

**researchacma**  
Evidence  
that informs

*Communications and media in  
Australia series:*

**How we use the internet**  
Executive summary and key findings

DECEMBER 2024

**Canberra**

Level 3  
40 Cameron Avenue  
Belconnen ACT

PO Box 78  
Belconnen ACT 2616

T +61 2 6219 5555  
F +61 2 6219 5353

**Melbourne**

Level 32  
Melbourne Central Tower  
360 Elizabeth Street  
Melbourne VIC

PO Box 13112  
Law Courts  
Melbourne VIC 8010

T +61 3 9963 6800  
F +61 3 9963 6899

**Sydney**

Level 5  
The Bay Centre  
65 Pirrama Road  
Pyrmont NSW

PO Box Q500  
Queen Victoria Building  
NSW 1230

T +61 2 9334 7700  
F +61 2 9334 7799

**Copyright notice**

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Except for the Commonwealth Coat of Arms, logos, emblems, images, other third-party material or devices protected by a trademark, this content is made available under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) licence.

All other rights are reserved.

The Australian Communications and Media Authority has undertaken reasonable enquiries to identify material owned by third parties and secure permission for its reproduction. Permission may need to be obtained from third parties to re-use their material.

We request attribution as © Commonwealth of Australia (Australian Communications and Media Authority) 2024.

# Contents

<b>Executive summary</b>	<b>1</b>
How we use the internet	1
About the research	2
<b>Key findings</b>	<b>3</b>
1. Home internet access	3
2. Online vs offline Australians	3
3. Devices connected to the internet	3
4. Number of devices connected to the internet	4
5. Smart devices connected to the internet	4
6. Frequency of internet use	5
7. Volume of data downloaded	5
8. Activities performed online	5
9. Gambling activities performed online	6



# Executive summary



## Using this report

This report contains the executive summary and key findings from our *How we use the internet* report, which is part of our *Media and communications in Australia* series.

An [interactive version](#) of the full report can be accessed on our website. We recommend this document is read in conjunction with the entire report as the key findings reference charts in the report. The website also has links to the methodology used, a data quality statement and a glossary of terms for the report. The data for tables in the report can be directly exported.

## How we use the internet

Australians use of and access to the internet remains stable and near universal. Nearly all of us are online, have access to the internet at home and use our mobiles to go online. Four in 5 of us have the NBN connected at home, steady since 2022.

Use of smart devices continued to grow, with more of us having smart devices than ever before. In contrast, there has been a steady decline in many internet-based activities.

### Key findings

Almost all Australian adults (99%) used at least one device to go online in the past 6 months in 2024 – up from 90% in 2019. However, for the first time, there has been a decline in the average number of devices we use to access the internet, falling to 3.7 from 4 in 2023. This could indicate a consolidation in internet-enabled devices.

Mobile phones were the most used device to access the internet (95% of Australian adults) with most of us (92%) accessing the internet through our mobile phones multiple times a day. Laptops (71%) and smart TVs (61%) were also popular. While those aged 75 and over were less likely to use their mobile phones to go online compared to all other age groups, take-up for this age group has jumped to 84% from 18% in 2017.

At June 2024, 98% of us had internet access at home – including via the 4G/5G mobile network. Steady from 2023, 93% of Australian adults had fixed or wireless home internet access, with the majority of Australians connected via the NBN (81%).

Smart device ownership continued to grow. Australians had more smart devices connected to the internet, with more of us having wearable devices (37%, from 33% 2023), smart home appliances (26%, from 20% 2023), voice-controlled smart speakers (23%, from 20% in 2023), Bluetooth tracking tags (12%, from 10%) and smart displays (11%, from 9%). Although younger Australians were more likely to have one of these smart devices connected to the internet, growth was driven by older Australians.

We continued to rely heavily on the internet for many everyday activities, such as online shopping and working from home. However, following the COVID-era peak, we have seen a steady decline in some internet-based activities. In 2024, there were declines in accessing news and information, accessing government services using an app, video conferencing and calling, and using telehealth appointments.

The total volume of data downloaded across retail broadband internet and mobile services increased by 14% to 13.9 million terabytes (TB) in 2023, from 12.2 million TB in the same quarter of the previous year. The volume of data downloaded over the NBN continued to rise (12% since the 2022 December quarter), with non-NBN downloads also rising (9% since the 2022 December quarter). Downloads using mobile devices increased by 33% to 2.1 million TB from the previous December quarter.

