

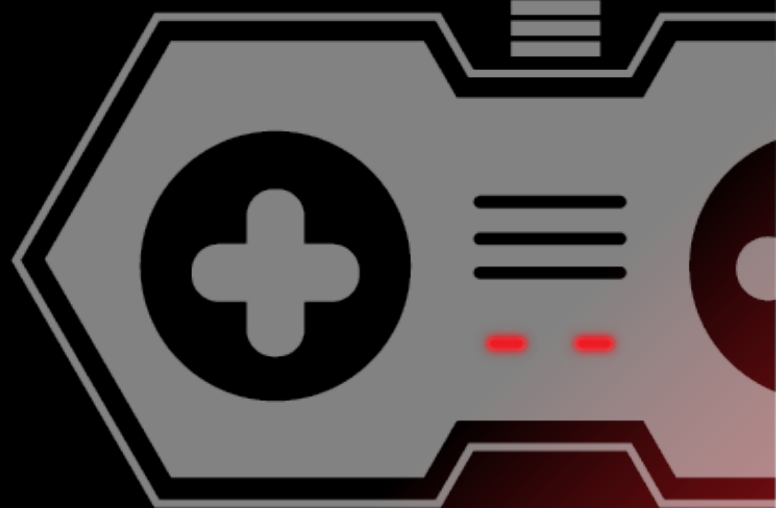
# ESPORTS 101:

## STARTING A PROGRAM AT YOUR HIGH SCHOOL

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## STEP 1

# SURVEY YOUR STUDENTS

Survey your prospective players to see what sort of program they are interested in

**Esports  
Club**

**Scrimmages**

**Competitive  
Teams  
(within school)**

**Competitive  
Teams (with  
other schools)**

### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- How often do your players want to play?
- Do your players want coaching?
- What games are they interested in?

## STEP 2

# DETERMINE LEVEL OF COMPETITION

Use the responses from the interested students to inform your decision about the competitiveness of your program.

Will your esports program be casual? Competitive? Somewhere in the middle?

Will you compete against other schools? If so, how will you organize those competitions?

Are there other schools in your network that already have esports programs?

Do you already belong to an association that offers esports competition in other schools?

Some states or regions offer esports leagues, but whether or not that's available in your district, your students can compete in Vanta Leagues courtesy of NEMR. This will allow students to play against other students across the country for tougher competition and enhanced practice opportunities.

## STEP 3

# FIND A COACH, MANAGER, OR SPONSOR

Most esports clubs simply have a faculty sponsor while more competitive programs may hire a coach and/or manager. You can choose what's right for you based on your school's goals and resources.

### FINDING A COACH

The top qualities to look out for when selecting a coach are proof of experience, game rank, and teaching skills. These can all be evaluated fairly easily.

First, you ideally want your coach to have esports coaching experience. For this, you will want to draw on references from your candidates to corroborate their experience.

Second, you want the candidate to be experienced in at least one (ideally all) of the games you will include in your program. Most games have an online database that allows people to look up users based on their IGN (in game name). By requiring applicants to include these usernames in their application, it will give you an easy way to check their in-game skills. Generally, you will want coaches that have an above average in-game rank.

Third, you want to evaluate the candidate's ability to teach players in the age group that attends your school. This can be done using online tests, personality quizzes, or anything else that you choose to use.

## **FINDING A MANAGER**

Sometimes, especially if you plan to have your school compete with other schools, you may need a manager. A manager is someone that you can trust to be in charge of the finances, competition, scheduling, and events for the program. This role may be filled by a teacher or another staff member that already exists in your organization, or you can hire someone to manage the team part time.

When looking for a manager, the two most important things to consider are past experience and management skills. To measure past experience, make sure you get references from your candidates so that you can corroborate their qualifications. To test their management ability, you may use any number of online resources to come up with some sort of management assessment. You may also want to ask your candidate some scenario questions to make sure that they would respond to certain situations the way that you'd like them to.

## **FINDING A SPONSOR**

If you choose to create an esports club rather than a competitive program, all you need is a sponsor. This will most likely be a faculty member who already works at your school and takes interest in esports and gaming. This person should have enough gaming knowledge to know how to run an afterschool esports program, but they do not necessarily need coaching credentials.

## STEP 4

# BUILD YOUR ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Once you have found your hires, you will need to work with them to flesh out your program's structure. Below are a few options for how you may structure your program.

### Esports Club

Playing within your school

#### Random Teams

Randomize teams based on all sign ups that you get for your school league

#### Team Captains

Select team captains and allow them to build their own teams

#### Buddy Sign Up

Allow players to sign up with a friend, and build teams around these pairs

### Competitive League

Playing against other schools

#### JV and Varsity

Also known as A and B teams, this allows the players with a higher skill level to be separated from those with a lower skill level

#### All One Level

Have all of your players on one team for each game

#### X and Y Teams

Split players based on skill, and then mix them for two separate teams comprised of all skills

## STEP 5

# DECIDE WHO WILL PAY FOR THE PROGRAM'S EXPENSES

Will the school pay? Will you reach out to sponsors?  
Or will your students simply pay dues? Below are some  
funding options.

**School  
Budget**

**Sponsorships**

**Team  
Fundraisers**

**Player Dues**

OPTIONAL: IF APPLICABLE, ADD A SENTENCE OR TWO ABOUT WHAT YOUR  
ISP IS WILLING TO CONTRIBUTE.



## STEP 6

# PROMOTE YOUR PROGRAM

You've got the basics sorted out. Now, you just need players. Here are some ways to get them:

- Post flyers
- Promote to parents
- Include in your morning announcements
- Have teachers recruit players
- Parent information sessions

## STEP 7

# FIND A SPACE/ LOCATION

Where will your student play?

- Computer lab
- At home
- A facility outside of your school

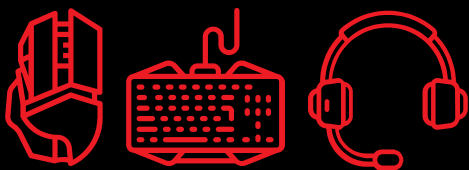
## STEP 8

# PURCHASE AND SET UP YOUR TECHNOLOGY

If you plan to host your program at your school, make sure you have the technology that you need.



### Gaming PCs



### Peripherals

- Mouse
- Keyboard
- Headphones



### Strong Internet Connection

## STEP 9

# COLLECT SIGN UPS

Time to send out those permission forms!

Allow students to sign up for this program the same way that they would for any other after school program. If you are simply having a club, anyone can show up!

If you plan to have one or multiple teams, you will need to collect committed sign ups in order to create team rosters. Be sure to collect the students' general information, as well as which game they want to play (out of the ones that you are offering) and their experience with that game. You should also ask them what rank they are in the game. This is good information for a coach to have, especially if you are creating Varsity and JV teams, or X and Y teams.

Once you have your rosters, it's time to get started! Be sure to periodically collect feedback from your players.

## STEP 10

# GET STARTED

Now that you have your location, teams, players, coach, and organizational structure, you're ready to play!

You can compete within your school or against other schools in the district or a regional league.

NEMR is also sponsoring your school's entry into Vanta Leagues, so let us know when you're ready to take the next step in enrolling your team!

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### Where to find a coach or manager

[Indeed](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Hitmarker](#)

### Best Peripherals

[Intel](#)

[PC Games](#)

[Forbes](#)

### Best Pre-built PCs

[PC Mag](#)

[Tom's Hardware](#)

### Companies that can help

[Vanta Leagues](#)

[PlayVS](#)

[High School Esports League](#)