



PRIMER ON ESPORTS AND GAMBLING: 2023

SCCG Research Product #5
August 3, 2023

This report provides an overview of the esports and esports betting industry, examining its unique dynamics and growth prospects. Esports has evolved from a niche hobby into a professionalized industry, attracting significant betting attention. Unlike traditional sports, esports betting is influenced by unique factors such as game patches and player streams. The report investigates the roles of streaming platforms like Twitch and YouTube in promoting esports and managing betting-related content. It also addresses issues like game balance, player behavior, and controversies around loot boxes, underscoring the need for robust regulation and consumer protection. Looking forward, the esports betting industry is set to continue its rapid expansion, driven by the increasing popularity of esports, technological advancements, and the integration of betting into the esports ecosystem. The report concludes that understanding these dynamics, proactive regulation and commitment to fair play are crucial for navigating this exciting and evolving industry.

ESPORTS: AN OVERVIEW	4
INTRODUCTION TO ESPORTS BETTING	4
HOW ESPORTS BETTING DIFFERS FROM TRADITIONAL SPORTS BETTING	5
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TRADITIONAL SPORTS BETTING AND ESPORTS BETTING	6
EXPLANATION OF THE 'META' AND ITS IMPACT ON BETTING	6
EXAMPLES OF SEISMIC GAMEPLAY CHANGES AND GAME UPDATES	6
<i>Overwatch's Role Queue Release (2019)</i>	6
<i>Fortnite's "The End" Event (2019)</i>	7
<i>Star Wars Battlefront II's Loot Boxes (2017)</i>	7
<i>Dota 2's 7.00 Update (2016)</i>	8
<i>Counter-Strike: Global Offensive's R8 Revolver (2015)</i>	9
AVAILABILITY OF IN-GAME DATA	9
MAJOR ESPORTS GENRES, GAME TITLES, AND EVENTS	10
FIRST PERSON SHOOTERS (FPS)	10
<i>Apex Legends</i>	11
<i>Call of Duty (CoD)</i>	11
<i>Counter-Strike: Global Offensive (CS:GO)</i>	13
<i>Overwatch</i>	14
MULTIPLAYER ONLINE BATTLE ARENA GAMES (MOBA)	15
<i>Dota 2</i>	15
<i>League of Legends (LoL)</i>	16
ESPORTS VERSIONS OF TRADITIONAL SPORTS	18
<i>FIFA (EA Sports series)</i>	18
<i>Madden NFL (EA Sports series)</i>	19
<i>Rocket League</i>	20
<i>NBA 2K (2K Sports series)</i>	20
BATTLE ROYALE TITLES (BR)	21
<i>Fortnite</i>	22
<i>PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds (PUBG)</i>	23
<i>Rainbow Six Siege</i>	24
<i>Valorant</i>	24
ONLINE COLLECTIBLE CARD GAMES (OCCG)	25
<i>Hearthstone</i>	26
REAL-TIME STRATEGY GAMES	26
<i>StarCraft II</i>	27
FIGHTING GAMES	28
<i>Street Fighter</i>	28
<i>Tekken</i>	28
MASSIVELY MULTIPLAYER ONLINE ROLE-PLAYING GAMES	29
<i>World of Warcraft (WoW)</i>	29
THE IMPACT OF STREAMING PLATFORMS ON ESPORTS BETTING	30
<i>Meta</i>	31
<i>Twitch</i>	32
<i>TikTok</i>	32
<i>X (Formerly Twitter)</i>	33
<i>Google</i>	33
THE WRAP-UP, AKA, TL;DR	34
ESPORTS BETTING GLOSSARY	35

Esports: An Overview

Esports, short for electronic sports, is a form of competition that utilizes video games. It has evolved from a niche hobby into a professionalized industry over the past two decades, featuring organized, multiplayer video game competitions among professional players and teams. These competitions often occur in grand tournament settings that draw in-person spectators and large online audiences streaming the events in real-time.

The competitive video games that form the backbone of esports can be from various genres. The most popular include multiplayer online battle arenas (MOBAs) such as Dota 2 and League of Legends (LoL), first-person shooters (FPS) like Counter-Strike: Global Offensive (CS:GO) and Call of Duty (CoD), and battle royale games such as Fortnite and PUBG. Real-time strategy games like StarCraft, and sports games like FIFA and Madden NFL, also have substantial followings.

Esports players are often members of professional teams, similar to traditional sports teams, and these teams are typically organized under leagues. Some of these leagues are game-specific, while others feature multiple games. Notable esports organizations include the ESL, the League of Legends Championship Series (LCS), and the Overwatch League.

As esports has grown, so too has its audience. Global esports viewership is in the hundreds of millions, with viewers tuning in to watch live events and recorded gameplay. This growth has been facilitated by the rise of streaming platforms like Twitch and YouTube Gaming, which allow fans to watch their favorite players and teams from anywhere in the world.

The esports industry has also attracted significant investment, with revenue sources that include sponsorships, advertising, ticket sales, merchandising, and media rights. Top esports players can earn substantial prize money from tournament wins, and many also earn income through sponsorships and streaming.

From humble beginnings, esports has become a global phenomenon, influencing gaming culture, media, technology, and entertainment. Its intersection with other industries, such as fashion and music, has further solidified its cultural relevance. As it grows and evolves, esports is expected to play an increasingly prominent role in the global entertainment landscape.

Introduction to esports betting

Esports betting, a natural offshoot of the booming esports industry, allows fans and enthusiasts to place wagers on the outcomes of competitive video game matches, tournaments, and specific in-game events. Much like traditional sports betting, it involves predicting outcomes and placing bets accordingly, but with the twist of dealing with virtual competitions rather than physical ones.

The rise of esports betting has mirrored the exponential growth of the esports industry itself. As viewership numbers for major esports events have surged into the hundreds of millions, betting

platforms have taken notice. This convergence of gaming and gambling has resulted in a robust market for esports betting, with millions of dollars wagered on matches and tournaments every year.

The mechanics of esports betting often mirror traditional sports betting, with options to bet on match winners, tournament winners, handicaps, and more. However, the nature of video games also introduces unique betting markets. For instance, punters can bet on specific in-game events, such as the first kill in a first-person shooter game or the first team to destroy an objective in a multiplayer online battle arena game.

Just as in traditional sports betting, knowledge and understanding of the game, the teams, and the players are crucial in esports betting. However, esports also introduces new factors to consider, such as game updates and patches, which can significantly alter the competition dynamics and, consequently, the betting odds.

Esports betting is facilitated by numerous online platforms that provide markets for various esports titles, including League of Legends, Dota 2, CS:GO, and more. These platforms offer live betting options, allowing bettors to place wagers while matches progress.

However, the rapid growth of esports betting also brings challenges. It has raised questions about the need for robust regulation, the prevention of underage gambling, and the integrity of esports competitions. As the industry continues to evolve, these issues are increasingly scrutinized.

Esports betting represents an exciting new frontier in the gambling industry, offering unique opportunities and challenges. As the esports industry continues its meteoric rise, esports betting is set to grow alongside it, revolutionizing the world of sports betting as we know it.

How esports betting differs from traditional sports betting

While sharing the foundational principles with traditional sports betting, the world of esports betting introduces unique elements of interest to its sharps. Among these, seismic gameplay changes sometimes introduced by game updates, the diversity of esports titles, the volume of available in-game data, and the understanding of 'game meta' collectively shape the betting experience.

While eSports betting shares its fundamentals with traditional sports betting, it offers a unique and thrilling experience filled with fresh dynamics, challenges, and opportunities. Like sharps in a conventional sports betting environment, smart esports bettors need a slightly different focus -- a vigilant awareness of the dynamic changes within games, their player rosters, and literal game-changing software patches that can alter mechanics and the entire meta -- to navigate and conquer this evolving digital world.

Differences between traditional sports betting and esports betting

The diversity of eSports titles adds another layer of complexity. The factors determining the outcome in a team-based strategy game like "Dota 2" are worlds apart from those in a one-on-one fighting game like "Street Fighter." This variability brings a fairly exciting level of unpredictability and demands different considerations when placing bets.

Explanation of the 'meta' and its impact on betting

The 'meta,' short for metagame, refers to the optimal strategies and character choices players use in a game at a given time. This 'meta' constantly evolves, impacted by game updates, player innovations, and shifting competitive environments. The meta dictates the 'best' way to play a game to win, shaping the tactics and team compositions that professional players use in eSports competitions.

For example, a particular character might become powerful due to a game update, and professional teams adapt by including that character in their strategy—this change impacts the meta. As a bettor, understanding the current meta of an eSport is crucial. It can provide insights into potential match outcomes, player performances, and even how a game might unfold, which is especially relevant for in-play betting.

Examples of seismic gameplay changes and game updates

Overwatch's Role Queue Release (2019)

Before the introduction of the Role Queue, Overwatch players could select any hero at any time, leading to team compositions that often needed more balance. For instance, some teams would consist entirely of damage-dealing characters with no one playing as a healer or tank. This was particularly notorious in the "GOATS" meta, where teams often chose three tanks and three support heroes, leading to long, drawn-out battles that many players and spectators found uninteresting.

In response to community feedback, Blizzard Entertainment, the developer of Overwatch, introduced the Role Queue system in July 2019. Under this system, players must play as a damage-dealing, tank, or support hero before entering a match. The game then ensures that each team has two of each type, promoting a more balanced team composition.

The introduction of the Role Queue system was generally well-received by the Overwatch community. Players appreciated that it led to more balanced and strategic matches. It also improved the game from a spectator's perspective, making professional Overwatch matches more diverse and exciting.

Of course, you can't please everyone. The Role Queue system had its detractors. Some players felt it could have improved their flexibility to choose heroes and adapt to the game's flow. But

overall, the change was seen as a positive step towards enhancing Overwatch's competitive balance and spectator experience.

Fortnite's "The End" Event (2019)

Fortnite's "The End" event in October 2019 marked the conclusion of the game's Season X, and it is one of the most notable events in the game's history due to its dramatic nature and the significant changes it brought to the game.

