



WELCOME TO BIGPOND

Whether you're new to broadband or an experienced user, this tutorial is for you!

We're here to help you understand the things that add to your usage each month so that you can be more confident keeping an eye on your account.

We're sure you'll find the information below really useful. Take some time to read through it, especially the topics that you're interested in.

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WHAT IS USAGE?

Nearly every online activity involves either downloading (data you receive) or uploading (data you send). The amount of usage you accumulate varies depending on the pages you visit and what you do online.

Your BigPond Broadband plan includes a monthly usage allowance. If you exceed your plan's monthly usage allowance you'll either be billed an additional charge or your access will be slowed – based on the plan you have chosen.

Remember, keeping track of your usage is up to you. If you know what's adding to your usage, you'll know how to manage it effectively.

This tutorial gives you lots of useful information and the tools you need to keep a check on your usage each month.



UPLOAD & DOWNLOAD?

The easiest way to think about uploading and downloading is:

UPLOAD – Information going 'from' your computer

DOWNLOAD – Information coming 'to' your computer

When you visit a website, view multi-media content such as video clips or just browse, you're *downloading* data to your computer.

When you send an email, place image or comments on a website or allow access to files stored on your computer via a file sharing programs such as Bit-Torrent or Limewire, you're *uploading* data from your computer.

Both uploads and downloads count towards your usage allowance.

An exception to this is when you visit [bigpond.com](#) or our exclusive unmetered sites. Accessing information from these sites doesn't add to your usage for most BigPond Broadband Members.



WHAT & HOW MUCH IS 1 MB?

A megabyte (MB) is a measure of computer storage.

1MB is made up of approximately 1000 kilobytes. If you measured a megabyte by pages of text, it would be roughly equal to 600 pages or a large novel. A plain text email has an average size of 2KB (kilobytes) – so a megabyte would be equal to about 500 plain text emails.

A digital camera photo is usually between 1MB and 4MB in size, depending on the resolution and an MP3 music file is usually 4MB in size.

Note: BigPond calculates 1 gigabyte (GB) as 1000 megabytes (MB).



WHAT ACTIVITIES IMPACT MY USAGE?

Here are some common applications and activities that can cause your usage to skyrocket.

- Peer to Peer
- Hackers
- File downloads
- Streaming Audio/video
- Using download managers
- Online gaming
- Sending and receiving emails
- News groups and chat
- Multiple users

Click below to see more information on these activities including tips on how to reduce your usage.

[more info](#)



WHAT ACTIVITIES IMPACT MY USAGE?

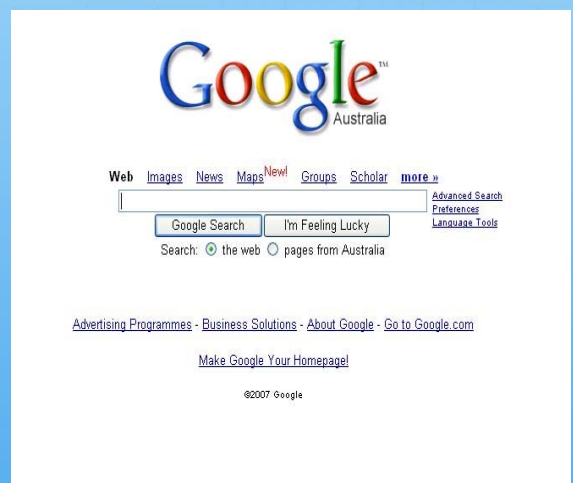
You've just seen some examples of common activities that add to your usage. Did you know that some of the ways your usage adds up isn't so obvious and can even happen without you knowing? This could very well explain why your usage has crept up without you knowing why.

Some websites are as they appear and use minimal megabytes - these sites are usually static and contain mostly text and very few images. However nowadays, most websites use more megabytes. They have a lot of content, are constantly changing to show the latest information, and typically contain lots of photos and images

Next, you will see an example of each.



LOW USAGE WEBSITE



This is an example of a website that consists mainly of static text which generates less usage.



HIGH USAGE WEBSITE



This is an example of a website that is content-heavy and constantly refreshing, generating more usage.

[more info](#)



COMMON HIDDEN USAGE CAUSES

Here are common causes of usage that you may not be aware of:

- Automatic downloads
- Sending/receiving digital images, large attachments via email
- Downloading songs for your mp3 player, iPod
- Playing online games on your console (PlayStation®, Xbox)
- Emails that don't reach their destination

Click below to access the usage estimator to calculate how much usage different activities use

[more info](#)



AUTOMATIC DOWNLOADS

These days, most software includes an Automatic Update feature. It regularly contacts the software manufacturer online to check for and download updates. On one hand this is great. You don't have to remember to check for updates yourself or do anything to get them.

However, software updates can be huge. They're downloaded on your internet account so this can really bump up your monthly usage. For example, the essential Windows XP Service Pack 2 update can be up to 260MB which could be all or a big chunk of your usage allowance!

[more info](#)



DIGITAL IMAGES & LARGE ATTACHMENTS

Digital photos mean that you can share your special moments with anyone anywhere in the world almost instantly.

The size of a high quality digital photo taken with a standard 5 mega pixel camera could be up to 1 MB or more (better picture quality means bigger size and more usage).

Remember, both sending and receiving file attachments will send your usage up, so sharing special moments with your family and friends over email could potentially cause your usage to climb really high!



Photos



DOWNLOADING MUSIC

Downloading music online and playing it on your portable music player (mp3, iPod) is so easy and convenient.

A standard music player has over 1 gig (1000MB) of storage - this means you could download 100's of songs from the internet which will send your usage up.

For example, a standard track is about 3-10MB (better sound quality means larger size and more usage), so your usage can easily add up!



