

Participate in Healthy Online Games and Apps

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Do you find yourself with lots of time to spare? Are you bored when there's nothing to watch on TV? Want something to do in the doctors' waiting room? How about on the L90 to the city? Switch on your computer or take your phone or tablet device with you and you'll never be bored again! Today's session is to help you navigate the mind boggling array of apps that can help you to keep your mind active, your body in shape and your fingers agile. Today is all about healthy online gaming and apps.

NOTE: There is no need to write notes as you will be able to download all the notes complete with useful links from the AvPals website after the end of our course today.

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DISCLAIMER

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How to access the Notes pages for this course:

- Go to the Avalon Computer Pals website, which is www.avpals.com
- Under the banner image are web page headings, go to second last one called "Student Course Notes" and navigate to the "Healthy Online Games and Apps" page.
- Click and you will have the notes. You can print them out, but as there are links to click on, it would probably more useful just to download the document to your PC or device for future reference.

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Here's what we will cover today.

- Why Gaming is Good For You:-
- **Apps for Tablets and Phones:-** We will start with these since they are the ones you are most likely to want to use. We will divide some of the games into Apple products (iPad and iPhone) and Android apps for all non Apple devices.
- **Computer Games:-** This is the where we cover games that you play on a full desktop or laptop computer. These include mind-strengthening games, popular games and community participation games.
- **Gaming Consoles & Specialist Equipment:-** Finally, we will briefly visit specialist equipment like the Nintendo and Wii. We won't go into this too much because most of the games for those devices are designed for children and young people, the reason we mention them at all is just in case you want to join in with the grand children or if you decide you like them enough to get one of your own.
- **Final Point:-** This is a "zero guilt" presentation, and if anyone asks why you are "wasting time" on gaming, just tell them you are strengthening your mind, toning your body and/or keeping your fingers agile. On that note let's PLAY!

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Why Gaming is Good For You:

- **Improves Your Memory and Sustained Attention Skills:-** Cognitive function often becomes impaired or begins to decline as we age, and researchers think it's because the connections between your brain cells are changing. But keeping your mind engaged, stimulated, and active can help improve brain health. Researchers in the USA developed a special 3D race-car video game called NeuroRacer. It tested players' ability to keep an eye out for a specific type of road sign while racing. They found that seniors who played the game for 12 hours over the span of a month, eventually outperformed young adults who played the game for the first time. What's more, the players' newfound skill wasn't lost over time; the seniors were just as good at the game six months later. This suggests that online games can help keep the brain active and improve important cognitive functions – such as memory and the ability to pay attention – for the long term.
- **Reduces Feelings of Depression and Loneliness:-** Older adults can get a mood boost from picking up a device that plays online games, too. A recent study presented at the Gerontological Society of America's Annual Scientific Meeting found that seniors who played Nintendo Wii for an hour a week reported being in a more positive mood and having fewer feelings of loneliness than seniors who watched television for the same amount of time. Another study from the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine concluded that one-third of participants who played an exercise game on the Wii reported a 50 percent or greater reduction in depressive symptoms.
- **Better Balance and Reflexes:-** Although it may seem like more of a muscular or skeletal issue, walking and staying upright is affected by your brain health. Another US study found that seniors who played computer games had better balance and an improved gait than those who did not play. The computer games used in the study focused on improving memory, spatial navigation, and decision-making skills. The older adults who played the brain-training games could stand up and walk faster than the control subjects in the study, which also reduces the likelihood of falling and getting injured.
- **Enhances Vision:-** Despite the commonly-held belief that screens hurt your eyes, computer games and apps might actually improve your vision. A study published in a publication called "Seeing and Perceiving" found that seniors with cataracts who played first-person shooter games such as "Call of Duty" or "Halo" for a month showed signs of improved vision: they could make out small print and recognize faces more easily. First-person shooter games force players to move their eyes quickly to track objects and react to sudden events in the game, and are also believed to increase dopamine and adrenaline, both of which help keep the brain active.
- **Final Point:-** Enough of the science of gaming, I think we've heard all we need in order to justify the time and expense. Now let's find out what to play on which device.

