Adults’ Media Use and Attitudes Report

RESEARCH REPORT:

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About this document

This report examines adults' media literacy. It provides detailed evidence on media use, attitudes and understanding among adults aged 16+. It focuses on the current wave of research which was conducted in autumn 2017, and looks at any changes since 2016.

The report is a reference for industry, stakeholders and consumers. It also provides context to the work Ofcom undertakes in furthering the interests of consumers and citizens in the markets we regulate.

The Communications Act 2003 placed a responsibility on Ofcom to promote, and to carry out research in, media literacy. This report contributes to Ofcom's fulfilment of this duty.

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1. Executive summary

Media literacy is the ability to use, understand and create media and communications in a variety of contexts. Our 2017 *Adults' Media Use and Attitudes* report is part of Ofcom's media literacy research programme. It provides detailed evidence on media use, attitudes and understanding among adults aged 16+, with a particular focus on those groups who tend not to participate digitally.

This report draws primarily on data gathered from the annual adults' media literacy tracker survey. This survey is based on interviews with 1,875 adults aged 16 and over in September and October 2017. This is supplemented with data from Ofcom's technology tracker survey in 2017, based on 2,861 interviews with adults aged 16 and over in July and August 2017.

This year, the report includes findings from an additional online study conducted with 1,050 adults aged 16+, which explored internet users' attitudes to being online, understanding of media regulation, use and critical understanding of price comparison websites and their interest in and attitudes to news, and sources of news.

The report also includes additional analysis on working-age adults, in the Annex.

Published alongside this report is the *Adults' Media Lives* 2017 qualitative research report.

This executive summary draws together findings from all these sources to provide an overarching narrative on adults' media experience in 2017.

The overview

Internet use is becoming more mobile, with more people going online via their smartphones and accessing the internet in locations other than work and home. This connectivity is affecting our lives in many ways, with increasing take-up of communication services like WhatsApp, more use of streaming and on-demand services, more access to creative opportunities, and YouTube and social media increasingly being used as sources of news and information.

So it is perhaps not surprising that the majority continue to say that for them the benefits of the internet outweigh the risks. However, this connectivity can be overwhelming, with a third saying they would like to cut down on the time they spend online. It can also bring downsides, most notably nearly half of internet users say they have seen hateful content online in the past year.

Given these downsides, critical thinking skills are of particular interest. People need the skills to question and make judgements about their online environment. These skills are important as they enable them to keep themselves and others safe, to understand when they are being advertised to and how their data is being used, and to know when something could be biased or misleading. Our research shows that many people struggle with at least some of these elements.

It is also important to remember that although the internet seems ubiquitous, the online experience is not the same for everyone. Our research reveals significant differences, by age and by socio-economic group, in the numbers who are online at all, and in the extent to which those who are online have the critical skills to understand and safely navigate their online world.

Key themes

Changing online habits

The internet is becoming more mobile

Nearly nine in ten (88%) UK adults are online, and this is almost universal among those under 55 (96% of 45-54s, increasing to 98% of 16-24s). Adult internet users spend a day a week online. While this hasn't increased overall since 2016, online adults spend now more time using the internet in locations other than home or work/ place of education. This is reflected in the increase since 2016 in the number using their smartphones to go online (70% vs. 66% in 2016). Smartphones are more popular than a computer for going online, continuing a trend first seen in 2016.

Participants in the qualitative research were taking advantage of this on-the-go connectivity for work, with several having started new online businesses and many using smartphones to keep in touch with work and clients. Whereas in previous years being without internet access would have been an irritating inconvenience, some would now consider it a threat to their livelihood.

And it's changing the way we communicate

As the internet becomes more mobile, newer forms of social media are gaining popularity. Facebook is still the most common site on which to have a profile, with three in five (62%) adults having a profile/ account, the same as in 2016. However, the number of people using WhatsApp has increased by 7pp to 36%. People are also more likely than in 2016 to say that WhatsApp is their main profile (11% vs. 4% in 2016) and less likely to say this about Facebook (48% vs. 52% in 2016). This is also reflected in the qualitative research, where WhatsApp is seen as central to maintaining relationships with friends and family.

The evolving role of TV

UK adults are less likely to say their TV set is the device they would miss the most

Since 2016, UK adults are less likely to use a TV set at home and less likely to say their TV set is the device they would most miss. More than half of adults now say they watch on-demand or streaming content; an increase since 2016[1], and the majority of participants in the qualitative research now use at least one on-demand or streaming service.[2]

[1] In 2016 respondents were only asked about their experience of watching on-demand content. In 2017 this was expanded to also include streaming content which could account for the increase shown between 2016 and 2017. Results should therefore be seen as indicative only. However, subscriber figures in Ofcom's CMR 2017 support this trend; see figure 2.3 https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/105074/cmr-2017-uk.pdf

[2] Supported by data in Ofcom's CMR 2017, see section 1.4.2; 67% of UK adults use at least one of the public service broadcasters' online services (BBC iPlayer, All4, ITV Hub, My5) and 45% use at least one subscription on-demand and streaming services, such as Amazon Prime and Netflix https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/105074/cmr-2017-uk.pdf

TV is still the first port of call for news

The majority of internet users value news that is impartial (66%), that is breaking/ up-to-date (62%) and which provides the key facts (59%). Fewer value news that provides depth and breadth of coverage (39%), or that provides an expert opinion (32%) or an alternative viewpoint (22%). TV is the first place that internet users go to, for all types of news that are important to them, with the exception of news that provides an alternative viewpoint.[3]

But people go to social media first for an alternative viewpoint on the news, despite users being *less likely* to see views they disagree with on social media

A quarter (25%) of those who value news which provides an alternative viewpoint say they would turn first to social media sites for this, followed by one in five (21%) who would turn first to TV. However, social media users are less likely than in 2016 to say they often see views they disagree with (20% vs. 29%) and are more likely to say they rarely see such views (18% vs. 12%).

There has also been an increase in the numbers who use YouTube to look for information online (35% vs. 31% in 2016) and three-quarters (74%) say they would use YouTube to learn new things, higher than the proportion who say they would use Google (69%).

The negatives and positives of being online

The number of people saying they have had negative experiences online has increased

Half of internet users (50%) say they are concerned about what is on the internet. This is unchanged since 2016, but specific concerns about risks to others or to society (27% vs. 22%), or about security or fraud (25% vs. 20%), have increased.

There has also been an increase in the numbers having negative online experiences. Close to half of internet users say they have seen hateful content online in the past year (47%), with one in seven (14%) saying they have 'often' seen this. Two in five (40%) who had seen this kind of content said they had done something about it, such as reported it to the website or commented to say they thought it was wrong, and three in five (59%) had ignored it or done nothing about it. Social media users are more likely than in 2016 to say they have seen something that has upset or offended them on social media/ messaging sites in the past year (55% vs. 44% in 2016). However, they are less likely to say they have done something about it (55% vs. 61% in 2016). One in eight (13%) who watch videos on video-sharing sites say they have ever reported inappropriate content to YouTube.

There are mixed views about the role of anonymity online. While more than a third of internet users (37%) think that people should have the right to hide their identity online in order to express their views anonymously, more say that opinions should always be shared online using people's real names, even if these opinions are controversial (46%).

[3] Ofcom's news consumption survey is the main source of Ofcom statistics on news consumption. See latest findings here https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/103570/news-consumption-uk-2016.pdf

Three in ten internet users would like to cut down on the time they spend online, but for most the benefits outweigh the risks

Four in ten internet users say they spend too much time online; this is higher than the proportion who disagree (26%). Many would like to change this: 30% say they would like to cut down on the amount of time they spend online. However, the same proportion disagree with this statement, and internet users also see many benefits of the online world. Four in five agree that new communication methods have made life easier, and three in five think that being online inspires them to try new things. More than half of internet users (54%) feel that being online helps them to connect with creative people, and more than two in five (43%) feel they are more creative since they've been going online. It is perhaps not surprising therefore that for the majority (62%) the benefits of being online outweigh the disadvantages.

Critical understanding: advertising, privacy, funding and regulation

Many lack the critical skills to make judgements about the accuracy of online information or identify when they are being advertised to

While most internet users understand that not all information they find online is truthful, 10% say they don't think about whether the factual information they find online is truthful and a quarter (23%) of social media users wouldn't make any checks on the trustworthiness of a news article on social media.

Although more than half of adults (54%) are aware of how search engines are mainly funded, almost one in five (18%) give an incorrect response, and almost three in ten (28%) don't know. Only half (48%) of search engine users are able correctly to identify advertising on Google, despite it being identified by a box with the word 'Ad' in it, and just under a fifth (18%) think that if something has been listed by a search engine it must contain accurate and unbiased information, although this figure has decreased since 2016 (21%).

This year we also looked at whether people understand how price comparison websites work. More than half (55%) of price comparison website users are not aware that the deals listed first might be paid-for content.

Although most internet users are aware of at least one of the ways in which companies collect information about users online, only three in ten are aware of all the ways we asked about

More than seven in ten internet users (72%) say they are confident that they can manage who has access to their personal data online. Almost seven in ten (69%) say they are aware that companies use cookies to collect information, and almost six in ten (59%) know that companies collect information from social media accounts. Fewer (45%) are aware that companies use apps on smartphones to collect data on users' locations, or on what products or services interest them. While 83% of internet users are aware of at least one of the ways in which companies can collect information about users, only three in ten are aware of *all* the ways we asked about.

Four in ten (41%) internet users say they are not happy for companies to collect and use their personal information. Around one third of internet users say they are happy for this to happen, but with conditions attached: if they can opt-out at any point (35%); if the company is clear about how they will use their personal information (33%); or if they are reassured that their information will not be shared with other companies (32%). In the qualitative research several participants expressed concerns about the sharing of their personal data between platforms, finding it disconcerting to see ads on one platform based on their behaviour on another.

When entering personal details online, 57% of internet users say they would check to see whether the site looks secure before registering their details online. However, one in eight say they would register their personal details if it was the only way to get the product or service they wanted (12%). More than three-quarters of internet users (77%) who purchase online say they make appropriate checks before entering their debit or credit card details online, although 4% say they enter their card details whenever required, and 10% do so if it is the only way to buy the item they want.

Awareness of how TV programmes are funded is high, but awareness of how online services and websites are funded is lower

The majority of adults (80%) know that the licence fee is the main source of funding for BBC television programmes, and seven in ten are aware that advertising is the main source of funding for television programmes on the commercial TV stations. Awareness of the licence fee as the main source of funding for the BBC website (66%) and BBC iPlayer (56%) continues to be lower than for BBC TV programmes, and less than half of internet users (45%) are aware that YouTube is mainly funded through advertising.

Internet users are split over the importance of who funds and owns websites. They are as likely to agree overall (38%) as they are to disagree overall (38%) with: *"As long as the internet provides good websites it doesn't really matter who owns them or how they are funded".* They are, however, more likely to disagree strongly (20%) than they are to agree strongly (15%). This contrasts with the results as recently as 2013, where the reverse was true - internet users were more likely to agree strongly (22%) than they were to disagree strongly (12%).

There is confusion about how content providers are regulated

Three in ten internet users incorrectly think content on YouTube is regulated; they believe that additional rules about offensive, harmful, unfair, inaccurate or biased content, over and above UK law, apply to videos posted on YouTube by the general public.[4]

Awareness of regulation on TV is higher: more than three in five (62%) internet users correctly identified that TV programmes broadcast on BBC One, BBC Two, ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5 (the main five PSB channels) are regulated. Fewer (45%) correctly identified that TV programmes available on channels other than the main five PSB channels (such as ITV2, E4, Dave etc.) are regulated.

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[4] Respondents were provided with the following explanation about media regulation: "*Media regulation is a set of rules or guidelines about programmes or content. These guidelines apply to programmes and things you might watch on your TV or through online services. All programmes and things that you might watch have to abide by UK law and not show anything illegal. However, some channels or services are more highly regulated than others, with additional rules about offensive, harmful, unfair, inaccurate or biased content".*

More than half (56%) correctly identified that TV programmes available on the BBC iPlayer service are regulated. Less than half (47%) think that programmes available on catch-up or on-demand services from the other PSB channels such as ITV Hub or All 4 are regulated.[5] The respondents in the qualitative research showed very little understanding of (and limited interest in) how TV is regulated. However, the BBC was expected to be the provider least likely to show potentially offensive or controversial content.

Demographic differences

While the internet may seem ubiquitous, older people remain less likely to be online

Just over one in ten (12%) UK adults do not go online, unchanged since 2016, and the majority (63%) of non-users say nothing would encourage them to go online in the next 12 months. However, the proportion saying this has decreased since 2016 (75%). The proportion who are not online increases with age, from 18% of those aged 55-64, to 35% of 65-74s and just under half of those aged 75 and over (47%).

Among those who use the internet, 7% are 'newer' internet users; i.e. they first went online less than five years ago. There has been no change in the incidence of newer internet users since 2016. A quarter (25%) of internet users are 'narrow' internet users (i.e. they carry out a small range of activities online). Older people are more likely to be newer and narrow internet users. There was also a clear divide between the under- and over-65s in the qualitative research; none of the latter group see the internet as essential.

And those in the DE socio-economic group are both less likely to go online and less likely to make critical judgements about online content

The proportion of adults in DE[6] households who do not go online is almost double the UK average (22% vs. 12%). This compares to 4% of adults in AB households and 7% in C1 households. Adults in DE households who do go online are more likely to be newer (14% vs. 7% UK average) or narrow (37% vs. 25% UK average) internet users.

Adults in DE households also continue to be less likely to have access to and to use most devices, including smartphones, computers, tablets, radio sets, DVRs, smart TVs, streaming media players and wearable technology. Adults in DE households are more likely to use *only* devices other than a computer to go online (33% vs. 20% UK average), while AB adults are less likely to do so (17%). Those in DE households are also more likely (16%) to *only* use a smartphone to go online, compared to adults overall (8%), while adults in AB households are less likely to do this (2%).

Those in DE households are also less likely to make critical judgements about content, to understand how price comparison websites work, and to use security features to protect themselves online. For

[5] This is partly correct, although these services are subject to a lesser degree of regulation as they only have to adhere to high-level rules about harmful content.

[6] Social grading divides up households based on the job of the highest income earner, social grade *D comprises semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers* and *E comprises state pensioners, casual and lowest grade workers, unemployed with state benefits only.*

example, they are less likely than average (48% vs. 59%) to understand that some websites in search engine results will be accurate or unbiased and some won't be. Those in DE households are more likely to say they are unsure how search engine websites are mainly funded (44% vs. 28% UK average) and less likely to correctly identify advertising as the main source of YouTube funding (36% vs. 45% UK average). People in DE households have lower levels of awareness of how television channels are funded, compared to the average, and users in DE households are less likely to be aware that deals listed first on price comparison websites might be paid-for content. Internet users in DE households are less likely than adults overall to use internet security features.

Given the high proportion of older people in the DE socio-economic group, additional socio-economic group analysis was conducted among adults of working age to explore whether the differences noted above are driven by age, socio-economic group, or both. This additional analysis revealed that these differences persist among working-age households, and the differences in media use and critical understanding are therefore likely to be driven by both age and socio-economic group. For example, working-age (16-64) adults in DE households are three times as likely as those in non-DE households to be non-users of the internet (12% vs. 4%) and are less likely to correctly identify the source of funding for search engines (45% vs. 61%) and YouTube (41% vs. 51%).

2. Summary of key findings by chapter

Digital media take-up and use

Nearly all adults aged 16-54 are now online

- In 2017, 88% of adults aged 16 and over go online, unchanged since 2016 (86%) and 2015 (87%).
- Nearly all adults aged 16-54 go online (98% for 16-24s, 97% for 25-34s, 97% for 35-44s, 96% for 45-54s). This decreases to 82% among 55-64s, 65% among 65-74s and 53% among those aged 75 and over.
- There has been an increase since 2016 in the number of 35-44s who are online (97% vs. 93%).

Compared to 2016, adults are more likely to use a smartphone to go online

- Adults are more likely than in 2016 to use a smartphone to go online (70% vs. 66% in 2016). This has been driven by those aged 35-44 (90% vs 82%) and 45-54 (83% vs.73%), those in the AB socio-economic group (77% vs. 70%) and women (72% vs. 66%).
- A quarter of adults (26%) only go online through devices other than a computer, and 8% only use a smartphone to go online. Both these measures are unchanged since 2016.

Since 2016, adults are less likely to use a TV set and less likely to say it is the device they would miss the most

- While the number of UK adults with a TV set at home remains unchanged (97% for both 2017 and 2016) fewer say they use a TV set at home (91% vs. 93% in 2016).
- UK adults are less likely than in 2016 to say their TV set is the device they would miss the most (28% vs. 32% in 2016), driven by a decrease among 35-44s (19% vs. 27% in 2016).
- Among UK adults overall, mobile phones are still the device people say they would miss the most. However, those aged 55+ continue to say they would miss their TV set the most.

Engagement and participation

There has been a decrease in the popularity of Facebook, and an increase in the popularity of WhatsApp since 2016

- More than three-quarters of internet users (77%) have a profile or account on a social media or messaging site or app, unchanged since 2016. This equates to two-thirds (68%) of adults overall.
- Facebook is still the most common site on which to have a profile, with 91% of social media/ messaging site users having a profile/ account.

- However, compared to 2016 social media/ messaging site users are less likely to use Facebook (down from 95% in 2016) and more likely to use WhatsApp (54%, up from 45% in 2016). In addition, social media/ messaging site users are less likely than in 2016 to consider their Facebook profile/account as their main profile (70% vs. 80% in 2016) and more likely to nominate WhatsApp (16% vs. 7% in 2016).
- The incidence of *only* having a profile or account on Facebook stands at 26%, down from 32% in 2016.

Compared to 2016, social media/messaging site users are less likely to say they often see views they disagree with

- The majority of adults with a social media or messaging profile (59%) say they sometimes see views they disagree with, one in five (20%) say they often see views they disagree with and a further one in five (18%) say they rarely see views that they disagree with.
- Compared to 2016[7], users are less likely to say they often see views they disagree with (20% vs. 29%) and are more likely to say they rarely see these views (18% vs. 12%).
- Women are more likely than men to say they often see views they disagree with (23% vs. 16%).

Social media/messaging site users are more likely than in 2016 to say they have seen something that upset or offended them in the past year, but are less likely to have done something about it

- More than half of social media/ messaging site users (55%) say they have seen something that has upset or offended them on social media/ messaging sites in the past year, an increase since 2016 (44%).
- Although more than half (55%) say they took some form of action in response to seeing this content, this is down since 2016 (61%).

Internet users say they value news which is impartial, breaking and up-to-date, and that TV is their first port of call for this

- Nine in ten (87%) internet users say they are interested in the news; this is more likely for older adults (97% for 65+, 92% for 55-64s).
- Around six in ten internet users say they value news that is balanced/impartial (66%), breaking (62%) and which provides the key facts (59%). Four in ten (39%) value news that provides all the detailed information, a third value news that provides an expert opinion (32%) and one in five values news that provides an alternative viewpoint (22%).
- People say they would turn first to the TV for each type of news they value. The exception is those who value an alternative viewpoint, who say they would turn first to social media.

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[7] In 2017 the definition of social media sites was expanded to specifically include messaging sites or apps; this could account for any differences in the trends over time.

- More than half of internet users say they find the news too depressing (56%). However, a quarter (27%) say they can't get enough of the news, and 78% value being able to check the news whenever they want.

Compared to 2016, smartphone users are more likely to use their phone as a ticket, boarding pass or entry ticket to an event

- Almost three in five (57%) smartphone users ever use their phone as a ticket, boarding pass or entry ticket to an event, an increase since 2016 (41%). The proportion of users doing this at least weekly has doubled, from 5% in 2016 to 11% in 2017.

There has been a decrease since 2016 in the proportion who have never completed government processes online because they prefer to use a pen and paper/ fill out a form/ use the post

- Half of all adults have ever completed government processes online (50%) or looked online for public services information on government sites (50%). About two in five have ever paid for their council tax or other local council service online (40%) or have ever signed an online petition or used a campaigning website (36%).
- Among those who have never completed government processes online, a quarter (24%) say they don't compete government processes online because they prefer to fill in a form or use the post; this is less likely than in 2016 (30%). A third (32%) say it is because they prefer some kind of verbal contact, either by phone or talking to someone on person, or because they think it cannot be done online (32%), unchanged since 2016 (29%).

Content

Close to half of internet users say they have encountered hateful content online in the past year

- Internet users were asked whether they had seen anything hateful on the internet directed at a particular group of people, based on, for instance, their gender, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity. In 2017, close to half of internet users say they have seen hateful content online in the past year (47%). One in seven (14%) say they 'often' see this, with the remaining third (33%) saying they 'sometimes' see it.
- Among those internet users who say they have seen hateful content, two in five say they did something about it, such as reported it to the website or commented to say they thought it was wrong, and three in five (59%) say they ignored it or didn't do anything about it.
- Half of internet users (50%) say they are concerned about what is on the internet, unchanged since 2016. They are, however, more likely to have specific concerns relating to risks to others or to society (27% vs. 22%) or about security/ fraud (25% vs. 20%).

However, the majority of internet users agree that the benefits of being online outweigh any disadvantages

- Three in five internet users (62%) agree that the benefits of being online outweigh any disadvantages.

- Four in five (80%) agree that new communications methods have made life easier; older internet users (55+) are more likely to agree with this, and three in five (61%) think that being online inspires them to try new things.
- Two in five (40%) agree that they spend too much time online; this is more common among younger internet users (16-34) and less common among older internet users (55+).
- Internet users are as likely to agree (31%) as disagree (33%) that they would like to cut down on the time they spend online, with younger users are more likely to agree and older users less likely.

More than half of adults watch on-demand and streaming content

- In 2017, more than half (55%) of adults say they watch on-demand and streaming content, an increase since 2016[8] (51%).
- Compared to the average (55%), older adults are less likely to ever watch on-demand or streaming content (38% for 65-74s and 26% for those aged 75+), as are those in DE households (41%). Those aged 16-24 (64%) and 35-44 (68%) and those in AB (66%) or C1 (62%) households are more likely to view this type of content.

Concerns about diversity on TV and fake or biased TV content have increased since 2016

- While the numbers remain relatively low, the proportion of adults with a TV in the household who say they have concerns about diversity on television (7% vs. 5% in 2016), or concerns that content on TV is fixed or biased (4% vs. 2% in 2016) have both increased since 2016.
- Overall, the proportion of adults who have any concerns about what is on TV has remained stable since 2016 (37% vs. 35% in 2016).

Search engines are by far the most popular source when looking for information online. However, use has decreased since 2016, while use of YouTube for this purpose has increased

- The vast majority of internet users (95%) have used a search engine to look for information online, although this has decreased since 2016 (97%). Around a third (32%) say they have used the BBC website, also down since 2016 (40%). A third (35%) have ever used YouTube for this purpose, up since 2016 (31%).

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[8] In 2016 respondents were only asked about their experience of watching on-demand content. In 2017 this was expanded to also include streaming content which could account for the increase shown between 2016 and 2017. Results should therefore be seen as indicative only. However, subscriber figures in Ofcom's CMR 2017 support this trend; see figure 2.3 https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/105074/cmr-2017-uk.pdf

Critical thinking

The majority of people are aware how television programmes are funded…

- Eight in ten (80%) adults are aware that the licence fee is the main source of funding for BBC television programmes. One in ten adults (9%) give an incorrect response (say something other than the licence fee), an increase since 2016 (7%). A similar proportion (11%) don't know.
- Seven in ten adults are aware that advertising is the main source of funding for television programmes on the commercial TV stations (70%), unchanged since 2016 (73%).

However, awareness of funding of online services and websites is lower

- Two-thirds of adults (66%) are aware that the licence fee is the main source of funding for the BBC website, and more than half (56%) are aware that the licence fee is the main source of funding for the BBC iPlayer. These are both lower than awareness of funding for the main BBC TV channels.
- More than half (54%) of adults are aware of how search engine websites are mainly funded, close to three in ten (28%) are unsure[9], and nearly one in five (18%) give an incorrect response.
- Less than half (45%) of adults are aware of the main source of funding for YouTube. This rises to half (50%) of internet users and more than half (55%) among users of video-sharing sites such as Vimeo, Snapchat, Facebook and YouTube.

Awareness of regulation on TV channels and online services is mixed - three in ten think that content on YouTube is regulated

Internet users were asked which TV channels and online services they thought were subject to regulation, i.e. in addition to UK law had to abide by "'additional rules' *about offensive, harmful, unfair, inaccurate or biased content."*

- More than three in five (62%) internet users correctly identified that TV programmes broadcast on BBC One, BBC Two, ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5 (the main five PSB channels) have to abide by additional rules about offensive, harmful, unfair, inaccurate or biased content.
- Fewer (45%) correctly identified that TV programmes available on channels other than the main five PSB channels (such as ITV2, E4, Dave etc.) need to abide by additional rules about offensive, harmful, unfair, inaccurate or biased content.
- More than half (56%) correctly identified that TV programmes available on the BBC iPlayer service need to abide by these additional rules.

[9] Either responding 'don't know' (26%) or stating they had never heard of search engine websites (2%).

- Less than half (47%) think that programmes available on the catch-up or on-demand services from the other PSB channels, such as ITV Hub and All 4, need to abide by these additional rules.[10]
- Two in five (39%) think that these rules apply to content on streaming services such as Netflix and Amazon Prime.[11]
- And almost three in ten (28%) incorrectly think that content on YouTube is also subject to these rules.

About a quarter say they don't make appropriate checks before entering personal or financial details online

- When entering personal details online, seven in ten say they make any of the 'appropriate' (or media-literate) checks asked about. The most popular, cited by more than half (57%), is to check to see whether the site looks secure before registering their details online, followed by checking whether they are familiar with the company or brand (cited by 49%).
- One in four (26%) say they do any of the 'unreliable' checks or actions asked about; the most popular, cited by one in eight, is registering if it is the only way to get the product or service they want (12%), followed by one in ten who would check whether the site is listed by a search engine (9%).
- Three-quarters of those who purchase online (77%) say they make any of the 'appropriate' (or media-literate) checks asked about before entering their debit or credit card details. The most commonly cited (by 65%) is checking for signs the site looks secure, e.g. the padlock symbol.
- A quarter (23%) say they do any of the 'unreliable' checks or actions asked about before entering their debit or credit card details; one in ten say they go ahead with the purchase anyway if it is the only way to get what they want (10%).

Three in ten internet users say they are aware of *all* the ways that we asked about, in which companies collect personal data online

- A majority of internet users say they are aware of: companies using cookies to collect information (69%); companies collecting information from social media accounts (59%); and companies asking customers to register with a website or app to opt in/out of receiving further information from them (58%) or their partners or other companies (51%).
- Forty-five per cent of internet users say they are aware of companies using smartphone apps to collect data on users' locations or on what products or services interest them.

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[10] This is partly correct, although these services are subject to a lesser degree of regulation as they only have to adhere to high-level rules about harmful content.
[11] This is partly correct, although these services are subject to a lesser degree of regulation as they only have to adhere to high-level rules about harmful content.

- Only three in ten internet users say they are aware of *all* the ways that we asked about, in which companies can collect personal information online.

Although over four in five internet users are confident they can recognise advertising online, only half can identify adverts in search engine results…

- A majority (85%) of internet users say they are either very or fairly confident that they know what is and is not advertising online.
- Six in ten (58%) search engine users can correctly identify sponsored links on Google as advertising; that is, they state that the first two results returned by Google, distinguished by the box with 'Ad' in it, are adverts. Around half (48%) understand that this is the only reason the results are displayed, unchanged since 2016 (48%).
- Less than three in five internet users (58%) are aware of personalised advertising, in that they are aware that some people might see different adverts to those that they see. More than one in five (23%) state that everyone would see the same adverts, and 18% are unsure.

…and the majority who use price comparison websites are unaware that the deals listed first might be adverts

- Forty-five per cent of price comparison website users say the deals listed first might be there because companies may have paid for the deal to appear first; this means that a majority (55%) are *not aware* that the deals listed first might be paid-for content.

Most internet users understand that not all the information they see online or on social media is truthful

- The majority of internet users (59%) say they consider 'some' of the information they see online to be truthful, followed by 25% who think that 'most' of the information is truthful. This compares to almost two-thirds of social media users (65%) who say that 'some' of the information posted on social media sites or apps is truthful, followed by 21% who think that most is truthful.
- One in ten internet users say they don't think about whether the information they see online is truthful. This is the same among social media users, one in ten (9%) of whom say they don't think about whether the content on social media sites or apps is truthful.
- Two per cent of internet users consider 'all' the information they see online to be true. This is the same for social media users, 2% of whom consider all the information they see on social media to be true.

Newer, narrow and non-users of the internet

Newer users tend to be older and in the DE socio-economic group. They are less confident online, less likely to be aware of online sources of funding and less able to identify advertising online

- 'Newer' internet users are defined as those who first started using the internet less than five years ago. Seven per cent of UK adult internet users are newer users. This rises to almost a quarter (23%) of internet users aged 75 and over and 14% of internet users in DE households.

- Newer users are more likely than established users to go online only through devices other than a computer (58% vs. 27%). Nearly a quarter of newer users only go online via a smartphone (23%) or a tablet (24%); each of these measures is higher than for established users (9% and 3% respectively).
- Newer internet users are less confident than established users in their use of the internet (overall confidence in internet use: 49% vs. 89% for established users). They are less likely to be aware of the main source of funding for BBC iPlayer (39% vs. 61%), search engine websites (34% vs. 61%) and YouTube (22% vs. 52%). Compared to established users, newer users are less likely to be able to identify advertising in search engine results (37% vs. 59%) and to be aware of personalised advertising (42% vs. 60). They are also less likely to say they use each of the nine online security measures asked about.

Narrow users also tend to be older and in the DE socio-economic group

- 'Narrow' internet users are defined as those ever carrying out up to four of 15 types of online activities (medium users ever carry out between five and nine types, and broad users ever carry out between ten and 15 types). A quarter (25%) of all UK adult internet users are narrow users, with those aged 55+ (32% for 55-64s, 49% for 65-74s and 55% for 75+) and in the DE socio-economic group (37%) more likely to be narrow internet users.
- Two in five narrow users (41%) say they go online less often than once a day, double the proportion of all UK internet users (19%).

Older people and those in the DE socio-economic group are more likely to be non-users of the internet, and the proportion of non-users of the internet is unchanged since 2014

- Twelve per cent of adults in the UK are non-users of the internet, unchanged since 2014 (14% in 2014, 13% in 2015, 14% in 2016). Non-use of the internet is more likely among those aged 55 and over (18% for 55-64s, 35% for 65-74s and 47% for those aged 75+).
- Non-use is also more likely for adults in DE households (22%). Due to the high number of older adults in the DE socio-economic group, analysis of working age adults only was conducted, revealing that socio-economic differences persist among working-age adults (12% of DE 16-64 year-olds are not online vs. 4% of ABC1C2 16-64 year-olds).
- More than half (52%) of non-users of the internet say they do not go online because they do not see the need; one in five (22%) mention a reason relating to the internet being 'too complicated'; and 15% mention a cost-related reason. Older non-users (aged 65 and over) are more likely than younger non-users (aged 16-64) to say they don't go online because they do not see the need, while younger non-users are more likely to cite cost.
- A majority (63%) of non-users say nothing would prompt them to go online in the next 12 months. However, this has decreased since 2016 (75%) and more than two in five (44%) non-users have asked someone else to use the internet on their behalf in the past year.

3. Introduction

Ofcom's duties

The promotion of media literacy is a responsibility placed on Ofcom by Section 11 of the Communications Act 2003. Under Section 14 (6a) of the Act we have a duty to make arrangements for the carrying out of research into the matters mentioned in Section 11 (1).

Media literacy enables people to have the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to make full use of the opportunities presented by communications services. Media literacy also helps people to manage content and communications, and to protect themselves and their families from the potential risks associated with using these services.

Ofcom's definition of media literacy is:

"The ability to use, understand and create media and communications in a variety of contexts".

The objectives of this research are:

- To provide a rich picture of the different elements of media literacy across the internet, television, radio, games and mobile phones.
- To identify emerging issues and skills gaps that help to target stakeholders' resources for the promotion of media literacy.