ONLINE WITH YOUR GAMING CONSOLE

These days your computer isn't the only device that can connect to the internet. Game consoles such as Xbox and PlayStation® allow you to play games online with other console user around the world and download files including new game demos.



EMAILS THAT DON'T REACH THEIR DESTINATION

Usually you don't need to think twice about sending and receiving emails. But, sometimes emails get stuck between the email program on your computer and the mail server.

This can happen when the messages you're trying to send or receive are too big and therefore can't get to their destination.

Your email program/server will keep trying to send or receive the email and every time this happens your usage goes up.



USAGE MANAGEMENT TOOLS

We know how important it is to you to understand your usage and keep an eye on your costs. That's why we have provided some tools to make it easier for you to keep track of your usage.



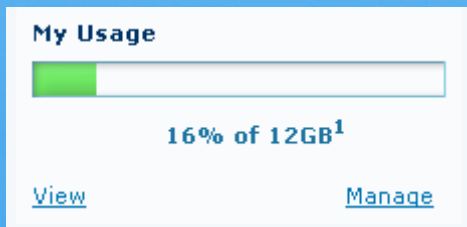


USAGE METER

The usage meter is a visual estimate of your hourly, daily and monthly usage. It will tell you how much your plan lets you use each month, it will show you how close you are to your limit, or by how much you've gone past it.

You can check your Usage Meter at any time by logging into [My BigPond](#) on bigpond.com.

We need you to know, however, that the Usage Meter can't tell you which programs or online resources you used during the month or how much they contributed to that month's usage.



EMAIL NOTIFICATIONS

An email notification will be sent to your BigPond email address as your estimated usage hits 50%, 75%, 100%, 125%, 175% and 250% of your plan's monthly usage allowance.

The emails we send you are very useful in letting you know how much of your allowance you're using, but you shouldn't rely on them on their own.

For example, you could exceed both the 50% and even the 100% usage mark in the same day. It's also possible the email we'll send doesn't reach you because you may not have read your email or because of delays.

This email, along with other important emails we send you are sent to your bigpond.com email address. If you don't use your BigPond email account, it's important you set up [email forwarding](#) so that these messages can be forwarded to an email address that you use regularly.

If you want to use your BigPond email address but still haven't set it up, please visit the [Email](#) section of our Help Centre



CHANGING PLANS

If you find that you're using more megabytes or hours than your plan includes, you can [change your plan](#) at any time and at no cost. This will increase your allowance each month, letting you enjoy the activities you like and you'll avoid having to pay additional usage charges.

Note: If you change your plan on a date other than the date you normally get your bill, you may want a little more information about some of the changes you'll notice with your usage and on your next bill.

Click below to find out more information on your usage when changing plans.

[more info](#)



WHEN TO CHANGE PLANS

A good time to consider changing plans is when:

- You're continually receiving emails from us letting you know that you are close to, or have exceeded your plan allowance
- The amount or type of activity you want to do online changes, e.g. more people are using your BigPond service or you find yourself addicted to playing Sodoku on BigPond Games.
- You're paying additional usage charges on a regular basis.

Click below to find instructions on how to change your plans.

[more info](#)



MY BIGPOND BILL

Whether you have nominated for your BigPond charges to appear on either a Telstra Single Bill or a separate BigPond Bill, you can expect to see the following each month:

- Billing period
- New charges
- Recurring fees
- Additional usage charges
- Other charges and credits

As you'll be notified of any additional usage charges on your bill, therefore checking the details of your BigPond Bill is another way to manage your usage.



PRO-RATA USAGE & CHARGES

When you change over to a new plan on any date other than your billing anniversary date, the amount of usage for the 'Change To' plan is adjusted based on:

- The number of days left in your current billing cycle.
- The number of days in your new billing cycle.

Click below to see examples on how pro-rated usage and charges are calculated.

[more info](#)



PROTECT MY SYSTEM

The internet connects millions of users around the world, and while most use it for things like research, emailing, entertainment or shopping, there are some who use it for dishonest purposes.

They can take advantage of unsuspecting users by finding ways to install programs, including viruses, on their computer. The damage of the programs can vary, they may:

- Display advertising
- Capture your browsing information and send them back to a central source
- Use your computer to send spam
- Use your computer to attack computer networks (often of major businesses)
- Enable hackers to browse your files
- Capture your username and password

The programs will usually slow down your computer and cause unwanted usage on your account.



BIGPOND SECURITY SOLUTION

To make it easy for you, BigPond offers a Security Solution which contains everything you need to help protect your family, or office PC from:

- inappropriate content
- spam, viruses
- phishing attacks

Our security pack comes with automatic updates and a 24 hour helpdesk.



[more info](#)



HELP & OTHER USEFUL LINKS

The objective of this tutorial is to help you understand the things that add to your usage each month so that you can be more confident keeping an eye on your account. You can find ways that work best for you to get the most out of your usage allowance each month - saving you time and money.

Remember, as a BigPond Member, it's your responsibility to be aware of your monthly usage allowance and to monitor your usage - and we've provided the tools you need to do this.

If at any time you need to find quick answers to your questions then visit our Help Centre for 24/7 assistance on email, hardware, Billing and account management, security and much more.



MY ACCOUNT

Check your usage and account details by logging in to 'My Account' at www.bigpond.com

[more info](#)



BIGPOND HELP CENTRE

Search the BigPond Help Centre and FAQ answer library for answers to your common questions.



[more info](#)



FAQs

- [Where can I see a monthly & daily breakdown of my usage?](#)
- [Why do I need to manage my usage?](#)
- [Usage reductions tips](#)
- [Free file downloads from the BigPond File Library](#)
- [How do I use email forwarding?](#)
- [BigPond Usage Estimator - Calculate how much usage different internet activities use](#)