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- **The Games People Play on ALL Devices:-** These are called "cross platform" programs and apps, and that means they can be used on tablets and smart phones of all types. Just use Google to find out which devices you can use to play any particular game. Also, if you have a Netflix account, you also have access to free games to play with your remote on your TV.
- **Minecraft:-** This game is hugely popular among young and old alike. Minecraft is a giant sandbox game where you dig (mine) and build (craft) different kinds of 3D blocks. You can

fight monsters and create your own world. In this world the sun rises and sets as you go about your work, gathering materials and making tools. There is rain and the occasional lightning storm, and animals that you can tame, farm or use for food. Depending on which mode you're playing in, you might also need to fight for your survival against hunger, danger and bad guys. Minecraft has one of the biggest communities of any game, and it has revolutionized the gaming industry. The game comes with a tutorial, and the learning curve is a bit steep, making it one of the most popular indie games of the decade. It can be played on any device that connects to the internet including PC, X-box, PlayStation, Apple and Android products.

- **Draw Something:-** Draw Something should need little introduction, spawning websites dedicated solely to the art created within. It's Pictionary for the 21st century, a parlour game for your palms, and an addictive one at that. With three platforms covered you'll never be short of opponents, just connect your social media accounts and you can battle just about anyone with a modern smartphone. The game shows you a word, for instance 'tree'. You have to draw this word with a stylus pen or your finger on the screen. Your opponent then has to guess the word you are trying to draw. If your opponent guessed it right, you and your opponent then get points.
- **Words With Friends:-** Words with Friends is a multi-player word game. Players take turns building words in crossword puzzle style similar to the classic board game Scrabble. The rules of the two games are similar, but Words with Friends is not officially associated with the Scrabble brand. Up to 30 games can be played simultaneously using push notifications to alert players when it is their turn. Players may look up friends either by username or through Facebook, or be randomly assigned an opponent through "Smart Match". Players can also find potential opponents using Community Match. There is a chat feature built into the game that allows opponents to exchange messages.
- **Final Note:-** Naturally there are many thousands of other games available for all devices, and there are more in the Useful Links section of the notes, but these are three of the very best games because they have consistently won awards for popularity, ease of use, and level of interest (otherwise known as addiction).

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- **Games for PC Computers Only:-** Many people have problems with vision, and find that phones and tablets too small to see properly. For others, a full size PC is what they are used to and they don't want to downsize to a smaller device. This does not in any way limit the gaming possibilities, in fact, games can be bigger, better and more fun on a PC, especially if you get the specialist equipment like a steering wheel for car racing games, or a joystick for most other games. Here are a few tried and tested games that are worth looking into. Of course you can stick to the good old Microsoft card games, but why not venture out into the world of community gaming?
- **World of Warcraft (or WoW):-** This game has been around since the 1990's. WoW is a massively multiplayer online role-playing game. World of Warcraft takes place within the Warcraft world of Azeroth. There is lots of opportunity to strategize and plot as well as build and create. More than 100 million accounts have been created over the game's lifetime so you will never lack someone to play with.
- **Steam:-** This is a multi-player platform developed by Valve Corporation. It is used to distribute games online. Steam provides the user with installation access and automatic

management of software across multiple computers. Community features such as friends' lists and groups and in-game voice and chat functionality are included.

- **Brain HQ:-** Using your brain's ability to change for the better. BrainHQ exercises are based on the science of "neuroplasticity," also called "brain plasticity". Brain plasticity is your brain's natural ability to remodel itself throughout life. (and of course you can have fun playing the game while getting smarter all the time. The other benefit is that it can actually improve your vision.
- **Final Point:-** There are thousands of ways to keep yourself busy learning, reacting, participating and interacting with people you didn't know even existed. So if your social life in the outside world is a little short of your needs, be brave and explore the online world instead.