Research methodology and analysis

This report is designed to give a detailed but accessible overview of media literacy among adults aged 16 and over, with demographic analysis by age, gender and socio-economic group.

It draws on the data from the latest wave of the Adults' Media Literacy Tracker. The 2017 quantitative survey was conducted by Saville Rossiter-Base among 1,875 adults, in-home, using CAPI (computer-aided personal interview) methodology, between September and October 2017. In this report we compare the 2017 data with the previous wave of research in 2016, and the charts show trends from previous waves of research in the charts, for reference.

This report also draws on data from another Ofcom research study - the 2017 Technology Tracker survey[12]. This quantitative study, also conducted by Saville Rossiter-Base, interviewed 2,861 adults aged 16 and over between July and August 2017 (of whom 2,514 were internet users). Where the data are taken from the Technology Tracker survey, this is mentioned in the narrative and flagged in the source notes under the relevant chart.

In 2017, the in-home research was complemented by an online study with 1,050 adults aged 16+. The purpose of this study was to understand internet users' attitudes to being online, with a

[12] The research in the Technology Tracker takes place across two waves per year and the data included in this report (going back to 2015) relate to the second wave that is conducted every year.

particular focus on their attitudes to creativity, establish users' understanding of media regulation, look at their use and critical understanding of price comparison websites and their interest in and attitudes to news, and sources of news.

The online interviews were conducted through a research panel between 31 October and 13 November 2017, with quotas set by age, gender, nation and household socio-economic group to reflect the profile of internet users aged 16+. Corrective weighting was applied to the online data to match the profile of internet users. Where the data are taken from the online survey, this will be mentioned in the narrative and flagged in the source notes under the relevant chart.

All previous media use and attitudes reports can be found at https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/media-literacy-research. The sample sizes and fieldwork periods are as follows:

Report published	Sample size Adults aged 16+	Fieldwork months (Year in which data are reported)
2017	1,846	1 wave: Nov-Dec 2016
2016	1,841	1 wave: Sep-Oct 2015
2015	1,890	1 wave: Oct- Nov 2014
2014	1,642	1 wave: Oct-Nov 2013
2013	1,805	1 wave: Sep--Nov 2012
2012	1,823	1 wave: Sep-Oct 2011
2011	2,117	2 waves: Apr-May & Sep-Oct 2010
2010	1,824	2 waves: Apr-May & Sep-Oct 2009
2008	2,905	1 wave: Oct-Dec 2007
2005	3,244	1 wave: Jun-Aug 2005

Significance testing

Significance testing at the 95% confidence level was carried out, and any findings detailed in this report have been found to be significant to a 95% confidence level. This means that where findings are commented on, there is only a 5% or smaller probability that the difference between the samples is by chance.

Between 2016 and 2017 the Technology Tracker changed from a survey administered using a pencil and paper approach (PAPI) to one administered through a tablet (CAPI). As this could affect the results shown, any differences between 2016 and 2017 have been tested at the 99% level, so that there is only a 1% probability that the difference is by chance.

Statistically significant findings between 2016 and 2017 are indicated by arrows in the figures in the report. In addition to reporting on differences over time, we look at adults in the different age groups and socio-economic groups, and compare these to adults overall in 2017, to see if there are any significant differences within these sub-groups. We also report on differences between men and women.

Take-up figures

The take-up figures in this report give useful information to contextualise people's media literacy-related behaviour and attitudes. Official all-UK Ofcom take-up figures, based on the data from the Technology Tracker survey, can be found in the annual CMR (*Communications Market Report*) published each summer. The latest publication can be found here:
https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/multi-sector-research/cmr/cmr-2017

4. Digital media take-up and use

This section looks at UK adults' access to, and personal use of, media devices. It also addresses adults' affinity with the devices they use, in terms of which they would miss most. It focuses on the devices used to go online, and details volume of internet use. This is followed by a summary of activities undertaken online (this is expanded upon in Section 4 and Section 5). This section also documents mobile phone use (smartphones in particular) and looks at how smartphone users manage their data use.

Key findings

- Compared to 2016, adults are more likely to have access to and use a smart TV at home, and they are less likely to have access to and use a standard TV. Overall, however, adults are less likely to use any type of TV set at home (91% vs. 93% in 2016) and this decrease is evident among C2 adults (89% vs. 94%), men (90% vs. 93%) and women (91% vs. 94%).
- Use of a radio set a home is also less likely than in 2016 among adults overall (47% vs. 51%) and among women in particular (46% vs. 52%).
- Compared to 2016, access to and use of a computer or tablet is unchanged among adults overall.
- Overall use of a mobile phone (89%) is unchanged since 2016, as is use of a smartphone (74%). There has been no change in either of these incidences among adults aged 16-74. Adults aged 75 and over are, however, now more likely to use a mobile phone (72% vs. 60% in 2016) and AB adults are more likely to use a smartphone (83% vs. 76% in 2016).
- Around three in ten smartphone users aged 16+, say that checking social media/ messaging people (29%) or checking email (28%) are the activities (other than making calls or sending texts) they would most miss using their smartphone for. Those aged 16-24s (57%) and 25-34s (41%) are more likely to say they would miss checking social media/ messaging people, and 35-44s (35%) and 45-54s (40%) are more likely to miss checking email.
- Mobile phones are still the device that people say they would miss the most, and this continues to be true among adults aged 16-54. Those aged 55+ still say they would miss their TV set the most. Compared to 2016, adults overall are more likely to say they would miss their mobile phone the most (46% vs. 41%) and this is particularly true for adults aged 45-54 (51% vs. 38% in 2016). At the same time, adults are less likely to say they would most miss their TV set (28% vs. 32% in 2016), driven by a decrease among 35-44s (19% vs. 27% in 2016).
- In 2017, 88% of adults aged 16+ go online, unchanged since 2016 (86%) and 2015 (87%). Compared to 2016, 35-44s are now more likely to go online (97% vs. 93%) which means that in 2017, nearly all adults aged 16-54 go online (98% for 16-24s, 97% for 25-34s, 97% for 35-44s and 96% for 45-54s).

- Adults are now, however, more likely to use a smartphone to go online (70% vs. 66% in 2016) – particularly 35-44s (90% vs 82%), 45-54s (83% vs.73%), AB adults (77% vs. 70%) and women (72% vs. 66%).
- Compared to 2016, women are also more likely to use a tablet (56% vs. 49%) or a smart TV (16% vs. 11%) to go online.
- In 2017, a quarter of adults (26%) go online only through devices other than a computer, and 8% of adults say they only use a smartphone to go online. Both these measures are unchanged since 2016.
- There has been no change in the overall self-reported volume of internet use per week at home or in the workplace/ place of education, but adults who go online spend more time online in locations other than home or work/place of education compared to 2016 (2.5 vs. 2.1 hours). The total estimated weekly volume of internet use now stands at 24 hours - so one day per week is spent online by the average internet user.
- Compared to the average, younger internet users (aged 16-44) are more likely to have undertaken most types of internet use in the previous week, while those aged 55+ are less likely.
- Four in five smartphone users aged 16+ (81%) say they know how to check their data allowance to see how much data they have left, and three in five (60%) have ever done this. Smartphone users aged 16-24 (57%) and those in DE households (47%) are more likely than average (39%) to say they have ever used up their data allowance, and to say they do so most months.
- Seven in ten smartphone users (70%) ever use public wifi; this is less likely among those aged 65 and over (45%).

Access to and use of devices in the home

Since 2016 there has been an increase in access to and use of a smart TV, particularly among adults aged 45-54, ABC1s and women

We ask respondents about a range of media platforms/ devices to find out which, if any, they have access to at home and which they personally use. These measures are shown in Figure 1 by age, and in Figure 2 by socio-economic group and gender.

As shown in Figure 1, a majority of UK adults have access to six devices in the home: a TV set - either standard or smart (97%), a mobile phone (94%), a desktop, laptop or netbook computer (73%), a tablet (65%), a radio set (58%) and a digital video recorder (DVR) (52%). These six devices are also owned by a majority of adults between the ages of 35 and 64. In contrast, while more than half of 16-34s have access to a TV set, a mobile phone, a computer, a tablet or a games console/ games player, less than half have access to a radio set (45% for 16-24s and 40% for 25-34s) or a DVR (47% and 45% respectively). A majority of those aged 65-74 have access to five devices: a TV set (99%), a mobile phone (90%), a radio set (71%), a computer (65%) and a tablet (54%). A majority of adults aged 75 and over have access to four devices: a TV set (99%), a mobile phone (86%) a radio (75%) and a computer (51%).

Across all adults aged 16 and over, the gap between access and use is greatest for a games console or player - there is a 17 percentage point difference between having one in the home (38%) and using it (21%). The gap for radio is 11 percentage points, for a standard TV set it is nine percentage points, for a DVR it is eight percentage points and for a tablet it is seven percentage points. The gap is lowest for a smart TV (two percentage points).

In 2017, there are four devices which are used by a majority of adults: a TV set – either standard or smart (91%), a mobile phone (89%), a desktop, laptop or netbook computer (67%) and a tablet (58%). Just under half use a radio (47%) and around two in five use a DVR (44%) and one in five (21%) a games console or games player.

Compared to the average (89%), use of a mobile phone is more likely among 16-24s (96%), 25-34s (95%) and 35-44s (94%) and less likely among 55-64s (84%), 65-74s (78%) and over-74s (72%). Use of any type of TV set (standard or smart) is higher among 65-74s (97%) and the over-74s (96%) and lower among 16-24s (85%) and 25-34s (85%) compared to the average (91%).

Use of a desktop/ laptop or netbook (67% overall) is higher among 35-44s (76%) and 45-54s (79%) and lower for 65-74s (57%) and over-74s (45%). Use of a tablet computer (58% overall) is also lower among 65-74s (48%) and over-74s (28%), and higher among 35-44s (66%).

Use of a radio set is more likely among over-54's (61% of 55-64s, 61% of 65-74s and 66% of over-74s) and less likely among 16-24s (28%) and 25-34s (32%).

Compared to the average (44%), 35-44s are more likely to use a DVR (55%) while those aged 65-74 (36%) and the over-74s are less likely (30%). Use of a smart TV is more likely than average (44%) among 35-44s (54%) and 45-54s (55%) and less likely among those aged over 65 (27% for 65-74s and 16% for over-75s).

Compared to the average (21%), use of a games console/ games player is more likely among 16-24s (51%), 25-34s (32%) and 35-44s (27%), and less likely among over 54s (5% of 55-64s, 2% of 65-74s and 0% of over-74s).

Use of streaming media players (like Apple TV, Now TV box, Amazon Fire TV, Chromecast, Roku) (17% overall) and wearable technology (9% overall) is more likely among 35-44s (22% and 15% respectively) and 45-54s (23% and 14% respectively) and less likely for those aged 65 and over (6% and 1% for 65-74s and 2% and 1% for 75+).

The arrows in Figure 1 show changes in access to and use of media in the home compares to 2016. In summary:

- Adults aged 75 and over are more likely to have access to (86% vs. 73% in 2016) and to use (72% vs. 60% in 2016) a mobile phone.
- Access to and use of a standard TV set has declined among adults overall; use, in particular, has declined among adults aged 16-64. Access to and use of a smart TV has increased among adults overall and for adults aged 45-54 in particular. Use of any type of television set (whether standard or smart) is less likely among adults overall (91% vs. 93%); this decline is not attributable to any particular age group.
- Adults aged 55-64 are less likely to use a desktop/ laptop/ netbook computer (62% vs. 71% in 2016). While adults aged 75 and over are more likely to say they have access to a desktop/ laptop/ netbook computer at home (51% vs. 40%), use among this age group is unchanged.
- Although use of a radio at home has declined among adults overall (47% vs. 51% in 2016) this is not attributable to any particular age group.
- Adults aged 55-64 are less likely to say they have access to (17% vs.29%) and to use (5% vs. 10%) a games console or games player.
- While access to wearable technology is unchanged since 2016, adults are more likely to use this technology (9% vs.7%) with use more likely among 45-54s (14% vs. 8% in 2016).
- There has been no change in access to or use of tablets, DVRs or streaming media players among adults overall or among any particular age group.

Figure 1: Summary of access to and use of devices/ media at home, by age: 2017

	All adults		16-24		25-34		35-44		45-54		55-64		65-74		75+	
	Access	Use	Access	Use	Access	Use	Access	Use	Access	Use	Access	Use	Access	Use	Access	Use
Mobile phone	94%	89%	97%	96%	98%	95%	97%	94%	96%	93%	93%	84%	90%	78%	86%↑	72%↑
Computer	73%	67%	78%	71%	68%	64%	79%	76%	84%	79%	70%	62%↓	65%	57%	51%↑	45%
Standard TV set	67%↓	58%↓	63%↓	51%↓	62%	51%↓	57%↓	49%↓	64%	53%↓	68%↓	62%↓	81%	77%	88%	85%
Tablet	65%	58%	68%	58%	73%	66%	74%	66%	68%	62%	63%	57%	54%	48%	34%	28%
Radio set (DAB or otherwise)	58%	47%↓	45%	28%	40%	32%	54%	42%	61%	53%	73%	61%	71%	61%	75%	66%
DVR/ Digital Video Recorder	52%	44%	47%	39%	45%	39%	65%	55%	57%	48%	57%	49%	45%	36%	36%	30%
Smart TV set	46%↑	44%↑	51%	47%	48%	46%	59%↑	54%	57%↑	55%↑	45%	42%	28%	27%	18%	16%
Games console /games player	38%	21%	64%	51%	54%	32%	54%	27%	39%	16%	17%↓	5%↓	6%	2%	1%	0%
Streaming media player	21%	17%	28%	22%	24%	19%	26%	22%	30%	23%	17%	13%	9%	6%	3%	2%
Wearable technology	13%	9%↑	17%	9%	13%	9%	21%	15%	18%	14%↑	10%	6%	3%	1%	2%	1%
ANY TV	97%	91%↓	95%	85%	94%	85%	98%	90%	98%	92%	99%	93%	99%	97%	99%	96%

Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
A1/ A2. Can you please look at this list and tell me which of these you have at home? (prompted responses, multi-coded)/ And which of these devices that you just said you had at home do you personally ever use, for any purpose? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1875 aged 16+, 249 aged 16-24, 277 aged 25-34, 305 aged 35-44, 268 aged 45-54, 296 aged 55-64, 239 aged 65-74, 241 aged 75+)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

Adults in DE households continue to be less likely to have access to and therefore to use most devices/media

Of the ten devices shown in Figure 2, compared to the average, access to six is more likely for adults in AB households, while access to the same six devices is less likely in DE households: mobile phone (97% AB and 91% DE) desktop/ laptop or netbook computer (88% AB and 54% DE), tablet (78% AB and 49% DE), radio set (69% AB and 48% DE), DVR (64% AB and 37% DE) and smart TV (61% AB and 32% DE). Adults in DE households are also less likely to have access to streaming media players (12%. vs. 21% for adults overall) and to wearable technology (6% vs. 13%). In contrast, adults in DE households (73%) are more likely, and those in AB households (59%) are less likely, to have access to a standard TV set, compared to the average (67%).

Compared to the average for adults overall (73%), access to a desktop/ laptop or netbook computer is higher among C1 adults (78%).

Access to a games console or player does not vary by household socio-economic group, compared to the average.

Each of these differences in access to devices within the home by socio-economic group is mirrored in the patterns of use of each of these devices. In addition, use of a streaming media player and use of wearable technology is higher than average in AB households.

In 2017, women are more likely than men to say that they have access to (69% vs. 60%) and use (62% vs. 54%) a tablet in the home. Although men are no more likely than women to say they have access to a games console/player in the home, they are more likely to use one (27% vs. 15%).

The overall decrease in access to and use of a standard TV set since 2016 is attributable to adults in AB, C1 and C2 households, and can be seen among men and women. While access is unchanged in DE households, use of a standard TV set is lower for DE adults.

Women are more likely than in 2016 to have access to a tablet (69% vs. 64%), although usage levels are unchanged. They are less likely to use a radio set (46% vs. 52%) although access has not changed.

While adults in C1 households are more likely than in 2016 to have access to a DVR in the home (57% vs. 50%), there has been no increase in use of this device among these adults. The increase in adults' overall access to and use of a smart TV is driven by adults in AB and C1 households and also by women.

Although access to a games console or player is less likely in C2 households (36% vs. 45% in 2016) use has not declined. Since 2016, women are more likely to have access to a streaming media player, and access to and use of wearable technology is more likely among women. Use of wearable technology is more likely among C1 adults (12% vs. 7% in 2016).

The decrease since 2016 in adults' use of a TV set at home, whether standard or smart, is attributable to adults in C2 households (89% vs. 94%) and both men (90% vs. 93%) and women (91% vs. 94%).

Figure 2: Summary of access to and use of devices/ media at home, by socio-economic group and gender: 2017

	All adults		AB		C1		C2		DE		Male		Female	
	Access	Use	Access	Use	Access	Use	Access	Use	Access	Use	Access	Use	Access	Use
Mobile phone	94%	89%	97%	93%	95%	91%	94%	88%	91%	84%	94%	89%	95%	90%
Computer	73%	67%	88%	83%	78%	73%	69%	62%	54%	48%	73%	69%	73%	65%
Standard TV set	67% ↓	58% ↓	59% ↓	52% ↓	66% ↓	56% ↓	70% ↓	62% ↓	73%	65% ↓	67% ↓	60% ↓	66% ↓	57% ↓
Tablet	65%	58%	78%	71%	69%	63%	60%	53%	49%	42%	60%	54%	69% ↑	62%
Radio set (DAB or otherwise)	58%	47% ↓	69%	55%	58%	49%	57%	45%	48%	40%	60%	49%	57%	46% ↓
DVR/ Digital Video Recorder	52%	44%	64%	55%	57% ↑	49%	50%	42%	37%	30%	53%	46%	51%	43%
Smart TV set	46% ↑	44% ↑	61% ↑	57% ↑	50% ↑	47% ↑	41%	38%	32%	30%	44%	42%	48% ↑	46% ↑
Games console /games player	38%	21%	39%	18%	41%	22%	36% ↓	21%	34%	22%	38%	27%	37%	15%
Streaming media player	21%	17%	30%	24%	22%	17%	20%	16%	12%	9%	20%	17%	23% ↑	17%
Wearable technology	13%	9% ↑	24%	15%	15%	12% ↑	7%	4%	6%	4%	13%	9%	14% ↑	9% ↑
ANY TV	97%	91% ↓	98%	94%	97%	90%	97%	89% ↓	98%	89%	97%	90% ↓	98%	91% ↓

Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
A1/ A2. Can you please look at this list and tell me which of these you have at home? (prompted responses, multi-coded)/ And which of these devices that you just said you had at home do you personally ever use, for any purpose? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1875 aged 16+, 415 AB, 571 C1, 386 C2, 503 DE, 909 male, 966 female)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

Device use and affinity

Smartphone use

Three-quarters of adults use a smartphone, unchanged since 2016, although those in AB households are now more likely to use one

As shown above in Figure 1, nine in ten adults (89%) use a mobile phone, unchanged since 2016 (90%). There has been no change in the use of a mobile phone among adults aged 16-74. However, adults aged 75 and over are now more likely to use one (72% vs. 60%).

Figure 3 breaks out overall mobile phone use into smartphone and non-smartphone use, and shows that in 2017 three-quarters of adults use a smartphone (74%) while one in seven (15%) say they use a phone that is not a smartphone. Use of a smartphone is also unchanged since 2016 (72%), although adults are less likely to now use a phone that is not a smartphone (15% vs.18% in 2016).

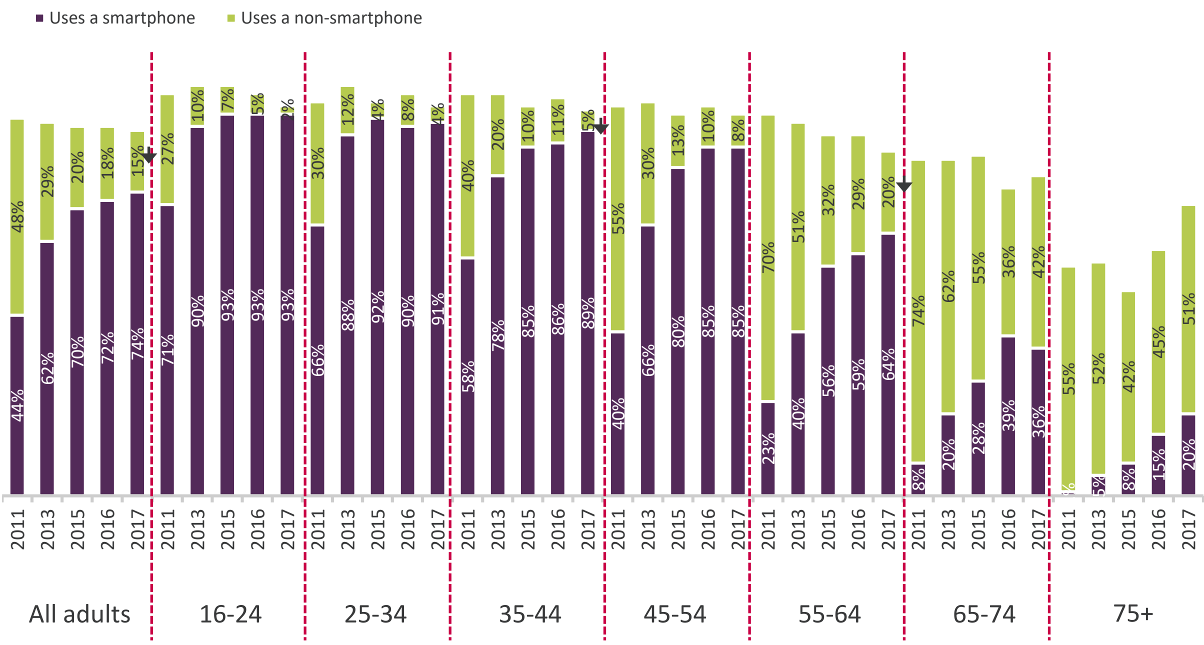
A majority of adults aged 16-64 use a smartphone, and those aged under-55 are more likely than average to use one. Among 16-54s, smartphone use ranges from 85% for 45-54s to 93% for 16-24s. Adults aged 65-74 (36%) or 75 and over (20%) are less likely than average to use a smartphone.

The decline since 2016 in use of a phone that is not a smartphone, among adults overall, is attributable to decreased use among 35-44s (5% vs. 11% in 2016) and 55-64s (20% vs. 29%).

Figure 4 breaks out mobile phone use by household socio-economic group; around four in five adults in AB (83%) and C1 (79%) households use a smartphone: higher than average (74%). Adults in DE households are less likely to use a smartphone (64%). Compared to 2016, adults in AB households are more likely to use a smartphone (83% vs. 76%) and are less likely to use a phone that is not a smartphone (10% vs. 16%). There has been no change since 2016 in use of a mobile phone among adults in any of the other three socio-economic groups.

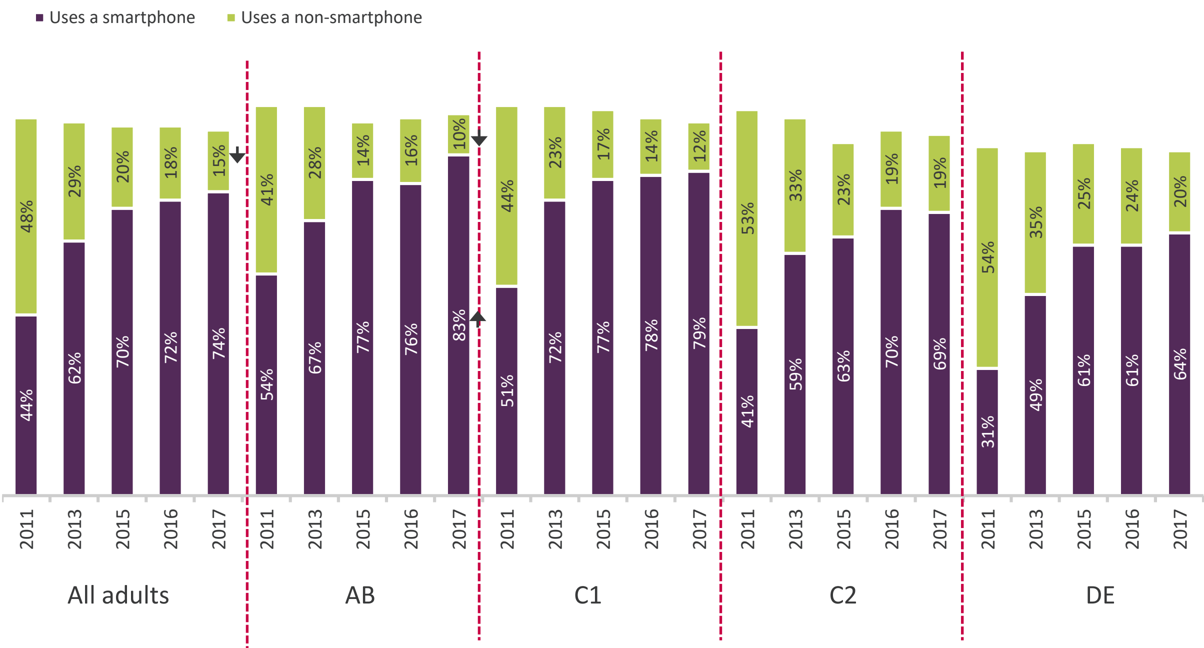
While not shown in Figure 4, men (73%) are as likely as women to use a smartphone (75%), and both these incidences are unchanged since 2016.

Figure 3: Mobile phone use, by age: 2011-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
A4. You said you use a mobile phone. Is it a smartphone? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1875 aged 16+, 249 aged 16-24, 277 aged 25-34, 305 aged 35-44, 268 aged 45-54, 296 aged 55-64, 239 aged 65-74, 241 aged 75+)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

Figure 4: Mobile phone use, by socio-economic group: 2011-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
A4. You said you use a mobile phone. Is it a smartphone? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1875 aged 16+, 415 AB, 571 C1, 386 C2, 503 DE)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

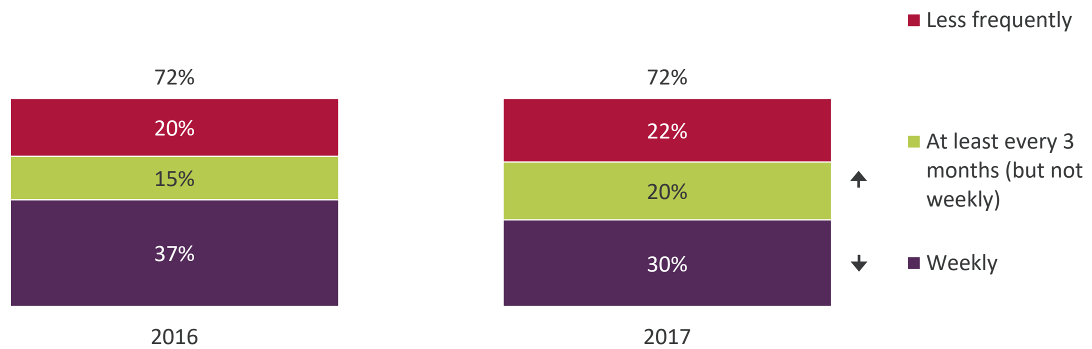
Smartphone users are less likely than in 2016 to edit photos or videos on their smartphone on a weekly basis

Smartphone users (74% of adults) are asked specifically about the types of activities they do on their mobile.

Figure 5 shows that in 2017, just over seven in ten smartphone users (72%) say they have ever edited photos or videos on their smartphone; three in ten (30%) say they do this at least weekly. The remaining four in ten smartphone users are fairly evenly distributed between those who use their smartphone for this quarterly (20%) and those who do this less frequently than quarterly (22%). Compared to 2016, smartphone users are less likely to use their phone at least weekly for this purpose (30% vs. 37%).

While not shown in Figure 5, compared to the average for smartphone users (30%), those aged 16-24 (46%) and 25-34 (44%) are more likely to use their smartphone at least weekly for this purpose while those aged 45 and over are less likely to do so. Women are more likely than men to say they use their smartphone at least weekly for editing photos or videos (36% vs. 25%).

Figure 5: Use of a smartphone for editing photos or videos: 2016-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
M7B. Please tell me from this list, the types of things you use your smartphone for, and how often you do each- edit photos or videos (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who use a smartphone (1249 in 2016, 1289 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

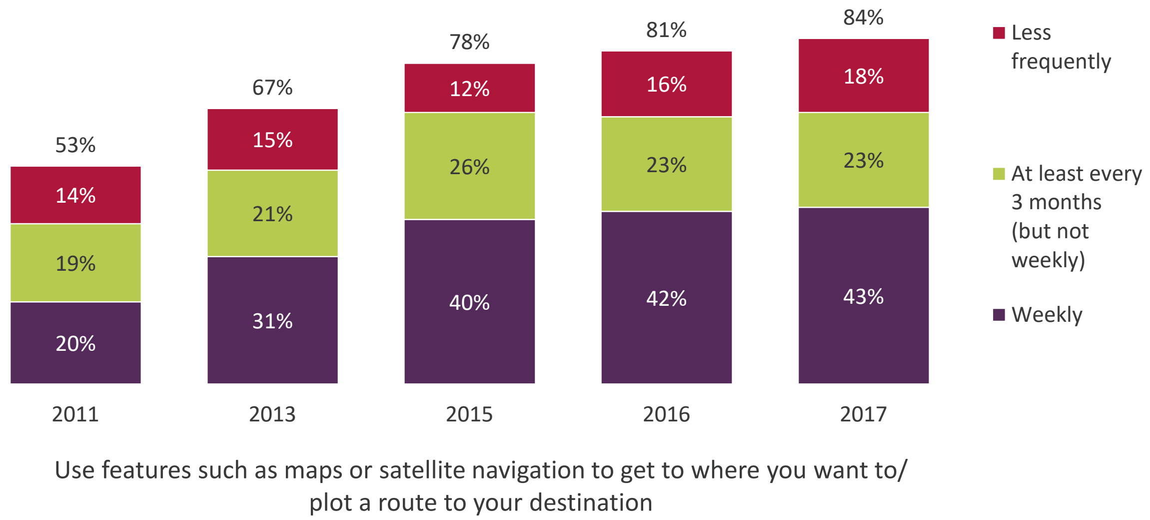
More than eight in ten smartphone users say they have ever used maps/ satellite navigation on their phone

Figure 6 shows that in 2017, more than eight in ten smartphone users (84%) say they have ever *"used features (on their phone) such as maps or satellite navigation to get where they wanted to go, or to plot a route to a destination"*, and 43% of these users do this on their phone at least weekly. A further 23% use this feature at least quarterly. Each of these measures of frequency of use is unchanged since 2016.

Compared to the average for smartphone users (43%), those aged 35-44 (51%) are more likely to use maps or satellite navigation on their phone at least weekly. Those aged 55-64 (28%) or 65+ (11%) are less likely to do so. Smartphone users in AB households (54%) are more likely to use their phone at least weekly for this purpose, while those in DE households are less likely (28%), compared to users overall (43%).

Men are more likely than women to say they use these features on their smartphone at least weekly (49% vs. 38%).