"The End" event started with a countdown timer reaching zero, at which point a rocket in the game launched into the sky. This was followed by multiple rockets appearing from rifts, eventually causing a meteor (which had been looming in the game for the entire season) to crash into the island, the game's map. This led to a black hole engulfing everything, resulting in the whole game being sucked in. At that moment, the players in the game could only watch as their characters and the entire map got sucked into the black hole.

Following the event, Fortnite was effectively shut down for around 36 hours. A black screen greeted players who tried to log in with a small black hole in the center of the UI, and they could not play the game. This led to intense speculation and anticipation in the Fortnite community and beyond, as no one was sure what would happen next.

The event culminated in the launch of Fortnite Chapter 2. When the game returned, it introduced a new island map with 13 new locations and several new gameplay features like fishing, swimming, and the ability to carry downed players. The user interface and game mechanics were also updated, introducing new ways to level up and earn experience.

"The End" event and the launch of Fortnite Chapter 2 received mixed reactions from the community. While some players appreciated the fresh experience and new features, others were frustrated by the dramatic changes and the downtime during which they could not play. Nonetheless, the event was a significant moment in gaming, demonstrating Fortnite's influence and the potential for games to create large-scale shared experiences.

Star Wars Battlefront II's Loot Boxes (2017)

Upon release, Star Wars Battlefront II was heavily criticized for its "pay-to-win" mechanics. The game's loot boxes, which could be purchased with real money, gave players randomized in-game items, some of which directly improved gameplay performance. This led to widespread backlash, with players arguing it created an unfair playing field in favor of those who spent more money. Although not a traditional esports title, this example significantly impacted the gaming industry's approach to monetization and player progression systems.

The backlash against Battlefront II's loot boxes was so severe that it caught the attention of lawmakers worldwide, leading to scrutiny and potential legislative action against such practices.

- Belgium and the Netherlands declared loot boxes a form of gambling and, therefore, illegal under their existing gambling laws. In 2018, the Belgian Gaming Commission

determined that loot boxes in several games, including Battlefront II, violated the country's gambling laws. As a result, game developers were forced to modify or turn off features in their games for players in these regions.

- Several United States lawmakers expressed concerns about loot boxes following the Battlefront II controversy. For example, Senator Josh Hawley introduced a bill in 2019 to ban the sale of loot boxes to minors, citing their similarity to gambling. The bill, S.1629, was referred to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, but further action has yet to be taken on it to date.
- In the United Kingdom, the House of Lords Gambling Committee called for the immediate regulation of loot boxes as gambling in a 2020 report.
- In January 2023, the EU adopted a report that (1) there was a need for member states to coordinate approaches to avoid the fragmentation of consumer protection laws within the single market, (2) consider the protection of minors and children particularly at risk, and (3) use industry-led initiatives such as the Pan-European Game Information game content rating system to inform parents about game information before making a purchase.

The Battlefront II loot box controversy has had a lasting impact on the gaming industry. It led to increased scrutiny of video game monetization practices, particularly those resembling gambling. In response to the controversy and potential legislative action, many game developers have altered their approach to loot boxes by disclosing odds or removing gameplay-related items.

[Dota 2's 7.00 Update \(2016\)](#)

The Dota 2's 7.00 update, released in December 2016, marked a significant shift in the game's mechanics and was one of the most impactful patches in the game's history. It introduced several new features, changed existing ones, and profoundly affected the meta.

Significant elements of the Dota 2 7.0 Update:

- Monkey King was the first hero to be added to Dota 2 that was not in the original Defense of the Ancients (DotA) mod. This new hero introduced unique mechanics, such as the ability to climb trees and disguise himself as various objects on the map.
- The user interface was overhauled to provide more information while taking up less screen space. This included a repositioned mini-map, redesigned top bar, a new hero control console, and a simplified shop interface.
- A pre-game phase was added, during which players could plan their lanes, pick their heroes in a new selection screen, and strategize with their team.
- The most significant change was the introduction of talent trees. Upon reaching certain levels, players could choose one of two unique bonuses for their heroes. These replaced

the old attribute bonus system, drastically changing hero progression and making each match more unique.

- The Dota 2 map was reworked, with changes to the layout of the jungle, the position of Roshan (a neutral boss character), and the addition of new types of runes.
- The update removed the ability for players to add +20 stats after maxing out their abilities, which was a significant change in the game's leveling system.
- The 7.00 update was met with mixed reactions from the community. Some players welcomed the changes as refreshing and exciting, while others were more resistant, feeling that the update altered the core gameplay too dramatically. The introduction of talent trees was particularly controversial, as it represented a significant departure from the game's previous leveling system. Despite initial resistance, many players adapted to these changes over time, and they have become integral parts of Dota 2's gameplay.

Counter-Strike: Global Offensive's R8 Revolver (2015)

When the R8 Revolver was introduced to Counter-Strike: Global Offensive (CS:GO) in December 2015 as part of the "Winter Update," it caused a significant disruption in the game's balance and competitive meta.

The R8 Revolver was a powerful weapon with a high accuracy rate and damage output, rivaling the AWP's high-powered sniper rifle. Moreover, the R8 Revolver was significantly cheaper to purchase in-game, making it an economically viable choice in most rounds. Its high damage output meant it could kill armored enemies with a single shot to the chest, a feat no other pistol in the game could achieve.

This led to an immediate outcry from the community, as the weapon was seen as overpowered and disruptive to the game's balance. The R8 Revolver was dubbed the "Pocket AWP" due to its high damage and accuracy. Its introduction was seen as detrimental to the game's competitive integrity, as it minimized the importance of strategic economic management, one of the critical elements of CS:GO's gameplay.

In response to the community backlash, Valve, the developer of CS:GO, acted swiftly. The weapon was significantly nerfed just three days after the introduction of the R8 Revolver. Its damage was reduced, its rate of fire was slowed, and its accuracy while moving was decreased. This made the weapon far less dominant and helped restore the game's balance.

Availability of in-game data

Furthermore, the availability of in-game data can significantly influence betting, particularly for 'In-Play' betting. In eSports, live betting is amplified by the richness of measurable in-game events. However, the availability and quality of this data depend significantly on the game publisher and the accessibility of their game data and APIs.

For example, Riot Games, the publisher of "League of Legends" (LoL), provides a robust API with considerable game data. This data includes real-time information like player kills, team

objectives secured, gold earned, and more. The value of their API is so well and widely regarded that technical writers interested in esports publish and collaborate on the best ways to leverage the API in statistical performance analysis for esports writers and shoutcasters. Bookmakers also leverage these extensive data sets to create strong models supporting various live betting options, enhancing the dynamic betting experience.

On the other hand, many publishers still offer limited access to real-time game data. This restriction can limit the possibilities for live betting, as bookmakers need more real-time information to set dynamic odds. Thus, bettors might find fewer options for in-play betting in such games.

In some cases, third-party organizations step in to fill the data gap. For instance, in "Counter-Strike: Global Offensive" (CS:GO), platforms like HLTV provide extensive match statistics, offering more data for bookmakers and bettors. The availability of such data enriches live betting opportunities, allowing for a wide variety of bets based on in-game events.

The STRATZ website is another example, where their publishers are trying to "...build the future of esports analytics." parse and store data from every Dota2 public match -- over 3.2 billion matches and 83 million player profiles parsed.

Major Esports Genres, Game Titles, and Events

First Person Shooters (FPS)

First Person Shooters (FPS) represent a dominant genre in esports, captivating players and spectators alike with their adrenaline-fueled action and intense gameplay. In FPS games, players assume the role of a protagonist, experiencing the game world through a first-person perspective. This immersive viewpoint enables players to wield various weapons, engage in combat, and navigate complex environments in real time.

The core mechanics of FPS titles revolve around accurate shooting, precise aiming, and strategic decision-making. Players must exhibit swift reflexes and adaptability to outmaneuver opponents while collaborating effectively with teammates to achieve victory.

The competitive nature of FPS esports is evident in tournaments, leagues, and community-driven events held worldwide. Esports organizations invest in professional teams, and top players attain celebrity status in the gaming community. Esports enthusiasts closely follow matches often live-streamed on popular platforms, elevating the genre's viewership to new heights.

FPS esports titles have evolved considerably, with developers constantly refining gameplay mechanics, introducing new maps, and offering post-launch content to maintain player engagement. Many FPS games now incorporate diverse characters or loadouts, adding an element of customization and strategic variety to the gameplay.

Apex Legends

Apex Legends, developed by Respawn Entertainment and published by Electronic Arts, is a prominent first-person shooter (FPS) battle royale game in professional esports. Released in February 2019, the game swiftly gained popularity, captivating players and spectators in the competitive gaming community.

In Apex Legends, players are organized into squads of three, known as "Legends," and dropped onto a vast map to engage in high-octane battles. Each Legend possesses unique abilities, ranging from offensive to defensive and supportive, adding strategic depth to gameplay. The primary objective is for squads to outlast and outplay their opponents until only one team remains, securing victory.

The dynamic movement mechanics and parkour-inspired elements contribute to its fast-paced and exhilarating gameplay, making it a captivating spectacle for players and viewers. As a result, Apex Legends has cultivated a thriving esports scene, drawing interest from prominent esports organizations and players worldwide.

Respawn Entertainment and Electronic Arts actively support the professional competitive scene, organizing official tournaments and leagues to nurture talent and promote community engagement. Esports events for Apex Legends are broadcasted on popular streaming platforms, garnering substantial viewership and audience engagement.

The Apex Legends Global Series (ALGS) is the official esports circuit for Apex Legends, organized and sponsored by Respawn Entertainment and Electronic Arts. The ALGS features a series of competitive events, including online tournaments and live LAN (Local Area Network) events that bring together top teams worldwide to battle it out in the battle royale arena, with a USD 5,000,000 total prize pool, culminating in the ALGS Championship.

The ALGS provides a platform for professional players to showcase their skills, strategic prowess, and teamwork as they compete for significant cash prizes and global recognition. The tournaments follow a points-based system, where teams earn points based on their performance in various matches and events throughout the season. At the end of each season, the top teams from different regions qualify for the Apex Legends Global Series Championship, the pinnacle of competitive play in Apex Legends esports.

