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HOW TO CREATE A HIGH SCHOOL ESPORTS PROGRAM

A Guide from Full Sail University

FOR TEACHERS

armada.fullsail.edu



How to Get STARTED

Form a Club

Encourage students to reach out to others who are interested in esports and ask them to sign up for a club. This list of names will help with showing community support for esports club efforts.



Get Access to Equipment

Meet with your school's IT department to get support in using school equipment for gatherings and league play.



Find a Sponsor

Find teachers or staff members you feel would be most likely to help with organizing space for club gatherings and getting school support. Be sure to discuss how esports league play can earn scholarships!



Organize

Pull together a monthly gathering for students to join the esports club and play games together.





Start Small

Choose 1-3 games you want to build the community around and start to identify who your best and most dedicated players are.



Organize Tournaments

If you have enough players, start organizing regular tournaments with your player base and any contacts or friends they have that are interested.



Start to Compete

Once you feel you can put together a competitive team for the games your club has chosen, it's time to look for competition!

How to Choose the Right Games

In collegiate esports you see more FPS games. But in the High School world there may be some limitations because of the nature of these games. Common starting games for High School competition are *League of Legends*, *Rocket League*, *Super Smash Bros.*, and *Smite*.





Example Leagues:



PlayVS

Competes in *Fortnite*, *League of Legends*, *Rocket League*, and *Smite*



High School Esports League

Competes in 12 titles across various game genres

How to Find the Right League

Begin searching for High School esports leagues that your school is eligible to participate in that include the games your students are playing. Students may need to play in more than one league in order to participate in all the games your esports club has decided on.

Tips:

- Most leagues have a Spring and Fall season, so check out their league calendar and get an idea of how much time there is to prepare for the next season.
- Each league will likely have a relatively small fee to participate, so be ready to talk with your school administration about sponsoring the league or doing a fund raiser.





How to Find a Sponsor

In the end, your esports program will have more success if you don't need to rely on a sponsor or donations to get it running. It is always best to have built a foundation to show interested parties when asking for help or sponsorships.

Best-case scenario: The esports program already has all the technology it needs. Worst-case scenario: The tech may not be powerful enough or available at all. This is where reaching out to potential sponsors can be helpful.

There are several things you can try to build your fundraising:

Team Sponsorships:

Reach out to local businesses with offers to promote their business with logo placement on all streams, jerseys, and other areas like your organization's LAN center or "Arena."

Community Partners:

There are a lot of great resources that work with high schools around the state, such as the Microsoft Store. Most likely, the league your students play in will already have some relationships that they will share with them.

Building relationships with these types of organizations can help a budding esports program. The worst thing anyone can say is no, so it never hurts to ask, but be realistic.

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Once students have their weekly matches scheduled, encourage them to consider at least one weekly practice per game they are playing.

- It's important to get each team together in a room so you can talk about strategies and how to prepare for your opponent that week. Seeing each other face to face also helps keep the human aspect for improved teamwork.

How to Build Schedules

Once students are participating in a competitive league with their esports teams, it's time to start thinking about scheduling. The weekly matches for each game they play will be the first place to start planning.

- If you are using a space provided by your school, contact them to learn what times and dates you have access to that space each week.
- If your league has a set day and time for matches, you have a place to start with the scheduling. Keep in mind that opponents might need to reschedule a match, so reach out as early as possible in the week to connect with them and ensure the date and time is set.





How to Foster Great Team Dynamics

Getting your program up and running is the first step, but running a successful esports program has a new set of challenges. Players will come and go, personalities will conflict, and students may have difficult decisions to make along the way.

- In order to help with this, it's important to keep faculty advisors involved so there's someone with authority involved.
- Keep them in the loop and make sure they are involved in any roster decisions or personality conflicts among members of your esports community.
- If possible, student should assign a team captain to each team. That person can help get the word out to the team about upcoming scheduled matches and practices. This helps ensure that everyone knows what's going on from week to week with fewer points of contact needed.



How to Set Up a Stream

Choosing a Platform:

The examples in guide will focus on [Twitch](#), though you may choose another platform to stream on like [Youtube](#). Although there are small differences from platform to platform, most of the info provided will be applicable.

Account Creation:

Account creation is straightforward. When creating a username, keep in mind it will also serve as the name for your channel and your unique URL.

Example: Our username is FullSailArmada, making our URL twitch.tv/FullSailArmada.

Broadcasting Application:

There are quite a few broadcasting applications you can choose from, but this guide will provide examples based on Streamlabs (SLOBS), as it is the most user friendly.