Figure 6: Use of maps or satellite navigation on a smartphone: 2011-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
M7C. Please tell me from this list, the types of things you use your smartphone for, and how often you do each – use features such as maps or satellite navigation to get to where you want to go/ plot a route to your destination (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who use a smartphone (1249 in 2016, 1289 in 2017)

Completing forms

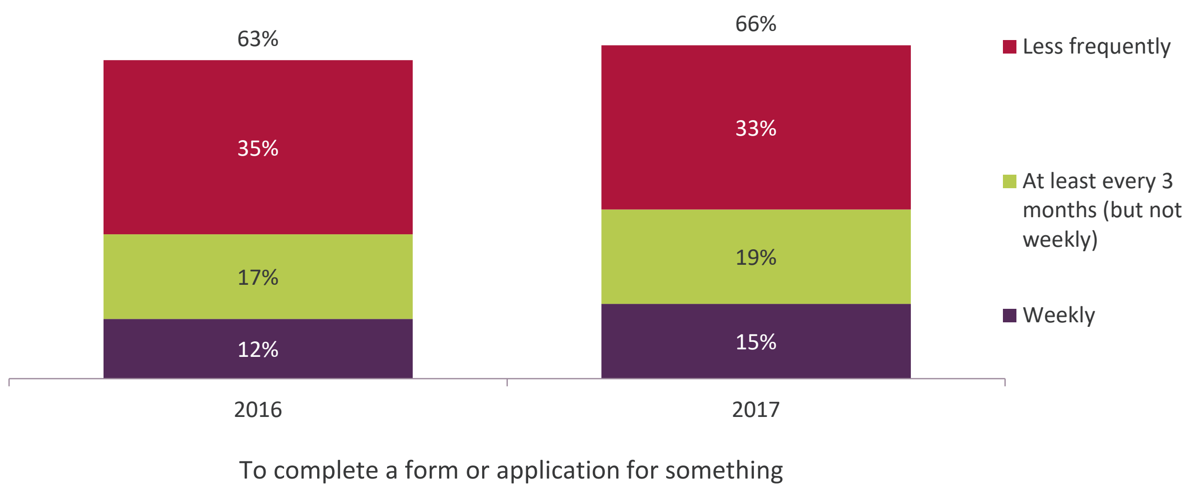
Two-thirds of smartphone users have ever used their phone to complete a form or application

Since 2016, smartphone users have been asked about how often they use their phone to complete a form or application. Figure 7 shows that two-thirds of smartphone users (66%) have ever done this, and 15% say they do it weekly. A further one in five (19%) say they do it at least quarterly, with a third (33%) using their phone for this less often than quarterly. Each of these measures is unchanged since 2016.

Smartphone users aged 16-24 (76%), 25-34 (79%) and 35-44 (75%) are more likely to say they have ever used their phone to complete a form or application, with those aged 55 and over less likely to say they have done this (46% for 55-64s and 31% for over-64s).

Compared to the average (66%), smartphone users aged 16+ in C2 households (58%) are less likely to say they have ever used their phone to complete a form or application. There are no differences when comparing the results for men and women.

Figure 7: Use of a smartphone for completing a form or application: 2016-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
M7A. Please tell me from this list, the types of things you use your smartphone for, and how often you do each-complete a form or an application for something on my phone (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who use a smartphone (1249 in 2016, 1289 in 2017)

Most smartphone users agree that completing forms or working on documents is easier on a computer

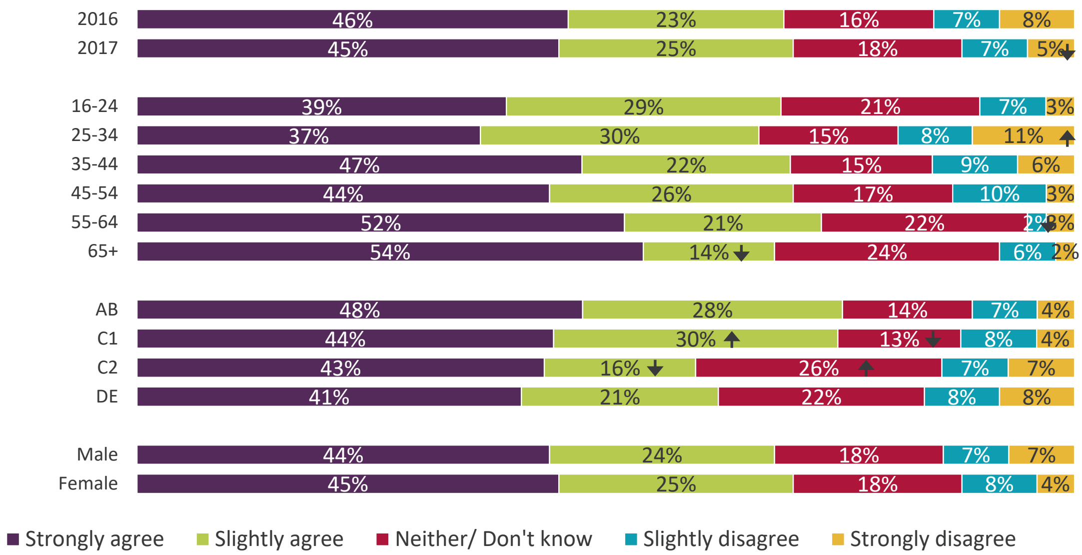
Smartphone users are also asked the extent to which they agree with the following statement: *"Completing forms and working on documents is more difficult on my smartphone than on a laptop or desktop".*

Overall, seven in ten smartphone users agree (69%), with close to half (45%) agreeing strongly. Thirteen per cent disagree overall, either strongly or slightly. Compared to 2016, smartphone users are less likely to disagree strongly (5% vs. 8%).

A majority of users in each age group agree overall with no differences by age. Users aged 25-34 are, however, more likely to disagree strongly (11% vs. 5%).

Compared to the average, smartphone users in C2 households are less likely to agree (60% vs. 69%)

Figure 8: Agreement with statement: *"Completing forms and working on documents is more difficult on my smartphone than on a laptop or desktop"*, by age, socio-economic group and gender



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
M6. Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who use a smartphone (1289 aged 16+, 232 aged 16-24, 246 aged 25-34, 267 aged 35-44, 220 aged 45-54, 179 aged 55-64, 145 aged 65+, 329 AB, 434 C1, 245 C2, 281 DE, 606 male, 683 female)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between 2016 and 2017 at the overall level, and by age / socio-economic group compared to all smartphone users, and men compared to women

Affinity with smartphone activities

Users say they would most miss using their smartphone to check social media, message people or check email

Smartphone users (74% of adults in 2017) were prompted with nine smartphone activities and were asked to say, other than phoning or texting, which one they would miss doing the most on their phone if their phone was taken away. These nine activities are shown in Figure 9.

Three in ten smartphone users aged 16+ say they would most miss using their smartphone most for checking social media/ messaging people (29%) or for checking email (28%). Around one in eight (12%) say they would most miss taking videos or photos. Each of the other six activities was mentioned by around one in 20, or fewer, smartphone users.

Compared to these averages, users aged 16-24 and 25-34 are more likely to say they would most miss checking social media or messaging people (57% for 16-24s, 41% for 25-34s vs. 29% overall) and less likely to say they would miss checking email (12% for 16-24s, 19% for 25-34s vs. 28%). In addition, 16-24s are less likely than smartphone users overall to say they would most miss checking news, travel or weather updates (1% vs. 5%).

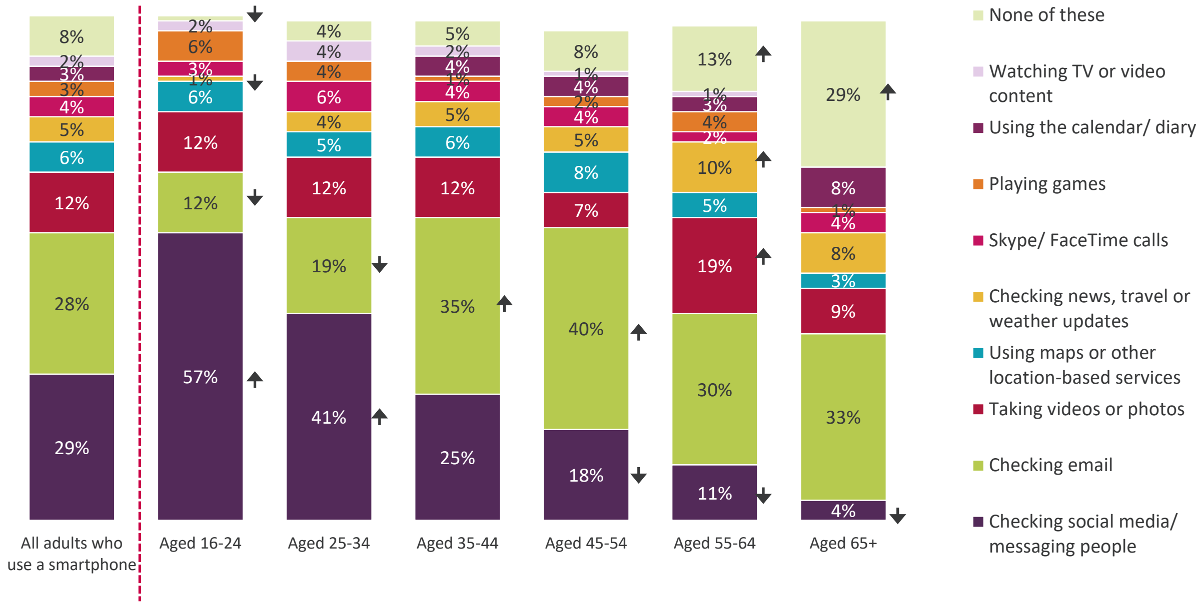
Smartphone users aged 35-44 (35%) or 45-54 (40%) are more likely than average (28%) to say they would miss checking email the most, and those aged 45-54 are less likely to say they would most miss checking social media/ messaging people (18% vs. 29%).

Users aged 55-64 are more likely than average to say they would not miss doing any of the nine activities (13% vs. 8%) but they are more likely than average to say they would most miss taking videos or photos (19% vs. 12%) and checking news, travel or weather updates (10% vs. 5%). They are less likely than average to say they would miss checking social media/ messaging people (11% vs. 29%). Smartphone users aged 65+ are three times more likely than average to say they would not miss doing any of these activities on their phone (29% vs. 8%) and are much less likely to say they would miss checking social media/ messaging people (4% vs. 29%).

While not shown in Figure 9, smartphone users in AB households are more likely than smartphone users overall to miss checking email (36% vs. 28%) and are less likely to miss checking social media/ messaging people (20% vs. 29%). In contrast, those in DE households are more likely to miss checking social media/ messaging people (40%) and are less likely to miss checking email (19%). Users in DE households are also more likely than average to most miss playing games (6% vs. 3%).

Women who use a smartphone are more likely than men to most miss checking social media/ messaging people (35% vs. 23%) while men are more likely to most miss checking email (32% vs. 24%).

Figure 9: Activity smartphone users say they would most miss using their phone for, by age



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
M8. Other than phoning or texting, which one of these activities would you miss doing the most on your smartphone if your phone was taken away from you? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who use a smartphone (1289 aged 16+, 232 aged 16-24, 246 aged 25-34, 267 aged 35-44, 220 aged 45-54, 179 aged 55-64, 145 aged 65+) Showing responses by >1% of all adults who use a smartphone. Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age compared to all smartphone users.

Most-missed media device

Mobile phones are the most-missed media device among 16-54s, while TV is still the most-missed among over-54s

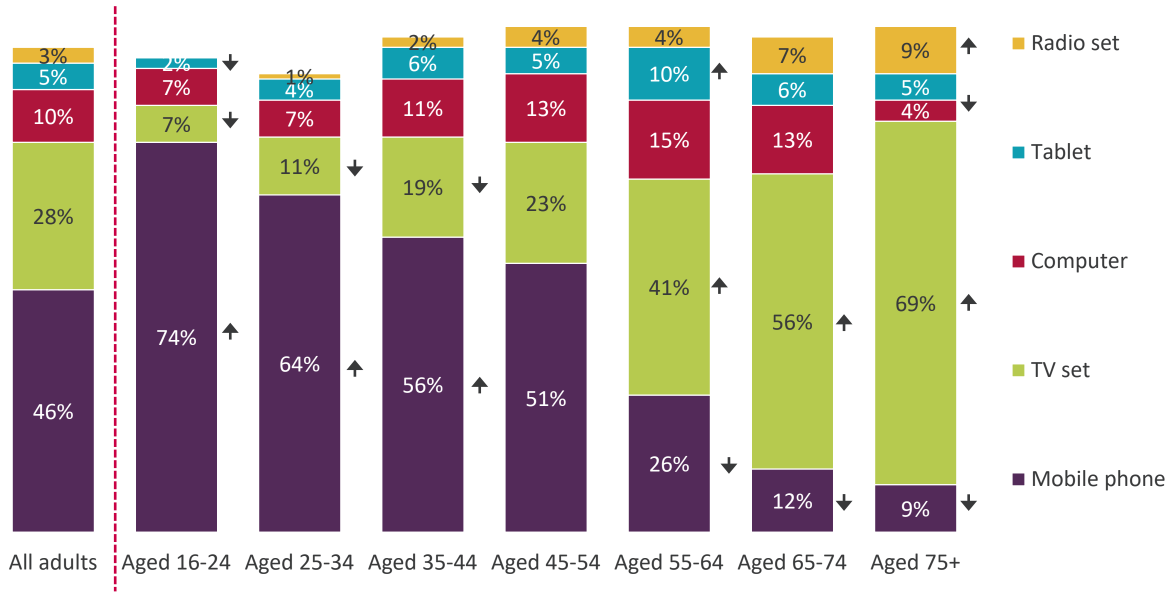
To understand how much importance adults attach to various media devices, we ask them to say, out of all the devices they use, which single device they would miss the most if it were taken away.

In 2017, the mobile phone is the device that adults overall say they would miss the most, chosen by close to half (46%). Slightly more than a quarter (28%) of adults say they would miss a TV set the most and one in ten (10%) say they would miss a computer (desktop computer/ laptop/ netbook). Less than one in ten adults say they would most miss either a tablet (5%) or a radio set (3%).

As shown in Figure 10 and Figure 11, there are a number of differences by demographic group:

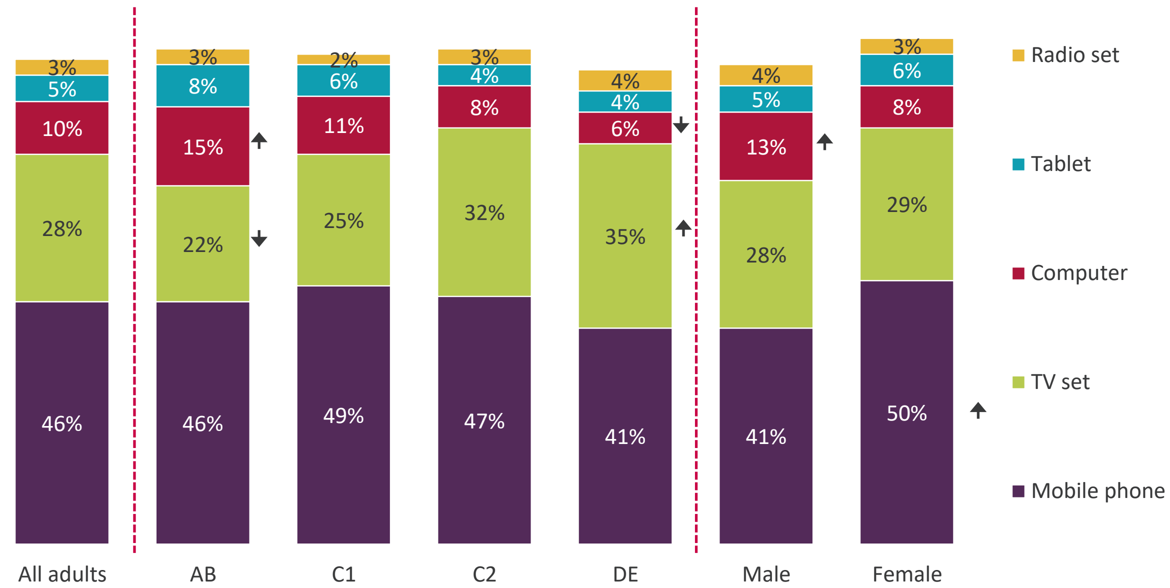
- 16-24s (74%), 25-34s (64%) and 35-44s (50%) are more likely than average (46%) to say they would miss a mobile phone the most. Adults aged 16-24 are ten times as likely to say they would miss a mobile phone than any other device. Those aged 16-24 (7%), 25-34s (11%) and 35-44s (19%) are less likely than average (28%) to say they would most miss the TV set. Those aged 16-24 (2%) are also less likely to say they would miss a tablet (5% among adults overall).
- In contrast, 55-64s (41%), 65-74s (56%) and over-74s (69%) are more likely than average (69%) to say they would miss the TV set the most, and are less likely to say they would miss their mobile phone (26% for 55-64s, 12% for 65-74s and 9% for the over-74s vs. 46% overall).
- Adults aged 55-64 are twice as likely as average to say they would miss a tablet the most (10% vs. 5%) while those aged 75+ are more likely to say they would miss a radio set (9% vs. 3%) and are less likely to miss a computer (desktop computer/ laptop/ netbook) the most (4% vs. 10%).
- ABs are less likely than average to miss a TV set (22% vs. 28%) and are more likely to say they would miss a computer (desktop/ laptop/ netbook) (15% vs. 10%) while the reverse is true for adults in DE households; they are more likely than average to miss a TV set (35%) and are less likely to miss a computer (6%).
- In 2017, men are more likely than women to say they would miss a computer (13% vs. 8%) while women are more likely than men to miss a mobile phone (50% vs. 41%).

Figure 10: Most-missed media device, by age



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
A3. Which one of these things you use would you miss the most if it was taken away? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1875 aged 16+, 249 aged 16-24, 277 aged 25-34, 305 aged 35-44, 268 aged 45-54, 296 aged 55-64, 239 aged 65-74, 241 aged 75+)
Showing responses by >2% of all adults
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age compared to all adults

Figure 11: Most-missed media device, by socio-economic group and gender



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
A3. Which one of these things you use would you miss the most if it was taken away? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1875 aged 16+, 415 AB, 571 C1, 386 C2, 503 DE, 909 male, 966 female). Showing responses by >2% of all adults
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by socio economic group compared to all adults and men compared to women

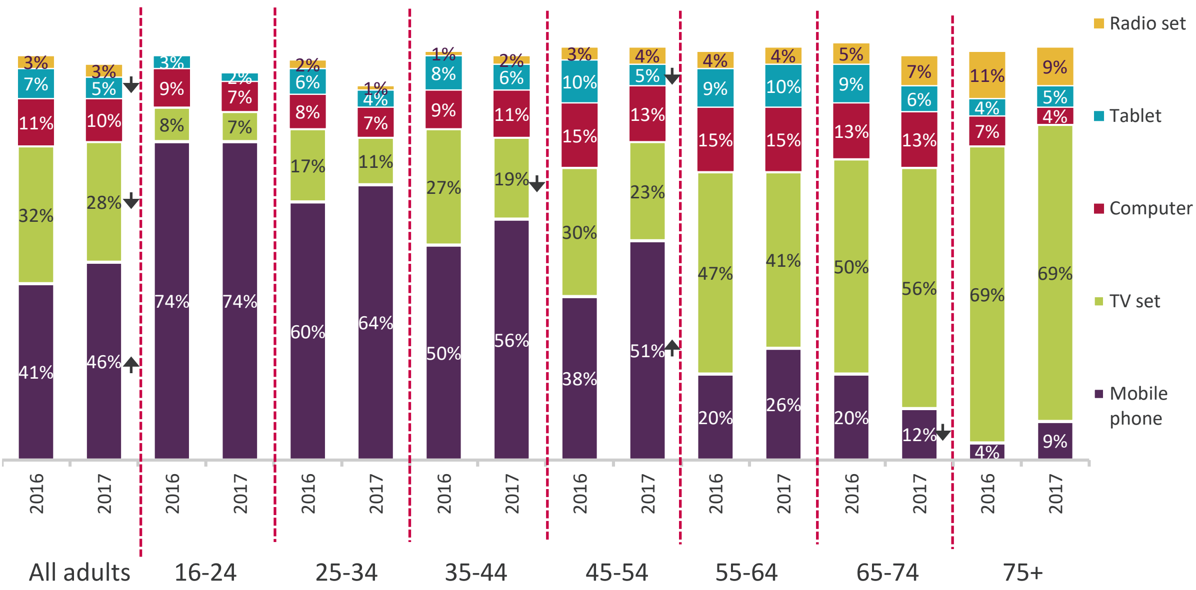
Adults are more likely than in 2016 to say they would miss their mobile phone the most; this is particularly the case for 45-54s

Figure 12 shows any change in the most-missed devices between 2016 and 2017 among adults overall and by age. Compared to 2016, adults overall are more likely to say they would miss their mobile phone the most (46% vs. 41%) and are less likely to say this about a television set (28% vs. 32%) or a tablet (5% vs. 7%).

There has been no change in the devices that adults aged 16-34 say they would miss the most. Compared to 2016, 35-44s are less likely to say they would miss their TV set (19% vs. 27%). Adults aged 45-54 are more likely to say they would miss their mobile phone the most (51% vs. 38%) and are less likely to say they would miss their tablet (5% vs. 10%).

Adults aged 65-74 are less likely to say they would miss their mobile phone the most (12% vs. 20%). This decrease follows a corresponding increase between 2015 and 2016 for this age group (not shown in Figure 12); as such, the incidence in 2017 is comparable to that of 2015 for these adults.

Figure 12: Most-missed media device: 2016-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
A3. Which one of these things you use would you miss the most if it was taken away? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1846 in 2016, 1875 in 2017). Showing responses by >2% of all adults in 2017
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

Internet take-up and use

Devices used to go online

Seven in ten adults now go online using a smartphone

In 2017, as in previous years[13], adults were asked about their use of various devices to go online. These devices are:

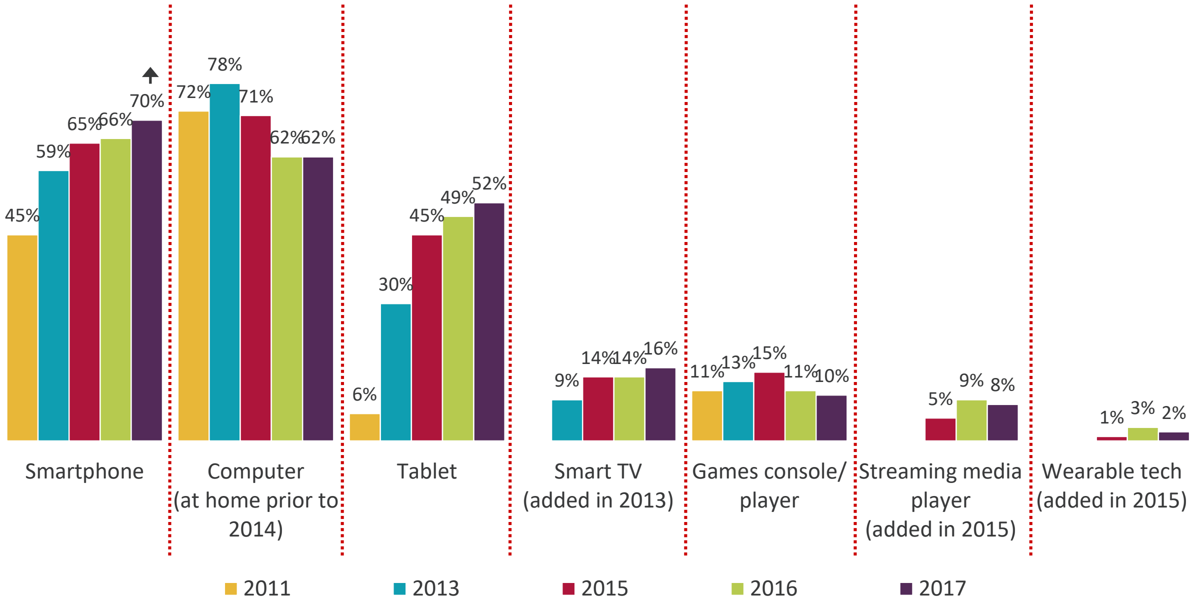
- smartphone;
- tablet (such as an iPad or Kindle Fire);
- computer - whether laptop, desktop or netbook (PC or Mac);
- games console or hand-held games player;
- smart TV - included since 2013;
- streaming media player (such as Apple TV, Now TV, Amazon Fire, Chromecast or Roku) - added in 2015;
- wearable technology (such as a smartwatch) - added in 2015.

As shown in Figure 13, seven in ten adults use a smartphone to go online, while three in five (62%) use a computer[14]. The trend for smartphones to be used more than computers to go online, first seen in 2016, is also evident in 2017. More than half of adults (52%) say they use a tablet to go online. One in six (16%) go online on a smart TV and one in ten (10%) through either a games console or handheld games player. Less than one in ten use a streaming media player to go online (8%), while 2% of adults say they go online using wearable technology.

Adults are more likely than in 2016 to say they use a smartphone to go online (70% vs. 66%). Use of each of the remaining six devices to go online is unchanged since 2016.

[13] Since 2016 respondents have been prompted with seven options to select from, whereas in 2015 they were prompted with 12 options. This could affect the trends shown in this section, particularly with regard to use of device other than a computer to go online.
[14] In 2011 and 2013, use of a computer to go online was based only on use within the home and not elsewhere.

Figure 13: Devices used to go online: 2011-2017

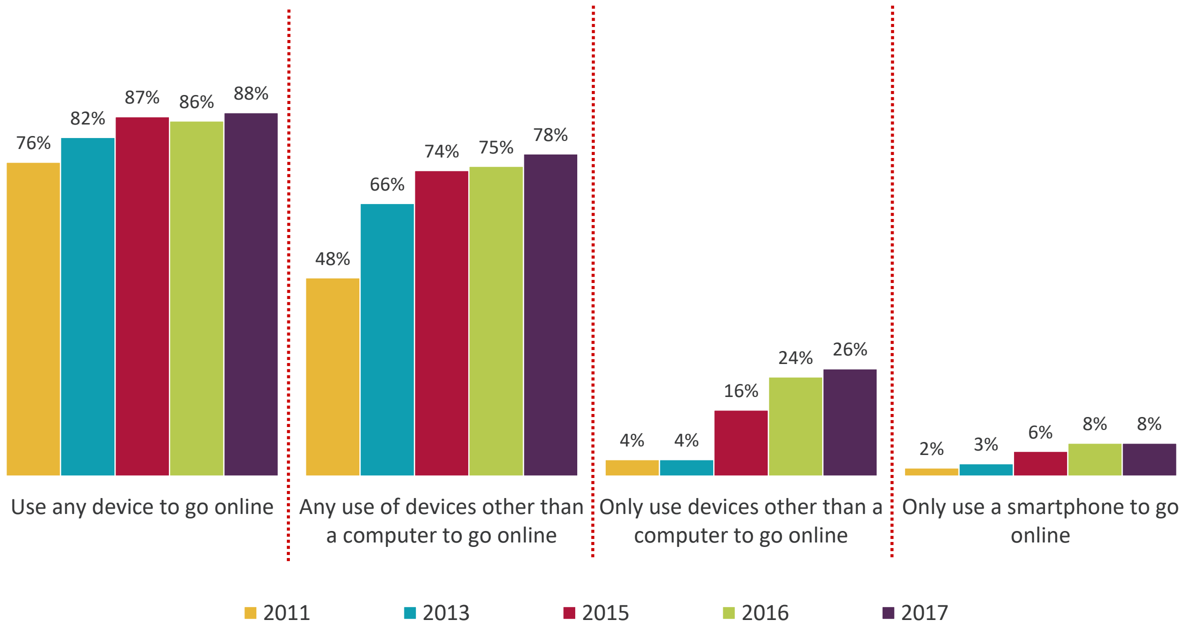


Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN1/ IN2. Do you ever go online/ Do you go online using any of these devices? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1846 in 2016, 1875 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

As shown in Figure 14, use of any device to go online is unchanged since 2016 (88% vs. 86% in 2016). More than three-quarters of adults (78%) use a device other than a computer (desktop/ laptop/ netbook) to go online, which is also unchanged over the period.

A quarter of adults (26%) now *only* use a device other than a computer to go online; and 8% of adults only go online through a smartphone. Although not shown in Figure 14, 4% of adults say they only go online through a tablet. Each of these three measures is unchanged since 2016.

Figure 14: Use of alternative devices to go online: 2011-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN1/ IN2. Do you ever go online/ Do you go online using any of these devices? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1846 in 2016, 1875 in 2017)

The increase in using a smartphone to go online among all adults since 2016 is attributable to 35-54s

Figure 15 and Figure 16 show the devices that can be used to go online which adults were asked about in 2017. Figure 15 breaks this out by age and Figure 16 by socio-economic group and gender.

The significance testing shown in both these charts (indicated by the arrows) shows any increases or decreases between 2016 and 2017 for the subgroups displayed.

Before looking at these trends over time, by type of device, it is worth noting that in 2017, adults aged 16-24 (98%), 25-34 (97%), 35-44 (97%) and 45-54 (96%) are more likely than average (88%) to go online. Those aged 55-64 (82%) 65-74 (65%) and 75+ (53%) are less likely to go online.

Those aged 16-24 and 25-34 are more likely than average to go online on a smartphone (95% and 93% vs. 70%) or on a games console or player (31% and 17% vs. 10%). Those aged 16-24 (23%) are also more likely than average (16%) to say they go online on a smart TV. Compared to the average (26%), *only* using devices other than a computer to go online is more likely among 16-24s (33%) and 25-34s (39%), as is only using a smartphone to go online (17% for 16-24s, 13% for 25-34s vs. 8% overall).

Adults aged 35-44 are more likely than average to go online on five of the seven devices: a smartphone (90% vs. 70%), a computer (74% vs. 62%), a tablet (64% vs. 52%), a smart TV (25% vs. 16%) or using wearable tech (5% vs. 2%).

Use of a smartphone (83%) or a computer (72%) to go online is also more likely among 45-54s, while going online on a games console/ player is less likely among this age group (4%). They are also less likely to say they *only* use a smartphone to go online (5% vs. 8%).

Four of the devices asked about are less likely to be used by 55-64s to go online, compared to the average: smartphones (50% vs. 70%), games consoles/ players (2% vs. 10%), streaming media players (4% vs. 8%) and wearable tech (1% vs. 2%). Adults aged 65-74 and 75+ are less likely than average to use each of the devices asked about to go online, to *only* use devices other than a computer to go online and to *only* use a smartphone to go online.

As shown by the significance testing in Figure 15, the increased use since 2016 of a smartphone to go online, among adults overall (70% vs. 66%), is attributable to increased use among 35-44s (90% from 82%) and 45-54s (83% from 73%). While use of a tablet to go online is unchanged among adults overall (52% vs. 49%), 35-44s are more likely to say they use a tablet for this purpose (64% vs. 54%). Although adults overall are no more likely than in 2016 to go online on any device, 35-44s are more like to go online (97% vs. 93% in 2016).

Figure 15: Devices used to go online, by age of user

	All adults	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Smartphone	70% ↑	95%	93%	90% ↑	83% ↑	50%	22%	11%
Computer	62%	65%	58%	74%	72%	59%	48%	38%
Tablet	52%	51%	58%	64% ↑	57%	49%	39%	24%
Smart TV	16%	23%	18%	25%	20%	12%	2%	4%
Games console/ player	10%	31%	17%	12%	4%	2%	0%	0%
Streaming media player	8%	11%	11%	12%	9%	4%	2%	1%
Wearable tech	2%	4%	2%	5%	3%	1%	0%	0%
Goes online	88%	98%	97%	97% ↑	96%	82%	65%	53%
Only use devices other than a computer to go online	26%	33%	39%	23%	24%	23%	17%	15%
Only uses a smartphone to go online	8%	17%	13%	8%	10%	5%	1%	1%

Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN1/ IN2. Do you ever go online/ Do you go online using any of these devices? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1875 aged 16+, 249 aged 16-24, 277 aged 25-34, 305 aged 35-44, 268 aged 45-54, 296 aged 55-64, 239 aged 65-74, 241 aged 75+)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

The increase in use of a smartphone to go online, since to 2016, is also attributable to women, and adults in AB households

Compared to the average (88%), adults in AB (96%) and C1 (93%) households are more likely to go online, and those in DE (77%) households are less likely.

There are also differences by socio-economic group in terms of the devices used to go online. Compared to the average, five of the devices are more likely to be used by AB adults to go online, and are less likely to be used to go online by those in DE households: smartphones (77% for ABs and 62% for DEs), computers (78% for ABs and 44% DEs), tablets (66% and 33%), smart TVs (23% and 8%) and wearable tech (5% and 0%). In addition, adults in DE households are less likely than average to go online using a streaming media player (4% vs. 8% for adults overall).

Compared to the average, smartphones and computers are more likely to be used to go online among adults in C1 households and less likely to be used among C2 adults.

