



Girl Gamers Grow Up  
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Moms may be vying with their kids for computer time, but not for work or home related tasks. Research from [America Online \(AOL\)](#) has found that females over 40 years old spend the most time per week playing online games at 9.1 hours, which accounts for 41 percent of their connection time. Comparatively, teens spend 7.4 hours per week playing games, while females under 40 log 6.2 hours.

The U.S. survey, conducted during December 2003 and January 2004 by Digital Marketing Services (DMS) of more than 3,600 individuals who have played online games within the last three months, revealed that a significant portion of 40-something women used gaming almost daily as a way to relieve stress, increase skill levels and inspire social interaction. While only 22 percent of teens admitted to playing games every day, 41 percent of 40-something women were daily gamers.

Gaming seems to be addictive among adults, as they were more likely to stay up all night playing games online than their teenage counterparts. Additionally, more 40-something women logged on to play before work, late night (midnight to 2am), and the middle of the night (2am to 5am) than any other market segments that were measured.

Word and puzzle games were most popular with the women over 40, with 49 percent preferring them over casino (27 percent), arcade (16 percent), trivia (7 percent), and sports (1 percent) games. The 40-something women were also more likely to take their online gaming friendships offline at 21 percent. Only 7 percent of teens were likely to pursue gaming friendships outside of the computer, and 9 percent of males have sparked romantic interest via gaming.

The survey found that gamers play in lieu of other activities, such as exercising, reading or watching TV. Women over 40 avoid working out more than the other groups, and females overall are more likely to read books than any of the other segments.

Do you play online games more than...?						
	Adults	Teens	Males	Females	Females Under 40	Females 40+
Working out/exercising	64%	61%	59%	66%	61%	<b>71%</b>
Hiking/outdoor activities	58%	51%	51%	62%	58%	<b>65%</b>
Reading books	45%	<b>50%</b>	<b>50%</b>	42%	41%	44%
Renting/watching movies	44%	41%	40%	45%	36%	<b>55%</b>
Watching TV	22%	23%	19%	24%	20%	<b>28%</b>
Source: DMS and AOL						

[Hitwise's](#) January 2004 traffic measurements to sites devoted to the production, download, review, sale or playing of computer games, console games, board games and other types of games lends some support to AOL's age-related findings, revealing that the majority of visitors are in the 35 to 44 year old range. However, according to Hitwise, more males than females are gravitating toward those type of sites.

<b>Most Visited Game-Related Sites, January 2004, U.S.</b>	
<b>Site</b>	<b>Market Share</b>
Yahoo! Games	12.22%
Pogo	11.99%
Sandboxer	4.23%
Neo Pets	3.76%
MSN Gaming Zone	3.12%
Gamefags	2.66%
Yahoo! Fantasy Basketball	2.36%
Yahoo! Fantasy Sports	1.78%
CheatPlanet	1.15%
GameSpot	1.08%
Source: Hitwise	

Hitwise noted that Yahoo! Games has been the #1 gaming site since February, 2003 but it was knocked from first place by Pogo for one week only — the week ending January 17, 2004. While AOL users are included in Hitwise's measurements, AOL's gaming sites are not included among the site category data.