

General

Grammar is a huge subject, so this grammar module will focus on key areas that cause problems in academic writing.

Articles¹

These are words like 'a/an' and 'the'. However, you often don't need to use them at all.

Comparisons²

These are adjectives and adverbs which compare two or more of something.

Past tenses³

These are tenses like the past simple, present perfect and past perfect.

Future tenses⁴

These are tenses like the future continuous and the future perfect.

Relative pronouns⁵

These are words like 'who', 'which', 'where' etc.

Conditionals⁶

These are sentences with 'if'.

Passive⁷

This is where the subject of the sentence does not 'do' the verb. To make it, you need the verb 'to be' and a past participle.

Participles⁸

These are words like 'going/gone'. You can use them in different ways, not just in tenses. You get present ones (-ing verbs) and past ones, used like a passive.

Would a ban on violent video games be useful?

Video gaming is becoming **an**¹ increasingly important form of recreation for many young people, especially young men. However, some people are now beginning to question the influence of particular games, especially those involving **warfare**¹ and killing, citing **the**¹ role that such games allegedly played in certain murder cases. While some believe that such games are harmless **fun**¹, others believe they damage **society**¹ and consequently should be banned.

Supporters of these games, such as the companies who produce them, claim that there is no need for concern. To support their opinion, they cite studies by psychologists which indicate that gamers are **no more likely**² to commit violent crime than non gamers. A report by Braxton University in the United States found that among 234 gamers, arrest and conviction levels for any form of crime were actually **0.2% lower**² than for non gamers (Brown, 1998). Both those who produce, and those who play the games, claim they are being unfairly blamed for the problems of society, and point out that no one would ever demand that books with violent themes should be banned for their negative influence.

On the other hand, a growing number of people reject this view, arguing that we **will soon be paying**⁴ the price for this attitude. They suggest that on certain vulnerable people, the watching and playing of violent scenarios for long periods of time, must have an effect. They cite the recent court case in Addington, Scotland where the defendant himself **claimed**³ to have been **directly influenced**^{3/7} by the game he had been **playing**³ continuously before attacking his best friend (Crowley and Stich, 2001). Furthermore, they point out that many male teenagers **will have spent**⁴ over a year of their life playing video games by the time they are 18, and common sense suggests this must have an effect.

The issue of regulation, therefore is a difficult one as not everyone believes that action is necessary. Also, even if it were agreed that a ban on certain games was beneficial, there is the question of enforcement. Young people would still be able to buy games because of CD piracy, plus could buy them over the internet from countries **where**⁵ they had not been banned. Consequently, a ban would be completely ineffective.

In conclusion, evidence on the influence of violent games seems inconclusive, and unlikely to change the mind of those **who**⁵ already have a strong opinion on the subject. Yet even if it were **decided** that a ban was desirable, circumstances indicate it would **not work**⁶. Hence, it would seem that the problems we have with violence in our society **will have to be addressed**⁷ in a more imaginative way than simply **banning**⁸ potential culprits.