## **About the research**

This report is based on an ACMA-commissioned nationally representative tracking survey seeking to understand consumer take-up, views and attitudes around communications and media services. Information about the sample and the ACMA annual consumer survey is in the [methodology](#).

# Key findings

## 1. Home internet access

*Base:* Australian adults, at June 2024

- Overall, 98% of us had access to the internet at home, including via the 4G/5G mobile network.
- 93% had a home internet connection (excluding 4G/5G), stable from 2023. The majority (81%) connected via the NBN. Those living in metropolitan areas were more likely to have an NBN connection (84%) than those in regional areas (76%).
- 42% had a mobile broadband service, unchanged from 2023.

## 2. Online vs offline Australians

*Base:* Australian adults, 6 months to June 2024

- Almost all (99%) of us used a device to access the internet – this has been stable since increasing from 90% in 2019.
- Internet use among those aged 35–44 increased from 99% in 2023, to 100% in 2024.

## 3. Devices connected to the internet

*Base:* Australian adults, 6 months to June 2024

- Nearly all (95%) of us used a mobile phone to go online – a 20 percentage-point increase from 2017. Increases from 2023 were among those aged 65–74 (95%, up from 91%) and in regional areas (96%, up from 94%).
- 84% of those aged 75+ used a mobile phone to go online – a considerable increase from 18% in 2017. Even so, they were less likely to go online via a mobile than all other age groups. They were also less likely to go online using a games console (1%) than all other groups.
- 71% used a laptop computer to go online – stable since 2021. Even so, use declined among those aged 65–74 (57%, down from 67%). Those in metropolitan areas (73%) were more likely than those in regional areas (67%) to use a laptop computer to access the internet.
- Males (48%) were more likely than females (32%) to use a desktop computer to access the internet. However, females were more likely to go online via a mobile phone (97%, compared to 95% of males) or an e-reader (10%, compared to 7% of males).
- Fewer females used a tablet to access the internet (49%, down from 54% in 2023).
- More people living in regional areas accessed the internet via a games console (25%, up from 19% in 2023).
- Fewer 35–44-year-olds went online using a personal video recorder (6%) than in 2023 (12%).

## 4. Number of devices connected to the internet

Base: Australian adults, 6 months to June 2024

- On average, we used 3.7 different types of devices to access the internet, down from 4 in 2023.
- 30% of us used 5 or more devices, down from 37% in 2023. This was driven by the younger age groups, with declines from 2023 among those aged 18–24 (23% from 43%), 25–34 (25% from 39%), and 35–44 (34% from 43%).
- Fewer people in metropolitan areas used 5 or more devices to go online than in 2023 (30%, down from 39%), as well as fewer females (27%, down from 36%) and males (33%, down from 38%).
- Males (33%) were more likely than females (27%) to use 5 or more devices to go online.

## 5. Smart devices connected to the internet

Base: Australian adults, 6 months to June 2024

- 37% of us had a wearable device connected to the internet (up from 33% in 2023). This was driven by the older age groups, with increases from 2023 among those aged 55–64 (38%, up from 30%), 65–74 (28%, up from 21%) and 75+ (23%, up from 13%).
- More females had a wearable device than in 2023 (41%, up from 35%), as did those in regional areas (35%, up from 29%).
- Females (41%) were also more likely than males (33%) to have a wearable device connected to the internet.
- Over the previous 12 months, there was growth in use of smart home appliances (26%, up from 20% in 2023), with increases from 2023 for all age groups (except for 18–24-year-olds), for both males and females, and in both metropolitan and regional areas.
- Males (29%) were more likely to have a smart home appliance than females (23%). People aged 75+ (10%) were less likely to have a smart home appliance than all younger age groups.
- 23% of us had a voice-controlled smart speaker connected to the internet (up from 20% in 2023). This change was most pronounced among those in regional areas (20%, up from 16%).
- Those aged 75+ (9%) were less likely than all other age groups to have a voice-controlled smart speaker.
- Bluetooth tracking tags (12%, up from 10%) and smart displays (11%, up from 9%) increased.
- More people aged 75+ (9%, up from 2%) and more males (14%, up from 10%) had a smart display connected to the internet than in 2023.
- Males were more likely than females to have a smart display connected to the internet (14%, compared to 9%), as were those in metropolitan areas (13%, compared to 10% in regional areas).
- More of those aged 65–74 had a Bluetooth tracking tag connected to the internet (9%, up from 4% in 2023) and those living in metropolitan areas (13%) were more likely to have a Bluetooth tag than those in regional areas (10%).
- GPS tracking tags remained unchanged from 2023 at 5%. However, people living in metropolitan areas (5%) were more likely to have a tracking tag than those in regional areas (3%).



