

Internet usage in the United States - Statistics & Facts

Internet access has become vital for communication, obtaining information, job-searching, and participation in an ever-changing world economy. The United States, the fourth largest country in the world by land area, is no exception. With over 312 million internet users as of 2018, it is one of the largest online markets worldwide. In 2019, it was found that just ten percent of U.S. adults said that they do not use the internet. Internet usage in the United States is frequent, with 43 percent of surveyed adults saying that they used the internet several times a day as of February 2018, compared to just eight percent who said they accessed the internet about once a day. The United States are also one of the highest-ranked countries in terms of internet freedom, ranking fourth in the Freedom House Index of 2017 with 21 points.

Internet usage in the United States is shifting towards an increasingly mobile access. As of 2019, 40.61 percent of web traffic in the United States originated from mobile devices. In 2023, almost 85 percent of adults in the United States are projected to access the internet via mobile phone, up from 80.3 percent in 2018. As of 2019, Americans spent half of their digital media time on smartphone apps. In the same year, it was found that the most popular app among U.S. smartphone audiences is YouTube, with a 77.2 percent user reach. Facebook, Google Search, and Google Maps are also very popular among U.S. mobile users.

Social media is one of the most popular online activities and in 2019, 79 percent of the population in the United States had a social networking profile. With a market share of 45 percent of all social networking site visits in the country, social network Facebook is one of the most popular social media entities in the United States, followed by Reddit and Pinterest. In terms of messaging apps, Facebook Messenger is the leading mobile messenger app in the United States with almost 109 million unique U.S. users. Snapchat ranked second with an audience of over 49 million users.

Online shopping is also a very popular online activity amongst internet users in the United States. In 2018, the number of digital buyers in the United States stood at an estimate of 259 million. Forecast shows that this figure is expected to increase to over 307 million by 2023. Leading online retail websites in the country include Amazon, Walmart, eBay, Target and Apple. Mobile commerce is also growing aggressively, with U.S. m-commerce revenues amounting to over 207 billion U.S. dollars in 2018. Amazon has the most popular mobile shopping app in the United States with just over 145 million monthly users as of March 2019. Walmart and eBay ranked second and third respectively.