

External games library avoids uninstalling games



Although current games often consume several dozen gigabytes of storage space, even the latest-generation consoles are only sparsely equipped with storage. If you don't want to uninstall games you have grown fond of, or if you want to play them with friends without lengthy download times, your best option is an external gaming hard drive.

When launching their new game consoles, Microsoft and Sony focus on performance improvements, new features and exclusive game titles. The storage space of the Xbox or PlayStation can barely be mentioned, as the consoles are only equipped with minimal storage, even in the latest generation. Neither the Xbox Series X nor the PlayStation 5 offer more than 1TB of usable storage, forcing gamers to make difficult decisions which games to install and which games to remove to make room for new titles.

The reason for this is that the storage space demands of games have grown enormously in recent years, with many popular titles taking up several gigabytes – and some top games even 50GB or more. The popular Red Dead Redemption 2, for example, takes up almost 90GB on the PlayStation 4 alone. Users who own a lot of games or like to try out new games will quickly have to deal with capacity restrictions. This is especially true as the available storage space cannot be used in its entirety, because game updates require free storage for downloading and installing. The PlayStation in particular is extremely storage-hungry in this respect – the more voluminous the games, the greater their need for free capacity when updating.

The easiest way to expand the storage of new and old consoles is by using external USB hard drives. They offer several TB of additional storage space without the user having to open the case of their console and replace the original storage. Although at least the Xbox Series X and S have a slot for an SSD expansion card, only 1TB can be retrofitted. External hard drives deliver larger capacities, and

at lower prices – also compared to external SSDs. While an external SSD with 2TB currently costs over 200 Euros, external USB hard drives with 4TB are available for well under 100 Euros. In addition, USB hard drives are also a convenient solution for PC gamers playing on a notebook, when there are no free drive bays or they simply do not want to deal with installing a new drive.

Fast USB is a must

In principle, the current game consoles from Microsoft and Sony can handle external hard drives that are formatted with exFAT and support at least USB 3.2 Gen 1 (previously known as USB 3.1 Gen 1). The fast USB standard ensures that there are no long loading times when starting games, building new levels and playing video sequences. However, hard drive manufacturers also offer special gaming versions of their drives that are guaranteed to be compatible and, moreover, have more stylish and robust housings than simple external hard drives. For this purpose, some of them have specially adapted firmware that prevents the hard drive from switching into sleep mode. In this way, gaming sessions can be continued seamlessly after a break – without waiting times or stuttering during playback.

With an average game size of 36GB, an external hard drive with 4TB can hold around 100 games, plus game saves, avatars and trophies. However, only games of the old console generations can be played directly from the hard drive. Owners of Xbox Series X and S as well as PlayStation 5 should therefore primarily store their beloved classics and keep the internal storage free for new titles. For example, the many PS4 games in the “PS Plus” subscription are ideal for USB hard drives.

Even if the new titles for Xbox Series X and S as well as PlayStation 5 cannot be played from external disks, users can still store them there. Microsoft and Sony support moving games from internal to external storage, and if the internal storage space runs out, you can quickly make room – moving it back later is much quicker than regular download and reinstallation of the game, and does not consume any bandwidth.

Gaming to go

Special gaming hard drives and other external USB drives in 2.5-inch format do not require an additional power supply. They are also lightweight and compact, making them easy to transport. In this way, users can easily take their game library with them to see friends or continue joint gaming sessions at different locations. You avoid the tedious downloading of several dozen gigabytes of large game packages, and you can start right away after plugging the drive into the console’s USB port. Simply log in with your Xbox Live or PlayStation Network account, and the games on the hard drive will be available on the new console.



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