Call of Duty (CoD)

Call of Duty (CoD) is an iconic and influential first-person shooter (FPS) video game franchise that has become a significant player in esports. Developed by Infinity Ward and published by Activision, the franchise's first installment was released in 2003. Over the years, Call of Duty has seen multiple iterations, each introducing unique settings, narratives, and gameplay mechanics. The series' emphasis on fast-paced action, immersive storytelling, and engaging multiplayer modes has garnered a massive global fan base, solidifying its position as a central pillar in the esports landscape.

Call of Duty has emerged as a significant title in esports, with competitive gaming events organized by Activision's Call of Duty League (CDL). Launched in 2020, the CDL operates on a franchised team model, with teams representing various cities and regions. This approach has brought a professional structure to the scene, attracting top-tier esports organizations and players to compete at the highest level. The league's regular season culminates in playoffs and a championship event, providing compelling and highly anticipated competitions for players and fans.

Call of Duty's strategic depth and dynamic gameplay make it an engaging spectacle for spectators, drawing substantial viewership for tournaments and events. Professional players showcase their skills across various game modes, such as Hardpoint, Search and Destroy, and Control, requiring adaptable tactics and teamwork to secure victory. With its captivating single-player campaigns, co-operative modes, and popular battle royale mode titled "Warzone," Call of Duty offers diverse opportunities for players and fans to immerse themselves in the franchise's action-packed universe and witness thrilling esports competitions.

The Call of Duty League (CDL) is the official esports league for the Call of Duty franchise, organized and operated by Activision Blizzard. Launched in 2020, the CDL marks a significant shift in the structure of Call of Duty esports, transitioning from an open tournament format to a city-based franchise system.

The CDL follows a franchised model, with 12 city-based teams representing major cities across North America and Europe. Each team is owned and operated by various esports organizations and traditional sports franchises, providing a localized and region-specific approach to the competition.

The league's regular season consists of multiple "Home Series" events, where teams compete against each other in matches featuring various game modes and maps from the current Call of Duty title. These events occur in different cities, allowing fans to experience live esports action in their hometowns.

The CDL culminates in the Call of Duty League Championship ("Champs"), an annual tournament where the top teams compete for the coveted title and a significant prize pool. The most recent championship, ending on June 18, 2023, was held in Las Vegas, NV, USA, with the first place team, the "New York Subliners," taking home a USD 1,000,000 of the USD 2,380,000 prize pool. The league features some of the world's most skilled players, with rosters comprising talented individuals known for their strategic acumen, precise gunplay, and teamwork.

CDL events are professionally produced, featuring high-quality broadcasting, expert analysis, and engaging commentary to enhance the viewer experience. The league's city-based approach and franchised model have added a new level of excitement and competitiveness to the Call of Duty esports scene, further solidifying its position as one of the premier titles in professional gaming.

Counter-Strike: Global Offensive (CS:GO)

Counter-Strike: Global Offensive (CS:GO) is a critically acclaimed and enduring esports title that has left an indelible mark on the gaming industry since its launch in 2012. Developed by Valve Corporation, CS:GO is a tactical first-person shooter that places players into teams of terrorists and counter-terrorists, engaging in thrilling 5v5 matches. The game's core mechanics revolve around strategic gameplay, precise gunplay, and teamwork, making it accessible to newcomers and deeply rewarding for skilled players.

CS:GO has risen to prominence as an esports title, boasting a thriving competitive scene with many tournaments and leagues. Its community-driven events, alongside Valve-sponsored Majors, attract top-tier talent and passionate participation from esports organizations worldwide. With consistent developer support and frequent updates, CS:GO continues to evolve, keeping the game fresh and engaging for its dedicated fanbase.

CS:GO's enduring popularity is attributed to its competitive integrity, balanced gameplay, and spectator appeal. Its accessible nature and strategic depth make it a captivating choice for players and spectators seeking adrenaline-pumping action and high-stakes competition in the dynamic world of esports. As one of the foundational pillars of professional gaming, CS:GO's legacy in the esports realm remains as strong as ever, securing its place as a timeless classic in the gaming community.

CS:GO (Counter-Strike: Global Offensive) esports competitions are at the forefront of the competitive gaming landscape, drawing a massive and dedicated global audience. Organized by various tournament organizers, leagues, and game developers, these events showcase the skills and teamwork of professional players in the tactical first-person shooter.

CS:GO esports competitions feature a 5v5 format, with teams competing on various maps in intense rounds of bomb defusals or hostage rescues. The game's competitive structure includes both online qualifiers and LAN (Local Area Network) events, with LAN events being viral due to the electrifying atmosphere and live audience engagement.

The Major Championships, sponsored by the game's developer, Valve Corporation, are among the most prestigious events in CS:GO esports. These Major tournaments feature top teams worldwide competing for substantial prize pools and the title of Major Champion.

With its established legacy and thriving competitive ecosystem, CS:GO has become a staple in the esports industry. The game's high skill ceiling, deep strategic gameplay, and passionate community have solidified it as one of the most-watched and celebrated esports titles.

Team Vitality won their first Major at the BLAST.tv Paris Major 2023 from a field of twenty-four teams who qualified for the event.

Overwatch

Overwatch, a team-based first-person shooter (FPS) developed and published by Blizzard Entertainment, is a prominent title in esports. Released in 2016, the game quickly gained popularity for its vibrant and diverse cast of heroes, each possessing unique abilities and playstyles. Overwatch's gameplay revolves around two teams of six players, each selecting heroes from categories such as tanks, damage, and support. The objective varies between maps and game modes, encompassing payload escort, control point capture, and hybrid combinations, ensuring varied and engaging gameplay experiences.

The game's emphasis on team coordination, communication, and strategic thinking has propelled it into competitive esports. Blizzard's Overwatch League (OWL) is a premier professional esports league featuring teams representing major cities across the globe. The league provides a structured and high-profile platform for talented players to showcase their skills and compete at the highest level. Additionally, the Overwatch Contenders and Open Division offer opportunities for aspiring players to work their way up the ranks and catch the attention of established organizations.

Overwatch's success as an esports title can be attributed to its captivating spectator experience. The vibrant visuals, well-designed maps, and dynamic gameplay create exciting and easily accessible viewing. Broadcasts of competitive matches feature expert analysis, detailed player perspectives, and engaging commentary, enhancing the overall experience for fans and newcomers alike. With continued developer support, regular updates, and an enthusiastic player community, Overwatch remains a force to be reckoned with in the fast-growing world of esports.

The Overwatch League (OWL) has quickly become one of the premier esports competitions, featuring teams from all over the world and attracting a massive global audience. The league follows a city-based franchise model, with teams representing major cities across Asia, Europe, and North America. Each franchise is owned and operated by various esports organizations, traditional sports teams, and business entities, contributing to the league's global appeal and competitive diversity.

The OWL's regular season is divided into four stages, each with multiple team matches. These matches occur in front of live audiences at homestand events, allowing fans to experience live esports action in different cities.

The season concludes with the Overwatch League Playoffs and the Grand Finals, where the top teams compete for the championship title and a substantial prize pool. The league features some of the world's most talented players, known for their exceptional hero skills, coordination, and strategic gameplay.

The professional esports league for the video game Overwatch 2, known as the Overwatch League (OWL), embarked on its sixth season in 2023. The competing teams were divided between the East and West regions, and the season kicked off with a preseason pro-am

tournament in the West, which saw Overwatch Contenders teams battling it out with Overwatch League teams. Meanwhile, Contenders teams joined the regular season in the East region, competing alongside long-standing Overwatch League teams. The regular season was bifurcated into Spring and Summer stages. The Spring stage started on April 27 and wrapped up with the Midseason Madness, a cross-regional midseason contest hosted in Seoul, South Korea. The Summer stage will culminate with play-ins, season playoffs, and the Grand Finals, set to be held at the Mattamy Athletic Centre in Toronto, Canada.

The Overwatch League has become synonymous with high production values, engaging broadcasting, and passionate fandom, contributing to its success in esports. With its strong developer support and a devoted player and viewer base, the OWL continues to grow as a critical player in the global esports landscape.

Multiplayer Online Battle Arena Games (MOBA)

Multiplayer Online Battle Arena Games (MOBA) form a prominent genre within the esports landscape, captivating players and spectators alike. MOBAs are team-based games, typically featuring two teams of players, each controlling unique characters with distinct abilities and roles. The objective of MOBAs is to destroy the opponent's main structure or base while defending one's own. Teams must strategize, communicate, and coordinate effectively to secure victory.

MOBAs blend real-time strategy (RTS) elements and action games, emphasizing tactical decision-making, map control, and hero-specific plays. Players must choose from an extensive roster of heroes or champions, each offering different playstyles, strengths, and weaknesses. The diversity of characters contributes to dynamic and engaging gameplay, requiring adaptability and a deep understanding of the game's mechanics.

Esports competitions for MOBAs have flourished, drawing massive audiences and substantial prize pools. Tournaments are frequently held, ranging from small community-driven events to large-scale global championships. Esports organizations invest in professional teams, fostering intense rivalries and captivating storylines that fuel viewership.

MOBAs also thrive as spectator sports, offering immersive broadcasting experiences with insightful analysis and expert commentary. Streaming platforms are crucial in delivering live matches to a global audience, creating a vibrant community of esports enthusiasts, and fostering a sense of camaraderie.

Dota 2

Dota 2, developed and published by Valve Corporation, is a revered and highly competitive multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) game that has left an indelible mark on the esports landscape. Released in 2013 as a sequel to Defense of the Ancients (DotA), Dota 2 has since grown to become one of the most popular and enduring esports titles globally. The game features two teams of five players, each controlling a hero with unique abilities and roles. Teams

vie for control of a central structure called the Ancient, primarily destroying the enemy team's Ancient to secure victory.

The strategic depth and complexity of Dota 2 are core components of its appeal to players and spectators alike. The game boasts an extensive roster of over 100 heroes, each presenting various playstyles and synergies. Teams must skillfully draft and execute strategies, adapting to the dynamic flow of the game, which unfolds in lanes and jungles across a detailed map. With an ever-evolving meta and regular updates from the developers, Dota 2 offers a constantly fresh and engaging experience for its dedicated community.