Compared to the average (26%), DE adults are more likely to use *only* devices other than a computer to go online (33%), while AB adults are less likely to do so (17%). Eight per cent of adults only use a smartphone to go online; adults in AB households are less likely to do this (2%) and adults in DE households are more likely (16%).

While men (87%) are as likely as women (89%) to go online using any device, they are more likely to go online using two particular devices: a computer (66% vs. 58%) and a games console or player (13% vs. 7%). Women are, however, more likely to go online on a tablet (56% vs. 47% for men) and to use *only* devices other than a computer to go online (31% vs. 20%).

As shown by the significance testing in Figure 16, compared to 2016 the growth in use of a smartphone to go online is due to increased use among ABs (77% vs. 70%) and among women (72% vs. 66%).

While there has been no growth since 2016 in use of a tablet to go online among adults overall, AB adults are now more likely to go online on this device (68% vs. 59%), as are women (56% vs. 49%). Women are also more likely to now go online using a smart TV (16% vs. 11% in 2016).

Figure 16: Devices used to go online, by socio-economic group and gender

	All adults	AB	C1	C2	DE	Male	Female
Smartphone	70%↑	77% ↑	77%	61%	62%	67%	72% ↑
Computer	62%	78%	70%	53%	44%	66%	58%
Tablet	52%	68% ↑	56%	48%	33%	47%	56% ↑
Smart TV	16%	23%	17%	15%	8%	17%	16% ↑
Games console/ player	10%	10%	11%	10%	9%	13%	7%
Streaming media player	8%	11%	9%	8%	4%	9%	7%
Wearable tech	2%	5%	3%	1%	0%	3%	2%
Goes online	88%	96%	93%	84%	77%	87%	89%
Only use devices other than a computer to go online	26%	17%	23%	30%	33%	20%	31%
Only uses a smartphone to go online	8%	2%	7%	9%	16%	8%	9%

Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN1/ IN2. Do you ever go online/ Do you go online using any of these devices? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1875 aged 16+, 415 AB, 571 C1, 386 C2, 503 DE, 909 male, 966 female)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

Volume of internet use

Adult internet users estimate they spend one day a week online

Adults who go online at home or elsewhere are asked to estimate how many hours in a typical week they use the internet in each of three locations: at home, in the workplace or place of education, and anywhere else. Figure 17 compares the average among all internet users by year. Because these estimates are self-reported it is likely that there will be a degree of under- and over-reporting, and the results should be taken as indicative only.

The total average weekly hours spent online are unchanged since 2016 (24.0 vs. 22.9 hours in 2016) and there has been no change in the hours spent online at home (14.9 vs. 14.8 hours) or in the workplace or place of education (6.6 vs. 5.9 hours).[15] Compared to 2016, adults say they spend more hours online in locations other than home or work/ place of education (2.5 vs. 2.1 hours).

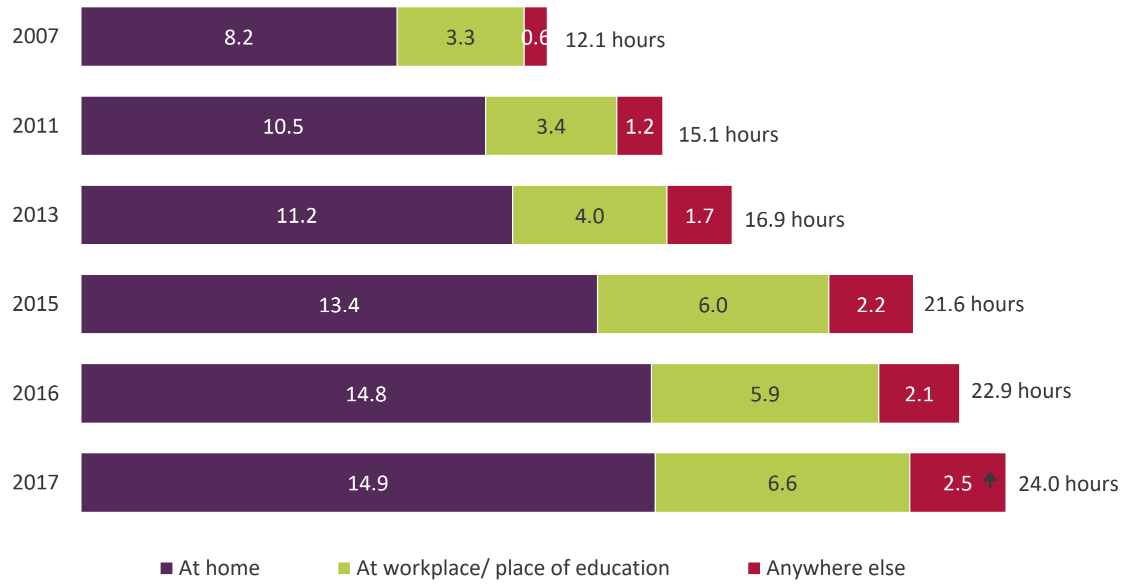
[15] Figures reported here differ from comScore figures reported in Ofcom's CMR 2017 because the data from the Adults' Media Literacy tracker, cited in this report, is based on respondents own estimations of time spent online while comScore

Although not shown in Figure 17, there are differences by demographic group, in terms of volume of internet use:

- Younger internet users have a higher weekly volume of use than internet users overall (34.3 hours for 16-24s and 29.0 hours for 25-34s). Volumes are higher than average for 25-34s at home (19.0 vs. 14.9 hours) and in locations other than home or work/place of education (3.5 vs. 2.5 hours) whereas for 16-24s, use is higher than average in all three locations.
- While the total weekly hours spent online for adults aged 35-44 and 45-54 is similar to the average for adults overall, those aged 35-44 have higher use at work (10.1 vs. 6.6 hours) and those aged 45-54 have lower use at home (12.3 vs. 14.9 hours).
- Internet users aged 55-64, 65-74 and 75+ have a lower volume of weekly use, due to a lower volume of weekly use in all three locations.
- Adult users in the AB socio-economic group have a higher volume of weekly use (26.6 vs. 24.0 hours) with more hours spent online in the workplace/ place of education (9.4 vs. 6.6 hours). Users in the C1 socio-economic group also spend more hours online in the workplace or place of education (8.8 hours), compared to the average.
- Adults in the C2 socio-economic group have a lower overall volume of weekly use compared to users overall (20.5 vs. 24.0 hours), due to lower use in the workplace/ place of education (4.3 vs. 6.6 hours). Those in the DE socio-economic group have a higher than average volume of use at home (17.2 vs. 14.9 hours) and a lower volume of use in the workplace/ place of education (2.4 vs. 6.6 hours).
- The overall estimated weekly volume of use is higher for men (25.4 hours) than for women (22.7 hours) because men have higher use in the workplace/ place of education (7.7 vs. 5.6 hours) and in locations other than home or work/ place of education (2.7 vs. 2.2 hours).

data is combines panel and census measurement techniques to obtain digital audience measurement statistics
https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/105074/cmr-2017-uk.pdf

Figure 17: Volume of internet use per week: 2007-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN5A-C. How many hours in a typical week would you say you spend online at home /at your workplace or place of education/ anywhere else? (unprompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1553 in 2016, 1570 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

Online activities undertaken regularly (in the past week)

More than half of internet users had gone online for the following four activities in the previous week: email, communications, transactions and banking

Another aspect of understanding online use is to look at the types of activities that people are undertaking. Before 2016, the results for the online activities undertaken had been taken from the Media Literacy Tracker. Since 2016, the questions relating to type and frequency of internet use were revised in this study. Adults who go online were asked a shorter set of questions, and the frequency options that respondents could select were amended.

Ofcom's Technology Tracker study also includes questions about types and frequency of internet use, and the results included here come from the research conducted in that study in 2017.

Internet users are prompted with 24 different internet activities and are asked to say which of them, if any, they have gone online to do, and which of these they have done in the previous week.

In reporting these online activities, we focus initially on those undertaken in the previous week, in order to draw out any differences in activities that are undertaken habitually/ regularly. Later, in Sections 6 and 7 of this report, we look in more detail at some individual online activities by frequency of use.

For this initial analysis, 23 of the 24 activities[16] have been grouped into 15 types of use, to enable broader comparison. These 15 types of use are detailed in Figure 18.

Figure 19 and Figure 20 show the incidence of each of the 15 broad categories of use among internet users, in order to make comparisons between age groups, socio-economic groups and by gender. As detailed above, data have been taken from Ofcom's Technology Tracker study. [17]

[16] For the purpose of this analysis the activity 'General surfing/ browsing the internet' has not been included.
[17] There is some overlap in the types of use asked about in the Technology Tracker and in the Media Literacy Tracker, pertaining to use of the internet for news, social networking, government services and watching video content. The categories of use shown in this section from the Technology Tracker tend to group a number of individual measures under one heading, and the questions asked to identify types of use are not the same across the two surveys. Where possible we have prioritised the data collected from the Media Literacy Tracker, which we use and report on in more detail later: accessing news/ politics/ current affairs websites later (Figure 83 onwards), having a social media profile/ account (Figure 30 onwards), accessing government services (Figure 56 onwards) and watching video-sharing sites (Figure 74 onwards).

Figure 18: Activities the internet is used for, by category

Category	Individual activities included in category
E-mail	• Send/ receive emails
Communications	• Communicating via instant messaging e.g. Facebook Chat, Skype Chat, Snapchat • Making voice calls using a VoIP service e.g. Skype • Making video calls e.g. via FaceTime, Skype
Transactions	• Online shopping (purchasing goods/ services/ tickets etc.) • Trading/ auctions e.g. eBay
Banking	• Banking
Social Media	• Using social networking (such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Bebo or Snapchat) • Using Twitter (browsing/ reading/ posting on site)
News	• Accessing news
Information for work/ school/ college	• Finding/ downloading information for work/ business/ school/ college/ university/ homework
Watch short video clips	• Watching short video clips (e.g. on YouTube, Dailymotion, Vimeo or Facebook)
Watch TV content	• Watching TV programmes or film content online
Health	• To find information on health related issues
Radio/ Audio services	• Listening to radio • Streamed audio services (free) e.g. Spotify (free) or Deezer (free) • Streamed audio services (subscription) e.g. Spotify Premium, Apple Music or Deezer Premium
Government services	• Using local council/ Government sites e.g. to find information, to complete processes such as tax returns, to contact local MP
Games	• Playing games online or interactively
Remote	• Accessing files through a cloud service such as Dropbox, Google Drive, Microsoft OneDrive or Apple iCloud • Remotely control TV services at home such as Sky+, Sky Q or Tivo using an online device • Remotely control or monitor household appliances e.g. fridge, cooker, washing machine, tumble dryer and/ or home heating, lighting or security system or home energy consumption
Upload/ add content	• Uploading/ adding content to the internet e.g. photos, videos, blog posts

Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker, H2 2017
QE5A. Which, if any, of these do you use the internet for? (prompted responses, multi-coded) / QE5B. And which, if any, of these activities have you used the internet for in the last week? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (2514 in 2017)

Compared to the average, 16-44s are more likely, and over-54s less likely, to have undertaken most types of internet use in the previous week

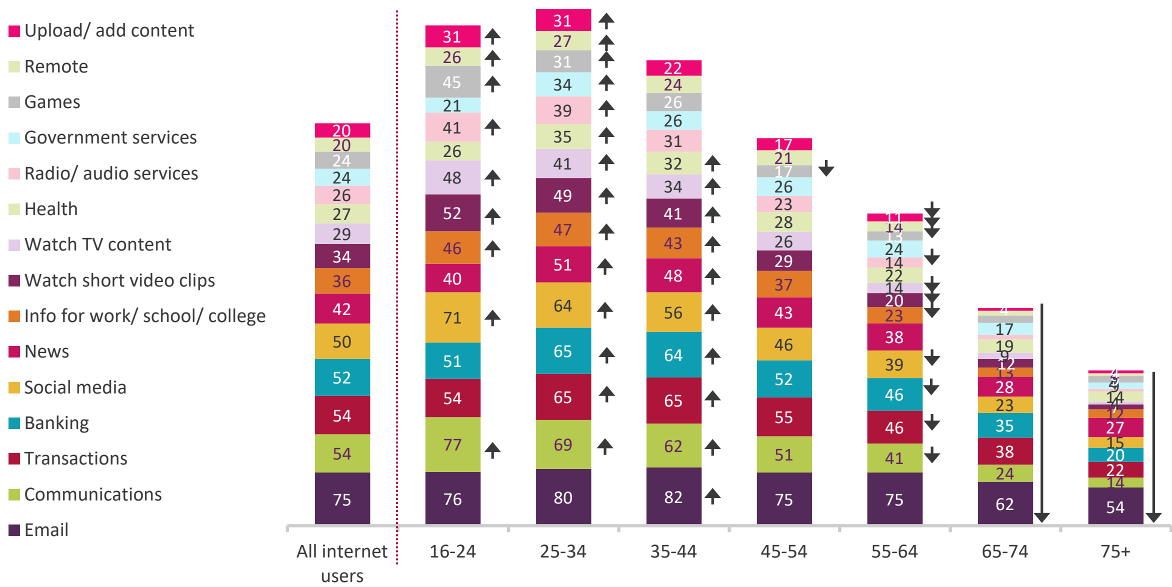
Figure 19 shows the proportion of internet users who had carried out each of the 15 categories of internet use in the previous week, at an overall level and by age. Generally, under-45s are more likely than the average internet user to have undertaken a number of online activities in the previous week, while over-54s are less likely.

- Internet users aged 16-24 are more likely than average to have undertaken nine of the 15 types of use in the previous week: communications (77% vs. 54%), social media (71% vs. 50%), looking for information for work/ school/ college (46% vs. 36%), watching short video clips

(52% vs. 34%), watching TV content (48% vs. 29%), using radio/ audio services (41% vs. 26%), for games (45% vs. 24%), for remote activities (26% vs. 20%) and uploading/ adding content (31% vs. 20%).

- 25-34s are more likely than average to have gone online in the previous week for 14 of the 15 types of use. They are as likely as all internet users to have been online in the previous week for email (80% vs. 75%).
- 35-44s are more likely than average to undertaken ten types of use: email (82% vs. 75%), communications (62% vs. 54%), transactions (65% vs. 54%), banking (64% vs. 52%), social media (56% vs. 50%), news (48% vs. 42%), looking for information for work/ school/ college (43% vs. 36%), watching short video clips (41% vs. 34%), watching TV content (34% vs. 29%) and health (32% vs. 27%).
- 45-54s' use of the internet in the previous week does not differ to that of the average internet user for 14 of the 15 categories. They are less likely to have been online to play games (17% vs. 24%)
- 55-64s are less likely than average to have gone online in the previous week for 11 of the activities: communications (41% vs. 54%), transactions (46% vs. 54%), banking (46% vs. 52%) social media (39% vs. 50%), information for work/ school/ college (23% vs. 36%), watching short video clips (20% vs. 34%), watching TV content (14% vs. 29%), using radio/ audio services (14% vs. 26%), for games (13% vs. 24%), for remote activities (14% vs. 20%) and to upload/ add content (11% vs. 20%).
- Internet users aged 65-74 and 75+, are less likely than average to have undertaken all 15 types of activity in the previous week.

Figure 19: Activities the internet has been used for in the previous week, by age



Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker, H2 2017
QE5B. And, which, if any, of these activities have you used the internet for in the last week? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults who go online (2514 in 2017, 366 aged 16-24, 399 aged 25-34, 465 aged 35-44, 443 aged 45-54, 371 aged 55-64, 283 aged 65-74, 186 aged 75+)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age compared to all internet users

Those in the AB socio-economic group have a broader weekly internet use

Where differences exist between the socio-economic groups, it tends to be the case that ABs are more likely than internet users overall to have undertaken an activity in the previous week, and DEs are less likely.

Twelve of the 15 types of activity are more likely to have been undertaken in the previous week by ABs: email (83% vs. 75%), transactions (60% vs. 54%), banking (64% vs. 52%), news (53% vs. 42%), information for work/ school/ college (47% vs. 36%), watching short video clips (40% vs. 34%), watching TV content (35% vs. 29%), health (35% vs. 27%), using radio/ audio services (33% vs. 26%), government services (34% vs. 241%), for remote activities (27% vs. 10%) and to upload/ add content (24% vs. 20%).

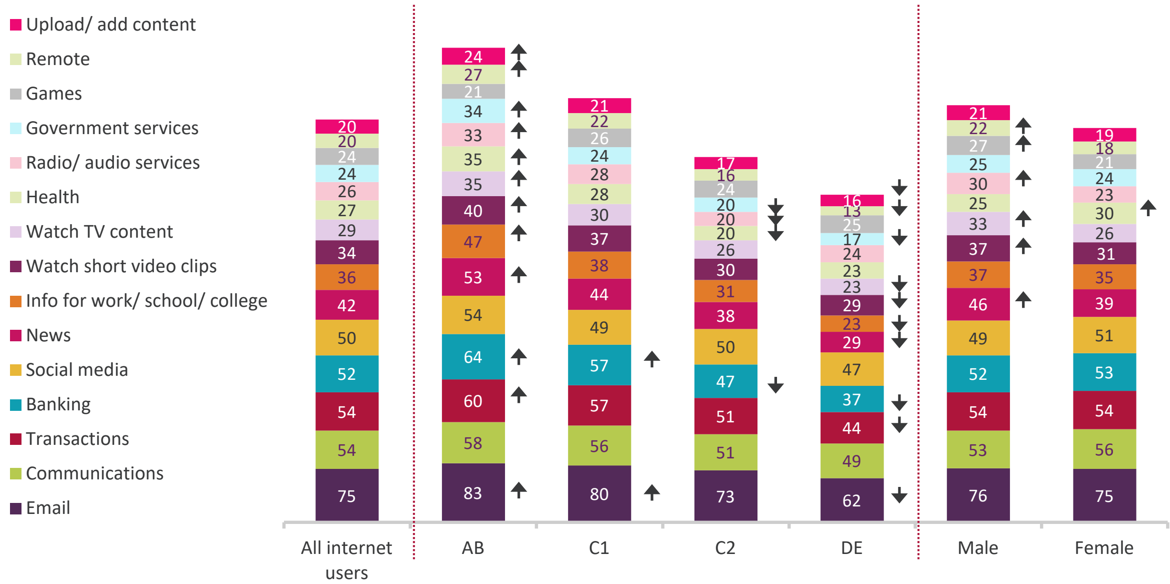
In contrast to the above, DEs are less likely to have been online in the previous week for ten of the 15 types of activity: email (62% vs. 75%), transactions (44% vs. 54%), banking (37% vs. 52%), news (29% vs. 42%), information for work/ school/ college (23% vs. 36%), watching short video clips (29% vs. 34%), watching TV content (23% vs. 29%), government services (17% vs. 24%), for remote activities (13% vs. 20%) and to upload/ add content (16% vs. 20%).

Use of the internet in the previous week by C1s does not differ to that of the average internet user for 13 of the 15 individual categories. They are more likely than average to say they have been online for email (80% vs. 75%) and for banking (57% vs. 52%).

Compared to the average, internet users in C2 households are less likely to have carried out four activities in the previous week: banking (47% vs. 52%), health (20% vs. 27%), radio/ audio services (20% vs. 26%) and government services (20% vs. 24%).

There are also differences by gender. Men are more likely than women to have been online in the previous week for news (46% vs. 39%), to watch short video clips (37% vs. 31%), to watch TV content (33% vs. 26%), for radio/ audio services (30% vs. 23%), for games (27% vs. 21%) and for remote activities (22% vs. 18%). Women are more likely than men to have been online in the previous week for health (30% vs. 25%).

Figure 20: Activities the internet has been used for in the previous week, by socio-economic group and gender



Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker, H2 2017
QE5B. And, which, if any, of these activities have you used the internet for in the last week? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults who go online (2514 in 2017, 616 AB, 807 C1, 533 C2, 553 DE, 1201 male, 1313 female)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by socio-economic group compared to all internet users and men compared to women

Gaming

Gaming, across devices

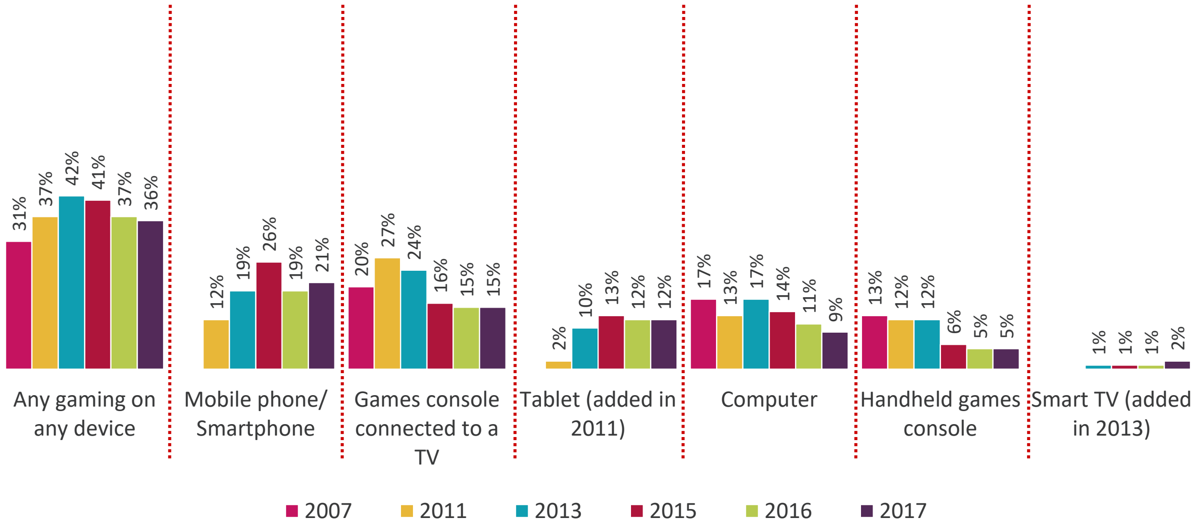
Compared to 2016, there has been no change in the level of game playing among adults – nor in the devices used for gaming

Adults are shown a list of devices that can be used for gaming and are asked to say which they ever use to play games, at home or elsewhere (see Figure 21). More than a third (36%) of UK adults use any of the devices we ask about for gaming – unchanged since 2016.

One in five adults play games on a mobile phone/ smartphone (21%), with more than one in ten doing so on a games console connected to a TV (15%) or on a tablet (12%). Around one in ten play games on a desktop computer/ laptop/ netbook (9%) and fewer say they play games on a handheld games console, such as a Sony PS Vita or Nintendo 3DS, (5%) or through a smart TV (2%).

Compared to 2016 there has been no change in the overall level of gaming among UK adults and no change in the specific devices used for gaming.

Figure 21: Devices used for gaming at home or elsewhere: 2007-2017



G1. Do you ever play games at home or elsewhere in any of these ways? (prompted responses, multi-coded).
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1846 in 2016).
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2015 and 2016.

As shown in Figure 22, in 2017, younger adults (aged 16-34) are more likely than average to use any of the devices for gaming (70% of 16-24s and 49% of 25-34s vs. 36% overall), while over-54s are less likely (23% of 55-64s, 16% of 65-74s, and 14% of over-74s) to do so.

- 16-24s are at least twice as likely as all adults to play games on four devices: a mobile phone (41% vs. 21%), on a games console connected to a television (46% vs. 15%), on a desktop computer, laptop or netbook (17% vs. 9%) and on a handheld games console (15% vs. 5%).
- 25-34s are more likely to game on mobile phones (31% vs. 21% overall) and on a games console connected to a TV (24% vs. 15%).
- 45-54s are less likely to play games on a games console connected to a TV (7% vs. 15%) or on a handheld games console (1% vs. 5%).
- 55-64s are less likely to play games on three of the six devices: a mobile phone (12% vs. 21%), on a games console connected to a TV (2% vs. 15%) or on a handheld games console (1% vs. 5%).
- Adults aged 65-74 and those aged 75+ are less likely than average to play games on each of the six devices shown.

Figure 22: Devices used for gaming, by age

	All adults	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Any gaming on any device	36%	70% ↑	49% ↑	40%	29%	23% ↓	16% ↓	14% ↓
Mobile phone/ smartphone	21%	41% ↑	31% ↑	26%	17%	12% ↓	5% ↓	3% ↓
Games console connected to a TV	15%	46% ↑	24% ↑	17%	7% ↓	2% ↓	0% ↓	1% ↓
Tablet	12%	16%	15%	13%	10%	13%	8% ↓	7% ↓
Computer (Desktop / laptop/ netbook)	9%	17% ↑	12%	9%	6%	8%	4% ↓	5% ↓
Handheld games console	5%	15% ↑	6%	6%	1% ↓	1% ↓	1% ↓	0% ↓
Smart TV	2%	3%	2%	3%	0%	2%	0% ↓	0% ↓

Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
G1. Do you ever play games at home or elsewhere in any of these ways? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1875 aged 16+, 249 aged 16-24, 277 aged 25-34, 305 aged 35-44, 268 aged 45-54, 296 aged 55-64, 239 aged 65-74, 241 aged 75+)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age compared to all adults

As shown in Figure 23, while there is no difference in the overall incidence of gaming by socio-economic group compared to the average, adults in AB households are more likely to play games on a tablet (17% vs. 12%).

Men are more likely than women to play games overall (41% vs. 31%), and they are more than three times as likely to play games on a console connected to a TV (23% vs. 7%). Women are, however, more likely than men to say they play games on a tablet (14% vs. 10%).

Figure 23: Devices used for gaming, by socio-economic group and gender

	All adults	AB	C1	C2	DE	Male	Female
Any gaming on any device	36%	34%	37%	30%	41%	41% ↑	31%
Mobile phone/ smartphone	21%	22%	19%	17%	25%	21%	21%
Games console connected to a TV	15%	12%	16%	15%	17%	23% ↑	7%
Tablet	12%	17% ↑	8%	11%	11%	10%	14% ↑
Computer (Desktop / laptop/ netbook)	9%	12%	9%	7%	8%	10%	8%
Handheld games console	5%	3%	5%	6%	4%	6%	4%
Smart TV	2%	1%	3%	1%	2%	2%	1%

Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
G1. Do you ever play games at home or elsewhere in any of these ways? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1875 aged 16+, 415 AB, 571 C1, 386 C2, 503 DE, 909 male, 966 female)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by socio-economic group compared to all adults and men compared to women

Data use

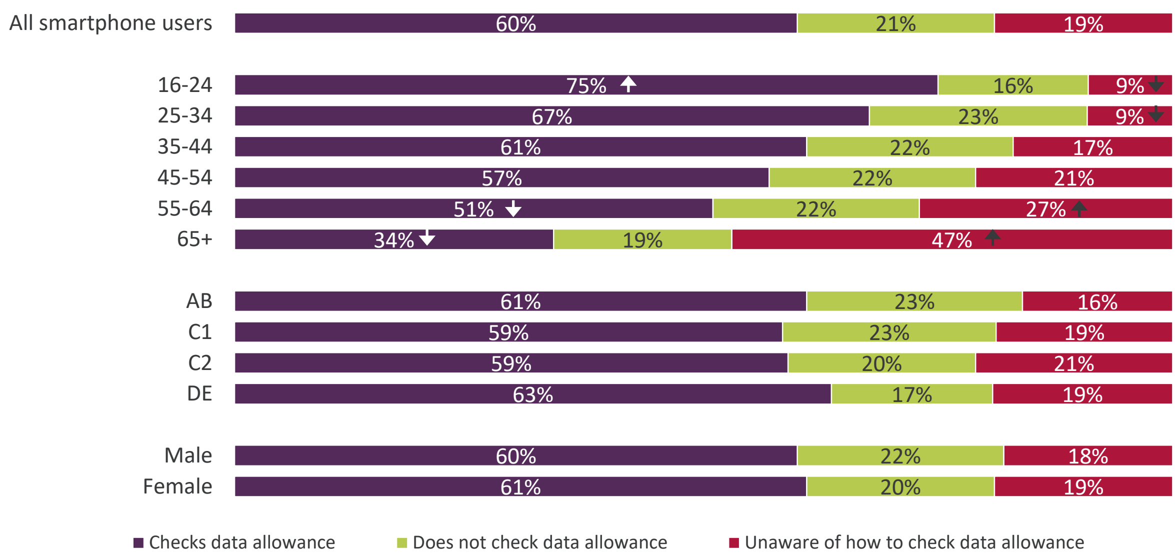
Since 2016, questions have been added to the Media Literacy Tracker study to better understand how smartphone users manage their data use.

Four in five smartphone users know how to check their data allowance and three in five ever do this

As shown in Figure 24, four in five smartphone users (81%) say they know how to check their data allowance to see how much data they have left. Awareness varies by age, rising to nine in ten for 16-24s (91%) and 25-34s (91%), dropping to almost three quarters (73%) for 55-64s and around half for over-64s (53%).

Three in five smartphone users (60%) say they ever check their data allowance to see how much data they have left. This is more likely among 16-24s (75%) and less likely among 55-64s (51%) and over-64s (34%).

Figure 24: Checking mobile data allowance, by age, socio-economic group and gender



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
M2A/ M2B. Do you know how to check your data allowance to see how much data you left?/ Do you ever check your data allowance to see how much data you have left? (prompted responses, single coded).
Base: All adults aged 16+ who use a smartphone (1289 aged 16+, 232 aged 16-24, 246 aged 25-34, 267 aged 35-44, 220 aged 45-54, 179 aged 55-64, 145 aged 65+, 329 AB, 434 C1, 245 C2, 281 DE, 606 male, 683 female).
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all smartphone users and men compared to women

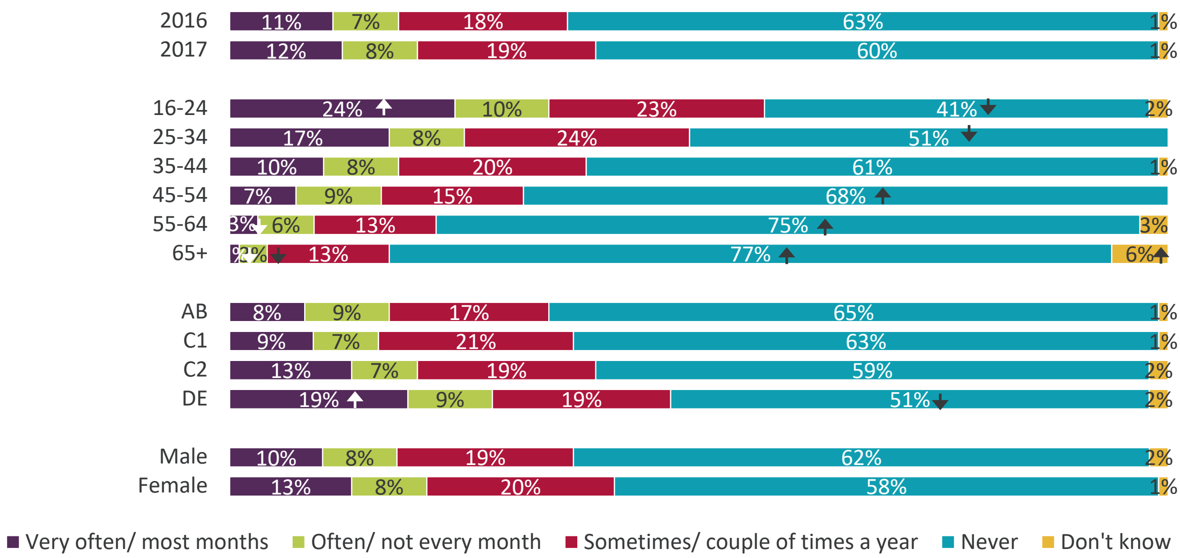
Smartphone users aged 16-24 and those in DE households are more likely to use up their data allowance

Smartphone users are also asked if they ever use up their data allowance and if so, how often. A majority of users, six in ten (60%), say they never use up their data allowance, with one in eight (12%) saying they do this very often, or most months. A further 8% say they run out of data often, but not necessarily every month, while one in five (19%) say they run out of data a couple of times a year. Each of these incidences is unchanged compared to 2016.

