

# China finally gets official PlayStations, minus some games

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A man plays with a Sony PlayStation 4 in a shop in Shanghai, March 19, 2015

Japanese electronics giant Sony on Friday launched its PlayStation gaming console in China, where authorities impose strict controls on content, but some popular titles including "Grand Theft Auto" and "Call of Duty" were not available.

China last year authorised the domestic sale of [game consoles](#) through its first free-trade zone (FTZ) in Shanghai, ending a 2000 ban that

authorities argued was aimed at protecting the country's youth.

The start of Sony's PlayStation 4 consoles, originally planned for January, makes it the second foreign company into the Chinese market after rival Microsoft, which launched its Xbox One in September.

Gaming consoles brought into mainland China through unofficial channels were already widely available online and at the country's many electronics markets.

At a Sony store in downtown Shanghai, around 50 people waited in line to enter by small groups and buy consoles, games and the hand-held PlayStation Vita.

"It's quite exciting that we can have this in China now," said Gu Chunhua, an engineer.

Sony is selling PlayStation 4 in China for 2,899 yuan (\$471) and PlayStation Vita for 1,299 yuan (\$211), said a store clerk.

But some customers showed disappointment over the small selection of games on offer initially.

"It is quite embarrassing that there are only a few titles available because of government censorship," Gu said.

Games must pass inspection by China's cultural authorities, according to FTZ rules, in line with government restrictions on content it deems to be obscene, violent or politically sensitive.

Only four PlayStation 4 titles were available at Sony's flagship Shanghai store on Friday: fantasy adventure "Dynasty Warriors 8: Xtreme Legends", motorcycle racing game "Trials Fusion" and youth-oriented

"Knack" and "Rayman Legends".

Analysts said a broader selection of games is the key to longer-term success in China's multi-billion-dollar market.

"Just having the console is only the first step, access to high-quality games remains the biggest driver for console sales," said Jack Chuang, associate partner at OC&C Strategy Consultants Greater China.

"For the average gamer, access to major titles with Chinese subtitles or dubbed in Mandarin will be vital," he said in a statement to media.

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