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- INTERMISSION

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- **Games People Play on Android Devices:-** There are lots of Android games recommended for seniors in the notes pages of this presentation, but we have picked three of the most popular apps that you can play with other people around the world. You can play with your friends via Bluetooth/Wifi, you can play on one single device, and you can even play with people on other platforms like iPad and Windows Phones.
- **8 Ball Pool (Free):-** If you are not into violence and shooting then this cool and calm game is for you. 8 Ball Pool is one of the most popular games available on Android, Facebook, and multiple other platforms. It lets you play online with other players on the Internet. If you are already skilled at pool then you can try your hand as a multiplayer to see how good you actually are at 8 Ball Pool when playing against the world.
- **Virtual Tennis Challenge (Paid \$4.99):-** Connect your Android to a friend's android via Bluetooth and start an exciting game of tennis with Virtua Tennis Challenge. This game is one of the best tennis games available for Android. You can play the official rules of tennis against your friends. You don't even need a court or a ball because both of you can just use your devices to finally settle the score with each other. You can play on different court settings, adjust your shots with different variety, and also partner up with other players to play a 2v2 to make things more exciting and competitive.
- **Uno and Friends (Free):-** The classic card game Uno comes to a whole new level on the Android platform. Uno & Friends takes the whole process of buying cards, getting friends together out of the equation because now you can play this amazing card game with all your Facebook friends. The rules are still the same but you can also try other modes for something more unique and challenging. You can participate in tournaments or just go all out against your Facebook friends in a classic Uno match, it's all up to you.
- **Final Point:-** So, as you can see, you can set your fantasies free and become whomever you want to be with the help of healthy online gaming.

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- **Games People Play on Apple Devices:-** Apple devices include iPad and iPhone and because Apple created the first App store, you will find that there are many and varied excellent

games for this platform. We have selected only three for this presentation because we don't want to overwhelm you, but once again, there are more suggestions in the notes.

- **Monopoly HD:-** A multiplayer game where you play with other people in the same room as you! You play Monopoly HD for the iPad with your friends on a single device and with the new TableTop mode, it looks similar to playing with a real board on the table with a top-down view. However, there is no online mode, but why would you play Monopoly online anyway.
- **Order & Chaos Online:-** Order & Chaos Online is the mobile version's take on World of Warcraft. It is the most complete online role-playing video game in which a very large number of people participate simultaneously available on an Apple Device. There are multiple levels to pass up through on your various quests. Really one of the best game for portable devices.
- **Pocket Legends:-** Join millions of users from all over the globe on adventures in creepy dungeons, frigid mountain peaks, and steamy swamps. The online mode allows you to play with your friends either in fast paced co-op, or player versus player action. Together, you will defeat enemies and bring justice to the land, while levelling up to unlock special abilities to become stronger and be able to customize your own character.
- **Final Point:-** We have tried to keep away from the violent games in this presentation, but if you enjoy a digital shoot-em-up, there are any number of them available right there in the device in the palm of your hand. Become a legend in your own lounge room and give gaming a go.

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- **Games People Play on Other Devices:-** Here we are going to briefly discuss other devices on which to play games:
- **PS (Play Station):-** If you have grandchildren you probably already know this one. For those that don't know, the PlayStation is one of the most popular video game systems of all time, with millions of users around the world. The initial costs are around \$300-\$400, and then games on top of that. Games cost around \$40.00 each. Now THERE's something your offspring would like to inherit from you!
- **X-Box:-** This is a video gaming brand created and owned by Microsoft. The cost is approximately \$400, and games retail from \$20 to \$50 depending on levels of complexity.
- **Wii:-** The Wii (pronounced WEE) is a home video game console released by Nintendo in 2006. It covers a larger demographic than the others due to the sporting and exercise elements of the device. The cost of a console is dependent on how you want to play, but ranges from \$40 for a USB to put in your TV set to \$140 for an independent console. Games are sports oriented and designed to get you moving around playing tennis, golf and other games.
- **Fitbit:-** Worn on your wrist, this device is much more than a watch. Apart from monitoring your activity, exercise, food, weight and sleep, you can also play games on it. The costs start at about \$90 and go up to \$300 depending on the model you choose. They don't have many games yet, but designers are working on them so the range should increase.
- **Apple Watch:-** Another smart device, the Apple Watch can do almost as much as the iPhone and iPad. These wearable technologies will continue to grow. Costs range from \$90 to \$600 and there is a wide variety of games available, mostly sports related.
- **VR (Virtual Reality) interactive devices:-** VR headsets like Oculus Rift and PlayStation VR are often referred to as HMDs, which simply means they are head mounted displays. Even with

no audio or hand tracking, holding up Google Cardboard to place your smartphone's display in front of your face can be enough to get you half-immersed in a virtual world.