Smartphone users aged 16-24 (57%) are more likely than users overall (39%) to say they ever use up their data allowance, and are twice as likely to say they do this very often/ most months (24% vs. 12% overall). While users aged 25-34 are more likely to say they have ever used up their data allowance (49% vs. 39%), they are as likely as all users to do so very often/ most months (17% vs. 12%). Those aged 45 and over are less likely to say they ever use up their smartphone data allowance.

Smartphone users in DE households are more likely than average to ever use up their data allowance (47% vs. 39%) and to do so very often/ most months (19% vs. 12%).

Figure 25: Frequency of using up data allowance, by age, socio-economic group and gender



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
M3. Do you ever use up your data allowance on your mobile phone? (unprompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who use a smartphone (1289 aged 16+, 232 aged 16-24, 246 aged 25-34, 267 aged 35-44, 220 aged 45-54, 179 aged 55-64, 145 aged 65+, 329 AB, 434 C1, 245 C2, 281 DE, 606 male, 683 female).
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between 2016 and 2017 at the overall level, and by age / socio-economic group compared to all smartphone users and men compared to women

Nearly a quarter of smartphone users who ever use up their data allowance say they buy extra data when they are at risk of running out

Smartphone users who ever use up their data allowance are prompted with six options and are asked to say which they ever do when they are at risk of running out of data.

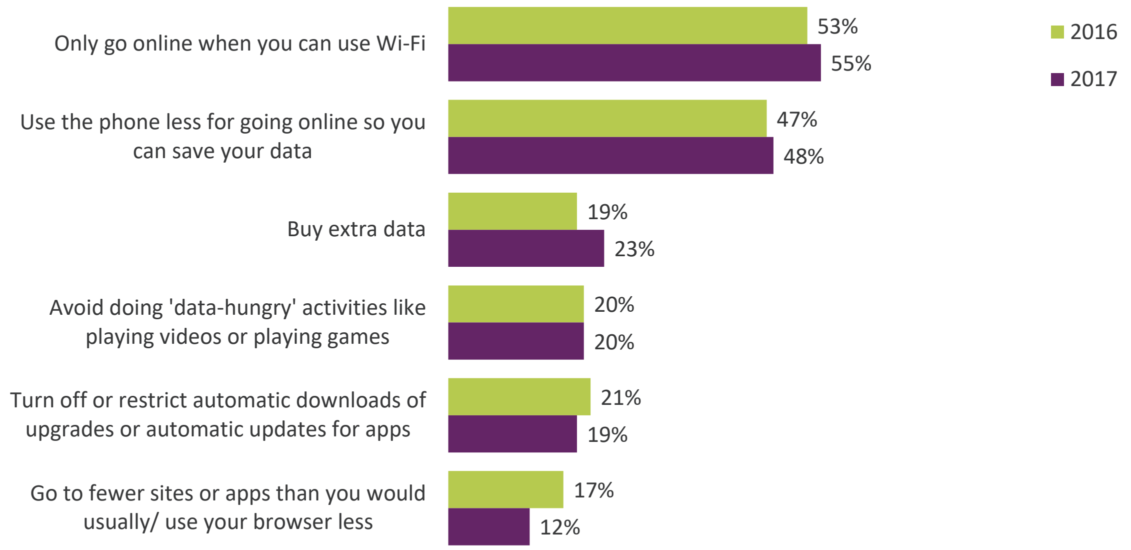
More than half (55%) restrict their data use/ only go online when they can use wifi, with close to half (48%) saying they just use their phone less for going online.

Nearly a quarter of smartphone users (23%) say they buy extra data from their network provider and one in five (20%) avoid 'data-hungry' activities like playing videos or games, or turn off/ restrict automatic downloads or updates of apps (19%). One in eight (12%) go to fewer sites or apps than they would usually, or use their browser less.

There are no differences by age when comparing those aged 16-34 with users aged 35 and over,[18] or when comparing results by gender.

Compared to those in C2DE[19] households, smartphone users in ABC1 households are more likely to say they go to fewer sites or apps, or use their browser less (15% vs. 8%).

Figure 26: Actions undertaken when at risk of running out of data: 2016-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
M4. When you are at risk of running out of data do you ever do any of the following things? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: Those with a smartphone who have ever used up their data allowance (423 in 2016, 493 in 2017)

Public wifi

Seven in ten smartphone users ever use public wifi

Smartphone users were also asked whether they ever used public wifi.[20] Seven in ten smartphone users (70%) say that they ever use public wifi, unchanged since 2016 (67%). In 2017, this incidence was lower for those aged 65 and over (45%).

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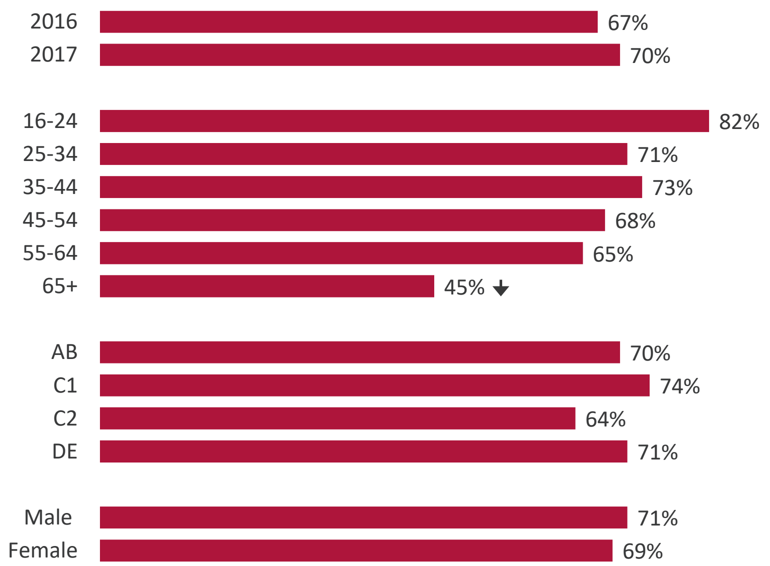
[18] Low base sizes prevent analysis by the usual six age groups
[19] Low base sizes prevent analysis by the usual four socio-economic groups
[20] The following definition was read out to respondents if required: wifi that is provided free of charge in public locations like coffee shops or hotels. Some of these may require you to register or to log in to gain access to the public wifi.

Figure 27: Use of public wifi



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
M5. Do you ever use free public wifi? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who use a smartphone (1289 aged 16+, 232 aged 16-24, 246 aged 25-34, 267 aged 35-44, 220 aged 45-54, 179 aged 55-64, 145 aged 65+, 329 AB, 434 C1, 245 C2, 281 DE, 606 male, 683 female).
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between 2016 and 2017 at the overall level, and by age / socio-economic group compared to all smartphone users and men compared to women

5. Engagement and participation

This section looks at the ways in which internet users engage and participate online. It first addresses how internet users communicate online, with a particular focus on social media and messaging sites[21] – looking at the sites used and exposure to upsetting or offensive content. It also looks at attitudes towards sharing opinions, whether through social media or more generally online.

It moves on to address internet users' interest in and attitudes towards news. It looks at frequency of accessing news content, people's views on the importance of difference types of news content and preferences for accessing these types of news content.

It also looks at adults' experience of transacting online or through their smartphone, and then looks at internet users' experience of comparing deals online and use of price comparison websites.

This section then covers use of the internet to access government or other public or civic services, as well as reasons for not completing government services online. It finishes by assessing attitudes towards creativity and covers some of the creative activities that adult internet users may do online.

Key findings

- In 2017, internet users are no more likely than in 2016 to email or use instant messaging services. They are however, more likely to make video calls (41% vs. 37% in 2016) and to have done so in the previous week (27% vs. 22%).
- Slightly more than three-quarters of internet users (77%) have a profile or account on a social media or messaging site or app – unchanged since 2016. This equates to two-thirds (68%) of adults overall. Internet users aged 25-34 are now more likely to have a profile or account on a social media or messaging site or app (96% vs. 90% in 2016) with no change among other age groups or by household socio-economic group.
- Ninety-one per cent of social media/ messaging site users say they have a profile/ account on Facebook, making it the most common site on which to have a profile. Compared to 2016, however, they are less likely to use Facebook (down from 95% in 2016) and are more likely to use WhatsApp (54%, up from 45% in 2016)[22]. As such, the incidence of *only* having a profile or account on Facebook stands at a quarter (26%), down from a third (32%) in 2016. In 2017 internet users with a social media or messaging profile/ account aged 55+ are more likely to only use Facebook.

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[21] In 2017 the definition of social media sites was expanded to also include messaging sites or apps, so any trend reported on should be seen as indicative only. It is, however, worth noting that although WhatsApp was not specifically included in the definition of instant messaging services provided to respondents in the Technology Tracker study, the data at Figure 28 shows that use of instant messaging services is unchanged compared to 2016.

[22] This increase for WhatsApp could be attributable to respondents being prompted to consider their use of instant messaging sites at this particular question, unlike in previous years.

- More than half of social media/ messaging site users (55%) say they have seen something that has upset or offended them on social media/ messaging sites in the past year. This is more likely than in 2016 (44%). More than half (55%) say they took some form of action as a result of seeing the upsetting content, although this is less likely than in 2016 (61%).
- Internet users aged 16-24 (68%) and 25-34 (71%) are more likely than internet users overall (57%) to say they ever share opinions online. While more than a third of internet users (37%) think that people should have the right to hide their identity online in order to express their views anonymously, internet users are more likely to say that opinions should always be shared online using people's real names, even if the opinions are controversial (46%).
- Close to nine in ten internet users (87%) say they are interested in news; interest is lower among 16-24s and 25-34s, and higher among over-64s. More than four in five internet users (85%) say they follow the news at least once a day.
- The majority of internet users say they value news which is impartial (66%), breaking/ up-to-date (62%) and which provides the key facts (59%). Fewer say they value news that provides depth and breadth of coverage (39%), news that provides an expert opinion (32%) or news that provides an alternative viewpoint (22%).
- Television is the source internet users say they would turn to first for most of the types of news content they say they value. But a quarter (25%) of internet users who value news that provides an alternative viewpoint say they would turn first to social media for this type of news content - making this the most popular news source for this type of content, compared to one in five (21%) who say they would turn first to TV.
- Around half of internet users have gone online in the previous week for banking (52%) or to purchase goods, services or tickets etc. (50%). Both of these measures are unchanged since 2016. Three in ten internet users (30%) have been online in the previous week to check or pay bills online.
- Smartphone users are more likely than in 2016 to have ever used their phone as a ticket or boarding pass or as an entry ticket to an event (57% vs. 41% in 2016). They are also twice as likely to have done this in the previous week (11% vs. 5% in 2016).
- Nine in ten internet users (89%) say they feel confident comparing prices and deals online. Four in five internet users say they have ever used a price comparison website for insurance services (79%).
- Six in ten internet users have ever looked online for public service information on government sites such as gov.uk, ni.direct or HMRC (58%), or have completed government processes online - such as updating their Universal Credit or renewing a driving licence or passport (58%). More than four in ten have ever paid their council tax or used another local council service online (45%), or signed an online petition or used a campaigning website (41%). Each of these measures is unchanged compared to 2016.
- More than half of internet users (54%) feel that being online helps them to connect with creative people, and more than two in five (43%) feel they are more creative since they have been going online.

Communication

In 2016 the questions in the Media Literacy Tracker, relating to type and frequency of internet use, were revised. A shorter set of questions were asked of adults who go online, and the frequency options that respondents could select were also amended.

As Ofcom's Technology Tracker study also includes questions about types and frequency of internet use, the specific online activities that are grouped under 'online communication' in this section of the report are taken from that study rather than from the Media Literacy Tracker.

These results are from the wave of Technology Tracker research conducted in July/ August 2017.

Internet users are now more likely than in 2016 to make video calls

The four activities that internet users are asked about in the Technology Tracker survey, which fall under the heading of 'online communication', are: sending or receiving emails, communicating via instant messaging (e.g. Facebook Chat, Skype Chat, Snapchat etc.), making video calls (e.g. via FaceTime, Skype) and making voice calls over this type of service (VoIP).

Figure 28 shows the proportion of adult internet users, from 2015 to 2017,[23] who say they ever undertake each of these activities online, broken out into those who have done this in the previous week, and less frequent use [24].

In 2017, more than eight in ten internet users say they have ever been online to send or receive emails (85%) while three-quarters (75%) say they have done this in the previous week. Both of these measures are unchanged since 2016[25].

Six in ten internet users have ever used instant messaging services (58%) and close to half say they have done this in the previous week (46%). Both of these measures are also unchanged since 2016.

Internet users are more likely to have used VoIP services for video calls than for voice calls, both 'ever' (41% vs. 30%) and in the previous week (27% vs. 20%). Compared to 2016, internet users are more likely to say they have ever used VoIP services for video calls (41% vs. 37% in 2016) and are more likely to have done this in the previous week (27% vs. 22% in 2016). Users are less likely than in 2016 to say they have used VoIP services for voice calls less frequently than weekly (10% vs. 13%).

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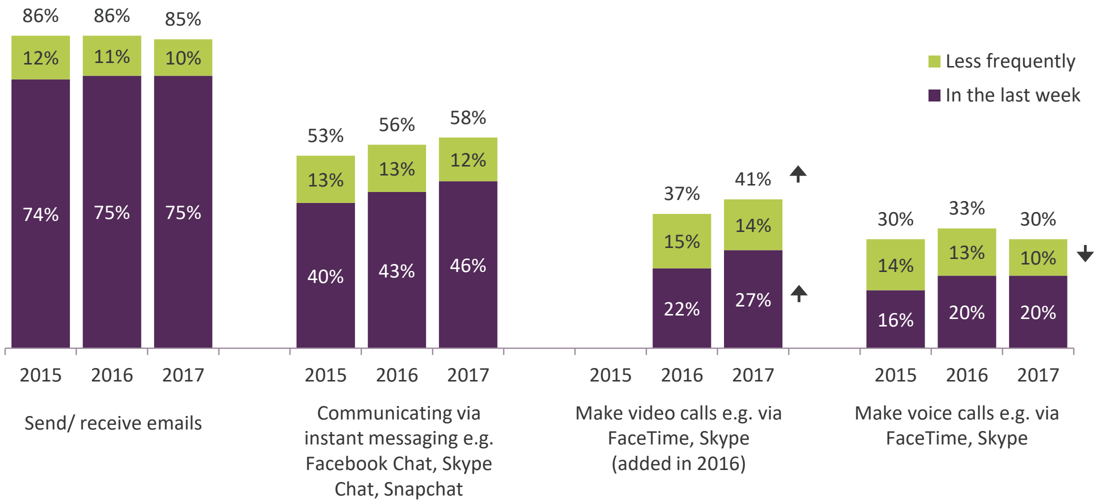
[23] Between 2015 and 2017 the research for the Technology Tracker study took place in two waves per year; the data shown relate to the second wave of research conducted in July/ August each year.

[24] It is not possible to show a trend going back to 2015 for making video calls over VoIP services as this was first included in the Technology Tracker survey in 2016.

[25] Between 2016 and 2017 the Technology Tracker changed from a survey partly administered using a pencil and paper approach (PAPI) to one administered through a tablet (CAPI). As this change in methodology could affect the results shown, any difference between 2016 and 2017 has been tested at the 99% level, meaning that there is only a 1% probability that the difference is by chance.

Figure 28: Communicating online: 2015-2017



Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker, H2 2015-2017
QE5A/ QE5B. Which, if any, of these do you use the internet for? / And which, if any, of these activities have you used the internet for in the last week? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (2413 in 2016, 2514 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (99% level) between 2016 and 2017

As shown in Figure 29, in 2017, internet users aged 16-24 and 25-34 are more likely than average to have been online in the previous week to use instant messaging services, or to use VoIP services, whether for video or voice calls. Internet users aged 35-44 are more likely to have been online in the previous week to send or receive emails and to use instant messaging services, while those aged 55-64 are less likely to have been online in the previous week to use instant messaging services or to use VoIP services - whether video or voice calls. Compared to internet users overall, those aged 65 and over are less likely to have been online in the previous week to carry out each of these four activities.

For three of the four activities (email, and voice and video calls on VoIP services), compared to internet users overall, those in AB households are more likely to have undertaken each of these activities. Those in C1 households are also more likely than average to have been online in the previous week to send or receive emails. Internet users in C2 households are less likely to have been online in the previous week to use voice- and video-based VoIP services, while those in DE households are less likely to have been online to send or receive emails.

Men who go online are more likely than women to say they have made voice calls using VoIP in the previous week.

Figure 29: Communication online in the previous week, by age, gender and socio-economic group

	All internet users	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Send/ receive emails	75%	76%	80%	82% ↑	75%	75%	62% ↓	54% ↓
Communicating via instant messaging e.g. Facebook Chat, Skype Chat, Snapchat	46%	69% ↑	60% ↑	54% ↑	41%	35% ↓	18% ↓	9% ↓
Make video calls e.g. via FaceTime, Skype	27%	39% ↑	40% ↑	30%	26%	18% ↓	9% ↓	7% ↓
Make voice calls e.g. via FaceTime, Skype	20%	26% ↑	30% ↑	25%	20%	13% ↓	7% ↓	3% ↓

	All internet users	AB	C1	C2	DE	Male	Female
Send/ receive emails	75%	83% ↑	80% ↑	73%	62% ↓	76%	75%
Communicating via instant messaging e.g. Facebook Chat, Skype Chat, Snapchat	46%	50%	47%	44%	42%	45%	48%
Make video calls e.g. via FaceTime, Skype	27%	35% ↑	27%	22% ↓	23%	27%	28%
Make voice calls e.g. via FaceTime, Skype	20%	26% ↑	21%	15% ↓	17%	23% ↑	18%

Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker, H2 2017
QE5B. And, which, if any, of these activities have you used the internet for in the last week? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (2514 aged 16+, 366 aged 16-24, 399 aged 25-34, 465 aged 35-44, 443 aged 45-54, 371 aged 55-64, 283 aged 65-74, 186 aged 75+, 616 AB, 807 C1, 533 C2, 553 DE, 1201 male, 1313 female)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age and socio-economic group compared to all internet users, and men compared to women

Social media and messaging sites

Incidence of having a social media or messaging profile/ account

More than three-quarters of internet users (two-thirds of adults) have a social media profile/ account; 25-34s are more likely than in 2016 to have a profile/ account

More than three-quarters (77%) of internet users have a social media or messaging profile/ account, unchanged since 2016 (76%)[26].

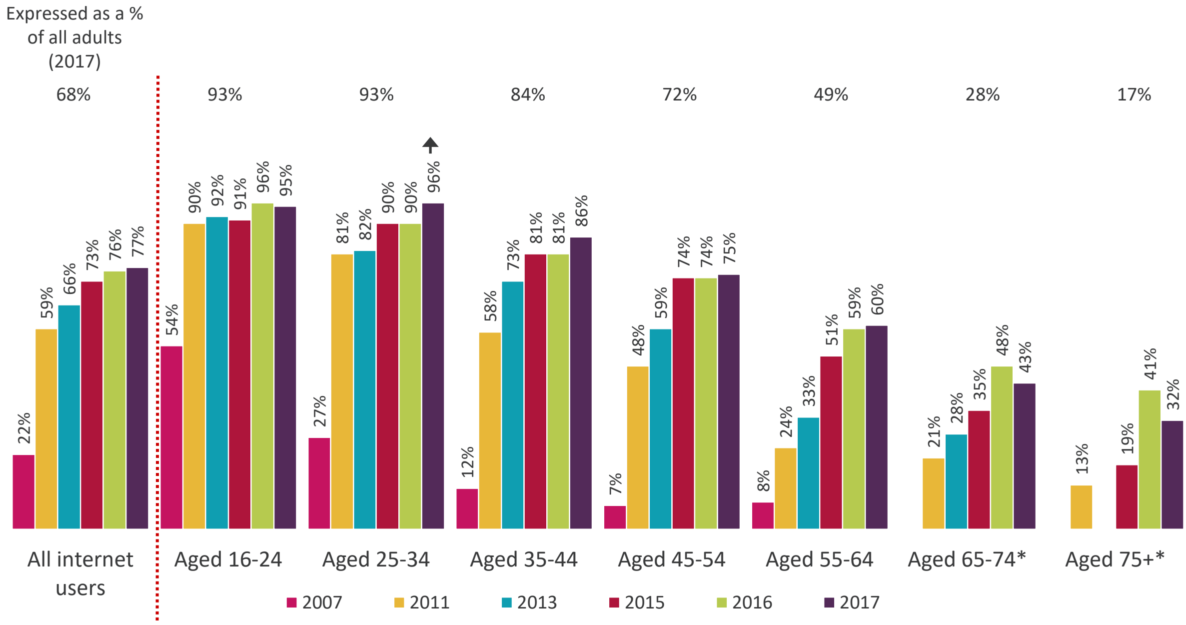
When expressed as a proportion of all adults aged 16+ (rather than all internet users), around two-thirds (68%) of adults have a social media or messaging profile/ account.

Internet users aged 16-24 (95%), 25-34 (96%) and 35-44 (86%) are more likely than average (77%) to have a profile/ account, and those aged 55-64 (60%), 65-74 (43%) and 75 and over (32%) are less likely.

[26] In 2017 the definition of social media sites was expanded to also include messaging sites or apps, so any trend should be seen as indicative only

Compared to 2016, internet users aged 25-34 are more likely to have a profile/ account (96% vs. 90%).

Figure 30: Incidence of having a social media profile/ account among internet users, by age: 2007-2017

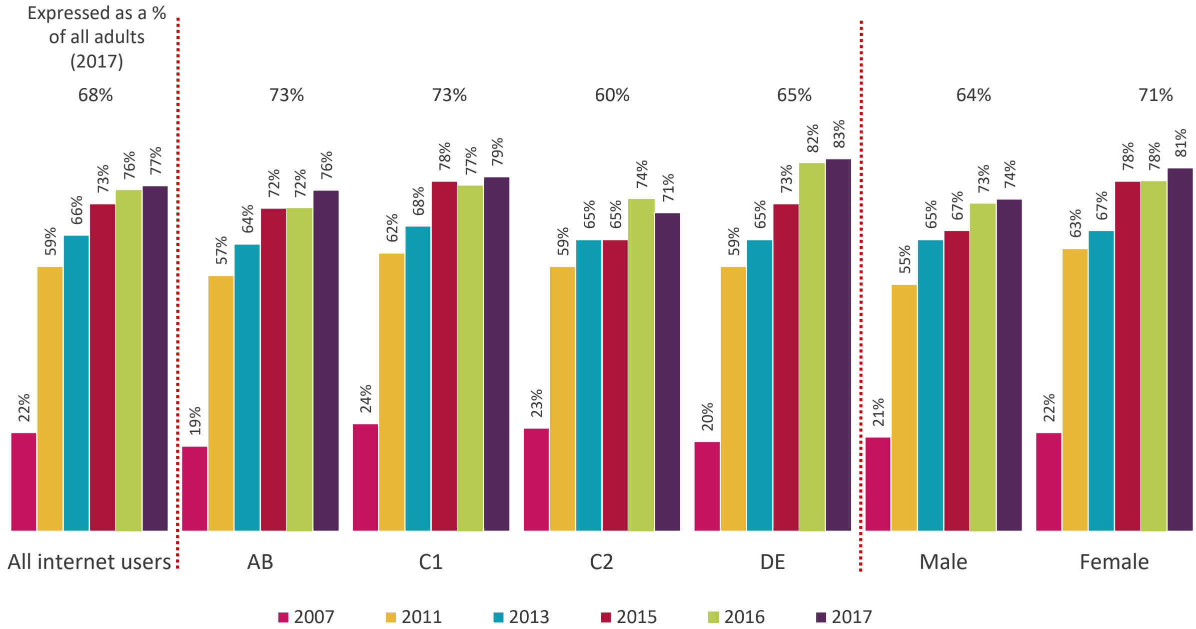


Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN21. I'd now like to ask you some questions about your use of social media or messaging sites or apps – so websites or apps like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, WhatsApp and YouTube. Do you have a social media profile or account on any of these types of sites or apps? (unprompted responses, single coded) * NB – definition expanded in 2017 to also include messaging sites or apps, previously just asked about social media. Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1570 aged 16+, 243 aged 16-24, 269 aged 25-34, 294 aged 35-44, 250 aged 45-54, 225 aged 55-64, 149 aged 65-74, 140 aged 75+)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017. Base too low to report for 65-74s in 2007, and 75+ in 2007 and 2013

As shown in Figure 31, a majority of internet users in all four socio-economic groups have a social media or messaging profile/ account. Internet users in C2 households (71%) are less likely than average (77%) to have a profile or account and those in DE households (83%) are more likely.

In 2017, women (81%) continue to be more likely to have a profile/ account, compared to men (74%). Each of the incidences shown in Figure 31 is unchanged since 2016.

Figure 31: Incidence of having a social media profile/ account among internet users, by socio-economic group and gender: 2007-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN21. I'd now like to ask you some questions about your use of social media or messaging sites or apps – so websites or apps like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, WhatsApp and YouTube. Do you have a social media profile or account on any of these types of sites or apps? (unprompted responses, single coded) * NB – definition expanded in 2017 to also include messaging sites or apps, previously just asked about social media.
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1570 aged 16+, 392 AB, 516 C1, 304 C2, 358 DE, 749 male, 821 female).

Social media users are less likely than in 2016 to have a profile or account on Facebook

As shown in Figure 32, nine in ten adults with a social media or messaging profile/ account say they use Facebook (91%) (62% among all adults), down since 2016 (95%)[27]. Only one other site is used by a majority of those with a profile/ account – WhatsApp (54%)[28] (36% among all adults), up since 2016 (45%). A quarter (26%) of those with a profile/ account say they *only* have one on Facebook, down from a third in 2016 (32%).

Three in ten adults with a profile/ account say they use YouTube (33%) or Instagram (31%), with around a quarter using Snapchat (27%) or Twitter (24%). A similar proportion have a profile/ account on LinkedIn (16%), Pinterest (14%) or Google+ (14%). All other sites are used by less than one in ten social media or messaging site users.

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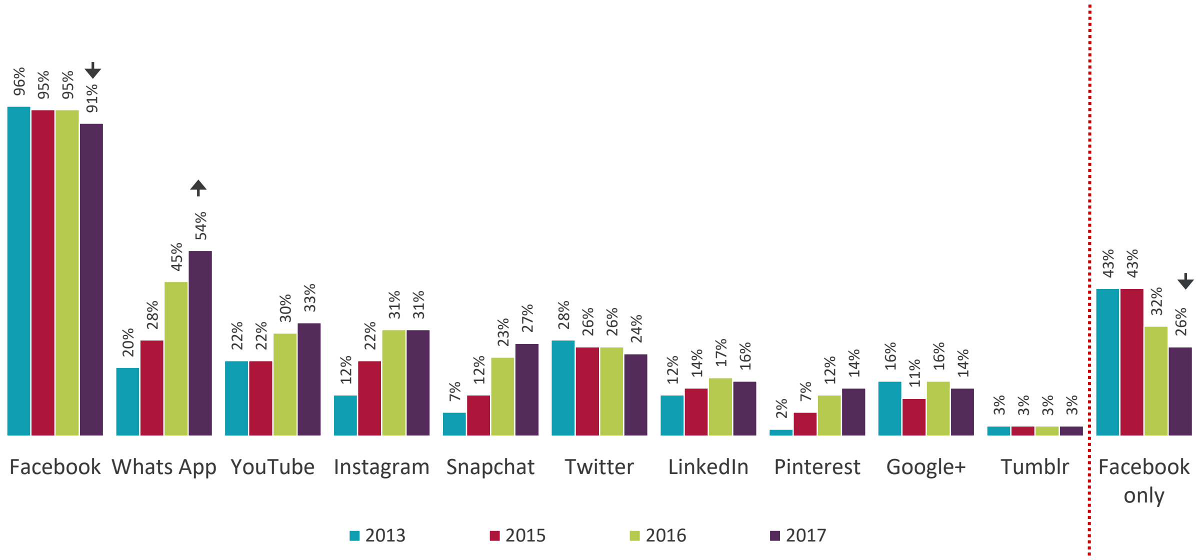
[27] As mentioned above, in 2017 the definition of social media sites was expanded to specifically include messaging sites or apps, which could account for this change

[28] As mentioned above, in 2017 the definition of social media sites was expanded to specifically include messaging sites or apps, which could account for this change

Figure 32: Social media sites used: 2013-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN22. Which social media or messaging sites or apps do you have a profile or account on that you still use? (prompted responses, multi-coded) – showing responses of 3% or more of adults in 2017 aged 16+ with a social media profile / account * NB – definition expanded in 2017 to also include messaging sites or apps, previously just asked about social media ** NB Showcard amended from 2016 reducing the prompted responses to the top ten most popular social media sites
Base: All adults aged 16+ with a social media profile/account (1136 in 2016, 1182 in 2017).
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

While not shown in the Figure, there are differences by demographics:

- Compared to the average, 16-24s are more likely to have a profile/ account on six of the ten sites/ apps shown above: Snapchat (66%), Instagram (64%), WhatsApp (63%), YouTube (51%), Twitter (33%) and Tumblr (7%). Adults aged 25-34 are more likely to have a profile/ account on Instagram (42%) or Snapchat (38%).
- Over-34s with a profile/ account are less likely than average to have one on Snapchat, over-44s are less likely to have one on Instagram, and over-54s are less likely to have one on WhatsApp. Adults aged 45-54 are more likely to have a profile/ account on LinkedIn (24%).
- There are no differences by age in having a profile/ account on Facebook compared to the average, although *only* using Facebook is more likely among those aged 55-64 (39% vs. 26%) and over-64s (59%).
- There are differences by socio-economic group compared to the average: AB adults are more likely to have a profile/ account on Twitter (33%) and LinkedIn (30%). Those in C2 households are more likely to use Facebook (97%) and less likely to use LinkedIn (9%). Adults in DE households are more likely to use Snapchat (34%) and are less likely to use LinkedIn (7%). *Only* using Facebook is more likely among those in C2 households (34%) and less likely among AB households (18%).
- Women are more likely than men to have a profile/ account on Facebook (94% vs. 87%), on Instagram (34% vs. 28%) and on Pinterest (20% vs. 8%).

Social media/messaging site users are less likely than in 2016 to consider their Facebook profile/ account to be their main one

In addition to asking respondents about the social media sites or messaging sites or apps they have a profile/ account on, they are asked to nominate which they consider to be their main one i.e. the one they use most often. The results are shown in Figure 33[29].

Seven in ten with a profile/ account on any site or app consider Facebook to be their main profile/ account (70%) (48% of all adults), less likely than in 2016 (80%) (52% of all adults). Sixteen per cent nominate WhatsApp (11% of all adults), higher than in 2016 (7%) (4% of all adults). Less than 5% nominate Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter or YouTube. Snapchat is also more likely than in 2016 to be nominated as their main site (4% vs. 2%).

There are some differences within these overall measures by age, socio-economic group and gender. Those aged 16-24 are more likely than average to nominate Snapchat (13% vs. 4%) or Instagram (9% vs. 3%) as their main profile/ account. WhatsApp is more likely than average to be mentioned by 35-44s (23% vs. 16%), while this age group are less likely to mention Snapchat (1% vs. 4%). Adults aged 55-64 are more likely to mention YouTube (6% vs. 2%), while Facebook is more likely to be mentioned by those aged 65 and over (83% vs. 70%).

Adults in AB households are less likely than average to nominate Facebook (56% vs. 70%) and are more likely to nominate WhatsApp (24% vs. 16%) or Twitter (5% vs. 3%). In contrast, adults in C2 households are more likely to nominate Facebook (84%) and less likely to nominate WhatsApp (7%).

Facebook is more likely to be nominated by women than by men (74% vs. 66%), whereas men are more likely than women to say that Twitter (4% vs. 1%) is their main profile/ account.

