

# 4 ways tech is making education more accessible

By [Jade Mathieson](#)

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Technology is not just about social networking and streaming your favourite TV series on your tablet. Sure, these are all great use cases, but tech is doing great things in the education space too. Here, I explore four ways tech is making education more accessible to everyone - no matter where they are, or how much (or little) money they have.



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## 1. **Access to quality education online by top universities sharing their lectures for free**

Simply Googling 'university lectures free' shows just how much quality, educational content is available online today. Initiatives like [Khan Academy](#) - which started offering free educational content in 2008 - pioneered a trend which has only gathered momentum. Today, a host of free content is available online from universities from MIT and Princeton to Wits and the University of Cape Town. [edX.org](#) provides a great resources page for access to many of these courses.

## 2. **Serious Games**

There are more and more Serious Games – games created to educate rather than just for entertainment. They are used to teach learners at school level and to train adults in business across a number of topics and sectors. The idea behind Serious Games is that people learn better when they're actively engaged with content, and playing a game provides that immersive engagement. As people learn they can progress up a game's levels, getting a more and more nuanced understanding of a concept or subject as they go. This makes Serious Games ideal to teach people everything from maths to cyber-security awareness to how to manage their finances.

## 3. **Increased access to smartphones and increasingly affordable internet - giving access to more people across income groups**

While the Internet and smartphones are often written off as luxury or entertainment items, they provide access to education, public services, healthcare, social connections and employment opportunities that people in urban areas with more developed economies and infrastructures take for granted. For the marginalised, people in rural areas and the poor, amongst others, the internet and smartphones provide access to information, a way to teach themselves skills, opportunities to find jobs and ways to reach out to other people just like them.

4. ***VR training goes mainstream - providing access to digital training when real life is too expensive or dangerous***

Virtual reality is often seen as a toy, good for gamers but not much use in the 'real world'. And while it is great for gaming, it's also incredibly useful for learning. Virtual reality provides employers with a means to put people in any situation imaginable - piloting a plane, escaping a fire, repairing equipment deep underground in a mine - and train them on how to act, react and respond safely. 70% of what people learn comes from what they experience, so giving them a way to learn and make mistakes without endangering themselves or others, is critical. VR is seeing pick up in the aerospace, defence, chemicals, health care, manufacturing and energy sectors, for example, precisely for this reason.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jade Mathieson is a creative director and game designer at [<http://www.seamonster.co.za/> Sea Monster], South Africa's prominent producer of games that aim to educate and create social change. She holds a BA from AFDA and is passionate about storytelling through all mediums.

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