Useful Links and apps

- How to Play Minecraft (with Pictures) <http://www.wikihow.com/Play-Minecraft>
- Link to show what people are creating with Draw Something [websites dedicated solely to the art created within](#)
- How to play Words With Friends:
http://www.zyngawithfriends.com/wordswithfriends/support/WWF_How_To_Play.html
- Hundreds of **other games for PC** available here: <http://store.steampowered.com/>
- **PC Game** World of Warcraft how to play manual <https://worldofwarcraft.com/en-us/game/new-players-guide>
- These games are available free or to buy on the App Store. They are suitable for older adults to play on **iPad and iPhone**: (Some of the games have demo's)
- Link to top rated games for iPad and iPhone <https://rumorscity.com/2014/08/08/the-25-best-multiplayer-games-for-iphone-and-ipad/>
- **Clevermind (iPad) – Free.** This is a great app to help people dealing with cognitive impairments that come with problems associated with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. From quizzes and games, to big buttons, voice command controls and a calendar interface.
- **Lumosity (iPhone) – Free.** Keep your mind sharp with some of the best mind games around, designed by neuroscientists working to enhance memory, attention and other skills.
- **Spelltower**
- **New World Colony**
- **Scrabble**
- **Words with Friends HD**
- **Cut the Rope HD**
- **Great Little War Game**
- **Angry Birds**
- **Bejeweled**
- **Bird Zapper**
- **Cut the Rope**
- **Cross Fingers**
- **Disc Drivin'**
- **Fruit Ninja**
- **Unblock Me**
- **Let's Create Pottery**
- **Marble Madness**
- **Slice It**

Useful games older adults on **Android** devices:

- **Best Android Games:** <https://beebom.com/multiplayer-games-android/>
- **More Android games:-**
- **Bubble Pop.** Well designed easy game especially for adults, you can play this naughty game with no cost, all game options are free.

- **Block Puzzle.** Block Puzzle is a unique version of one of the most known puzzle games of all times. The pieces are issued at the start and you have put them into their places correctly.
- **Circle the Dot.** Circle the Dot is a simple game with very simple rules. The goal is surrounding the blue circle with orange dots. But it's not as easy as it seems.
- **Ultraflow.** ULTRAFLOW is a minimalist, easy but challenging puzzle game testing your agility. Enjoy simple design and comforting colours without worrying about score or timer.
- **2 Cars.** Control 2 differently coloured cars at the same time and collect circles while avoiding squares.
- **Bubble Poke.** A simple game for beginners, you just need to choose similar coloured bubbles from android tablet/phone screen.
- **Sudoku Master.** Sudoku is a worldwide number placement puzzle game for adults. You will enjoy playing Sudoku Master with beautiful graphics on your Android device.
- **2048.** 2048 is a very simple and addictive puzzle game. Swipe and move the tiles, join the same numbers together and get to the 2048 tile.
- **Rolling Balls.** Rolling Balls is a good game to spend time when you have nothing else to do. This game with the balls will increase your skills in performing tasks with your fingers.
- **Pool Billiards Pro.** Pool Billiards Pro is the number one pool game in android markets. With 3D animation, selectable game modes and simple controls, enjoy your free time with a good pool game.
- **Stick Hero.** Stick Hero is an android game based upon distance guessing. In the game, players control a character that has to cross over a stick in order to keep moving on.
- **Hearts Free.** Hearts Free brings the joy of famous and classic 4 player card game to your android phones and tablets. Play your favourite card game with high quality graphics and adjustable settings.
- **Dots.** Dots is an exciting and addictive android game based on connecting same coloured dots. Easily connect the dots while enjoying yourself with minimalistic design and comforting music.
- **2Fuse.** 2Fuse is a quick, simple and colourful puzzle game to draw players away from reality for just a few minutes.
- **Colour Zen.** Colour Zen is a different kind of game, which aims to relax you by inviting you to put your headphones and dive into the wonderful world of colours and sounds.
- **1010!** 1010! is a simple, fun and hard-to-put-down puzzle game based on placing different coloured pieces strategically.
- **Unblock Me.** A simple and addictive puzzle game for android mobile and tablet game players.
- **101-in-1 Games.** A collection of 142 games in only 1 app. Featuring a vast variety of game types, 101-in-1 is designed for every player to find what they are looking for.
- **3D Bowling.** The most realistic android 3D bowling game in google play store. Almost best android bowling game if you like to have fun on playing bowling.