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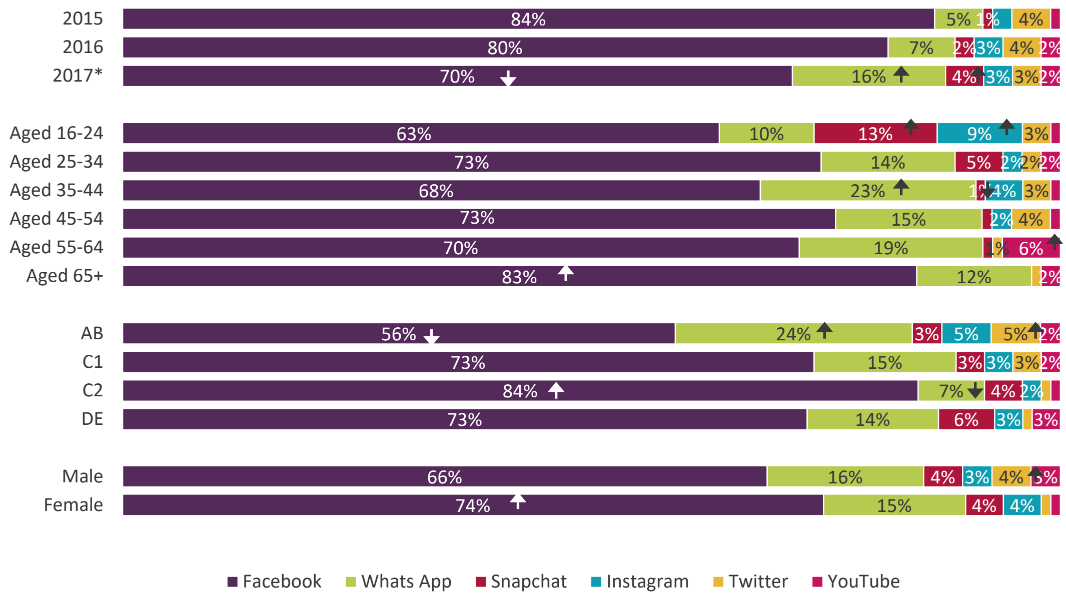
[29] As mentioned above, in 2017 the definition of social media sites was expanded to specifically include messaging sites or apps; this could account for any differences in the trends over time

Figure 33: Service considered as main social media profile/ account, by year and demographic group



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN23. And which one would you say is your main social media or messaging site or app – the one you use most often? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ with a social media profile /account (1182 aged 16+, varies by demographic). Showing responses of >1% in 2017 among all adults with a profile/ account. * NB – definition expanded in 2017 to also include messaging sites or apps, previously just asked about social media. Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between 2016 and 2017 at the overall level, and by age / socio-economic group compared to all with a social media profile/ account and men compared to women

Sharing opinions on social media sites or apps

In 2017 adults with a social media or messaging site profile/ account are less likely to say they often see views they disagree with

To try and gauge the variety of opinions that people are exposed to on social media, adults with a profile/ account on social media or messaging sites/ apps are prompted with three responses and are asked to say which one best applies to their experience of social media. These responses are:

- I often see views that I disagree with
- I sometimes see views that I disagree with
- I rarely see views that I disagree with

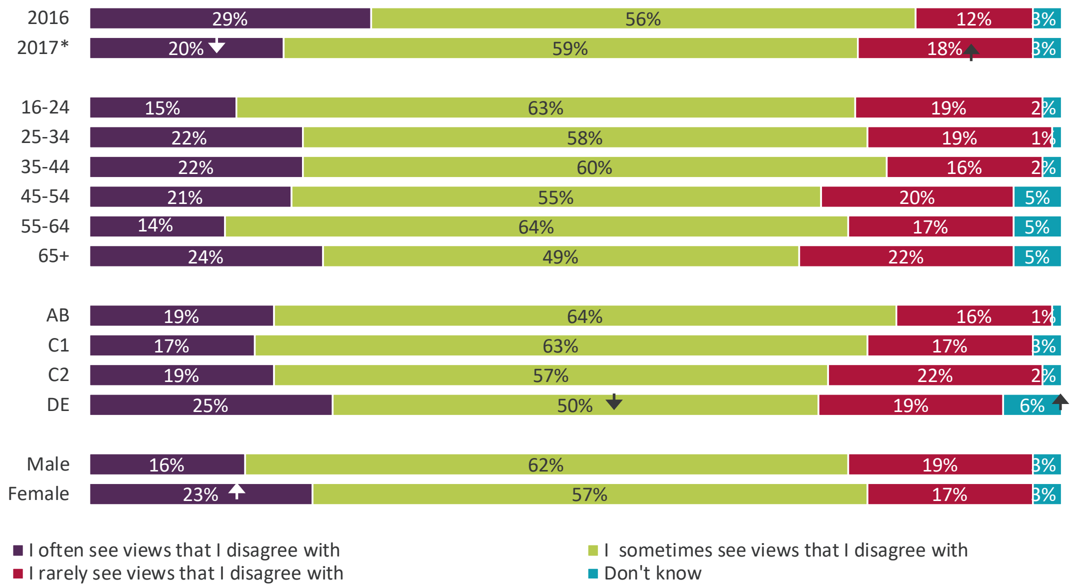
As shown in Figure 34, close to one in five with a profile/ account (18%) say they rarely see views that they disagree with. The majority (59%) say they sometimes see views they disagree with, and a further one in five (20%) say they often see views they disagree with. Compared to 2016[30], these

[30] As mentioned above, in 2017 the definition of social media sites was expanded to specifically include messaging sites or apps; this could account for any differences in the trends over time

users are less likely to say they often see views they disagree with (20% vs. 29%) and are more likely to say they rarely see these views (18% vs. 12%).

Women are more likely than men to say they often see views they disagree with (23% vs. 16%).

Figure 34: Extent to which people see views on social media that they disagree with, by age, gender and socio-economic group



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN28. When you use social media, which one of these best applies? (prompted responses, single coded). * NB – definition expanded in 2017 to also include messaging sites or apps, previously just asked about social media. Base: All adults aged 16+ with a social media or messaging site profile/ account (1182 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between 2016 and 2017 at the overall level, and by age / socio-economic group compared to all with a social media profile/ account and men compared to women.

Seeing content on social media/ messaging sites or apps that upsets or offends

Social media/ messaging site users are more likely than in 2016 to say they have seen something that upset or offended them on social media in the previous 12 months

Social media/ messaging site users are asked whether they have seen something that upset or offended them on the sites they use, over the past 12 months. Those who say they have are asked whether have seen this often, sometimes or rarely. The results are shown in Figure 35.

More than half of social media/ messaging sites users aged 16+ (55%) say they have seen something that has upset or offended them in the past year, with one in ten (9%) saying they have 'often' seen this type of content in the past 12 months. A quarter of users (26%) say they have 'sometimes' seen this and one in five (20%) say they have 'rarely' seen this.

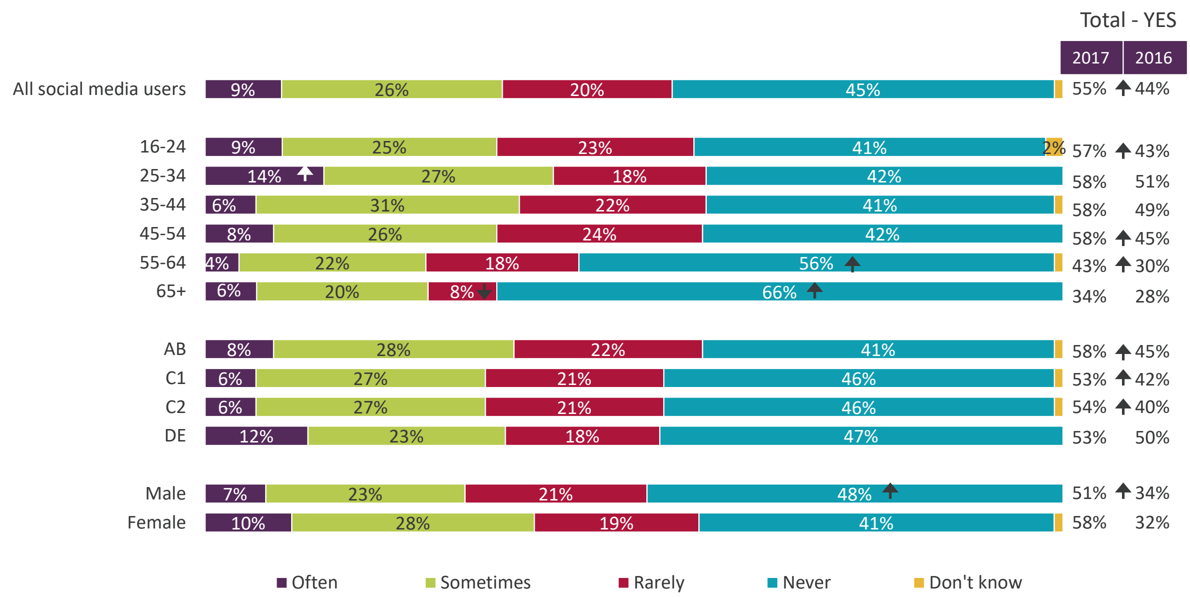
Compared to the average (55%), users aged 55-64 (43%) and 65 and over (34%) are less likely to say they have seen something on social media sites that has upset or offended them in the past 12 months. Users aged 25-34 (14%) are more likely than average (9%) to say they have often seen this type of content in the past 12 months.

Women are more likely than men to say they have ever seen content that upset or offended them in social media over the past year (58% vs. 51%).

Due to changes that were made to this particular question in 2017[31] it is only possible to compare the overall incidence of having seen upsetting or offensive content on social media, over time[32].

Social media/messaging site users are more likely than in 2016 to say they have seen this type of content in the past 12 months (55% vs. 44%). This increase between 2016 and 2017 at an overall level is also evident for 16-24s (57% vs. 43% in 2016), 45-54s (58% vs. 45%) and 55-64s (43% vs. 30%). Users in AB (58% vs. 45%), C1 (53% vs. 42%) and C2 households (54% vs. 40%) are also more likely to have seen this type of content than in 2016, as are men (51% vs. 34%).

Figure 35: Frequency with which users have seen something that has upset or offended them on social media in the past year, by age, gender and socio-economic group



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN54. You said earlier you had a social media profile or account. Have you seen anything that upset or offended you in the last 12 months on any of the social media sites you use? (prompted responses, single coded). *The showcard was amended in 2017 – only possible to show the trend at the overall level rather than by specific response
Base: All adults aged 16+ with a social media profile/ account (1182 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between 2016 and 2017 at the overall level and by age/ socio-economic group compared to all with a social media profile/ account and men compared to women

[31] In 2016, social media users who said they had seen anything that upset or offended them on social media in the last 12 months were asked instead whether they had seen this 'once or twice' or 'more frequently'.
[32] As mentioned above, in 2017 the definition of social media sites was expanded to specifically include messaging sites or apps, which could account for any differences in the trends over time

Compared to 2016[33], those who have seen upsetting or offensive content on social media are less likely to say they have taken any action over it

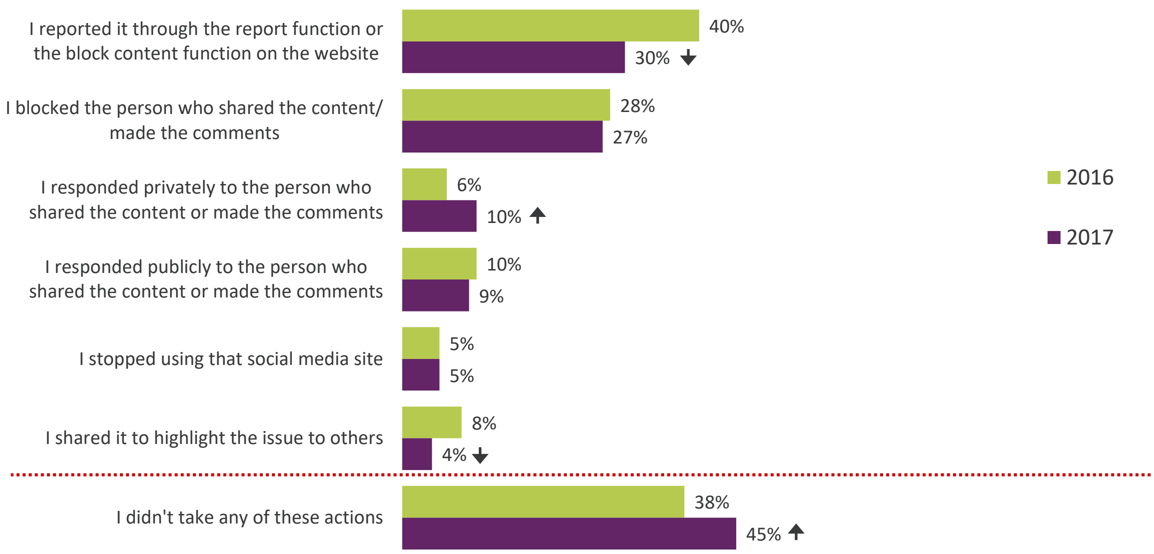
Social media/ messaging site users who have seen something upsetting or offensive on social media in the previous 12 months are asked whether they have taken any action as a result of seeing this content. They are prompted with six specific options, as well as an option to say they didn't take any of the six actions. The results are shown in Figure 36.

In 2017, three in ten (30%) say they reported it through the report function on the website, with fewer saying they blocked the person who shared the content or made the comments (27%). Fewer still, around one in ten or less, responded privately (10%) or publicly (9%) to the person who made or shared the content/ comments. Five per cent say they stopped using that social media site and 4% shared it to highlight the issue to others. More than four in ten (45%) say they did not take any of these actions.

Compared to 2016, those who have seen any upsetting content on social media sites are less likely to say they reported it through the report function on the website (30% vs. 40%) or to have shared the upsetting or offensive content to highlight the issue to others (4% vs. 8%). They are, however, more likely to say they responded privately to the person who shared the content or made the comments (10% vs. 6%). The net result of these differences mean that, compared to 2016, those who have seen something upsetting or offensive are less likely to say that they took any of these actions (55% vs. 62% in 2016).

In 2017, those aged 16-44[34] are more likely than over-44s to say they reported it through the report function on the website (34% vs. 23%).

Figure 36: Action taken as a result of seeing the upsetting or offensive content: 2016-2017



[33] As mentioned above, in 2017 the definition of social media sites was expanded to specifically include messaging sites or apps; this could account for any differences in the trends over time
[34] Low base sizes prevent analysis by the usual six age groups

Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN55. Did you take any of the following actions as a result of seeing this upsetting or offensive content? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All who have seen something upsetting or offensive on the social media sites they use in the past 12 months (644 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

Attitudes towards sharing opinions online

Close to half of internet users say that sharing opinions should be done using real names rather than anonymously

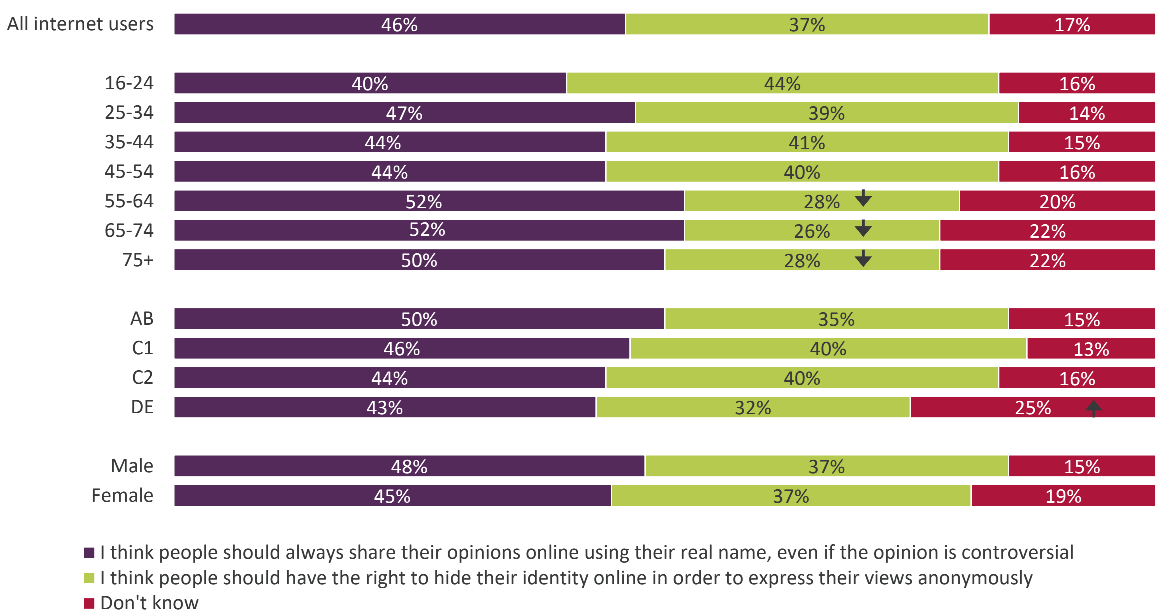
In 2017, internet users were asked the following question *"Which one of these two options is closest to how you feel about sharing opinions online? Please think about sharing opinions online that might be visible to everyone as well as those visible only to people you allow to see them"*. Users were then prompted with two options:

- I think people should always share their opinions online using their real name, even if the opinion is controversial
- I think people should have the right to hide their identity online in order to express their views anonymously.

The results are shown in Figure 37. Close to half of internet users say people should share their opinions using their real name (46%) compared to close to two in five (37%) who say that people should be able to share opinions online anonymously. Close to one in five (17%) are unsure.

Internet users aged 55 and over are less likely than average to say that people should have the right to hide their identity online (28% for 55-64s, 26% for 65-74s and 28% for 75+ vs. 37% overall). Internet users in DE households are more likely to be unsure (25%) compared to the average (17%).

Figure 37: Attitudes towards sharing opinions online, by age, gender and socio-economic group



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN29. Which one of these two options is closest to how you feel about sharing opinions online? Please think about sharing opinions online that might be visible to everyone as well as those visible only to people you allow to see them (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1570 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all internet users and men compared to women

Younger internet users are more likely to share their opinions online

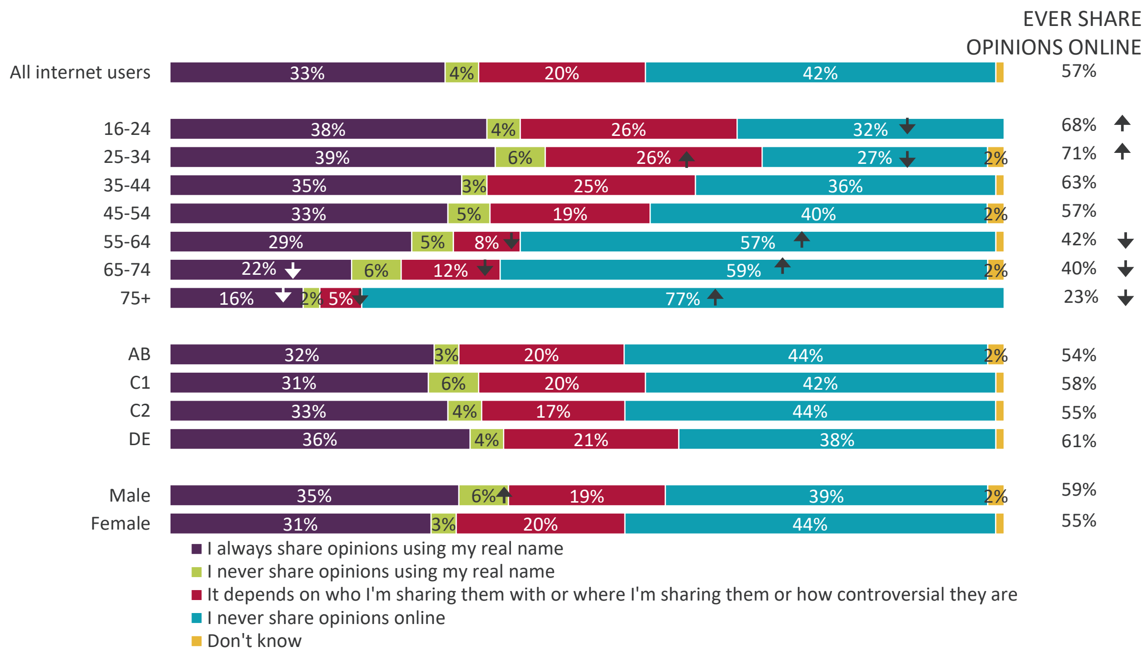
In 2017, internet users were also asked to consider the following statement: '*I share my opinions online using my real name even if the opinion is controversial*'. They were then prompted with four options and were asked which one option best applied to them personally.

The results are shown in Figure 38. More than half of internet users aged 16 and over say they share opinions online (57%); this is more likely for 16-24s (68%) and 25-34s (71%), and less likely among 55-64s (42%), 65-74s (40%) and those aged 75 and over (23%).

A third of internet users (33%) say they always share opinions using their real name, while 4% say they never share opinions using their real name. One in five (20%) say it depends on who they are sharing opinions with, where they are sharing them or how controversial they are.

Men are more likely than women to say they never share opinions using their real name (6% vs. 3%). There are no differences by household socio-economic group.

Figure 38: Attitudes towards sharing opinions online using real name, by age, gender and socio-economic group



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN30. Thinking now about the following statement: *"I share my opinions online using my real name even if the opinion is controversial"* - which one of these options best applies to you personally? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1570 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all internet users and men compared to women

News

Interest in and frequency of following news

Close to nine in ten internet users say they are interested in news; interest is highest among those aged 65+ and lowest among 16-34s

As detailed earlier in the introductory section of this report (Section 2), to complement the Media Literacy Tracking study in 2017, a separate survey was conducted online with adults aged 16+. The online survey included a series of questions relating to news content, and the findings are included in this section of the report. As this survey was conducted online, to avoid any confusion the respondents are referred to throughout this section as 'internet users' rather than 'adults'.

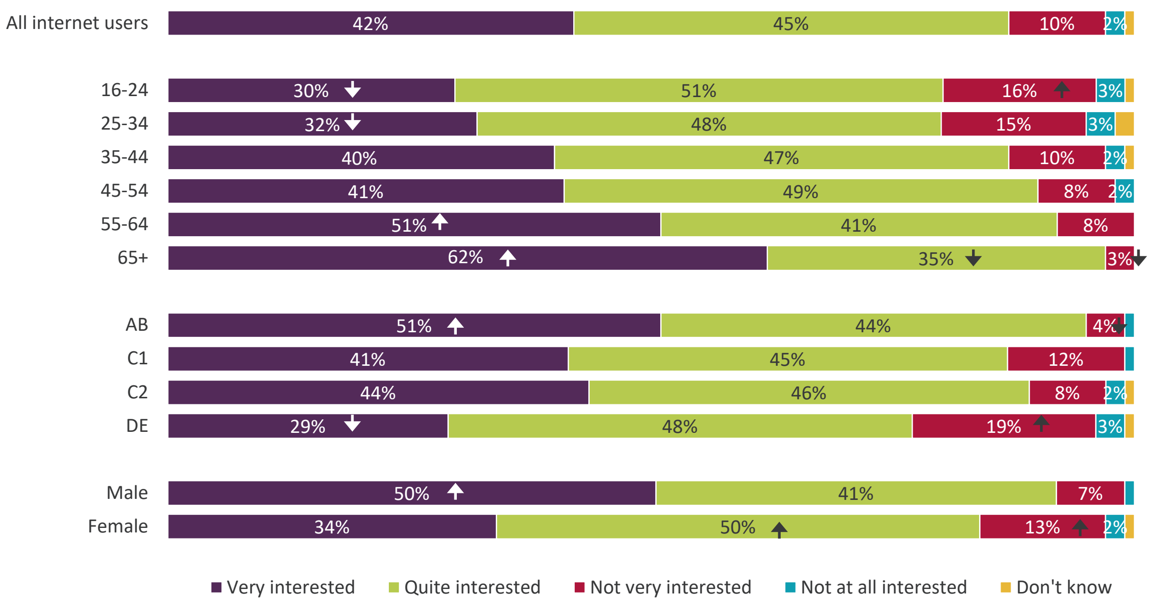
Internet users were asked the extent to which they were interested in reading, watching, listening to or following news. The results are shown in Figure 39. Overall, close to nine in ten (87%) internet users aged 16+ say they are interested in news; fairly evenly split between those 'very' interested (42%) and those 'quite' interested (45%). While 12% of internet users say they are not interested, they are more likely to say they are 'not very' interested (10%) rather than 'not at all' interested (2%).

Internet users aged 16-24 (81%) and 25-34 (80%) are less likely than average (87%) to say they are interested in the news, because they are less likely to be 'very' interested compared to internet users overall (30% for 16-24s, 32% for 25-34s vs. 42% overall). In contrast, a majority of internet users aged 55-64 (51%) or aged 65 and over (62%) say they are 'very' interested in news.

Internet users in AB households (95%) are more likely than average (87%) to say they are interested in the news, while those in DE households are less likely (77%). These differences are attributable to nearly twice as many internet users in AB households (51%) saying they are 'very' interested in news compared to those in DE households (29%). As such, more than a fifth of internet users in DE households say they are not interested in news (22%) compared to the average of 12% among internet users overall.

Men are more likely than women to say they are interested in news (91% vs. 84%) due to half (50%) of men saying they are 'very' interested (50%) compared to only a third (34%) of women. Twice as many women (15%) as men (8%) are not interested.

Figure 39: Interest in news among adults who go online, by age, gender and socio-economic group



Source: Ofcom adults' online survey 2017
Q11. How interested are you in reading, watching, listening to or following news? Would you say you are... (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1050 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all who go online and men compared to women

More than four in five internet users say they follow the news at least daily, with this incidence increasing with age

Internet users were asked the following question: *'Typically, how often, if at all, do you read, watch or listen to the news? Please think about all the ways you may do this e.g. on TV, on the radio, reading a newspaper, going online'*. They were then prompted with the following eight responses to choose from:

1. Lots of times throughout the day/ constantly
2. A few times a day
3. Once a day
4. Every couple of days
5. Weekly
6. Less often than weekly
7. I don't ever read, watch or listen to the news
8. Don't know

The results are shown in Figure 40, with options 2- 3 above combined to show those who follow news at least once a day, and options 4-6 above combined to show those who follow the news less often than daily.

More than four in five internet users (85%) say they follow news daily; one in six do so constantly (17%) and two-thirds at least once per day (68%).

The proportion of internet users saying they follow the news 'constantly/lots of times throughout the day' does not vary by age. However, compared to the average (85%), following the news on a daily basis is less likely among 16-24s (72%), 25-34s (76%) and more likely among those aged 45+ (91% for 45-54s, 96% for 55-64s and 99% for those aged 65+).

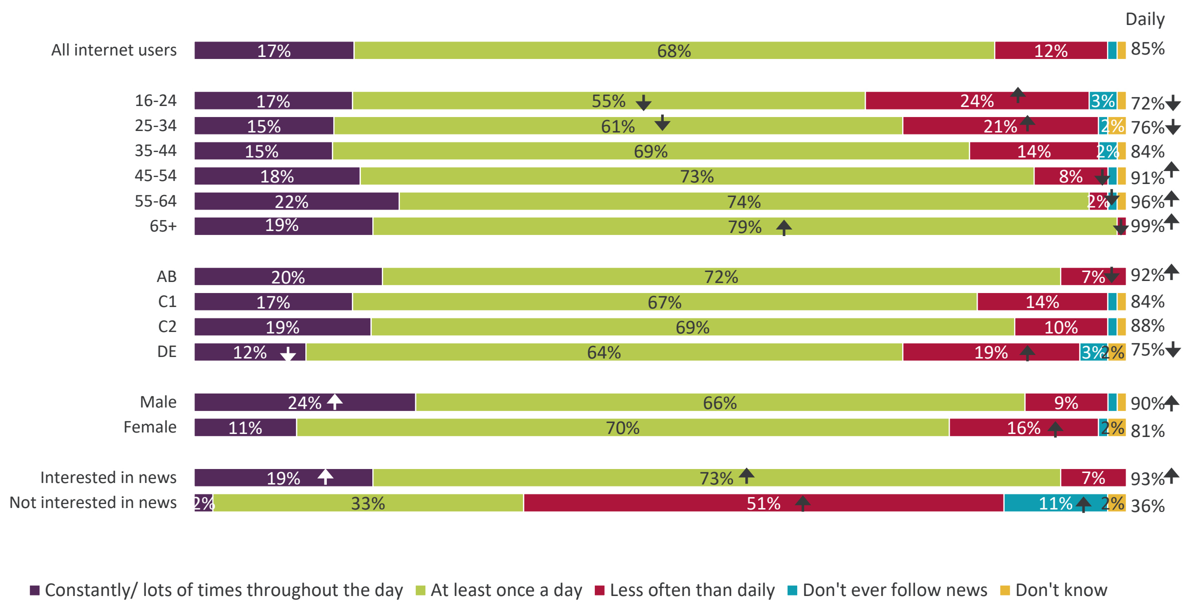
Internet users in AB households (92%) are more likely than average (85%) to follow the news on a daily basis, and those in DE households are less likely (75%). Adults in DE households are less likely than average to say they follow the news constantly (12% vs. 17% overall).

Men are twice as likely as women to say they follow the news constantly/ lots of times throughout the day (24% vs. 11%) and are more likely to say they follow the news on a daily basis (90% vs. 81%).

Among the 87% of internet users who say they are interested in news, more than nine in ten (93%) say they follow the news daily; one in five (19%) say they do so constantly/ lots of times throughout the day.

Among those who say they are not interested in the news – 12% of all internet users – one in ten (11%) say they don't ever follow the news and half (51%) say they follow the news less often than daily.

Figure 40: Frequency of following news among adults who go online, by age, gender, socio-economic group and interest



Source: Ofcom adults' online survey 2017
Q12. Typically how often, if at all, do you read, watch or listen to the news? Please think about all the ways you may do this e.g. on TV, on the radio, reading a newspaper, going online (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1050 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all who go online, men compared to women and those interested/ not interested in news

Importance of types of news content

Two-thirds of internet users value news that is balanced, impartial or unbiased

In 2017, internet users were also asked about the types of news content they considered important. They were prompted with six types of news content and were asked the following question: *'Here is a list of things that other people have said they value most in news coverage. Which if any of these are important to you?'* The results are shown in Figure 41, by age and in Figure 42, by socio-economic group and by gender.

Among internet users overall, two-thirds (66%) say that it is important that news is balanced, impartial or unbiased, while around three in five say it is important that news is breaking/ as up-to-date as possible (62%) or that it provides the key facts (59%).

Fewer, two in five (39%), say it is important that the news provides all the details (breadth and depth of coverage) and a third consider it important for the news to provide an expert opinion (32%). Around one in five (22%) consider it important for news to provide an alternative viewpoint.

Compared to these averages, three types of news are considered less important to internet users aged 16-24 and more important among internet users aged 65+: news that is balanced/ impartial/unbiased (52% for 16-24s and 75% for 65+), news that is breaking/ as up-to-date as possible (47% for 16-24s and 74% for 65+) and news that provides the key facts (47% for 16-24s and 68% for 65+).

Those aged 25-34 are also less likely to say that it is important for news to be balanced/ impartial/ unbiased (56% vs. 66%) while those aged 55-64 are more likely to consider this to be important (81%). Those aged 35-44 are also more likely than average to say that it is important that news is breaking /as up-to-date as possible (69% vs. 62%) while 55-64s are more likely to say that breadth and depth of coverage is important (48% vs. 39%).

Figure 41: Importance of types of news among adults who go online, by age

News that is.....	All internet users	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
balanced/ impartial/ unbiased	66%	52% ↓	56% ↓	64%	73%	81% ↑	75% ↑
breaking/ as up-to-date as possible	62%	47% ↓	57%	69% ↑	59%	66%	74% ↑
provides the key facts	59%	47% ↓	53%	59%	63%	64%	68% ↑
gives me all the detailed information- so breadth and depth of coverage	39%	37%	36%	35%	40%	48% ↑	40%
provides an expert opinion	32%	31%	29%	31%	32%	30%	40%
provides an alternative viewpoint	22%	21%	20%	23%	23%	23%	19%

Source: Ofcom adults' online survey 2017
Q13. Here is a list of things that other people have said they value most in news coverage. Which if any of these are important to you? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1050 aged 16+, 161 aged 16-24, 196 aged 25-34, 222 aged 35-44, 181 aged 45-54, 141 aged 55-64, 149 aged 65+)
Arrows show significant differences by age compared to all who go online

As shown in Figure 42, internet users in AB households are more likely than average to say that two types of news are important: news that is balanced/ impartial/ unbiased (73% vs. 66%) and news that gives breadth and depth of coverage (46% vs. 39%). This latter type of news is less likely to be considered important among internet users in DE households (31%).

