

## Look to sports, not video games, to boost driving skills

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(HealthDay)—Enrolling your children in organized sports might help

them when they start driving, a new study suggests.

Playing video games? Not so much.

For the study, researchers analyzed data from instructors at a Los Angeles driving school who rated 100 students' driving skills.

The investigators found that new drivers—male and female—who had played any type of organized sport had better driving skills than those who had not been [sports participants](#).

Previous studies have shown that involvement in organized sports improves spatial perception, the study authors noted. The researchers were led by Nancy Wayne, associate vice chancellor for research and a physiology professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, medical school.

Studies also have shown improved [spatial perception](#) from playing action video games. Because of that, the researchers said, they were surprised to find no link between playing video games and driving skills.

On average, female students were less confident than males about their driving skills, but both genders received nearly the same average score from the driving instructors.

The age of student drivers did make a difference, however—at least among male drivers, the study found.

The older the male driver, the worse his skills. Teenage boys scored 36 percent higher on driving skills than men in their 20s, the study found. Age did not affect female drivers' scores.

Noting the finding on age, the researchers said that all states should

consider expanding mandatory driver's education requirements to all new [drivers](#)—not just teens. Ultimately, the researchers said, that could reduce traffic accidents and save lives.

The study results were published online recently in the journal *PLoS One*.

**More information:** The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more on [teen drivers](#).

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