

# PS4, Xbox One or Nintendo Switch: Which console should you buy?

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One of the biggest staples of holiday sales aren't just the fancy new 4K TVs, it's what you can play on them.

With Black Friday, Cyber Monday and just general holiday discounts abounding across retailers online and in-store, the Xbox One, PlayStation 4 and Nintendo Switch all receive some of their biggest discounts this time of year, presenting an interesting challenge for buyers and gift givers: Which system should you choose?

While all can play "Fortnite" and "Minecraft," here is a guide to help you make this decision, plus a little bit of what you should keep in mind as we head into 2019.

For those on a budget: Xbox One S or PlayStation 4

At starting prices of \$199.99, there are plenty of deals to be had for the Xbox One S or regular PlayStation 4. While not as powerful as their One X or PS 4 Pro siblings, both systems can play all the latest games and can even tap into newer TV features like HDR.

Both consoles play largely the same games, including recent hits like "Red Dead Redemption 2," "Madden 19," "NBA 2K19" and "Call of Duty Black Ops 4" but some exclusives like "Marvel's Spider-Man" or "God of War" are only for PlayStation, while franchises like "Gears of War" and "Halo" are solely for Xbox.

You can't really go wrong with either system, but if you are buying as a gift make sure to check with your gamer to find out where their friends play (and remember to pick up a subscription to Xbox Live or PlayStation Network, the respective service needed to play others online).

With the exception of "Fortnite," playing with friends on a different system is largely non-existent right now.

The most recent PlayStation 4 is largely a cosmetic update to the original PS4 that was released in 2013. So if you already have a PS4 and are happy with it, this model isn't much of an upgrade. Both can play games in HDR.

Original Xbox One owners who find that system to be slow will, however, appreciate the One S which isn't just sleeker, but faster and more powerful than the first One and can play games in HDR and Blu-rays and Netflix in 4K.

As for which bundle—and there are plenty—to consider, look to see what each retailer offers. Games like "Minecraft," "NBA 2K19" or "Marvel's Spider-Man" are among the current popular titles being bundled, with some retailers also throwing in extra controllers and other perks.

Best for portable gamers: Nintendo Switch

While Nintendo's Switch lacks the graphical power of the Xbox One or PlayStation 4 and big releases like "Madden," "Call of Duty" and "Red Dead Redemption 2," it does have a few perks of its own. The biggest: portability.

With a built-in touchscreen, the Switch can be used on its own or on a

big TV when placed in its included docking station. The Joy-Con controllers can even be split up to let two players play a game like "Mario Kart 8 Deluxe," "Super Mario Party" and the upcoming "Super Smash Bros. Ultimate" right out of the box.

On certain games, like "Smash", up to eight players can play off of one Switch, assuming you have enough controllers to pass around.

While Nintendo still sells its 3DS and 2DS portable systems, the latest lineup of new games—and the fact that the Switch can play "Fortnite"—make it a better option for many.

For the more intense gamers: Xbox One X or PlayStation 4 Pro

If you just bought a fancy new 4K HDR TV and want to make the most of it, the Xbox One X or PlayStation 4 Pro are the options for you.

With improved graphical prowess and performance, both systems make games shine, particularly on 4K HDR TVs, which deliver improved resolution and colors over standard high-definition. Most of the more popular games released in 2018, including "Red Dead 2," "Spider-Man," and the latest versions of "Call of Duty," "Madden" and "NBA 2K" are optimized for 4K and HDR to make the most of what these systems offer.

The Xbox One X is a bit more powerful, and at the moment is the same price as the PS4 Pro at \$399. But again, it comes down to which games you want and what systems your friends use. As with their siblings, both are excellent consoles and you won't be disappointed with either.

Be aware of 2019

As with other products like AirPods, this year's game purchases have a

cloud of uncertainty over them as major upgrades are rumored to be right around the corner.

While the Nintendo Switch launched only last year, rumors suggest Nintendo is readying an updated model possibly for next summer.

Both Sony and Microsoft have made clear that their next generation systems are in the works, with Sony most recently getting the internet talking that its decision to sit out the E3 video [game](#) conference next year is, in part, because it is working on the PlayStation 5. Rumors also are circulating that Sony might reveal the PS5 next year at its own event before releasing the new console in 2020.

At this year's E3, Microsoft's Xbox head Phil Spencer said the company's hardware team was already working on the "next Xbox consoles." Microsoft insider Brad Sams of Thurrott.com says the next-gen Xbox console is also expected in 2020.

Both consoles were released in November of 2013, making each prime for an upgrade.

What does this mean for now? Not much in the short term as all current systems will continue to play great, with new games expected to come out for them over the next few years. But it is worth keeping mind what might be on the horizon, and when that horizon might arrive, as you prepare to shop this holiday season.

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