## 6. Frequency of internet use

*Base:* Australian adults who used each specific device to access the internet, 6 months to June 2024

- Most of us who used a mobile phone to access the internet went online with the device at least once a day (94%), and 92% did so multiple times a day.
  - Those aged 75+ were less likely than all other age groups to use the device to access the internet multiple times a day (68%).
  - Females (93%) were more likely than males (90%) to use their mobile phone to go online multiple times a day.
- Males were more likely than females to access the internet multiple times a day using a desktop computer (59% compared to 39%), laptop computer (53% compared to 40%) or personal video recorder (50% compared to 36%).
- People in metropolitan areas were more likely than those in regional areas to access the internet multiple times a day using a mobile phone (93% compared to 90%), laptop computer (49% compared to 42%) or desktop computer (54% compared to 46%).

## 7. Volume of data downloaded

*Base:* Australian adults, 3 months to 31 December 2023

- The total volume of data we downloaded increased by 14% to 13.9 million terabytes (TB) (12.2 million TB in December 2022).
- The volume of data downloaded over the NBN continued to rise, with non-NBN downloads also rising after a decline last quarter.
- 81% (11.3 million TB) of total data downloaded was via NBN services, 15% (2.1 million TB) via mobile services and 4% (0.6 million TB) via non-NBN services.
- Downloads using mobile services increased by 33% to 2.1 million TB (1.5 million TB in the previous December 2022 quarter).
- Postpaid services accounted for just under half of data downloaded over mobile networks (0.9 million TB), more than triple the volume for prepaid services (0.3 million TB).

## 8. Activities performed online

*Base:* Australian adults, 6 months to June 2024

- Following a peak in 2021, there has been a steady decline in most internet-based activities.
- Accessing news and information online declined (91%, from 94% in 2023), but has returned to 2022 levels. Compared to 2023, fewer of those aged 55–64 (91%, from 95%) and 65–74 (86%, from 92%) accessed news and information online. Likewise, fewer males, females and those living in regional or metropolitan areas accessed news and information online than in 2023.
- Accessing government services using an app declined (71%) from 2023 (75%). This change was most pronounced among those aged 55–64 (63%, down from 75%), females (71%, down from 75%) and those in regional areas (69%, down from 75%).
- Video conferencing or video calling continued to fall (54%) from 2023 (61%), with video conferencing falling among those aged 55–64 (44% from 53%) and video calling declining for males, females and those living in regional or remote areas.

- Following its peak in 2021, accessing telehealth consultations continued to decline from 2023 (40%, down from 46%), with the largest decline for those aged 65–74 (34%, from 46%) and 75+ (37%, from 48%). While there were declines for gender and location, females (46%) remained more likely than males (35%) to access a telehealth consultation.
- People aged 75+ were less likely than all younger age groups to shop online (64%), access government services using an app (50%) and participate in video calling (25%).
- Those aged 18–24 were more likely to study online from home (72%) than all older age groups.
- People living in metropolitan areas (46%) were more likely than those in regional areas (34%) to work online from home, study online from home (33%, compared to 22%), shop online (86%, compared to 83%), participate in video calling (59%, compared to 43%) or access telehealth (42%, compared to 37%).

## 9. Gambling activities performed online

*Base:* Australian adults who gambled online, 6 months to June 2024

- More than a third (36%) of Australian adults gambled online in some form – an increase from 32% in 2023.
- Lotteries were the most common online activity (78%), stable since 2019.
- Gambling activities by gender:
  - Females were more likely than males to gamble online via lotteries (84%, compared to 75%) and instant scratch tickets (5%, compared to 1%).
  - Males were more likely than females to participate in sports betting (23%, compared to 12%), betting on racing (23%, compared to 11%) and betting on fantasy sports (1%, compared to <0.5%).
- People in metropolitan areas (2%) were more likely than those in regional areas (<0.5%) to gamble online playing poker. In line with this, fewer people in regional areas gambled online playing poker than in 2023 (<0.5%, compared to 1%).