



Is it permissible to play sports/games?

I will mention different points in answering the question.

Firstly: That entertainment itself is a permissible act. However, there are certain exceptions. No one is capable to worship Allāh all the time without getting bored or tired. Therefore, it is right upon the self to give happiness and satisfaction. However, engaging in sports, games and recreation, disregarding Halal and Haram cannot be permissible.

Secondly:

The sports that are recommended in the religion: There are certain sports that give training to perform Jihad, improve one's courage and determination. And activities such as swimming, equestrian and archery are good for entertainment.

It's mentioned in Saḥeeḥ al-Bukhāri that the Prophet ﷺ said:

ارْمُوا بَنِي إِسْمَاعِيلَ فَإِنَّ آبَاءَكُمْ كَانُوا رَامِيًا

"The progeny of Ismael عليه السلام are good at archery. Indeed your father was a person who engaged in archery".

Thirdly: With regards to games in general. If the sport/game in question does not give training to Jihad, or if it has been reported as a forbidden game with evidence - for example chess. And there are also sports that have some things in them that lead to forbidden acts. In both these situations one should abstain from such games/sports.

However, if the game/sport does not include anything forbidden and it is not having any impermissible act then it is permissible to play them - sports such as football, basketball etc. There are however conditions such as the sports/game in question is not played with gambling being involved, due to being engaged in the sport one forgets to remember Allāh, and if the sport is played for too long by wasting time, which could have been spent in more beneficial acts. These things should be considered.

A sport/game is declared Haram with evidence, or with a Qiyas that has been conducted authentically. Or if engaging in it abstains a person from making Dhikr in remembrance of Allāh. Or something that abstains a person from going to the prayer in congregation. Or if it is something that might open a door to gambling or anything that is forbidden in the Shari'ah (such as free mixing).

Fourthly:

Specifically some kinds of games. Many of the youth these days are addicted to some games such as TV games, PlayStation, and online games. It's important to think about the consequences of these.

Do you value the opportunities given to us in this life? As mentioned in the letter Al-Imām ibn Jawzee رحمه الله wrote to his son, if we subtract the time we spend to sleep, to eat, to drink and to relax and if we don't consider the time before we reached puberty, isn't it a small amount of time that's left in our lives?

The lifespan of the people of our Ummah is 60 years. Dear brother! The amount of time given to us to live is the time that we have to spend it in anticipation of the paradise which will give all the happiness, relaxation and blessings that we so desire. Isn't this short life the time to work for that?

15 years of life has passed in childhood. 8 hours of sleep every day. For eating, drinking, showering, using the toilet - 3 more hours. If the lifespan of a person is 60 years how much time is left for him? How much time has he got to strive to achieve paradise?

Is there anything such a person can say with regards to entertainment?

Therefore, how unfortunate is a person who wastes his/her life with useless valueless things, a person who doesn't realise the value of time?

To the person who spends his life without taking into account what he does with his time, Al-Imām ibn al-Qayyim رحمه الله said:

"The time of a person is actually his life. That is the original blessing which is given to spend in going to the eternal life. For if a person spends it in all kinds of false dreams and his life was spent in sleeping and all kinds of invaluable acts, it is much better for that person to die than to live." (Al-Jawab al-Kaafee)

The reason for this is that if he lives he will spend his time in distancing himself from Allāh.

Al-Imām ibn al-Qayyim رحمه الله further says, "In this life, the best thing that you can achieve is to spend your life in engaging in acts that will benefit you the most in the hereafter." (Al-Fawaid, 458)

Al-Imām al-Allāmah ibn Baaz رحمه الله said:

"Time is life. Anyone who wastes time has wasted his life. If you have wasted your life you will regret it. And this regretting will not benefit him." (Fatawah 261/16)

Al-Imām al-Allāmah al-Uthaymeen رحمه الله said:

"My dear brother. Secure your life of this world. I swear by Allāh, the life of a person is much valuable than gold and silver. And if a person isn't willing to waste even one Dirham, why would he waste his whole life?" (Al-Liqaa' ash-Shahree 72)

And he, Al-Imām al-Allāmah al-Uthaymeen رحمه الله also said: "If we cannot spend our life in doing good deeds, we have lost the world and the hereafter." (Ak-Kaafiyah ash-Shaafiyah 380-4)

What is amazing is that today Muslim kids have so much time and they don't have anything else to do except, to engage in different things in the name of entertainment.

Dear brother! Reflect upon this! Dear people of wisdom! Achieve a lesson from this. The one who spent 70 or 80 years of life in this world and leaves this world will give this answer:

Allāh says:

(قَالُوا لَبِئْنَا يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ فَسئَلِ الْعَادِينَ)

They will say: "We stayed a day or part of a day. Ask of those who keep account."

Do we realise within ourselves how short the time we have and how short our life actually is?

So I say, with regards to everything that's been mentioned above, in our lives as Ustadhs, when we visit houses, when parents invite us to advice their children, the complaints from the parents are that their children are submerged in playing games. That they are so occupied in it, they don't even sleep at night to engage in playing. That they don't have time for anything else. That morning, evening and night they are occupied in this. How can these children wake up for prayer? What interest would they have for prayer?

Tell me one single thing that has benefited these kids from these games! Only one thing! I swear by Allāh! This is, throwing yourself into distraction! This is, choosing misery and unhappiness for your own selves. That is an enormous neglecting on your part because these things stray you away from the obligations that are upon you and you are wasting the blessings that Allāh has bestowed upon you. You are disregarding His blessings as if they are nothing! I do not advice anyone, any child to play these games. Some of the games that children play today are even Haram. Because they include Kufr and Shirk. To get power in the game, the characters go and bow to statues submitting to the statues. I swear by Allāh, these acts are definitely forbidden.

This has become something extremely dangerous for children and the youth. That these games facilitate and lead to distraction of their lives and leads them to misery, it is not something that will be opposed by anyone with a sound mind.

Dear brothers! You should think of this life. Your age. You will be questioned about what you did in your life and how you spent your time in it. Can you answer that day "I spent it in getting myself entertained?"

My advice to you is to spend your time wisely by reading the books of the people of the Sunnah (Salafis) and to listen to their lectures. For gaining such knowledge, is a worship and it will give your heart an abundant amount of happiness and contentment. You could also engage in lawful sports as mentioned above. There are many such sports.