Men are more likely than women to consider two types of news to be important: news that is balanced or impartial or unbiased (70% vs. 62%) and news that provides an expert opinion (39% vs. 25%).

Figure 42: Importance of types of news among adults who go online, by socio-economic group and gender

News that is…..	All internet users	AB	C1	C2	DE	Male	Female
balanced/ impartial/ unbiased	66%	73% ↑	66%	62%	59%	70% ↑	62%
breaking/ as up-to-date as possible	62%	63%	59%	65%	60%	60%	63%
provides the key facts	59%	63%	60%	57%	54%	61%	57%
gives me all the detailed information- so breadth and depth of coverage	39%	46% ↑	41%	35%	31% ↓	40%	38%
provides an expert opinion	32%	37%	30%	31%	28%	39% ↑	25%
provides an alternative viewpoint	22%	26%	21%	20%	18%	23%	20%

Source: Ofcom adults' online survey 2017
Q13. Here is a list of things that other people have said they value most in news coverage. Which if any of these are important to you? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1050 aged 16+, 308 AB, 281 C1, 227 C2, 234 DE, 498 male, 552 female)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by socio-economic group compared to all who go online and men compared to women

People say they would turn to the television first for each type of news they value – the exception is those who value an alternative viewpoint who would turn first to social media

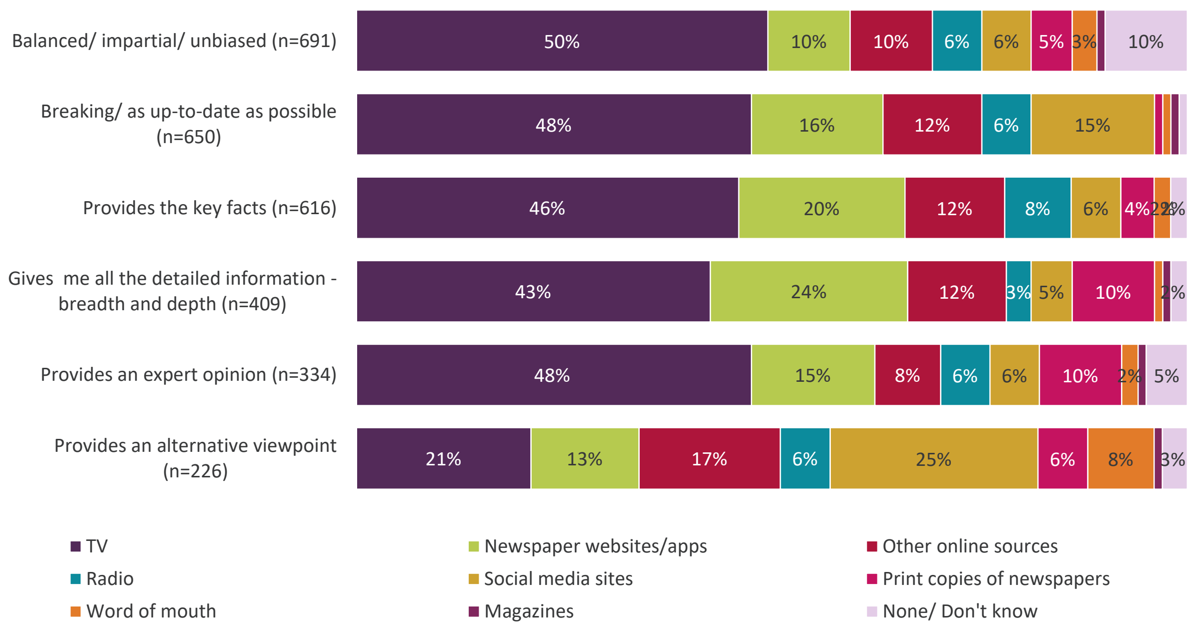
Internet users who considered each type of news to be important were prompted with eight possible ways in which they could find out about the news, and were asked to say which, if any of these, they would turn to first for this type of news. The results for each type are shown in Figure 43.

For five of the six types of news, television is the news source that internet users (considering these news types important) would turn to first; at least two in five (40%) mentioned this source. This compares to one in five (21%) who say they would turn to TV first to find out about news that provides an alternative viewpoint.

Among those who say that news which provides an alternative viewpoint is important to them, a quarter say they would turn first to social media sites (25%) – this is the most popular news source for this type of content. Fifteen per cent of internet users who consider breaking/ up-to-date news important say they would first turn to social media for this type of news. Less than one in ten internet users say this about social media for any of the other type of news content they consider important.

Newspaper websites or apps are the second most popular source (after TV) among those interested in three types of content: news that gives all the detailed information/ breadth and depth of coverage (24%), news that provides the key facts (20%) and news that provides an expert opinion (15%).

Figure 43: Sources that internet users would turn to first for each type of news that they consider important



Source: Ofcom adults' online survey 2017
Q15A-F Here is a list of ways in which you can find out about the news. Which one of these, if any, would you go to first for each of the following: to get the key facts about the news/ to get an expert opinion on the news/ to get an alternative viewpoint on the news/ to get a balanced, impartial, unbiased report of the news/ to get breaking news/ to get all the details about a story - so breadth and depth of coverage (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online who say that each type of news is important to them (bases shown on chart)

Attitudes to and preferences for news content

While more than half of internet users agree that the news is too depressing, more than three-quarters value being able to check the news whenever they want

In the online study, internet users were asked about the extent to which they agreed with seven statements about the news. Four of these statements addressed some of the more negative aspects or associations with the news/ news coverage (those shown first in Figure 44) and three statements addressed the more positive aspects or associations with the news. The statements are ranked according to the proportion of internet users who agree overall.

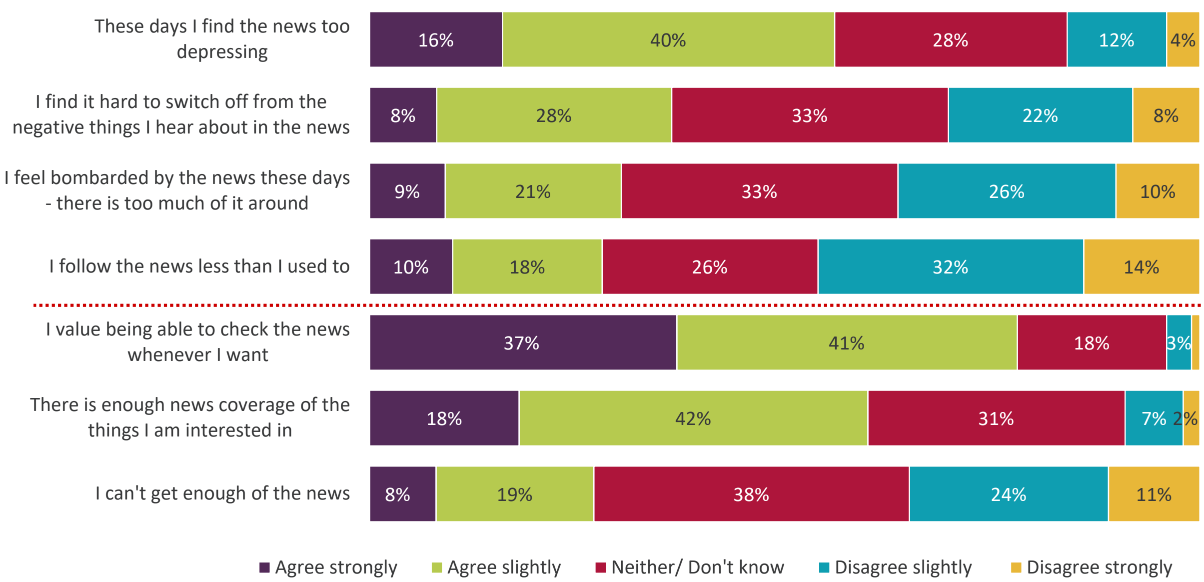
The majority of internet users (56%) agree with the statement *"These days I find the news too depressing"* with one in eight agreeing strongly (16%). While slightly more than a third of internet users (36%) agree that "*I find it hard to switch off from the negative things I hear about in the news*", this is higher than the three in ten who disagree (31%). Internet users are more likely to disagree (36%) than agree (31%) that "*I feel bombarded by the news these days – there is too much of it around*". In spite of a majority agreeing that the news is too depressing, internet users are more likely to disagree (46%) than agree (28%) with "*I follow the news less than I used to*".

Close to four in five internet users agree (78%) with the statement *"I value being able to check the news whenever I want"* with slightly fewer agreeing strongly (37%) than agreeing slightly (41%). A small minority (4%) disagree overall with this statement.

A majority also agree (60%) that *"there is enough news coverage of the things I am interested in"* compared to one in ten (9%) who disagree. Internet users are more likely to agree slightly (42%) with this statement than to agree strongly (18%).

While more than a quarter (27%) of internet users agree that "*I can't get enough of the news",* this is lower than the 35% who disagree.

Figure 44: Attitudes towards the news among internet users



Source: Ofcom adults' online survey 2017
Q16A-G. Here is a list of things that other people have said about the news. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1050 aged 16+)

Internet users aged 16-34 are more likely than average to say they follow the news less than they used to

Figure 45 shows the proportion who agree with each of the statements about the news (shown in Figure 44) among internet users overall and by age.

Internet users aged 16-24 are more likely to agree with each of the four more negative statements about news (see the first four statements in Figure 45) while those aged 55-64 are less likely to agree with each of these statements. Internet users aged 25-34 are also more likely than average to agree that they follow the news less than they used to (42% vs. 28% overall) while those aged 65 and over are less likely to agree (13%).

Internet users aged 65 and over are more likely than internet users overall to agree that they value being able to check the news whenever they want (85% vs. 78%).

Those aged 55-64 are less likely to agree that they can't get enough of the news (18% vs .27% overall). Despite being more likely to say they follow the news less than they used to, 25-34s are also more likely than average to say they can't get enough of the news (34% vs. 27%).

Figure 45: Attitudes towards the news among internet users, by age

% who agree	All internet users	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
'These days I find the news too depressing'	56%	65% ↑	60%	59%	53%	46% ↓	52%
'I find it hard to switch off from the negative things I hear about in the news'	36%	46% ↑	41%	39%	32%	24% ↓	28%
'I feel bombarded by the news these days- there is too much of it around'	31%	40% ↑	35%	33%	30%	17% ↓	24%
'I follow the news less than I used to'	28%	37% ↑	42% ↑	32%	23%	16% ↓	13% ↓
'I value being able to check the news whenever I want'	78%	71%	76%	78%	80%	75%	85% ↑
'There is enough news coverage of the things I am interested in'	60%	57%	59%	56%	59%	66%	68%
'I can't get enough of the news'	27%	31%	34% ↑	27%	24%	18% ↓	24%

Source: Ofcom adults' online survey 2017
Q16A-G. Here is a list of things that other people have said about the news. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1050 aged 16+, 161 aged 16-24, 196 aged 25-34, 222 aged 35-44, 181 aged 45-54, 141 aged 55-64, 149 aged 65+)
Arrows show significant differences by age compared to all who go online

Figure 46 shows how attitudes towards the news differ by socio-economic group and gender.

There is very little variation by socio-economic group in the proportion of internet users who agree with each statement.

Those in C2 households are more likely than average to agree that they value being able to check the news wherever they want (83% vs. 78%)a while those in DE households are less likely to agree that they can't get enough of the news (19% vs. 27%).

Women are more likely than men to agree with each of the four more negative statements about news, as shown in Figure 46, while men are more likely than women to agree that they can't get enough of the news (31% vs. 23%).

Figure 46: Attitudes towards the news among internet users, by socio-economic group and gender

% who agree	All internet users	AB	C1	C2	DE	Male	Female
'These days I find the news too depressing'	56%	55%	59%	54%	57%	46%	66% ↑
'I find it hard to switch off from the negative things I hear about in the news'	36%	36%	33%	39%	37%	28%	43% ↑
'I feel bombarded by the news these days- there is too much of it around'	31%	30%	32%	32%	29%	27%	34% ↑
'I follow the news less than I used to'	28%	29%	23%	30%	32%	23%	33% ↑
'I value being able to check the news whenever I want'	78%	77%	78%	83% ↑	72%	79%	76%
'There is enough news coverage of the things I am interested in'	60%	59%	62%	61%	61%	62%	59%
'I can't get enough of the news'	27%	30%	27%	30%	19% ↓	31% ↑	23%

Source: Ofcom adults' online survey 2017
Q16A-G. Here is a list of things that other people have said about the news. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1050 aged 16+, 308 AB, 281 C1, 227 C2, 234 DE, 498 male, 552 female)
Arrows show significant differences by socio-economic group compared to all who go online and men compared to women

Younger internet users are more receptive to news content that supports their point of view, while older internet users are less receptive to this

Internet users were also asked about their preferences for news content. They were asked the following question: Broadly speaking, which one of these statements best applies about your news preferences? I tend to prefer following/ reading/ watching/listening to news that:

- supports my point of view
- challenges my point of view
- it depends – sometimes I want news that supports and sometimes I want news that challenges my point of view

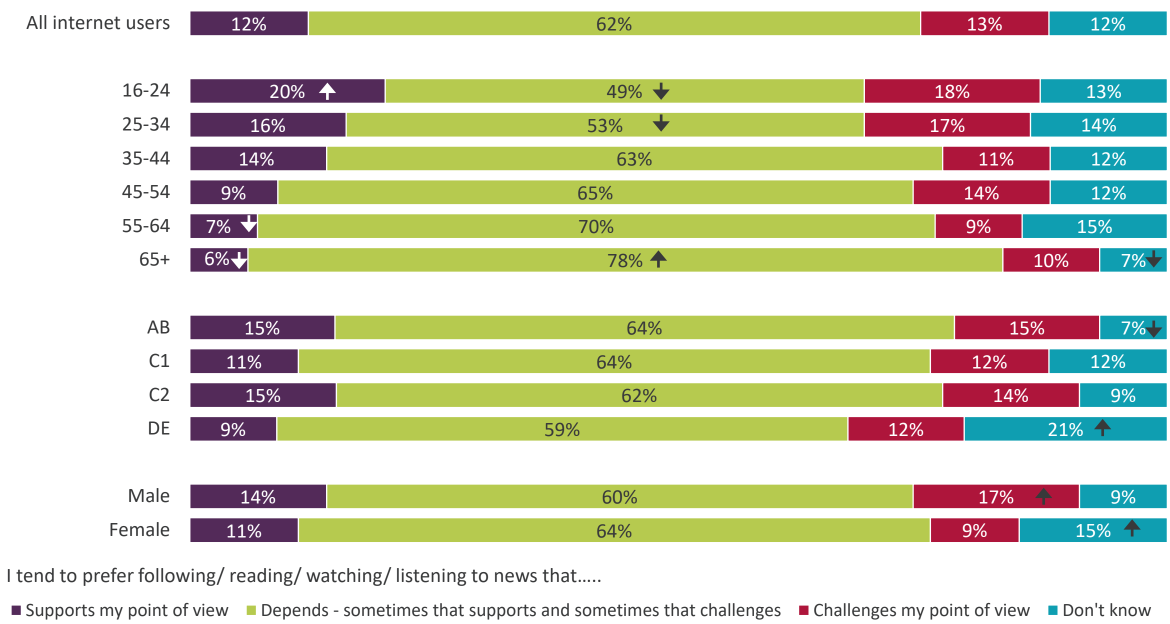
The results are shown in Figure 47. Around one in eight internet users (13%) say they prefer news that challenges their point of view, while a similar proportion (12%) say they prefer news that supports their point of view. One in eight (12%) are unsure. The majority of internet users, more than six in ten (62%), therefore prefer a mix of news, that sometimes supports and sometimes challenges their point of view.

Adults aged 16-24 who go online are more likely than internet users overall to say they prefer news content that supports their point of view (20% vs. 12% overall). Those aged 55-64 (7%) and 65+ (6%) are less likely to give this response.

While there are no differences in these preferences by household socio-economic group, internet users in DE households (21%) are more likely than average (12%) to be unsure and those in AB households are less likely to be unsure (7%).

Men are more likely than women to say they prefer news content that challenges their point of view (17% vs. 9%) and women are more likely to be unsure (15% vs. 9%).

Figure 47: Preferences for news content by age, gender and socio-economic group



Source: Ofcom adults' online survey 2017
Q17. Broadly speaking, which one of these statements best applies about your news preferences? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1050 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all who go online and men compared to women

Transacting online

Around half of internet users had been online in the previous week for shopping or for banking

Two activities that internet users are asked about in the Technology Tracker survey fall under the heading of transacting online: online shopping (purchasing goods, services, tickets etc.) and banking.

Figure 48 shows the proportion of adult internet users, between 2015 and 2017, who say they have ever undertaken each of these activities online, broken out into those who have done this in the past week, and less frequently.

In 2017, seven in ten internet users say they have shopped online (70%) while more than six in ten (64%) say they have gone online for banking. These incidences are unchanged since 2016[35]. Half of internet users in 2017 say they have shopped online in the previous week (50%) and more than half of internet users say they have gone online in the previous week for banking (52%); both these measures are unchanged compared to 2016. However, the proportion of internet users who are

[35] Between 2016 and 2017 the Technology Tracker changed from a survey partly administered using a pencil and paper approach (PAPI) to one administered through a tablet (CAPI). As this change in methodology could affect the results shown, any difference between 2016 and 2017 has been tested at the 99% level, meaning that there is only a 1% probability that the difference is by chance.

doing each of these activities less frequently than weekly has decreased since 2016; 20%, from 24% for online shopping and 12%, from 15%, for banking.

Figure 48: Transacting online: 2015-2017

Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker, H2 2015-2017
QE5A/ QE5B. Which, if any, of these do you use the internet for? / And which, if any, of these activities have you used the internet for in the last week? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (2413 in 2016, 2514 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (99% level) between 2016 and 2017

As shown in Figure 49, in 2017 internet users aged 25-34 and 35-44 are more likely than internet users overall to say they have gone online in the previous week to do banking or shopping. Those aged 55 and over are less likely to have done each of these online activities. Adult internet users in AB households are more likely than internet users overall to have done online shopping or banking in the previous week, while those in DE households are less likely to have done either of these transactional activities online. Adults in C1 households are also more likely than average to have been online in the previous week for banking, while those in C2 households are less likely.

Figure 49: Transacting online in the previous week, by age, gender and socio-economic group

	All internet users	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Banking	52%	51%	65% ↑	64% ↑	52%	46% ↓	35% ↓	20% ↓
Online shopping (purchasing goods, services, tickets, etc.)	50%	50%	61% ↑	61% ↑	49%	43% ↓	34% ↓	19% ↓

	All internet users	AB	C1	C2	DE	Male	Female
Banking	52%	64% ↑	57% ↑	47% ↓	37% ↓	52%	53%
Online shopping (purchasing goods, services, tickets, etc.)	50%	57% ↑	53%	47%	38% ↓	49%	50%

Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker, H2 2017
QE5B. And, which, if any, of these activities have you used the internet for in the last week? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (2514 aged 16+,366 aged 16-24, 399 aged 25-34, 465 aged 35-44, 443 aged 45-54, 371 aged 55-64, 283 aged 65-74, 186 aged 75+, 616 AB, 807 C1, 533 C2, 553 DE, 1201 male, 1313 female)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all internet users and men compared to women

More than half of internet users have ever paid or checked bills online, with three in ten having done this in the previous week

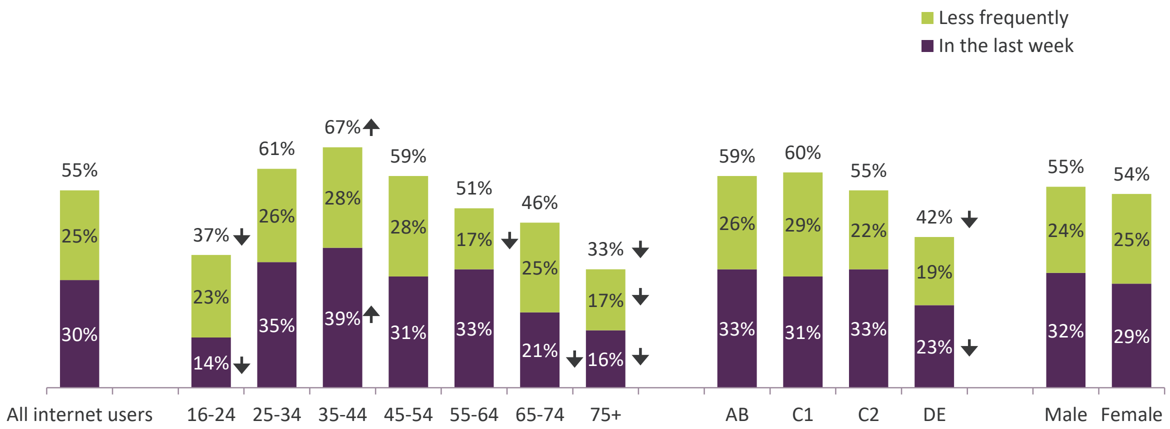
Of the online activities that internet users are asked about in 2017 in the Media Literacy Tracker[36], one activity also relates to transacting online: paying or checking bills online. Figure 50 shows the proportion of adult internet users, by age, socio-economic group and gender, who say they have ever done this, broken out into those who had done so in the previous week, and those who do so less frequently.

Among internet users overall, more than half (55%) have ever paid or checked bills online, and three in ten (30%) have done this in the previous week. The youngest (aged 16-24) and oldest (aged 75 and over) internet users are less likely than average to say they have ever done this online, and to have done it in the previous week.

Adult internet users aged 35-44 are more likely than average to say they have ever done this (67%) and to have done this in the previous week (39%). Those aged 65-74 are as likely as internet users overall to have ever done this online but are less likely to have done it in the previous week (21% vs. 30%).

Internet users in DE households are less likely than internet users overall to have ever been online to pay or check bills (42% vs. 55%) or to have done this in the previous week (23% vs. 30%).

Figure 50: Paying or checking bills online, 2017



[36] As this measure was added to the Media Literacy Tracker in 2017, it is not possible to show a trend.

Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN13/ IN14. Which if any of these activities have you ever done online?/ And which if any of these activities have you used the internet for in the last week? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1570 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all with a social media profile/ account and men compared to women

Use of a smartphone for transacting

Smartphone users are now more likely than in 2016 to use their phone as a ticket, boarding pass or for entry to an event

Smartphone users (74% of adults) are asked how frequently they use their mobile *phone "as a ticket or boarding pass or as an entry ticket to an event"*[37].

Figure 51 shows that in 2017, close to three in five (57%) smartphone users ever use their phone as a ticket or boarding pass or to gain entry to an event, while one in ten (11%) say they use their phone in this way at least weekly. At least one in five (23%) use their phone less often than weekly (but at least quarterly) for this purpose, and a quarter of smartphone users do so less often than quarterly (25%).

Compared to 2016, smartphone users are more likely to say they have used their phone as a ticket or boarding pass or to gain entry to an event (57% vs. 41%), driven by an increase in users doing so weekly (11% vs. 5%) and at least quarterly (but less than weekly) (20% vs. 12%).

While not shown in Figure 51, compared to the average for smartphone users, those aged 16-24 are more likely to have used their smartphone for this purpose (67%) and to have done so in the previous week (16%). Those aged 55 and over are less likely than users overall to have ever done this (38% for 55-64s and 32% for those aged 65+ vs. 57% overall) and are less likely to have done this in the previous week (4% for 55-64s and 0% for 65+ vs. 11% overall).

Smartphone users in AB households (69%) are more likely than average to have ever used their smartphone for this purpose and to have done so at least weekly (18%) and those in DE households are less likely (43% have ever done this and 5% at least weekly). Men are more likely than women to say they have ever used their smartphone to do this (60% vs. 53%) but are no more likely to use their phone on a weekly basis for this purpose.

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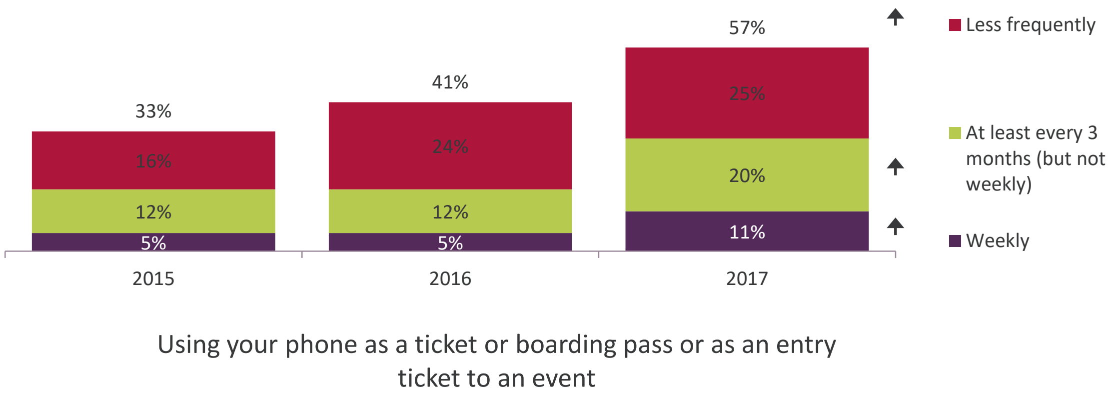
[37] The differences shown for this measure (compared to 2015) could be attributable to changes made to the questionnaire in 2016. In 2015 respondents were asked how frequently they used their mobile phone to make a payment in a shop, by touching it against a contactless reader.

Figure 51: Use of a smartphone for transactions: 2015-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
M7D. Please tell me from this list, the types of things you use your smartphone for, and how often you do each- use your phone as a ticket or boarding pass or as an entry ticket to an event (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who use a smartphone (1249 in 2016, 1289 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

Comparing deals online and price comparison websites

In the online survey in 2017, internet users were asked about their attitudes towards comparing deals online and their use of price comparison websites. The findings are reported in this section of the report.

Nine in ten internet users say they feel confident comparing prices and deals online

Internet users were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with four specific statements relating to going online to research the best deals or to compare prices for products or services[38].

[38] Before being asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with these statements, respondents were provided with the following explanation:

We would now like to ask you some questions about going online to research the best deals or to compare prices for products or services. Some examples of what we mean by this are: reading product reviews online to see what other people say, looking across websites to find the cheapest provider or the best deal for a particular product or service, doing price comparison searches online on sites like moneysupermarket.com, price runner, uSwitch etc. to get the best deals for things like broadband, mobile phone services, utilities (like gas or electricity suppliers), credit cards, insurance, foreign currency etc.

As shown in Figure 52, close to nine in ten internet users (89%) who say they compare deals online agree that "*I feel confident comparing prices and deals online*" with a majority (60%) agreeing strongly. A small minority (4%) of internet users disagree with this statement.

More than four in five internet users (83%) who say they do this agree that: *"I'm willing to spend as much time online as I need researching the very best deal I can get"*, with more than two in five (45%) agreeing strongly. A small minority (4%) disagree.

Around half of internet users (53%) who say they do this agree that: *"It is important to me to get a reasonable deal, but I don't like spending too much time researching it online"* with around one in five (22%) agreeing strongly. Around one in five internet users (22%) disagree overall.

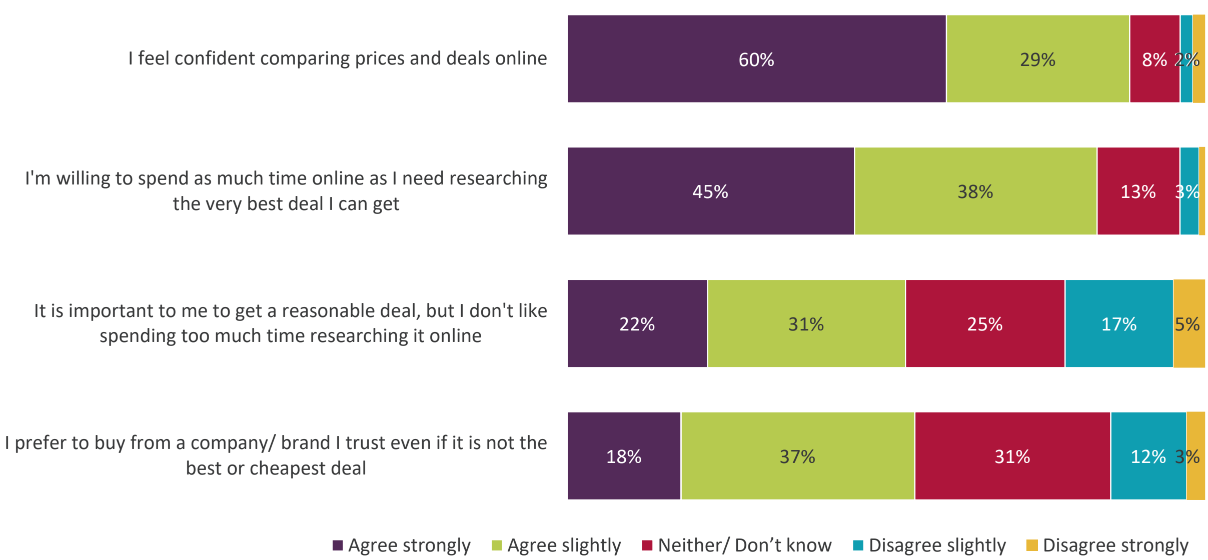
Slightly more than half of internet users (55%) who say they do this agree that: "*I prefer to buy from a company/ brand that I trust even if it is not the best or cheapest deal*". Fifteen per cent of internet users disagree.

There are differences by age, socio-economic group and gender. Internet users aged 16-24 who say they do this are less likely than average to agree that they feel confident comparing prices and deals online (78% vs. 89%), and that they are willing to spend as much time as required researching the best deal online (77% vs. 83%). Those aged 55-64 are less likely than average to agree strongly (10% vs. 18%) that they prefer to buy from a company or brand they trust even if it is not the cheapest deal, while those aged 65 and over are less likely to agree strongly (14% vs. 22%) that it is important to get a reasonable deal but that they don't like spending too much time researching it online.

Internet users in DE households who say they do this are less likely than average to agree strongly (52% vs. 60%) that they feel confident comparing prices and deals online, and they are less likely to agree (47% vs. 55%) that they prefer to buy from a company or brand they trust, even if it is not the cheapest deal.

Women are more likely than men to disagree with the statement: *"it is important to me to get a reasonable deal but I don't like spending too much time researching it online"* (24% vs. 19%).

Figure 52: Attitudes towards going online to compare prices/ research deals



Source: Ofcom adults' online survey 2017
Q5A-D. We would now like to ask you some questions about going online to research the best deals or to compare prices for products or services. [Additional examples provided to respondents]. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online who say they do this (variable base)

Four in five internet users have used a price comparison website to look for information about insurance services

Internet users were also asked about their experience of using price comparison websites to look for information about the best deals available for particular services. The results are shown in Figure 53.

Around eight in ten (79%) have ever used a price comparison website to look for information on insurance services, and more than seven in ten have ever done this for household communication services (73%), for utilities (73%) or for travel services (72%). Fewer, although more than half (57%), have done this for banking services.

Where internet users have used price comparison websites for each of these types of services it is more likely that they have done so in the past year as opposed to less recently.

Internet users aged 16-24 are less likely than internet users overall to say they have used a price comparison website to research three types of products or services: insurance (64% vs. 79%), household communication services (57% vs. 72%) or utilities (52% vs.73%). Those aged 35-44 are more likely than average to have used price comparison websites for utilities (80% vs. 73%) and for banking (65% vs. 57%). Those aged 65 and over are more likely than internet users overall to say they have used a price comparison website for insurance (86% vs. 79%) and are less likely to have used one to research banking services (46% vs. 57%).

There are three services that internet users in AB households are more likely than average to have used, and that those in DE households are less likely to have used: insurance services (87% for ABs, 65% for DEs vs. 79% overall), travel services (82% for ABs, 57% for DEs vs. 72% overall) and utilities (80% for ABs, 65% for DEs vs. 73% overall). Adults in DE households are also less likely to have ever used a price comparison website for banking services (47% vs. 57% overall).

