



How to Estimate Data Usage

What is Internet Usage?

Internet usage is the amount of data which is transferred between your computer or other device (e.g. smart phone, tablet) and the Internet over a certain amount of time. This amount of data is measured in bytes, kilobytes, megabytes and gigabytes.

What is the difference between download and upload?

A download means that data is transferred from the Internet to your computer or device.

Note Downloading songs, movies, software or images also uses bandwidth.

An upload means data is transferred from your computer or device to the Internet.

Note: Most people tend to download more than they upload.

What is a gigabyte (GB) of data?

A gigabyte (GB) is measurement unit for computer data that is technically about 1,048,576 Kilobytes (KB) and around 1000MB... but in the real world, this equates to approximately:

- 1.5 hours of Video Conferencing
 - Around 200 music tracks (5MB each); or
 - Approximately 1000 images or photos (1MB each);
 - 1.4 standard definition movies (700MB per movie)
 - 2 hours of streaming TV (500MB an hour)
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What can cause unexpected high usage?

The most common culprits for high data usage are;

- Videoconferencing: Communicating with other offices and/or your customers for extended periods of time via a Video Conferencing application.
 - Streaming: Video or audio content on YouTube, illico.tv, tou.tv, etc.
 - Online gaming: such as XBOX LIVE, Miniclip.com, Games.com
 - Automatic updates: e.g. Adobe, Windows, Explorer, etc.
 - Exchanging files via iTunes, LimeWire, Zik.ca, Kazaa, BitTorrent, etc.
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How much data does it take to...?

Below are some general estimates of common amounts of data used for usual internet activity. The guidelines below are only approximate so please be aware that actual usage could be far greater (e.g. if you utilise High Definition Video Conferencing, or download High Definition movies or images instead of standard definition versions or if you receive or send a large amount of emails with large attachments).

Activity Type	Measurement of estimated / approximate data used
Internet browsing/surfing	5MB per hour
Emails	500KB per email (estimate includes attachments & spam)
Video Conferencing	600MB per hour
Films	2GB per film (avi, mpeg, divx)
Game/Movie Trailers	100MB each
Music tracks	5MB per song (4-5min duration)
Online gaming	15MB per hour
Online radio	Average stream at 128Kbps
Photos/Documents	850KB per image
Videos	2MB per minute