[Streamlabs OBS \(SLOBS\)](#)

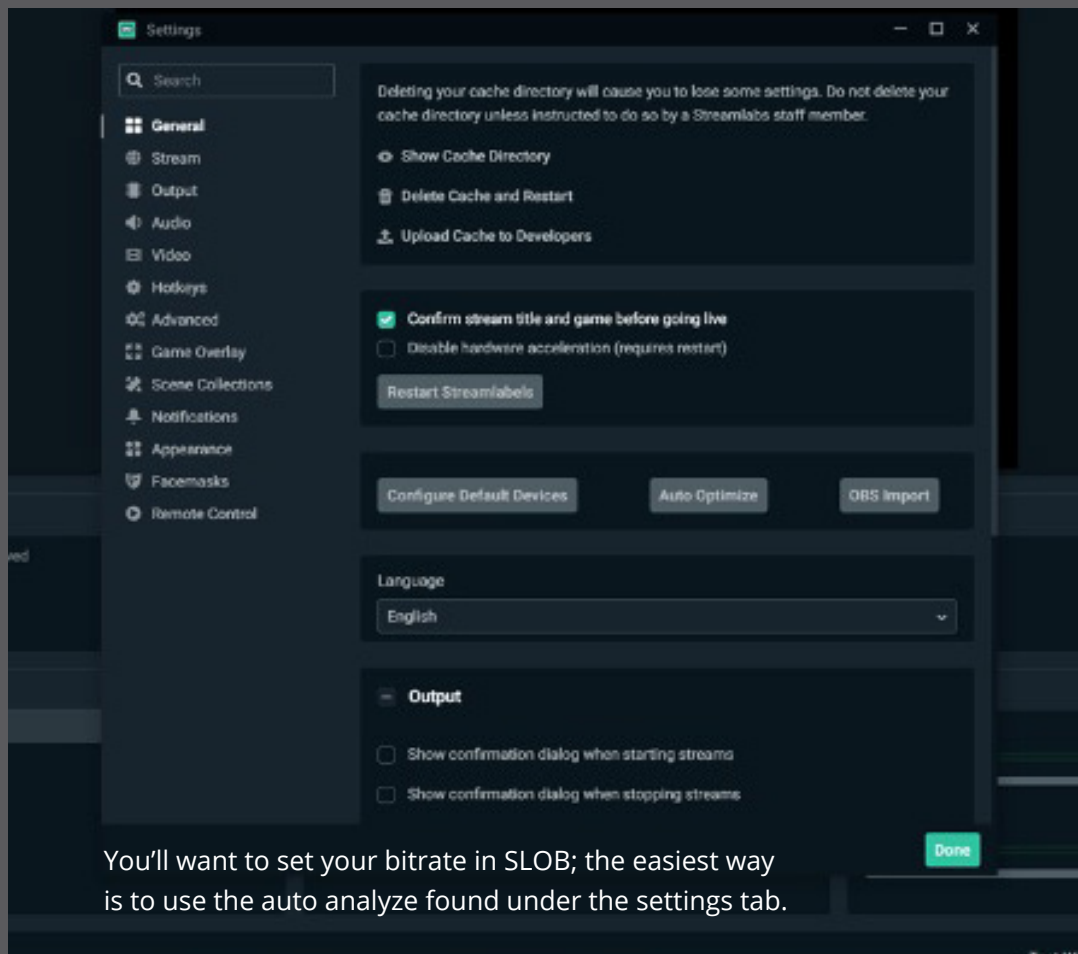
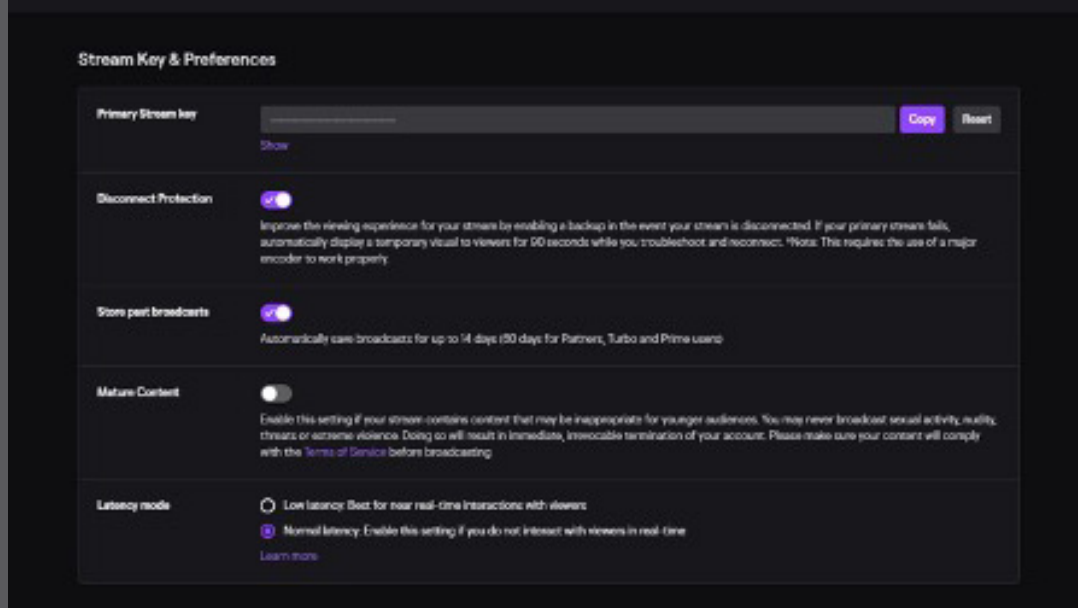
For advanced users: [OBS Project](#)