Dota 2 esports competitions are renowned as some of the industry's most prestigious and competitive events. Developed by Valve Corporation, Dota 2 is a famous multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) game that features intense 5v5 battles between teams of players.

The competitive scene revolves around several major tournaments, the most notable being The International. The International is an annual Dota 2 championship event by Valve, featuring the world's top teams competing for the largest prize pool in esports history. The tournament has gained legendary status, attracting millions of viewers from around the globe and consistently setting records for esports prize money.

This year, the International 12 will be held in Seattle, with the group stage starting October 14, 2023, followed by playoffs, as "The Road to the International." The International itself starts October 27-29, 2023, with the prize pool expected to be between USD 25,000,000 and USD 30,000,000.

Apart from The International, Dota 2 has a vibrant ecosystem of regional leagues, such as the Dota Pro Circuit (DPC), where teams participate in various events throughout the year to earn qualifying points for The International.

Complex strategies, exceptional hero play, and high-level team coordination characterize Dota 2 esports competitions. The game's ever-evolving meta and strategic depth have solidified it as one of the most-watched and played esports titles worldwide. The massive support from Valve, along with the passionate community and professional players, have contributed to Dota 2's status as a pillar of the competitive gaming landscape.

[League of Legends \(LoL\)](#)

League of Legends (LoL) is a free-to-play multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) game developed and published by Riot Games. Launched in 2009, LoL has become a cultural phenomenon and a dominant force in esports. The game is played in a 5v5 format, where two teams of five players each, known as "Summoners," battle on a map called "Summoner's Rift." The objective is to destroy the opposing team's Nexus, located deep within their base. Players control unique champions with distinct abilities and roles, contributing to the game's strategic depth and replayability.

LoL's appeal lies in its diverse roster of over 150 champions, allowing players to adopt various playstyles and strategies. The ever-evolving meta, influenced by regular game updates and patches, keeps the gameplay fresh and engaging.

As a spectator sport, LoL boasts captivating and high-stakes matches, enhanced by skilled commentators and engaging broadcasts. The game's competitive ecosystem, coupled with Riot Games' consistent support and investments, has solidified LoL as a pillar of the esports industry. LoL's impact extends beyond the virtual realm, with the game contributing to the growth and recognition of esports as a mainstream entertainment medium. With its continuous evolution, dedicated community, and passionate player base, League of Legends remains a defining title in the vibrant, competitive gaming landscape.

The League of Legends Championship Series (LCS) is the premier esports league for the famous multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) game, League of Legends, developed by Riot Games. Established in 2013, the LCS is one of the world's longest-running and most influential esports competitions.

The LCS is divided into two regions: the LCS North America (LCS NA) and the LCS Europe (LCS EU), each featuring professional teams representing major cities. The teams compete in regular season matches, followed by playoffs to determine the region's champion. The top teams from each region then qualify for the Mid-Season Invitational (MSI) and the League of Legends World Championship (Worlds), where they compete against teams from other regions for international glory.

The LCS has played a crucial role in shaping the competitive landscape of League of Legends, attracting top-tier talent, and establishing a dedicated fan base. The league is known for its high production values, engaging broadcasting, and exciting gameplay, making it one of the most celebrated esports competitions, despite significant friction between the LCS Players Association (LCSPA) and Riot Games, leading to a walkout vote on May 28, 2023. The walkout was called off on June 8, 2023, in time for the Summer Split to launch on June 14, 2023, with both parties agreeing to terms that would increase protections for players and stability for the North American ecosystem.

The League of Legends World Championships, often called "Worlds," is the pinnacle of competitive play in the League of Legends esports scene. The tournament features a multi-stage format, starting with play-in matches to determine the final teams joining the main event. The main event consists of multiple group stages, followed by knockout rounds leading to the Grand Finals, where the top two teams face off in a best-of-five series to determine the world champion. The winning team takes home the coveted Summoner's Cup and earns the title of the world's best League of Legends team.

Worlds 2023 Play-In Stage, with a prize pool between USD 2,250,000 and USD 3,000,000, will be in South Korea, with the main events as follows:

- Play-In Stage: Seoul @ LoL Park

- Swiss Stage: Seoul @ KBS Arena
- Knockouts: Busan @ Sajik Indoor Gymnasium
- Finals: Seoul @ Gocheok Sky Dome

Esports Versions of Traditional Sports

Traditional sports have found a new dimension in esports, where they have been adapted into virtual formats, captivating players and fans alike. These esports titles offer a unique fusion of athleticism and digital entertainment, bridging the gap between traditional sports enthusiasts and the gaming community.

Soccer, or football in some regions, has been adapted into popular esports titles, allowing players to control virtual players in fast-paced, competitive matches. Esports soccer games capture the essence of real-world matches, replicating tactical gameplay, player skills, and team dynamics.

Basketball has also made its mark in the esports landscape, with basketball-themed video games offering immersive experiences. Players can engage in virtual tournaments, mastering dribbling, shooting, and passing skills to secure victory for their digital teams.

Motorsports enthusiasts can indulge in racing simulators, where realistic physics and graphics recreate the adrenaline rush of Formula 1, rally racing, and other motorsport events. Esports racing games attract both professional drivers and gaming enthusiasts, providing a platform for exhilarating competition.

Traditional combat sports like boxing and martial arts have also seen virtual adaptations. Esports fighting games offer a diverse roster of characters, each with unique abilities and fighting styles, enabling players to showcase their skills in one-on-one combat scenarios.

In addition, traditional sports such as golf, baseball, and even skateboarding have found their digital counterparts in esports, offering immersive gameplay experiences and fostering friendly competition among players.

FIFA (EA Sports series)

FIFA, an EA Sports series, is one of the most beloved and enduring esports titles globally. Developed by Electronic Arts, the franchise centers around soccer (football), aiming to provide an immersive and authentic gaming experience for players and fans alike. First launched in 1993, FIFA has evolved, consistently integrating cutting-edge graphics, realistic gameplay, and an expansive roster of licensed teams and players worldwide.

FIFA's gameplay emulates the intensity and excitement of real-life soccer matches, allowing players to control their favorite teams and compete against others in various game modes. The series features multiple iterations released annually, each building on the foundation of its predecessors while introducing new gameplay mechanics, animations, and features. As a result,

FIFA has cultivated a dedicated community of players engaging in casual play and competitive esports tournaments.

FIFA esports competitions revolve around the popular soccer video game franchise developed by Electronic Arts (EA). The competitive scene for FIFA is structured into various events and leagues, providing players with opportunities to showcase their skills and compete against the best in the world.

The pinnacle of FIFA esports is the FIFAE World Cup, an annual tournament that crowns the world champion. Players qualify for regional events like the FIFA Global Series and continental championships. The FIFAE World Cup features a combination of online qualifiers and live events, culminating in a grand offline finale where the top players compete for the title.

This year's FIFAE finals ended on July 19, 2023, with ManuBachooore and Mark11 bringing the finals to a dramatic 3-3 draw, with ManuBachooore taking the winning title in a penalty shootout.

Madden NFL (EA Sports series)

Madden NFL, part of the renowned EA Sports series, is a staple in esports and virtual American football gaming. Developed by Electronic Arts, the Madden NFL series has enjoyed continued success since its inception in 1988. The game has evolved over the years, incorporating cutting-edge graphics, realistic player animations, and strategic gameplay elements that emulate the excitement and intensity of professional football.

In Madden NFL, players assume the role of an NFL team coach, making crucial in-game decisions and leading their chosen team to victory. The game's immersive features include realistic NFL stadiums, official team rosters, and authentic playbooks, providing players with an authentic NFL experience. With each iteration, the Madden NFL series has refined its gameplay mechanics, offering players a comprehensive football simulation emphasizing strategy, teamwork, and individual skill.

Madden NFL has established a prominent presence in the esports realm, with competitive events and leagues drawing talented players and passionate fans from around the globe. Esports tournaments showcase players facing off in head-to-head matchups, strategically employing plays and tactics to outwit opponents. The game's competitive scene offers numerous opportunities for aspiring players to showcase their talents and secure sponsorships and professional contracts, adding to the game's appeal in the esports landscape.

The Madden Championship Series (MCS) is the official esports circuit for Madden NFL. It features a series of events and tournaments throughout the year, providing players multiple opportunities to qualify for the Madden Bowl, the season's marquee event.

Players can participate in online qualifiers and live events to earn Madden Championship Series points, determining their eligibility for the Madden Bowl. The top players from these events face off in the Madden Bowl to determine the ultimate Madden NFL champion. MCS 2023 ends

in the Ultimate Bowl with a series prize pool of USD 1,700,000, with the events scheduled as follows:

- MCS Ultimate Kickoff Live Broadcasts: Sept. 7 and Sept. 9, 2023 (USD 180,000 Prize Pool)
- MCS Ultimate Thanksgiving Live Broadcasts: Nov. 9 and Nov. 16, 2023 (USD 260,000 Prize Pool)
- MCS Ultimate Wild Card Live Broadcasts: Jan. 6 and Jan. 11, 2023 (USD 260,000 Prize Pool)
- MCS Ultimate Madden Bowl Broadcasts: Jan. 23 and Feb. 6, 2023 (USD 1,000,000 Prize Pool)

Rocket League

Rocket League, developed and published by Psyonix, is a unique and captivating esports title that combines the fast-paced action of soccer with rocket-powered vehicles. Released in 2015, the game has rapidly grown into a prominent esports phenomenon, compelling players and spectators with its exhilarating gameplay and competitive spirit. In Rocket League, players control rocket-powered cars in a futuristic arena, attempting to score goals by driving a giant ball into the opposing team's net. The game's intuitive controls and physics-based mechanics make it accessible to players of all skill levels, while its strategic depth and skill ceiling provide endless opportunities for mastery.

