

## Tips for using the “Usage Over Time” spreadsheet:

1. **Purpose of the spreadsheet** - This spreadsheet is meant to serve as a quick-reference guide to some of the core data on Internet use that has been gathered by the Pew Internet & American Life Project tracking surveys since 2000. *This document is not intended to serve as a stand-alone, primary source of our data.* In order to protect the integrity of the data, the spreadsheet is a read-only document.
2. **Understanding the data** – Our survey data is most accurately understood when read within the context of the raw data file, the full questionnaire and the methodology for each period (available on our website). Questionnaires provide the exact wording and positioning of questions, and indicate who the questions were asked of (e.g. asked of all respondents vs. Internet users).

Please note as a general rule:

- **Q5 and Q6 are asked of all respondents**
- **Q7 and all ACT questions are asked of all Internet users (those who respond “Yes” to Q6).**

The methodology explains the process or method by which the data was gathered, including important information about margins of error and sample sizes, which vary from survey to survey.

3. **Responses included in the spreadsheet** - The responses gathered in this spreadsheet reflect only those who answered “Yes” to the included questions. “No” and “Don’t know/refused” responses are not included in this document. The use of an asterisk (\*) indicates that the response was greater than zero, but less than 1%. Cells that contain “0%” indicate that there were no affirmative responses for the question. Cells that contain “not asked” indicate that a question was not fielded during a particular survey period.
4. **Question labels and abbreviated question wording** – Column A contains the question labels that are assigned to each question in the full questionnaire. In some cases, where question labels have changed over time, both labels are included or the most recently employed question label is used.

Column B contains the wording for each question, which is abbreviated in order to facilitate ease of use. Please refer to questionnaires for complete wording.

5. **Activities “ever done” vs. done “yesterday”** – The online activities questions are typically divided into two batteries, or clusters, of questions in our surveys. Each battery contains a group of questions about various online pursuits. Respondents are first asked: “Please tell me if you ever do any of the following when you go online. Do you ever [insert activity here]?” Those who respond affirmatively are then asked a follow-up question, “Did you happen to do this yesterday or not?”

The online activities questions included in the spreadsheet are divided accordingly. The first cluster, labeled WEB A/1 includes a group of questions asked in the “ever done” and “yesterday” contexts. The second cluster, labeled WEB B/2 includes a separate set of questions also asked in the “ever done” and “yesterday” contexts. WEB A/1 and WEB B/2 clusters are divided in the spreadsheet by a two-row dark blue bar. “Ever done” and “yesterday” iterations within each cluster are further divided by a single-row light blue bar. Additionally, the question wording indicates the “ever” or “yesterday” context of the question.

6. **Demographics** – In addition to the overall response for each question, the spreadsheet includes results according to basic demographic groups: gender, race/ethnicity and age. *Please note that the number of African-American and Hispanic Internet users and users over the age of 65 are occasionally quite small in our samples due to the lower penetration rates for each of these groups. For this reason, it is especially important to refer to primary sources of our data in conjunction with this spreadsheet.*
  7. **Growth of the U.S. adult Internet population** – Because the size of the Internet population has increased over time, the percentage of Internet users who do any given activity should be understood as relative to the size of the total adult Internet population for each survey period.
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