

How do I manage my data usage?

Data usage occurs every time the internet is accessed in any way i.e. browsing websites, checking the local news, making and receiving phone calls, visiting a chat site, or listening to music, watching TV or streaming videos through the internet.

You do not only incur downloads from saving files such as movies onto your PC. Every time you display a page on your screen, the amount of data within and attached to that page, will be added to your data usage.

Data can be used even when you are not actively viewing but your devices are on. If you have multiple devices in your home, laptops, pcs, phone, ipads all will use data in the background if their wifi is on. Windows updates use large amounts of data and should be restricted.

Equipment tips to help you manage your data

The following tips can help you control the amount of data your devices use.

- Learn how new devices, programs, or apps will access and use the Internet
- Identify options to manage usage
- Adjust settings appropriately
- Exit and close programs not in use
- Turn off unused devices
- Keep anti-virus, anti-spyware, and firewall software installed and up to date
- Install parental controls to minimize unknown usage

Set your connection to metered

Take control and help reduce your data usage. Check these links for advice on how to set up your connection

<http://www.laptopmag.com/articles/set-up-metered-connection-windows-10>

<http://www.pcworld.com/article/2853758/how-to-limit-your-pcs-data-use-while-tethering.html>

Apps that help you manage your data

There are free apps that you can download onto each device (such as GlassWire) that allows you to monitor the usage on that individual device. You would need it loaded onto each device that connects to the internet at your home/office.

Devices and applications on my network

Personal computers

Any activity on a personal computer using a web browser (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari, etc.) contributes to your Internet data usage. Websites with animation e.g. weather and/or a site with many pictures, e.g. Ninemsn, will increase data usage. Photos on sites such as Ebay all look the same size, but in fact some can be quite large (in terms of MB (megapixels), while others may be of a smaller MB size, there is no way to establish the MB size of any photo prior to viewing it on the web.

Windows updates, virus definition downloads, anti-spyware/adware definitions, and any other software that downloads or uploads data will add usage to your service. These downloads run in the background and you may not even notice them.

Audio and video streaming

Streaming, downloading, and watching videos (YouTube, NetFlix, Stan, Foxtel Go etc.) and downloading or streaming music (iTunes, Spotify, etc.) dramatically increases data usage. The main providers also offer 4K streaming which delivers improved quality but also consumes more data, which can quickly add up. Consider adjusting the quality of the video to manage your data usage.

Nbn has a breakdown of how much data the major Australian streaming services use.

<http://www.nbnco.com.au/blog/entertainment/how-much-data-does-streaming-video-movies-and-tv-use.html>

Email

Sending and Receiving Emails will add to your data usage. The larger the file you send or receive, the larger the number of MB. If the emails you receive have photos or other attachments, these will count toward your data usage even if you don't open the file. Once the email has been received into your inbox, it is counted towards your data usage.

Video chat

Limit the size and resolution of video chat services such as Skype, FaceTime to lessen data usage.

Tablets and smartphones using home Wi-Fi

Tablets and smartphones may Wi-Fi when you use them at home and use the Internet in ways similar to personal computers.

As with personal computers, you can control usage by adjusting settings and making other changes.