Rocket League's success as an esports title is attributed to its engaging and dynamic gameplay, which showcases a seamless blend of strategy, precision, and teamwork. The game offers various modes, including the standard 3v3 competitive mode and a 2v2 variant, allowing players to enjoy diverse gaming experiences. Rocket League's vibrant and dedicated community has led to the establishment of numerous competitive tournaments, leagues, and championship events, with top-tier esports organizations investing in professional teams to compete at the highest level. These events draw substantial viewership, aided by passionate shoutcasters and entertaining broadcasts, creating a compelling esports spectacle for fans across the globe.

Moreover, Rocket League's developer, Psyonix, remains actively involved in nurturing the game's competitive scene, regularly updating the title with new content, balancing adjustments, and community-driven features. The game's continuous evolution ensures its longevity as an esports title and fosters a positive relationship between the developers and the community. With its exhilarating gameplay, supportive community, and sustained developer commitment, Rocket League has solidified its position as a significant force in esports, showcasing the potential of blending sports and vehicles in an immersive and engaging competitive environment.

NBA 2K (2K Sports series)

NBA 2K, developed by 2K Sports, is a highly acclaimed and realistic basketball simulation video game series that has left an indelible mark on the esports landscape. With its debut in 1999, the franchise has become a dominant force in the sports gaming genre, delivering an authentic NBA experience to players and fans alike. NBA 2K captures the essence of professional basketball,

featuring real-life teams, players, and arenas, coupled with lifelike animations and gameplay mechanics that emulate the sport's nuances.

The game's core mode, "MyCareer," allows players to create virtual basketball players and guide them from rookie to superstar. MyCareer immerses players in a compelling narrative, blending on-court action with off-court decisions that influence their career trajectory. Beyond MyCareer, NBA 2K offers an array of modes, including "MyTeam," where players build their dream team by collecting virtual trading cards, and "MyLeague," which enables complete control over a customized basketball league.

The NBA 2K League is an official competitive gaming circuit for the NBA 2K video game series, developed by Visual Concepts and published by 2K Sports. Launched in 2018, the league is a joint venture between the National Basketball Association (NBA) and the National Basketball Players Association (NBPA).

The NBA 2K League features teams representing real NBA franchises, directly connecting the traditional sports world and esports. Each NBA team has its esports team, consisting of professional players who compete in 5v5 matches using custom-created avatars rather than real-life NBA players.

The 2023 5v5 NBA 2K League Playoffs, ending on August 5, 2023, are live on Twitch at <https://twitch.tv/NBA2KLeague>.

Battle Royale Titles (BR)

Battle Royale (BR) style games have emerged as a dominant genre in the esports and gaming industry. These games typically feature many players (often 100 or more) dropped into a vast, dynamic map. The objective is to be the last player or team standing as individuals or squads. As the match progresses, the playable area shrinks, forcing players to engage in intense gunfights and tactical decision-making to survive.

BR games blend fast-paced action, exploration, and strategic thinking. Players must scavenge for weapons, armor, and other resources to increase their chances of survival. The dynamic environment and the element of surprise from encountering opponents create an ever-changing and exhilarating experience.

The genre's popularity can be attributed to its accessibility and appeal to a broad audience, from casual gamers to seasoned esports professionals. BR titles have gained a massive following on streaming platforms, where players and viewers alike can immerse themselves in thrilling gameplay and share the excitement of intense battles.

Esports organizations have recognized the potential of BR games, organizing competitive events and leagues. Tournaments draw skilled players and teams worldwide, competing for substantial prize pools and recognition on the global stage.

Fortnite

Fortnite, developed by Epic Games and released in 2017, has swiftly become a cultural phenomenon and a leading force in esports. This free-to-play battle royale game has attracted millions of players worldwide with its unique blend of building mechanics, fast-paced action, and vibrant visual design. Players are dropped onto a large island and engage in a last-person-standing competition, navigating the map, scavenging for weapons, and constructing structures to gain a tactical advantage.

One of Fortnite's defining features is its innovative building system, allowing players to construct walls, ramps, and structures on the fly using gathered materials. This element adds a strategic dimension to the gameplay, encouraging creativity and adaptability in offensive and defensive scenarios. The game's ability to appeal to players of all ages and skill levels has contributed to its massive success and prominence as an esports title.

Fortnite's esports scene has seen exponential growth. Epic Games actively supports competitive play through organized tournaments, such as the Fortnite World Cup, and continuous updates to keep the meta fresh. Esports organizations have invested in professional Fortnite rosters, and the game's frequent community-driven events allow aspiring players to showcase their talents. Spectator engagement is further enhanced through interactive in-game events, live broadcasts, and streaming platforms, making Fortnite a captivating and accessible experience for esports enthusiasts and casual viewers. As Fortnite's esports ecosystem continues to evolve, its status as a cultural and competitive juggernaut within the esports landscape remains secure.

Epic Games organize the Fortnite Champion Series (FNCS) Global Championship. The FNCS Global Championship culminates in multiple regional Fortnite Champion Series events annually. Players compete in squads (teams of four) to earn qualifying spots for their respective regions' FNCS. The regional FNCS events feature intense battles where groups showcase their skills, strategies, and teamwork. The top teams from each region then advance to the FNCS Global Championship.

The FNCS Global Championship in 2023 is scheduled from October 13th to October 15th. The event, boasting a prize pool of \$4,000,000, will be held at the Royal Arena in Copenhagen, Denmark. Per the Royal Arena's website, the tournament kicks off at the following times:

- Central European Time (CET): 4 PM
- Eastern Time (ET): 10 AM
- Pacific Time (PT): 7 AM
- British Summer Time (BST): 3 PM

PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds (PUBG)

PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds (PUBG) is a seminal battle royale game that has significantly impacted the world of esports since its release in 2017. Developed and published by PUBG Corporation, a subsidiary of South Korean game company Bluehole, the game quickly garnered widespread popularity due to its innovative gameplay mechanics and immersive experience. PUBG revolutionized the battle royale genre, inspiring a wave of similar games and cementing its position as one of the most influential esports titles.

In PUBG, players are dropped onto a large, open map and must scavenge for weapons, equipment, and resources while battling against up to 99 other players. The objective is to be the last player or squad standing, making strategy, survival instincts, and sharp shooting skills paramount to success. The dynamic, shrinking play zone forces players into intense encounters, leading to exhilarating gameplay that keeps players and spectators on the edge of their seats.

The game's immersive and realistic environment, combined with its ever-evolving meta and regular content updates, has contributed to its success as an esports title. PUBG esports competitions feature various formats, including regional leagues, international tournaments, and prestigious global events like the PUBG Global Invitational (PGI). Esports organizations worldwide have invested in PUBG rosters, and its consistent viewership on streaming platforms like Twitch continues to attract a dedicated and engaged audience. With its ongoing commitment to esports, PUBG remains a prominent and influential force in the competitive gaming landscape.

The competitive PUBG scene features tournaments and leagues that unite professional players and teams worldwide.

One of the primary competitive formats is the PUBG Global Championship (PGC), an annual tournament that serves as the pinnacle of PUBG esports. The PGC brings together the best teams from different regions to compete for the world champion title and a substantial prize pool.

The PUBG Global Championship 2023 (PGC 2023) is the prestigious final event of KRAFTON's annual esports competition, scheduled for the fourth quarter of the year. PGC 2023 will bring together 32 elite PUBG Esports teams worldwide, qualifying based on their performance in events like PGS1, PGS2, and various regional competitions. Each region will have a specific number of team slots available for the PGC tournament, as indicated below:

- Americas: 4 teams
- EMEA: 6 teams
- Asia: 10 teams
- Asia-Pacific (includes Chinese Taipei and Japan): 7 teams

In addition to the PGC, PUBG esports includes various regional leagues and events, such as the PUBG Continental Series (PCS), which feature teams from specific regions competing against each other.

Rainbow Six Siege

Rainbow Six Siege is a critically acclaimed tactical first-person shooter developed and published by Ubisoft. Launched in 2015, the game has quickly established itself as a prominent title in esports, captivating players with its strategic gameplay and dynamic encounters. Set in a modern-day scenario, the game features a variety of counter-terrorism units from around the world, each with unique abilities and gadgets.

The core gameplay of Rainbow Six Siege revolves around intense 5v5 matches, where players are split into two teams: attackers and defenders. The attackers must strategically plan their approach to breach and neutralize the objectives defended by the opposing team. On the other hand, defenders set up barricades, reinforce walls, and utilize their gadgets to thwart the attackers' advances. The game's emphasis on teamwork, communication, and meticulous planning makes it an enthralling and competitive experience.

The pinnacle of Rainbow Six Siege esports is the Six Invitational, an annual tournament organized by Ubisoft. The Invitational brings together top teams worldwide to compete for a substantial prize pool and world champion title. In 2023, it was held in Canada, February 17-19, with the winning team, G2 Esports taking home the USD 1,000,000 prize pool.

In addition to the Invitational, Rainbow Six Siege esports includes other events, such as the Rainbow Six Pro League and regional leagues like the North American League (NAL), European League (EUL), and others. These leagues offer regular season matches and playoffs, providing consistent competitive opportunities for teams throughout the year.

Valorant

Valorant is a free-to-play multiplayer first-person shooter (FPS) game developed and published by Riot Games. Launched in June 2020, Valorant quickly became a significant player in the competitive gaming world. The game combines the fast-paced action of classic FPS titles with unique agent-based gameplay, setting it apart from its competitors.

In Valorant, players assume the roles of "agents," each equipped with distinct abilities that add strategic depth to the gameplay. The two teams, attackers and defenders, compete in rounds with the objective of planting or defusing a device known as the "Spike." The team that wins thirteen rounds first emerges victorious. Valorant's blend of precise gunplay, character abilities, and tactical decision-making has appealed to a broad audience of players and spectators, making it a prominent title in the esports industry.

Valorant's competitive scene has quickly gained traction, with Riot Games actively supporting the growth of professional esports through regional and international tournaments. Prominent

esports organizations have invested in rosters, and top players from various FPS backgrounds have transitioned to Valorant. The game's spectator-friendly design and regular updates have contributed to a thriving viewership on streaming platforms, fostering a strong community around the title. As Valorant continues to evolve and expand, it solidifies its position as a prominent esports title with a promising future in the ever-growing competitive gaming landscape.

