VIDEO GAMES MAY BE ENERGY-DRAINING

You're probably not thinking about the amount of energy your video game console is using when you're trying to make it to the next level in your secrets ops mission, but maybe you should. Video game consoles use a substantial amount of electricity and can offer great opportunities for lowering your utility bills. What most people don't realize is that these devices often consume almost as much energy when they're not in use (in "standby mode") as they do when you're playing. For example, a PlayStation 3 from 2007 could consume nearly $170 worth of electricity per year (at U.S. average prices) if left on 24/7. That's a lot of pizza.

How do you reduce the waste? The best thing to do is simply turn off your video game console whenever possible. Another good option is to use the power management features already built into your device. These features are often disabled initially, so you have to activate them yourself, but they can save tons of energy without negatively affecting your gaming experience.

> "...if you're craving a movie, make sure to use a separate DVD player rather than your game console."

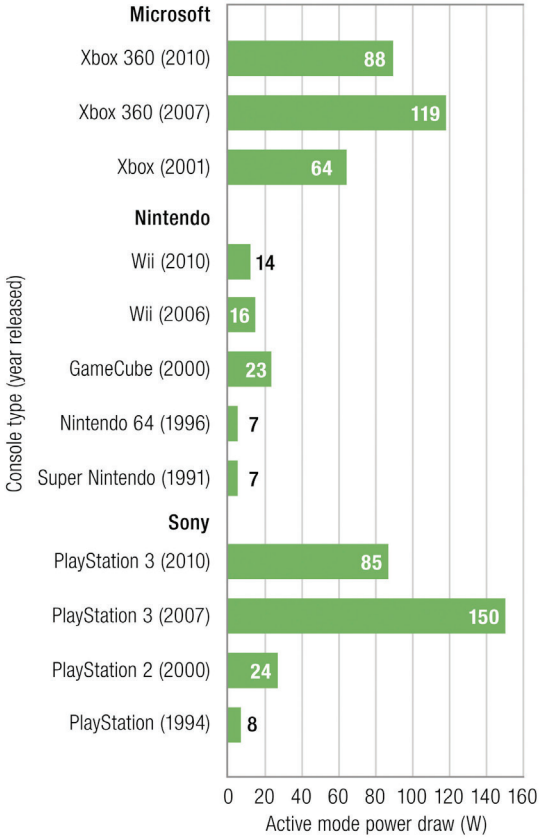
The good news is that the most recent game system models actually draw less power than their predecessors, even despite technical improvements like better graphics-rendering capabilities. The chart shows how energy use varies by model. Right now, the Nintendo Wii is the most energy efficient of the major game systems.

Video game consoles also use much more power when used for nongaming purposes—like watching movies—than a stand-alone device such as a DVD player. So if you're craving a movie, make sure to use a separate DVD player rather than your game console.

The bottom line is that game consoles can use as much electricity as a refrigerator—or more—unless you smartly manage the systems. Join the more than 50 percent of gamers who regularly turn off or power manage their systems, and sit back and enjoy the savings.

THE EVOLUTION OF VIDEO GAME POWER DRAW.

Although video game consoles have historically used more power as consoles became more advanced, models manufactured since 2007 draw considerably less power in active mode than their predecessors did.



Note: W = watt.

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