large and highly skilled team up to two years to complete.



For further reading and information visit the PEGI website:  
[www.pegi.info](http://www.pegi.info)



For consumer-focused information visit:  
[www.askaboutgames.com](http://www.askaboutgames.com)



The UK games industry's main trade body is ELSPA (the Entertainment and Leisure Software Publishers Association):  
**ELSPA, 167 Wardour Street,  
London W1F 8WP Tel: 020 7534 0580  
Email: [info@elspa.com](mailto:info@elspa.com)  
[www.elspa.com](http://www.elspa.com)**



# LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

THE NEW RATINGS SYSTEM FOR INTERACTIVE GAMES IN THE UK

## What is PEGI?

The PEGI (Pan-European Game Information) age rating system was established in 2003 to help parents and guardians make informed choices when buying interactive games.



All the major console manufacturers, games developers and publishers throughout Europe – and beyond – universally support PEGI. All are bound by its assessment of the age suitability of a game.

PEGI sets standards for the age rating of interactive games, both online and offline. It gives clear advice on content to provide certainty for parents – and the strongest possible protection for children.

PEGI is the gold standard for the age rating of interactive games and it is the only pan-European standard for online gameplay. It is accepted in 29 countries.

Once a game has been rated by PEGI it is passed to the Video Standards Council in the UK which ensures that a game has been correctly classified before then granting a licence for sale in the UK.

## Why was PEGI chosen to rate all games in the UK?

The Government's decision will give PEGI legal force in the UK for all games that are rated 12 and above. This was a key recommendation of the Byron Review in 2007.

Professor Tanya Byron's report recognised that games are increasingly being played online and across international boundaries, so a system that worked both within and beyond the UK was essential.



PEGI is an age rating system designed specifically for games. These are very different from passive entertainment such as films and TV that lead each viewer on identical journeys. In contrast, games can deliver entirely different experiences to players each time they are played.

PEGI is a very robust system. It has rigorous checks and balances on content, with independent experts advising on the ratings. More than that, PEGI is adaptable. It is scalable and so it is the right system for games as it is effectively "future-proof" – no matter what tomorrow's gaming world will deliver.

## What are the PEGI ratings?

The new system will be comprised of three elements:

**age rating roundels** that are the minimum legal age and content suitability for ages 3, 7, 12, 16 and 18.



**game descriptor icons** detail the type of content with icons giving additional advice to support the overall age rating symbol.



**extended written advice** will be added for games released in the UK. These are two examples.

## What will change?

All interactive games in the UK will include the PEGI age rating roundels, which follow the easily understandable "traffic light" system introduced recently for food products. The red, amber and green coding is instantly recognised by children and adults alike.

Games rated either 3 or 7 will carry a green-coloured PEGI rating roundel while those for 12 and 16 year-olds will be amber-coloured. Games rated 18 will be red.



The 12 and above age ratings will be legally enforceable as the minimum age for buying the game. This extends existing protection for children from unsuitable content from the previous "16 and over" law.

The game descriptor icons give detail on content beyond age suitability, offering parents and guardians more control over the type of games they or their children purchase.

In the UK, interactive games will also have supplementary written descriptions.

Additionally, PEGI works online with the same roundels and descriptors. This means that gamers playing in different countries have a common understanding of both the age suitability and content of games they play.