The Valorant Champions Tour (VCT) is the official esports circuit for Valorant. It has multiple stages, including the Challengers, Masters, and the Champions event. Teams compete in regional competitions during the Challengers stage to earn spots in the Masters tournaments. The top teams from the Masters events then qualify for the Champions event, battling it out for the world champion title.

The Valorant Champions Tour ends in Los Angeles, California, USA, running from August 6-26, 2023, with sixteen teams fighting for the Champions title. You can watch the event on Twitch and YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCA1d3HFGFUmkKr2JIUA5Vlw>.

In addition to the VCT, Valorant esports includes various other tournaments and leagues organized by third-party organizers, such as First Strike and Ignition Series events. These tournaments provide additional opportunities for players to earn recognition and prize money.

Online Collectible Card Games (OCCG)

Online Collectible Card Games (OCCGs) are a popular genre within esports titles that have gained significant traction among players of all ages. These games blend the elements of traditional collectible card games with the accessibility and interactivity of online gaming platforms.

In OCCGs, players collect virtual cards representing various characters, spells, and abilities, each possessing unique attributes and mechanics. These cards can be acquired through gameplay, virtual purchases, or rewards, fostering a sense of progression and strategy as players build and customize their decks.

OCCGs typically offer multiple modes of play, including single-player campaigns, casual matches, and competitive tournaments. Players engage in strategic battles against each other, leveraging their decks' strengths and synergies to outwit opponents.

The online nature of OCCGs allows for continuous updates and expansions, ensuring a fresh and evolving gameplay experience. Developers frequently introduce new cards, mechanics, and content to maintain player engagement and promote a dynamic metagame.

OCCGs have cultivated vibrant esports scenes with organized competitive circuits, tournaments, and professional players. Spectators can follow live matches through streaming platforms, witnessing high-level gameplay and gaining insights from expert commentary.

Overall, OCCGs have become a staple in the esports landscape, attracting a diverse audience of casual players and dedicated competitors. The blend of strategic depth, collectible elements, and online accessibility makes OCCGs an engaging and ever-evolving genre in esports titles.

Hearthstone

Hearthstone, developed and published by Blizzard Entertainment, is a digital collectible card game well-accepted by the esports world. Released in 2014, it quickly gained widespread popularity, captivating players with its accessible gameplay and strategic depth. Drawing inspiration from the Warcraft universe, Hearthstone features a diverse array of heroes and spell cards, each with unique abilities and characteristics, allowing players to craft personalized decks and engage in compelling one-on-one matches.

The straightforward mechanics make it appealing to casual and competitive players. In each match, players take turns summoning minions, casting spells, and using weapons to reduce their opponent's health to zero. Players must skillfully manage their resources, make tactical decisions, and anticipate their opponent's moves to emerge victorious. Hearthstone's ever-evolving metagame, facilitated by regular expansions and updates, ensures a dynamic and engaging experience for players and spectators alike.

The 2023 Hearthstone Esports season changes the competitive program, focusing on sustainability and audience engagement. It features seven events, including three Masters Tour Seasonal Championships and three Battlegrounds: Lobby Legends tournaments, all broadcast on YouTube and Twitch. Qualification for each event is based on Competitive Points earned through monthly standings, with the top players from each region receiving invites. The Masters Tours will have a USD 50,000 prize pool, and the World Championship will have a total prize pool of USD 500,000.

Real-Time Strategy Games

Real-Time Strategy (RTS) games are video games that emphasize strategic thinking and real-time decision-making. Players control virtual armies or civilizations and must manage resources, build bases, and engage in tactical combat against AI or other players.

RTS games typically occur on dynamic maps where players must explore, expand, and exploit resources to strengthen their forces. The genre often involves multiple game modes, including single-player campaigns, skirmishes against AI opponents, and multiplayer modes that enable players to face off against one another.

Fundamental gameplay mechanics in RTS games include unit management, base construction, and technology upgrades. Players must carefully balance resource gathering, unit production, and military strategies to outwit opponents. The use of terrain, unit positioning, and the ability to adapt strategy in real time are vital components of success in these games.

RTS games offer various themes, settings, and art styles, catering to diverse player preferences. Some RTS titles feature historical or futuristic settings, while others delve into fantasy realms, enabling players to explore imaginative worlds while honing their strategic skills.

The competitive aspect of RTS games has led to the establishment of professional esports scenes, where skilled players and teams compete in high-stakes tournaments for recognition and substantial prize pools. Esports viewership of RTS games has also gained traction, attracting a global audience of passionate fans.

StarCraft II

StarCraft II is a seminal real-time strategy (RTS) game developed and published by Blizzard Entertainment, renowned for its immersive gameplay and complex strategic elements. Released in 2010, it is the sequel to the original StarCraft, a game that revolutionized the RTS genre. Set in a distant future, players take on the roles of three distinct factions: Terran, Zerg, and Protoss, each with unique units, structures, and strategies. The game's single-player campaign offers engaging storytelling and challenging missions, while its multiplayer mode has become a defining aspect of its presence in the esports landscape.

StarCraft II has maintained prominence as an esports title, drawing players, fans, and competitive communities worldwide. Its fast-paced, high-stakes gameplay demands swift decision-making, precise micromanagement, and strategic thinking, making it a test of skill and mental agility for professional players. With Blizzard's continuous support, StarCraft II boasts a rich esports scene featuring numerous tournaments and leagues, culminating in prestigious global championships like the World Championship Series (WCS). These events offer substantial prize pools and are revered for showcasing some of the finest talent and thrilling matches in the esports world.

The enduring legacy of StarCraft II lies in its contribution to the establishment and growth of esports as a global phenomenon. The game's profound impact on the industry has earned it a devoted fanbase and a lasting legacy. Its strategic depth, intense competition, and the ability to showcase individual player skills have solidified StarCraft II as a revered esports title, inspiring a new generation of players and ensuring its continued relevance in the competitive gaming landscape.

The pinnacle of StarCraft II esports is the Global StarCraft II League (GSL), organized by AfreecaTV and Blizzard Entertainment. The GSL features players from South Korea, known for their exceptional skills and dominance in the game. The league showcases intense matches, highlighting the strategic depth and high-level gameplay that StarCraft II is known for.

GSL's second season in 2023 ended on July 27, 2023, with Maru taking the win from Cure, 4-2. GSL's last season of the year runs from October 3-26, 2023.

Fighting Games

Street Fighter

Street Fighter is a legendary fighting game franchise with an iconic status in esports. Developed and published by Capcom, the series debuted in arcades in 1987 and has since evolved into a cornerstone of the competitive gaming scene. In Street Fighter, players assume the roles of diverse characters from around the globe, each with their unique fighting styles and special moves. Matches occur in one-on-one battles, where players must strategically outmaneuver and defeat their opponents using a combination of skill, timing, and tactics.

Over the years, Street Fighter has undergone several iterations, with each installment introducing new characters, mechanics, and gameplay improvements. The latest title in the franchise, Street Fighter V, continues to receive updates and support from its developers, ensuring its relevance and competitive balance in the esports arena. The straightforward yet deep gameplay mechanics have made it a favorite among casual players and professional esports athletes, attracting a dedicated and passionate community.

The competitive Street Fighter scene features a series of tournaments and leagues, with the Capcom Pro Tour (CPT) being the official esports circuit for the game. The CPT includes multiple regional and global events, where top players worldwide compete to earn points and qualify for the Capcom Cup, the pinnacle of Street Fighter esports. The Capcom Pro Tours 2023 are scheduled as follows:

- Oceania: August 12-13, 2023
- Central America West: August 19-20, 2023
- US/Canada West: August 26-27, 2023

In addition to the CPT, various grassroots and community-run tournaments provide opportunities for aspiring players to showcase their skills and compete against some of the best in the game.

Tekken

Tekken, developed and published by Bandai Namco Entertainment, is a critically acclaimed and long-standing fighting game franchise that has been a mainstay in esports. The series debuted in arcades in 1994 and quickly gained popularity among competitive gamers and casual players. Tekken is characterized by its deep combat mechanics, diverse roster of unique characters, and visually stunning graphics.

Tekken's core revolves around one-on-one battles between fighters worldwide, each with distinctive fighting styles and special moves. Players engage in fast-paced and strategic combat, executing a combination of punches, kicks, throws, and powerful "juggles" to deplete their opponent's health bar and emerge victorious. The game's accessibility and depth appeal to

novice players and seasoned competitors making it a staple in competitive gaming events and tournaments.

Over the years, Tekken has seen multiple iterations and updates, refining its gameplay mechanics, introducing new characters, and expanding its export presence. The franchise's legacy has earned it a dedicated fanbase and a prominent spot in the fighting game community. From local tournaments to global championships, Tekken continues to showcase the passion and skill of its players, solidifying its position as a revered esports title that continues to evolve and captivate audiences worldwide.

The Tekken World Tour (TWT) is the official esports circuit for the game, featuring a series of tournaments and events held worldwide. The TWT showcases top players from various regions, competing to earn points and qualify for the Tekken World Tour Finals, the ultimate tournament in Tekken esports. Tekken esports competitions highlight the game's deep combo system, precise timing, and character-specific strategies. Matches are intense and closely contested, with players showcasing their mastery of diverse characters and fighting styles. In 2023, TWT has 5 Offline Master Events and 13 Regional Final Events worldwide. Regions without a Regional Final will send their top player from their leaderboard to be eligible to participate in the Global Finals.

In addition to the TWT, numerous grassroots tournaments and community-run events contribute to the competitive ecosystem of Tekken esports. These events allow aspiring players to gain recognition and compete against established players.

Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games

World of Warcraft (WoW)

World of Warcraft (WoW) is a viral massively multiplayer online role-playing game (MMORPG) developed and published by Blizzard Entertainment. Released in 2004, WoW quickly became a cultural phenomenon, captivating millions of players around the globe. Set in the high-fantasy world of Azeroth, the game offers players the opportunity to create and customize their characters from various races and classes, each with unique abilities and skills.

