

How to Conserve and Control Data Usage using Your Internet Connection

Your internet connection will be through one of several different connections. The connection that you connect to is a Hotspot. This Hotspot can be one of the parks Wi-Fi connections or your personal Wi-Fi connection. Your personal connection may be a through your phone company, through a private company providing your Wi-Fi or through a device from your cell phone company. Some of these connections have a monthly data plan. Usage is not unlimited and is costly; therefore you want to adjust settings for your smartphone, tablet, or PC to reduce your data use. The same applies to using Wi-Fi on the park's Wi-Fi system. This article will show you some ways to control your data use.

All Devices and PCs

Media (high resolution photos, videos, Netflix, internet radio such as Pandora) consume a lot of data. Avoid using these while connected to your hotspot. Watch the amount of time you spend on YouTube. Example: 2 GB monthly iPad data plan consumed in 4 hours by using Pandora Radio app.

Tablets and Smartphones

- Go into Facebook settings and turn Autoplay for Videos off.
- For Apple devices, go into iCloud backup settings. Make a decision whether you want iCloud backup of your photos and videos to occur automatically. If you have never backed up, do not turn this on for the first time using a hotspot, because the first-time backup could consume your hotspot data usage.
- For Apple devices, go into iCloud backup settings. If you have a PC and backup to iTunes on your computer, use your charging cable to connect to your computer instead of backing up or syncing by Wi-Fi. If you do not back up your iPad or iPhone to a PC, we do recommend that you do a monthly manual backup to iCloud. However, you should connect to a strong unlimited Wi-Fi source to initiate your manual backup to iCloud, to conserve hotspot data usage.
- If your iPhone and iPad are on a carrier's cellular data plan, the same theory applies. You should avoid using your expensive cellular data plan for the activities described above. On an iPhone or iPad, go to Settings and select Cellular. Scroll down and turn off app settings for any apps which you don't want using your limited cellular plan or hotspot plan. Many will by default be set to "on".
- Make sure that your email settings do not automatically download large file attachments, such as videos. Set this to "tap" or "click" to download so you control when this occurs and what Wi-Fi source you are connected to. (Settings will vary by brand of tablet or mail service provider.)

If your iPhone / iPad are on a shared cellular data plan where you connect via your carrier (AT&T, Verizon, etc.) then you do not need to be on Wi-Fi for your devices to have internet connection. However, you use up your data plan similarly to a hotspot data plan. The same principles apply to conserving your data usage. You can track cellular data usage on your Apple device by going to Settings – Cellular – Data Usage. You can also reset the statistics to track after you have turned off undesirable apps and backups. There are apps for your phone which show your data usage.

Windows PCs – all versions

Windows Update on PC – you do want to keep your Windows and other Microsoft software current; however some Windows updates are large so you should control when these happen. Go into Control Panel - System Updates and change your Windows Update settings so you are notified when there is an update. The exact wording varies by which version of Windows you have.

Windows 8 PCs and Tablets

The Start screen on new Windows 8 PC is usually set by default to have a number of "live tiles" which are connected to the internet (for example, a weather tile and a news tile). Any "live tile" which displays changing information is drawing on your data plan if you are connected to your hotspot. We recommend that you right click on each live tile and turn the live feature "off". The only one to leave on is the Store which notifies you of app updates. Touching on an app tile for for count of 2 will also bring up the option to turn the tile "off".

Big Updates and Backups

Whether using a PC or smart device, if you need to perform a large software update or a large backup, we recommend you do not use your hotspot or cellular data plan. Find a good unlimited free Wi-Fi source such as the Mesa Express Library (in outlet mall at intersection of Baseline and Power Road).

Helpful Articles

<http://www.imore.com/going-over-your-data-allowance-your-iphone-or-ipad-heres-how-better-monitor-your-usage>

<http://osxdaily.com/2012/03/28/tips-to-reduce-iphone-ipad-personal-hotspot-data-usage/>

<http://www.techhive.com/article/2048068/5-ways-to-stay-below-your-data-cap-on-android-and-ios.html>