Streaming Your Matches:

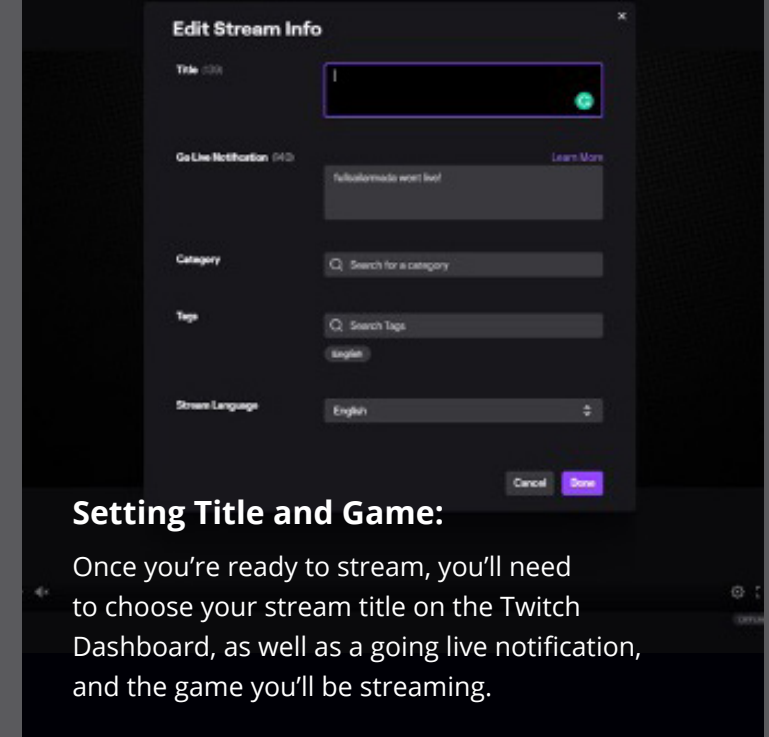
Once you've set up your account and downloaded your streaming program of choice, you'll want to be sure to either log into your twitch account via SLOBS, or use your stream-key that can be found under your channel section under preferences > channel on the Stream dashboard on Twitch.

Twitch offers an excellent creator camp to help new streamers get up and running that we recommend checking out.

[Twitch Creator Camp](#)

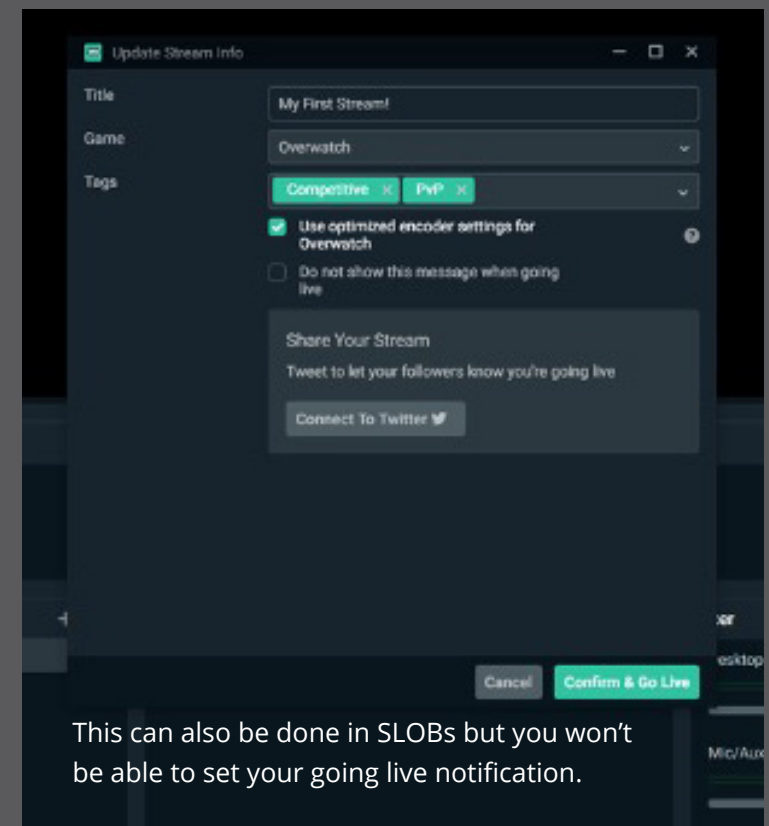


You'll want to set your bitrate in SLOB; the easiest way is to use the auto analyze found under the settings tab.



Setting Title and Game:

Once you're ready to stream, you'll need to choose your stream title on the Twitch Dashboard, as well as a going live notification, and the game you'll be streaming.



This can also be done in SLOBs but you won't be able to set your going live notification.



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