WoW's gameplay revolves around exploring the vast and immersive open world, completing quests, defeating formidable creatures, and engaging in player-versus-player (PvP) combat. The game features a compelling narrative and continually evolving lore, making it an engrossing experience for solo players and groups forming alliances or guilds. Moreover, the game regularly receives expansions introducing new content, areas, dungeons, and raids, ensuring a dynamic and engaging experience for long-time veterans and newcomers alike.

As an esports title, World of Warcraft has a rich history in competitive gaming, particularly in its PvP aspect. Players can participate in organized PvP battlegrounds or engage in thrilling open-

world PvP encounters. The game's arena system, which pits teams of players against each other in intense 2v2, 3v3, or 5v5 matches, has become a highlight of the esports scene. Tournaments and events host top players and teams, offering competitive challenges and sizeable prize pools. Beyond its esports aspect, World of Warcraft continues to foster a vibrant gaming community, providing social interaction and camaraderie among players across the globe.

The Arena World Championship (AWC) is one of the primary WoW esports competitions. It focuses on the game's player-versus-player (PvP) arena battles, where teams of players face off against each other in 3v3 matches. The AWC features regional and global tournaments, culminating in the World Championship event, where the top teams compete for the world champion title. In its 16th year, the Arena World Championship (AWC) is underway, featuring top World of Warcraft Arena players worldwide competing in the latest Dragonflight season. These players aim to showcase their skills and vie for a portion of the USD 800,000 prize pool throughout the year. Eventually, eight teams, four from the Americas and four from Europe will ultimately come together for the AWC Season Finals to determine the ultimate champion.

In addition to the Arena World Championship, there is also the Mythic Dungeon International (MDI) for those interested in PvE (player-versus-environment) content. The MDI features teams racing against the clock to complete challenging dungeons in the fastest time possible.

The Impact of Streaming Platforms on Esports Betting

Streaming platforms play a crucial role in the growth and popularity of esports. These platforms, such as Twitch, YouTube, and Facebook Gaming, are the primary medium for live broadcasting and content distribution, connecting esports events, players, and fans in real time. They facilitate the global reach of competitive gaming, allowing enthusiasts worldwide to tune in and engage with their favorite players and teams.

Streaming platforms provide an immersive viewing experience, offering live commentary, real-time chat, and interactive features that foster a sense of community among viewers. Esports enthusiasts can share their passion, discuss gameplay strategies, and celebrate victories together, enhancing the spectator experience.

Moreover, streaming platforms offer a vital avenue for aspiring players and content creators to showcase their skills and gain visibility within the esports ecosystem. By streaming their gameplay or creating original content, individuals can build a dedicated fan base, attract sponsors, and potentially join professional teams, contributing to the industry's continuous growth.

Additionally, streaming platforms have become a significant revenue source for esports organizations, players, and event organizers. Content creators can monetize their channels through subscriptions, ad revenue, and donations, ensuring a sustainable and profitable esports landscape.

Overall, streaming platforms act as the backbone of esports, fostering engagement, accessibility, and financial viability, making them indispensable components in the ongoing success of competitive gaming.

In September 2022, Twitch announced that it would prohibit certain gambling content based on jurisdiction. The updated policy will ban the streaming of gambling sites with slots, roulette, or dice games not licensed in the US or other jurisdictions with significant consumer protection. Four specific websites, including Roobet, Stake, Rollbit, and Duelbits, will be banned. While gambling content will not be outright banned, sharing links or referral codes to gambling sites was forbidden on Twitch. The new policy will go into effect on October 18th, and Twitch will continue to allow websites focused on poker, sports betting, and fantasy sports. This decision follows recent discussions about banning gambling content on Twitch, triggered by a streamer admitting to scamming friends and fans for sports betting addiction.

In August 2023, Twitch updated its Community Guidelines to explicitly prohibit the promotion and sponsorship of skins gambling sites, particularly for CS:GO. This move is part of their recent clampdown on gambling content, especially unlicensed sites. Despite the update, Twitch has not publicly addressed how strictly these rules will be enforced, and some streamers continue to promote skin gambling sites. The change is not expected to affect CS:GO skin trading sites without gambling offerings.

CS:GO skin gambling has been a concern in 2023, with G2 Esports partnering with CSGORoll in May. The impact of Twitch's new guidelines on this partnership remains to be determined, considering CSGORoll's presence on G2's CS: GO team jerseys. Removing skin gambling sponsorships may significantly impact streamers, as many top CS:GO streamers currently have such sponsorships.

Following criticism from prominent streamers, Twitch tried to crack down on unregulated gambling content in the past year. They updated their policy to ban streaming unlicensed slots, roulette, or dice games in certain jurisdictions. CS:GO developer Valve also took steps to limit the CS:GO skin betting market, making gambling a bannable offense on Steam, which may affect third-party CS:GO skin gambling websites using Steam's API.

Meta

Social media platforms have updated policies to encourage safe betting practices while regulating online gambling and gaming advertising. Users occasionally find ways to sidestep these rules, making regular policy updates necessary.

Meta (formerly Facebook) has over 3 billion monthly active users and is a prime target for advertisers. Although its streaming functionality is less robust than platforms like YouTube or Twitch, users can still post gambling-related content. However, Meta has stringent rules for promoting gambling.

To advertise gambling on Meta, users must obtain written permission from Meta Technologies. Approval is limited to specific ad account IDs, certain URLs (including the URL for the App Store), and approved regions. Ads can only target users over 18 years old.

Advertisers must demonstrate that their betting service is licensed by a regulatory body and legally established in the target regions for approval. Meta's definition of betting-related content includes direct gaming, games where money is required for entry and awarded as a prize, and ads leading to landing pages that promote online games and betting.

However, Meta does not classify physical betting establishments, state or government lotteries, and free-to-play games as betting-related content; these do not require permission for promotion.

[Twitch](#)

Twitch, a popular platform among online gamers, esports players, and content creators, implemented a policy in 2023 banning sites that include roulette, slots, and dice games. This policy prohibits sites not licensed in the United States or other jurisdictions or by a reputable regulatory body with robust consumer protection.

Initially, the policy banned sharing links or referral codes to websites featuring slots, dice games, and roulette to safeguard the community from rising scams and harm in the online betting industry. However, users and promoters found ways around this regulation, leading Twitch to enforce an outright ban on streaming sites featuring those games.

Sites permitted are those licensed in the United States or by regulatory bodies providing sufficient protection measures, such as deposit limits, waiting periods, and age verification. The ban also extends to domain extensions of the prohibited sites and their free social versions. Users are forbidden from sharing links to these sites in chats.

Poker, fantasy sports, and sports betting sites are exempt from the ban and can be streamed without violation. Twitch stated that accounts breaching this policy would face enforcement actions, and warnings would be issued to users needing help understanding the update. The policy language page provides more information on the ban, and further updates from Twitch can be expected.

[TikTok](#)

Despite prohibiting gambling, TikTok's social media platform will introduce in-app games. In 2020, TikTok gained significant popularity, becoming the most downloaded-app that year and leading to a surge in the popularity of short-form content. This trend was mirrored by other social media giants such as Meta and YouTube with the introduction of YouTube Shorts and Instagram reels. However, from the outset, TikTok maintained a strict policy against utilizing its platform for casinos or betting-related venues.

TikTok's policies regarding social media advertising and gambling can be summarized as follows:

- It prohibits promoting, soliciting, or facilitating access to sports betting, casinos, lotteries, fantasy sports, and other gambling activities. This includes both online and offline establishments where deposits and cashouts occur.
- It prohibits the promotion, sale, solicitation, or facilitation of access to free credits, coupons, and vouchers for casinos, in both print and digital formats.
- It prohibits promoting, soliciting, or facilitating access to websites, products, or software that direct traffic to casino games. This extends to content such as odds calculators, game rules, strategies, tips, tricks, forecasts, etc.
- It prohibits the promotion, sale, solicitation, or facilitation of access to games of luck or chance, such as scratch cards and bingo, mainly when the games offer monetary prizes or other valuable items.
- It prohibits the promotion, sale, solicitation, or facilitation of access to equipment, devices, tools, props, and accessories related to casinos.

In addition, TikTok plans to launch a dedicated mobile gaming tab, following in the footsteps of Facebook, which already offers Facebook Gaming where users can play games. This move by TikTok is a bid to capitalize on the popularity of gaming content.

X (Formerly Twitter)

Despite changes in leadership and layoffs in late 2022, Twitter maintains its betting policies. The platform's iGaming social media advertising policy, which applies to tweets, accounts, and trends, bans promoting betting-related content except in areas where it is legally permitted. In some cases, advertisers may need to obtain authorization from Twitter.

Users need to contact the Twitter account team to gain authorization, with the process varying depending on the specific case. The policy applies to various issues or products, including online casinos, bingo, sports betting, physical casinos, fantasy sports sites, bonus codes, betting-related software, etc.

However, Twitter allows hotels with casinos to advertise or post content as long as the emphasis is on the hotel aspect. News on fantasy sports is also allowed.

The platform's policy differs by region and country, so advertisers must review their target country's specific online gambling laws and acts before promoting their content.

Google

Google supports responsible betting and requires all gambling advertisements on its platform to comply with its policies and local laws and possess an appropriate Google Ads certification. The ads should target countries that permit online or offline betting and include information about responsible betting on their landing pages. They should not target minors.

While ensuring compliance with local regulations, Google allows the promotion of physical and online real-money betting, sites with links to real-money betting (including bonus codes,

vouchers, poker odds calculators, tips, strategies, etc.), and internet games requiring money wagers that pay out real-money prizes under certain circumstances. Google also permits advertising of social casinos as long as they do not provide opportunities to win real money and the ads come from a suitably certified Google Ads account.

Although Google's policy is less strict than other social media platforms, checking country-specific restrictions before advertising is crucial. Google frequently updates its policies; its latest update in April 2023 saw the company begin accepting ads on horse racing targeting Massachusetts and Arizona. However, advertisers must obtain certificates before advertising on the platform, with applications for certification opening on April 26, 2023.

