



The PlayStation Revenge Story

How a story of revenge built a gaming giant, and why the disappearing game disc is making players nervous.

The story of PlayStation is really the story of an angry man who wanted revenge. In the early 1990s, Sony agreed to build a CD player add-on for Nintendo. Then, at the last moment, Nintendo cancelled the deal. One Sony engineer, Ken Kutaragi, was furious. He convinced¹ his bosses that Sony should build its own game machine instead. He was right.

The first PlayStation arrived in 1994 and changed everything. Older machines used small plastic cartridges, but the PlayStation used CDs. This was cheaper for companies, and it gave games more space for music and video. More than 100 million people bought one. Six years later, the PlayStation 2 became the best-selling console in history. Part of its success was clever: it could also play DVD films, so families bought it for two reasons.

Sony kept pushing forward. The PlayStation 3 added Blu-ray, and the PlayStation 4 focused on players who simply wanted great games. Then, in 2020, the PlayStation 5 arrived with a super-fast drive and a new wireless² controller that could shake in your hands. Today, gaming is one of the biggest entertainment businesses on Earth, larger than film and music together.

But something important has changed in recent years, and not everyone is happy about it.

For a long time, players bought games as physical discs. You could hold the box, put it on a shelf, and truly own it. If you finished a game, you could sell it, lend it to a friend, or take it to a shop and trade³ it for something new. This second-hand

market kept prices lower, because shops had to compete for customers.

Now the industry is moving toward digital downloads. Instead of a disc, you buy a code and download the game onto your machine. This is fast and easy, and many younger players have never bought a disc at all. Sony and other companies clearly prefer this model, partly because it costs them less money.

However, many players worry⁴ about what they are losing. When you buy a digital game, you do not really own it in the same way. You cannot sell it, lend it, or give it away. If a company closes its online store, or removes a game from its service, you may lose something you paid for. This has already happened with some films and shows, and it has made people nervous.

Fans also argue⁵ that digital-only shopping is bad for competition⁶. With discs, many shops sold games, and they lowered prices to attract buyers. With downloads, one company often controls the only store, and it can set any price it wants.

Nobody knows exactly how this will end. Some people believe physical games will slowly disappear, just as music CDs did. Others think companies have pushed too fast and will face a strong reaction from angry customers. Either way, the quiet plastic disc, once the heart of every gaming room, is fading away, and a new digital world is taking its place, ready or not.

Listen to This Lesson

Scan or click for the full lesson, shadowing practice, and extra questions on [Listenglisch.com](https://listenglisch.com).



Shadowing Mode

Perfect your pronunciation with synchronized audio and word-by-word highlighting.

VOCABULARY — KEY WORDS FROM THE STORY

#	WORD	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
1	convince <i>verb</i>	to make someone believe that something is true, or agree to do something, by giving them good reasons	"It took me an hour to convince my parents to let me buy the new console."
2	wireless <i>adjective</i>	working without wires or cables, using radio signals to connect	"I bought a wireless keyboard so my desk would look tidier."
3	trade <i>noun</i>	the activity of buying, selling, or exchanging goods or services	"There is a busy trade in second-hand phones in our city."
4	worry <i>verb</i>	to think about problems or bad things that might happen, in a way that makes you feel unhappy or afraid	"Many people worry about how much time their children spend online."
5	argue <i>verb</i>	to give reasons why you think something is true or right, especially to persuade other people	"Scientists argue that the change is happening faster than expected."
6	competition <i>noun</i>	a situation in which companies or people try to be more successful than others, for example by offering lower prices	"Strong competition between airlines has made flights much cheaper."

COMPREHENSION — ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1 — MULTIPLE CHOICE

According to the article, why did Ken Kutaragi want Sony to build its own game machine?

- A-) Because Sony had always wanted to make games B-) Because Nintendo cancelled a deal with Sony and he was angry
- C-) Because CDs were cheaper than cartridges D-) Because the PlayStation 2 could play DVDs

QUESTION 2 — MULTIPLE CHOICE

What does the article say was one clever reason the PlayStation 2 sold so well?

- A-) It was completely free for families B-) It used plastic cartridges instead of CDs
- C-) It could also play DVD films D-) It had a wireless controller

QUESTION 3 — SHORT ANSWER

Explain in your own words why some players believe digital-only games are worse for buyers than physical discs.

COMPREHENSION ANSWERS

My score today ____ / 3

Q1 Because Nintendo cancelled a deal with Sony and he was angry ✓ Correct (B)

The article opens by calling this 'the story of an angry man who wanted revenge'. It explains that Nintendo 'cancelled the deal' at the last moment, that Kutaragi 'was furious', and that he then 'convinced his bosses that Sony should build its own game machine'. The anger caused by the cancelled deal is clearly the reason, so the second option is correct.

Q2 It could also play DVD films ✓ Correct (C)

The text states that 'Part of its success was clever: it could also play DVD films, so families bought it for two reasons.' The wireless controller belonged to the PlayStation 5, and cartridges were used by older machines, so only the DVD option matches the PlayStation 2.

Q3 **Answer:** Players believe digital games give them less control and fewer choices. With a physical disc, you truly own the game: you can sell it, lend it to a friend, or trade it in a shop, and this second-hand market keeps prices lower because shops compete. With a digital game, you only buy a code, so you cannot sell or share it. If the company closes its store or removes the game, you can lose something you paid for. Also, one company often controls the only store, so it can set high prices without competition.

Explanation: A strong answer should mention at least two clear disadvantages from the text, such as not being able to sell or lend the game, the risk of losing access if a store closes, and higher prices caused by a lack of competition. The best answers connect these points to the idea of ownership and choice, using the student's own words rather than copying full sentences from the article.

VOCABULARY — TRANSLATION & NOTES

convince

Often followed by 'someone to do something' (convince him to stay) or 'someone that...' (convince her that it was safe). Do not confuse with 'convict', which is about crime.

wireless

Common with 'wireless controller', 'wireless network', and 'wireless headphones'. In casual speech, home internet is often just called 'wifi'.

trade

'Trade' is also a verb ('trade it for something new'). Note the phrase 'trade in', which means giving your old item to reduce the price of a new one.

worry

Usually followed by 'about' (worry about money). 'Don't worry' is a very common friendly phrase to calm someone down.

argue

'Argue that + sentence' is used for giving an opinion with reasons. 'Argue' can also mean to disagree angrily ('they argued about money'), so context matters.

competition

In business, we often say 'competition keeps prices down'. The word can also mean a contest you can win, like a singing competition.

YOUR TURN — SENTENCE BUILDING

Mastery comes from practice. Write original sentences using today's target vocabulary.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

READY FOR TOMORROW'S CHALLENGE?

Your daily English habit continues with a brand new story on listenglish.com