The Wrap-Up, aka, TL;DR

Esports and esports betting is a dynamic and rapidly evolving industry. The esports industry has grown from a niche interest to a professional competition arena, attracting millions of players and spectators worldwide. Popular games such as Dota 2, League of Legends, and CS:GO are central to this industry, hosting regular tournaments and barring significant betting attention.

The betting landscape in esports varies significantly from traditional sports betting, with unique factors such as game patches and player streams influencing betting odds. Recent years have seen an increasing number of traditional sports betting agencies and new platforms offering esports betting markets, indicating the growing potential and interest in this sector.

A critical component of this landscape is the role of streaming platforms, which have become pivotal in promoting esports and facilitating betting. Platforms such as Twitch, YouTube, and others have had to adapt and adjust their policies to manage betting-related content, focusing on encouraging responsible betting and adhering to local laws and regulations.

The esports betting industry faces challenges. Issues such as game balance, player behavior, and the impact of real-world events can significantly influence the betting landscape. Furthermore, the controversy around loot boxes and potential legislative action underscores the need for ongoing dialogue about regulation and consumer protection in this space.

Looking ahead, the esports betting industry is expected to continue its rapid growth, driven by the increasing popularity of esports, technological advancements, and the continued integration of betting in the esports ecosystem. As with any industry, the future will likely bring new challenges and opportunities. Still, the unique intersection of gaming, competition, and betting in esports makes it a fascinating space to watch.

The key to navigating this landscape will be a keen understanding of the unique dynamics of esports, a proactive approach to regulation and consumer protection, and a commitment to fostering a fair and exciting environment for all stakeholders. As we move forward, it will be essential to monitor changes in the esports betting landscape, adapt to new developments, and learn from past experiences to ensure this exciting industry's sustainable and responsible growth.

Esports Betting Glossary

Term	Definition
Battle Royale (BR)	A game genre where a large number of players compete simultaneously, with the objective of being the last surviving player or team. The gameplay combines elements of survival, exploration, and intense combat. The term, "Battle Royale" likely originated from the Japanese cult film, "Battle Royale", based on the Koushun Takami novel of the same name, whose characters were required to fight each other to the death.
Bots	Computer-controlled opponents or characters that simulate human gameplay. They are commonly used for training, practice, or to fill empty slots in matches when the desired number of human players is not available.
Buff	A positive adjustment or enhancement made to a specific in-game element such as a character, weapon, or ability. Buffs are often implemented by developers to improve the performance or viability of certain aspects of the game, balancing the gameplay and promoting diversity in competitive strategies. The opposite of Nerf.
Bullet Sponge	A target that is easy to hit, but difficult to kill.
Button Mashing	Rapidly, haphazardly pressing buttons on a controller or keyboard, especially in fighting games. See, "Spam"
Carry	When used as a noun, it defines a skilled player who takes on the primary role of dealing significant damage and securing crucial kills for their team. The carry is relied upon to lead their team to victory and often becomes the focal point of strategies and resources. This term, however, is used most often as a verb to describe a scenario where one or more highly skilled players "carry" lower skilled player or players, through a game or encounter.
Clutch	A player or team's exceptional performance under immense pressure, often leading to a dramatic comeback or victory.

Term	Definition
DPS	A role or player specializing in dealing high amounts of damage to opponents during competitive gaming matches. See, "Glass Cannon"
Dumpstered	Used when a team or player suffers a severe and one-sided defeat, often resulting in a lopsided match.
Economy	A game mechanic in some esports first-person shooter (FPS) titles -- it is a resource management system that forces players and teams to make calculated decisions on how to allocate limited in-game currency or resources to gain an advantage over their opponents. This mechanic is particularly prevalent in games like Counter-Strike: Global Offensive (CS:GO) and Valorant, where it greatly influences the flow of the game and the tactical choices players must make.
Facecheck	A term from League of Legends, it describes the act of blindly walking into an unexplored area, often resulting in encountering, and being defeated by an enemy team. Similar to the term, "Facepull", in PVE games, where a player will walk within range of a hostile NPC, drawing its unwelcome attention.
First Person Shooter (FPS)	FPS (First-Person Shooter) refers to a genre of esports titles where players experience the game from the perspective of their character's eyes and primarily engage in combat using firearms and other ranged weapons. These games require precise aiming, quick reflexes, and strategic thinking.
Glass Cannon	A character or strategy that possesses exceptionally high offensive power but lacks durability or survivability, making them vulnerable to enemy attacks. These glass cannons excel in dealing massive damage, but a single mistake or successful opponent strike can quickly lead to their defeat. See, "DPS"
Kill Streak	A series of consecutive kills achieved by a player during a match.

Term	Definition
LAN	A physical, localized network setup where players and teams gather in a common location to compete in tournaments or events. It enables low-latency, high-performance gameplay, fostering a fair and competitive environment where participants can showcase their skills without internet-related disruptions.
Leroy Jenkins	A famous internet meme and a player character from the MMORPG game World of Warcraft. While not directly related to esports titles, his name has become synonymous with impulsive and reckless actions in gaming, often used humorously to describe players who charge into battles without proper strategy or coordination. See, "Zerg" and "Rush"
Map	The virtual environments where competitive matches take place.
Massively Multiplayer Online Game (MMO)	Online games where large numbers of players compete in virtual worlds simultaneously.
Meta	The most dominant and effective strategies, character picks, or gameplay styles within a game environment.
Multiplayer Online Battle Arena (MOBA)	An esports genre where two teams of players compete in strategic matches, controlling unique heroes with distinct abilities, working together to win by destroy the opposing team's base.
Nerf	The act of reducing the power or effectiveness of specific weapons, abilities, or game mechanics in esports titles to maintain balance and fairness in competitive play. The opposite of Buff.
OP	Something that is "overpowered," meaning it is excessively strong or advantageous in the game, often leading to unbalanced gameplay. Players or teams may seek to exploit OP elements to gain a competitive edge, but game developers typically strive to address and balance these issues through updates and patches to maintain fair competition. See, "Meta"

Term	Definition
Pick and Ban	A strategic process used in many esports titles, where teams take turns selecting or banning specific characters, heroes, or champions from the available pool before a match. It allows teams to shape the game's meta, counter opponents' strategies, and emphasize their strengths.
PogChamp	a popular Twitch emote featuring a shocked and excited expression. Gamers use it to convey exhilaration and surprise during thrilling moments in competitive matches, making it a widely recognized expression of excitement in the esports community.
Potato	A low-end or outdated computer or console that struggles to run modern games smoothly. This term is also used, currently, to describe unskilled players.
Potato Aim	A humorous term used to describe a player's poor aiming skills, often resulting in inaccurate shots, and missed opportunities. It playfully suggests that the player's aim is as imprecise as throwing potatoes at opponents. See, "Spray and Pray"
PVE	Game modes or content where players collaborate to battle against AI-controlled opponents rather than competing against each other directly.
PVP	Competitive gameplay where human players directly face off against each other, rather than against computer-controlled opponents.
QQ	A term of questionable origin, it is used in text-based chats in games to taunt players by implying that they are crying and want to quit the game. Some say the origin is a visual pun, with, "QQ", looking like eyes with tears coming out of them. Others claim the term originates from text-based multiplayer games where, "qq" was a shortcut used to quit a game immediately. See, "Ragequit"

Term	Definition
Ragequit	The term "ragequit" originated from online gaming communities, particularly in the context of multiplayer games. It refers to a player abruptly and angrily quitting a game, often in response to frustration, defeat, or perceived unfairness, leaving the match prematurely and disrupting the gameplay experience for other participants. See, "QQ"
Real-Time Strategy (RTS)	A game genre where players control and manage units, resources, and strategic decisions in real-time.
Respawn	A mechanism where players who are eliminated during a match are brought back into the game after a short delay. This allows for continuous gameplay and strategic planning, making it a common feature in various team-based esports games. See, "Rush", "Leroy Jenkins", and "Zerg"
Rush	Aggressive and high-risk gameplay strategies aimed at overwhelming opponents quickly. Players or teams employing a "rush" tactic often prioritize fast engagements and decisive actions to catch opponents off guard and gain an early advantage in the game. See, "Zerg", and "Leroy Jenkins"
Spam	The excessive and repetitive use of certain in-game actions, abilities, or tactics with the intention of overwhelming opponents or disrupting their gameplay. This term is often used pejoratively to describe players who don't use the full range of active and reactive abilities strategically. See, "Button Mashing"
Spray and Pray	When a player continuously fires their weapon in a general direction without precise aiming, hoping to hit opponents through sheer volume of bullets. It is a less accurate but sometimes effective strategy, particularly in close quarters combat or when facing multiple enemies. See, "Potato Aim"

Term	Definition
Streamer	An individual who broadcasts live gameplay, commentary, and interactions with viewers over streaming platforms like Twitch or YouTube.
Tank	A player character or role with high durability and defensive capabilities, often serving as the frontline or initiator for the team. Tanks are responsible for absorbing damage and protecting more vulnerable teammates, creating space and opportunities for their team to secure objectives and victories. See, "Bullet Sponge"
Turn Based Gaming	The term "turn-based gaming" originated from board games and early strategy games, where players take turns to make their moves or decisions instead of playing in real-time. In turn-based gaming, each player's actions are sequential and occur in a structured order, allowing for strategic planning and thoughtful decision-making. Online Collectible Card Games are a good example of turn based gaming in this context.
Zerg	A term used in esports titles to describe a rapid and overwhelming attack strategy employed by players. Often used pejoratively to describe players who are not applying this strategy strategically, and just throwing themselves at the enemy. The term "Zerg" originated from the popular real-time strategy (RTS) game StarCraft. In StarCraft, players can choose one of three factions: Terran, Protoss, and Zerg. The Zerg faction is known for its unique gameplay style, which involves overwhelming opponents with large numbers of weaker units, known as "Zerglings." The term "Zerg" or "Zerging" has since transcended StarCraft and is now used more broadly in the esports community to describe strategies that involve swarming opponents with large groups of units or players in a rapid and aggressive manner. See, "Rush", and "Leroy Jenkins"