Figure 53: Use of price comparison websites, by category

Source: Ofcom adults' online survey 2017
Q6A-E. Now thinking specifically about price comparison websites. Have you ever used a price comparison website or app to look for information about the best deals available for any of the following types of products or services? Some of the most popular price comparison websites/ apps are: MoneySuperMarket.com, PriceRunner, USwitch, CompareTheMarket.com, Go Compare, Kelkoo etc. (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1050)

Internet users in AB households who have ever used price comparison websites to research communication services are more likely than average to have researched bundles or packages

Internet users who had ever used price comparison websites to research communication services (73% of internet users) were asked about the types of services they had ever researched, either individually or as a bundle or package.

As shown in Figure 54, more than half said they had researched broadband deals (65%) or mobile deals (55%), with at least three in ten saying this about landlines (33%) or pay TV (30%). One in eight had looked for information about postal services (12%).

Two in five (41%) researched deals about broadband and home phone combined and a third (33%) researched deals for broadband, home phone and pay TV combined. One in six (17%) researched deals for all four services.

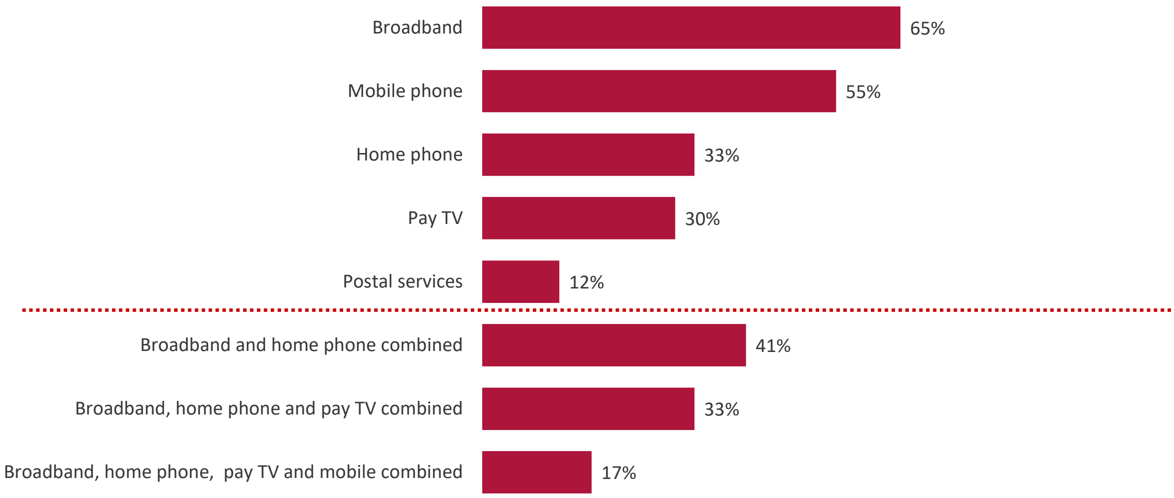
Adults aged 65 and over are less likely to have researched mobile phone deals (44% vs. 55% overall), while 16-34s[39] are less likely to have researched deals on broadband and home phone combined (34% vs. 41%). Those aged 35-44 are more likely to have researched deals for broadband, home phone and pay TV combined (41% vs. 33%).

[39] There are too few 16-24s who have used a price comparison website for household communication services to analyse (92 interviews) so 16-24s have been included with 25-34s.

Internet users in AB households who have ever used a price comparison website for household communication services are more likely than average to have researched bundles or packages, whether broadband, home phone and pay TV combined (42% vs. 33%), or all four services combined (24% vs. 17%).

Men are more likely than women to say they have looked for information relating to pay TV services (35% vs. 26%).

Figure 54: Communication services researched through price comparison websites



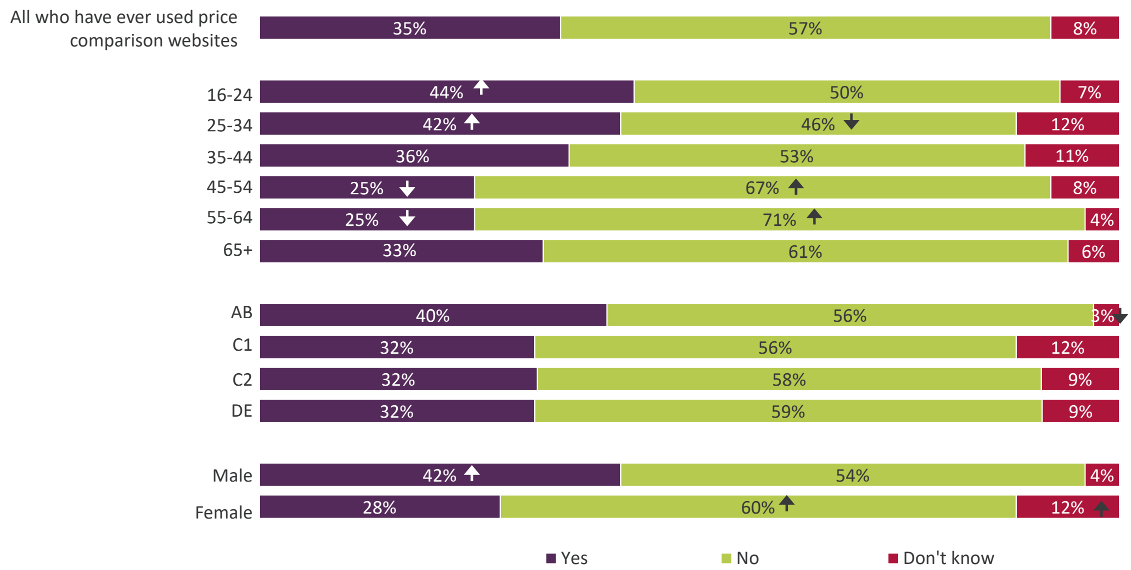
Source: Ofcom adults' online survey 2017
Q8. You said earlier you have used a price comparison website or app to get information about household services like pay TV, broadband or mobile phones. Which of these best describes the types of services you have ever researched, either individually or as a bundle or package? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults who go online who have ever used a price comparison website for communication services (769)

A third of price comparison website users say they are aware of the Ofcom accreditation scheme for price comparison websites

Adults who go online and who had ever used a price comparison website for any of the services shown in Figure 53, (91% of all internet users) were asked the following question: *"Are you aware that Ofcom (the communications regulator) offers an accreditation scheme for those price comparison websites that provide information about household services (like pay TV, broadband or mobile services)? This accreditation means that Ofcom approves sites that have had their price comparison services put through a rigorous independent audit".*

Around a third say they are aware of the Ofcom accreditation scheme (35%). Awareness is higher among 16-24s (44%) and 25-34s (42%) and lower among 45-54s (25%) and 55-64s (25%). Men are more likely than women to say they aware (42% vs. 28%).

Figure 55: Awareness of the Ofcom price comparison website accreditation scheme among internet users, by age, gender and socio-economic group



Source: Ofcom adults' online survey 2017
Q9. Are you aware that Ofcom (the communications regulator) offers an accreditation scheme for those price comparison websites that provide information about household services (like pay TV, broadband or mobile services)? This accreditation means that Ofcom approves sites that have had their price comparison services put through a rigorous independent audit (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: Adults who go online who have ever used a price comparison website (953)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all internet users who have used a price comparison website and men compared to women

Accessing government services/ public/ civic activities

Using public or civic services online

More than half of internet users have ever completed government processes or looked for public services information online

Of the online activities that internet users are asked about in 2017 in the Media Literacy Tracker[40], four activities can be grouped under the heading of public or civic services. These are:

- looking online for public services information on government sites such as gov.uk, ni direct or HMRC;
- completing government processes online – such as updating Universal Credit, renewing a driving licence or passport etc.;
- paying online for council tax or for another local council service (parking ticket, congestion charge etc.); and

[40] As these questions were retained on the Media Literacy Tracker, they have been included here, rather than the data about online activities from the 2017 Technology Tracker. It is not possible to show a trend prior to 2016, however, due to changes in the frequency options that respondents were asked to select.

- signing an online petition or using a campaigning website such as change.org.

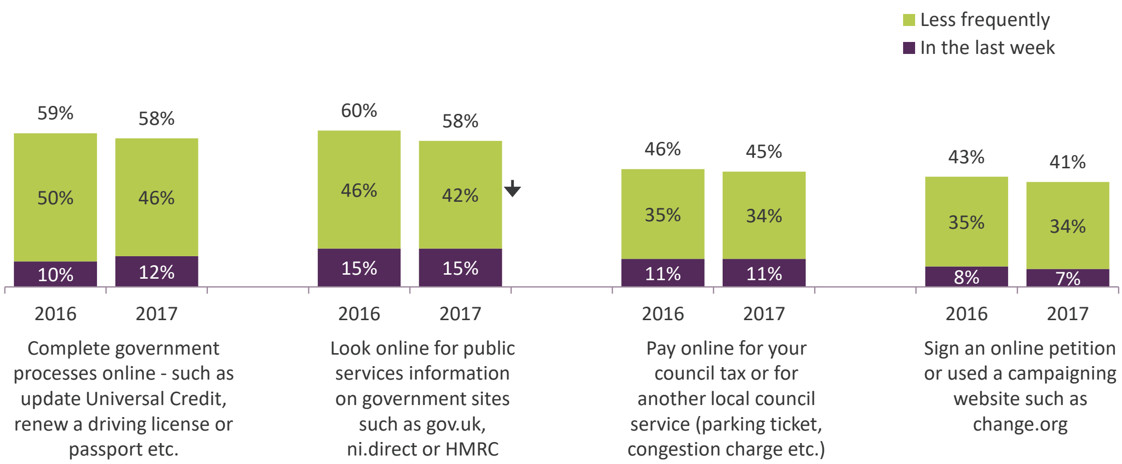
Figure 56 shows the proportion of adult internet users in 2017 who say they have ever undertaken each online activity, broken out into those who had done so in the previous week, and those who do so less frequently.

A majority of internet users have ever undertaken two of the four public or civic activities: completing government processes online (58%) (50% of all adults) and looking online for public services information on government sites (58%) (50% of all adults). More than two in five have ever paid for their council tax or other local council service online (45%) (40% of all adults) or have ever signed an online petition or used a campaigning website (41%) (36% of all adults).

More than one in ten internet users (15%) say they have looked online for public services information on government sites in the past week. Around one in eight internet users have completed government processes (12%) or paid their council tax or other local council service online (11%) in the previous week. Less than one in ten had signed an online petition/ used a campaigning website (7%) in the previous week.

Compared to 2016, there are no differences in having ever been online, or having been online in the previous week, for each of the four activities shown in Figure 56.

Figure 56: Using public or civic services online, by activity type: 2016-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN13/ IN14. Which if any of these activities have you ever done online?/ And which if any of these activities have you used the internet for in the last week? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1553 in 2016, 1570 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

Figure 57 shows any variation in the incidence of ever undertaking each of these four public or civic activities online, by age, while Figure 58 shows any variation by household socio-economic group and by gender.

Compared to the average, internet users aged 16-24 are less likely to have ever undertaken three of the four activities: completing government processes online (49% vs. 58%), looking online for public services information on government sites (42% vs. 58%), and paying online for council tax or for another local council service (26% vs. 45%).

Internet users aged 25-34 and 35-44 are more likely than average to have looked online for public services information (65% for 25-34s and 68% for 35-44s vs. 58%) and to have paid their council tax or other local council service online (54% for 25-34s and 61% for 35-44s vs. 45%).

Adults aged 35-44 are also more likely to have ever completed government processes online (71% vs. 58%) and those aged 55-64 (45%) or 65-74 (46%) are less likely.

Those aged 75 and over who go online are less likely than average to have ever undertaken all four public/ civic activities online.

Figure 57: Use of public or civic services online, by age

	All internet users	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Complete government processes online – such as update Universal Credit, renew a driving licence or passport etc.	58%	49% ↓	64%	71% ↑	63%	45% ↓	46% ↓	34% ↓
Look online for public services information on government sites such as gov.uk, ni.direct or HMRC	58%	42% ↓	65% ↑	68% ↑	57%	60%	48%	34% ↓
Pay online for your council tax or for another local council service (parking ticket, congestion charge etc.)	45%	26% ↓	54% ↑	61% ↑	48%	40%	38%	24% ↓
Sign an online petition or used a campaigning website such as change.org	41%	38%	45%	48%	40%	40%	42%	20% ↓

Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN13. Which if any of these activities have you ever done online? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1570 in 2017, 243 aged 16-24, 269 aged 25-34, 294 aged 35-44, 250 aged 45-54, 224 aged 55-64, 149 aged 65-74, 140 aged 75+)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age compared to all internet users

As shown in Figure 58, adult internet users in AB households are more likely than average to have ever undertaken three of the four public or civic activities online: completing government processes online (68% vs. 58%), looking online for public services information on government sites (64% vs. 58%), and signing an online petition or using a campaigning website (50% vs. 41%). Adults in C1 households are more likely to say they have ever paid their council tax or other local council services online (54% vs. 45%). Those in C2 households are less likely to have ever completed government processes online (50%) and those in DE households are less likely to have ever undertaken all four activities.

Women are more likely than men to say they have ever signed an online petition or used a campaigning website (47% vs. 35%).

Figure 58: Use of public or civic services online, by socio-economic group and gender

	All internet users	AB	C1	C2	DE	Male	Female
Complete government processes online – such as update Universal Credit, renew a driving licence or passport etc.	58%	68% ↑	61%	50% ↓	48% ↓	57%	59%
Look online for public services information on government sites such as gov.uk, ni.direct or HMRC	58%	64% ↑	60%	55%	49% ↓	55%	60%
Pay online for your council tax or for another local council service (parking ticket, congestion charge etc.)	45%	50%	54% ↑	39%	34% ↓	44%	46%
Sign an online petition or used a campaigning website such as change.org	41%	50% ↑	41%	37%	34% ↓	35%	47% ↑

Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN13. Which if any of these activities have you ever done online? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1570 in 2017, 392 AB, 516 C1, 304 C2, 358 DE, 749 male, 821 female)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by socio-economic group compared to all internet users and men compared to women

Devices mostly used for completing government processes online

Computers are the device most often used for completing government processes online

Figure 59 shows how the device mostly used for completing government processes online varies over time as well as by age, socio-economic group and gender.

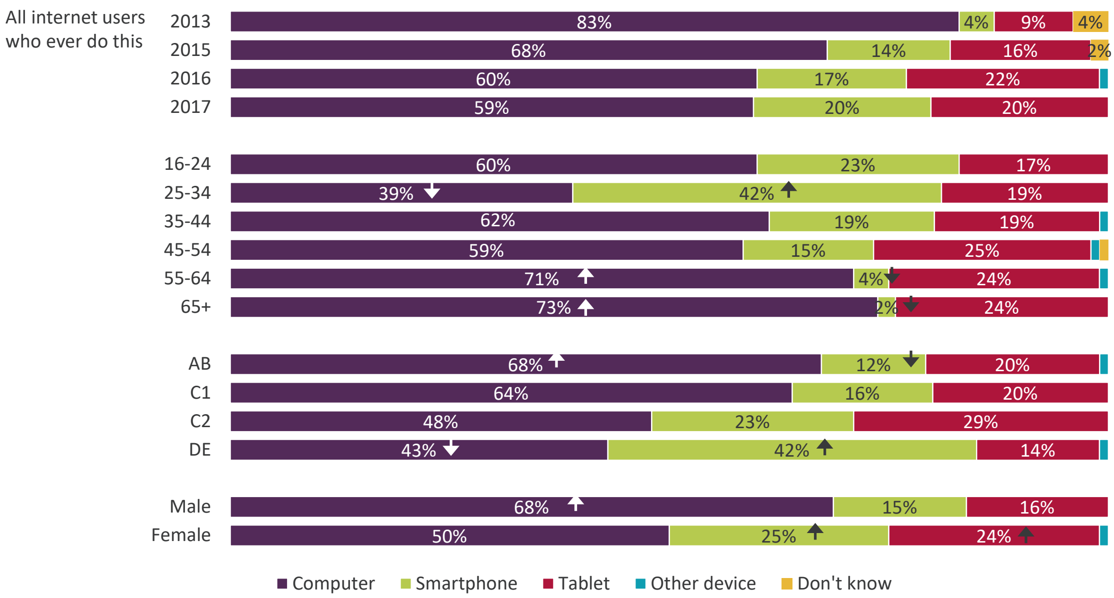
Six in ten internet users who ever go online to do this type of task (59%) say they mostly use a laptop/ netbook or desktop computer for this purpose, with one in five mostly using a smartphone (20%) or a tablet (20%). There has been no change in each of these incidences compared to 2016.

Compared to the average (59%), over-54s are more likely to say they mostly use computers (71% for 55-64s and 73% for over-64s), while those aged 25-34 are less likely (39%). More than two in five 25-34s (42%) say they mostly use a smartphone, twice the UK average (20%). Less than 5% of over-54s say they mostly use a smartphone, lower than average.

Those in AB households who complete government processes online are more likely than the average internet user to say they mostly use a computer for this activity (68% vs. 59%). Those in AB households are also less likely to say they mostly use a smartphone (12% vs. 20%). In contrast, adults in DE households are more likely to mostly use a smartphone (42% vs. 20%) and are less likely to use a computer (43% vs. 59%).

Men are more likely than women to say they mostly use a computer to do this activity (68% vs. 50%), while women are more likely to say they mostly use a smartphone (25% vs. 15%) or a tablet (24% vs. 16%).

Figure 59: Device mostly used for completing government processes, by demographic group



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN16. You said earlier that you go online to complete government processes such as updating Universal Credit, renewing a driving licence or a passport. Which one of these devices do you use most for completing government processes online? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online and who complete government processes online (843 in 2017, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between 2016 and 2017 at the overall level and by age/ socio-economic group compared to all internet users who do this and men compared to women

Reasons for not completing government processes online

A quarter of those who have never completed government processes online say it is because they prefer to use pen and paper/ fill out a form/ use the post

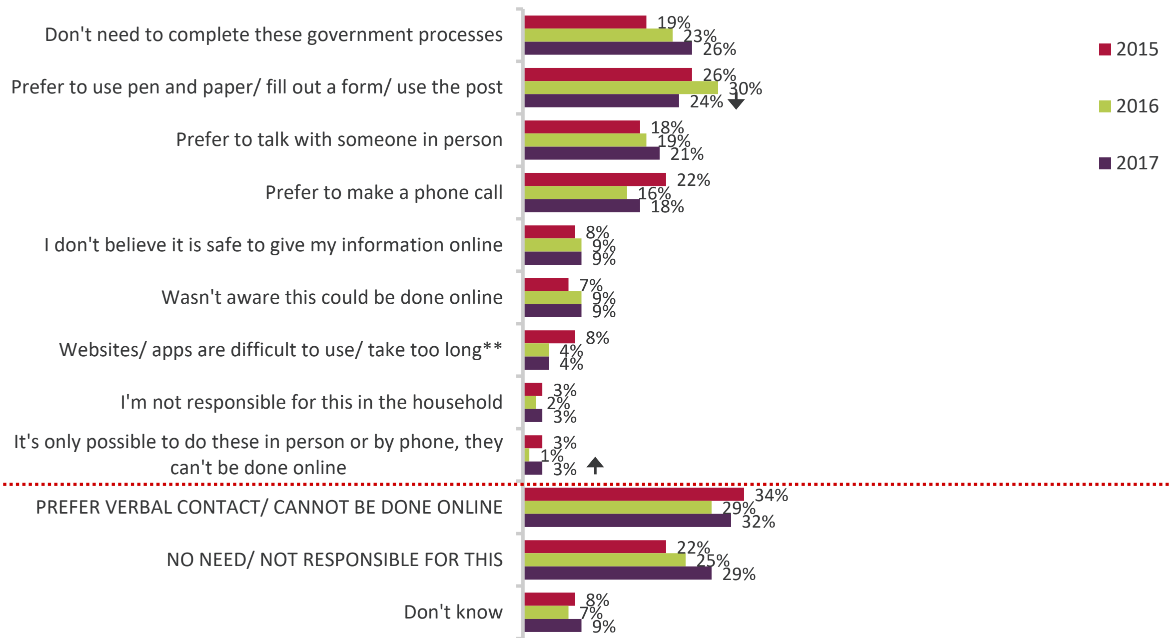
Internet users who have never completed any government processes online (such as updating Universal Credit, or renewing a driving licence or a passport - accounting for 42% of all internet users) are prompted with eight reasons for not having done this and are asked to say which applies to them

As shown in Figure 60, a quarter of this group say they don't complete any government processes online because they don't need to do this (26%) or because they prefer to fill in a form and use the post (24%). Around one in five prefer to talk with someone in person (21%) or make a phone call (18%). All other responses are given by one in ten or less.

Overall, a third of internet users who don't complete government processes online say it is because they prefer some kind of verbal contact, either by phone or by talking to someone in person, or because they think the process cannot be done online (32%).

Internet users who have never completed any government processes online are less likely than in 2016 to say that this is because they prefer to fill in a form and use the post (24%) and are more likely to say it is because these things cannot be done online (3% vs. 1%).

Figure 60: Reasons for not completing government processes online



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN15. You said earlier that you don't go online to complete government processes such as updating Universal Credit, renewing a driving licence or a passport. Which of these are reasons why you don't do this online? (prompted responses, multi-coded) ** In 2015 this option was created from two separate codes, so the trend should be seen as indicative only
Base: Adult internet users aged 16+ who have never completed government processes online (670 in 2016, 727 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

Creativity

Attitudes towards creativity

Two in five internet users feel more creative since they've been going online

In the online study, internet users aged 16+ were asked about their attitudes towards creativity. They were prompted with four statements and were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each. These statements are shown in Figure 61, ranked according to the proportion who agree overall (either strongly or slightly) with each.

Before being shown the four statements, respondents were shown the following explanation of creativity: *'Creativity' could mean creating, making or doing something that you personally consider to be creative. This could be online or offline.*

Two-thirds of internet users (66%) agree overall with the statement: *"I consider myself a creative person"* while slightly more than half (54%) agree that: *"Being online helps me to connect with creative people"*. Around half (49%) agree with the statement*: "I think that being online helps me express myself creatively"* and more than two in five (43%) with the statement: *"I feel I'm a more creative person since I've been going online"*. For each of these statements internet users are more likely to agree slightly than they are to agree strongly.

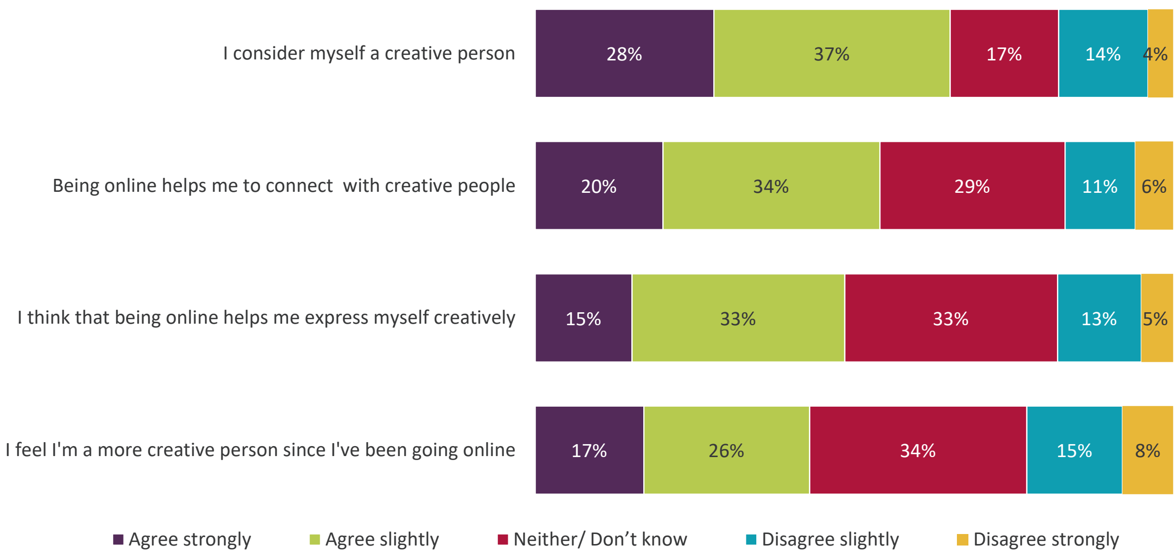
Overall disagreement is fairly consistent at around 20% for each of the four statements shown in Figure 61.

Internet users aged 16-34 are more likely than internet users overall to agree strongly that *"being online helps me to connect with creative people"* (27% for 16-24s, 30% for 25-34s vs. 20%) while those aged 55-64 (12%) or 65 and over (8%) are less likely to agree strongly. These differences by age are also apparent for the statement *"I feel I'm a more creative person since I've been going online"*, compared to the average (17%), those aged 16-24 (24%) or 25-34 (24%) are more likely to agree strongly while those aged 55-64 (9%) or 65+ (6%) are less likely to.

Internet users aged 16-24 are also more likely to agree strongly that *"being online helps me express myself creatively"* (26% vs. 15%) and those aged 65+ are less likely to agree strongly (7%).

Compared to the average (66%), internet users aged 16+ in AB households (72%) are more likely to agree (either strongly or slightly) that *"I consider myself a creative person"* while those in C1 households are less likely to agree (59%). Internet users in DE households are less likely to agree strongly that *"being online helps me to connect with creative people"* (14% vs. 20%).

Figure 61: Attitudes towards creativity among internet users



Source: Ofcom adults' online survey 2017
Q1. We would now like to ask you some questions about your creativity. [Additional examples provided to respondents]. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1050)

Creative activities undertaken online

More than half of internet users say they have ever followed online tutorials

In the online study, internet users aged 16+ were prompted with 12 creative activities and were asked whether they had ever done any of them online. More than three-quarters (78%) say they have ever done any of these 12 activities.

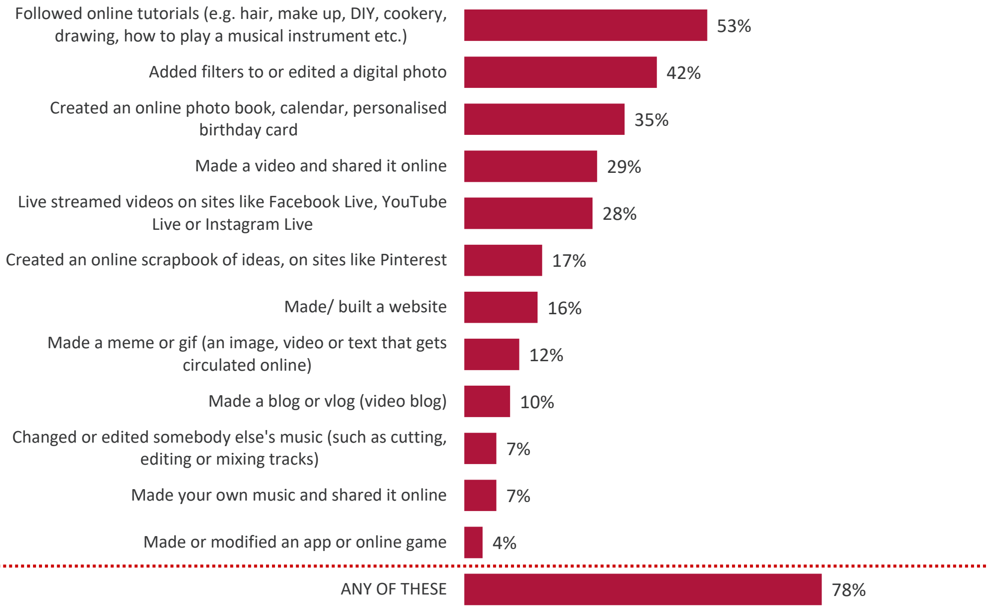
Only one of these activities has been undertaken by more than half of internet users (53%) - following online tutorials (e.g. hair, make-up, DIY, cookery, drawing, how to play a musical instrument etc.) More than two in five say they have added filters or edited a digital photo (42%) and over a third say they have ever created an online photo book, calendar or personalised birthday card (35%). Three in ten have made a video and shared it online (29%) or live-streamed videos on sites like Facebook Live, YouTube Live or Instagram Live (28%). Around one in six have ever created an online scrapbook of ideas on sites like Pinterest (17%) or have made or built a website (16%). One in eight internet users (12%) have ever made a meme or gif. Less than one in ten internet users have ever done any of the remaining three activities – changed or edited someone else's music (7%), made and shared their own music online (7%) or made/ modified an app or online game (4%).

Where differences exist by age, younger internet users are more likely to undertake these creative activities and older internet users less likely – internet users aged 16-24 are more likely to have undertaken nine of these 12 activities, those aged 25-34 are more likely to have undertaken all 12. Internet users aged 55-64 are less likely to have undertaken seven of the activities, and those aged 65+ are less likely to have undertaken nine of them.

Internet users in AB households are more likely than average to say they have created an online photo book, calendar or personalised birthday card (43% vs. 35%) or to have made/ built a website (21% vs. 16%). Those in C2 households are less likely to have made/ built a website (10% vs. 16%). Compared to the average internet user, five activities are less likely to have ever been undertaken by adults in DE households: followed online tutorials (44% vs. 53%), added filters or edited a digital photo (35% vs. 42%), created an online photo book, calendar or personalised birthday card (11% vs. 17%), made a video and shared it online (22% vs. 29%) and created an online scrapbook of ideas (11% vs. 17%).

Six activities are more likely to have been undertaken by men than by women: made a video and shared it online (32% vs. 26%), live-streamed videos (31% vs. 25%), made a website (19% vs. 13%), changed or edited someone else's music (10% vs. 5%), made and shared their own music online (11% vs. 4%) and made / modified an app or online game (6% vs. 3%). Women are more likely than men to have undertaken four activities: followed online tutorials (56% vs. 49%), added filters or edited a digital photo (56% vs. 49%), added filters to or edited a digital photo (46% vs. 38%) or created an online photo book, calendar or personalised birthday card (39% vs. 30%).

Figure 62: Creative activities undertaken online



Source: Ofcom adults' online survey 2017
Q2. Which if any of the following things have you ever done online? (prompted responses, multi coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1050)

Uploading content online

Three in ten internet users have uploaded content online, fewer than in 2016

One of the activities that internet users are asked about in the Technology Tracker survey[41] falls under the heading of 'creative activities': uploading or adding content to the internet (e.g. photos, videos or blog posts).

Figure 63 shows the proportion of adult internet users, between 2015 and 2017, who say they have ever undertaken this activity online, broken out into those who had done this in the past week, and less frequent use.

In 2017, three in ten internet users say they have ever uploaded or added content to the internet, with around two-thirds of these (20%) saying they have done this in the past week.

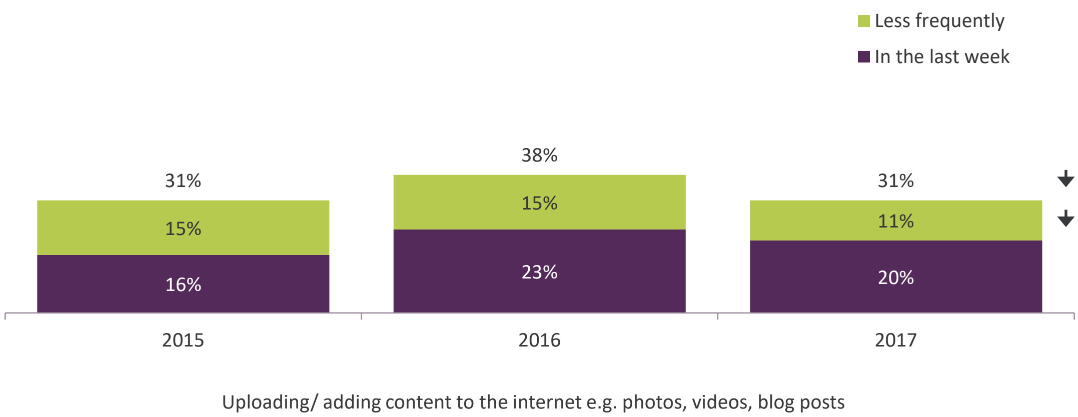
Compared to 2016, adult internet users are less likely to say they have ever done this (31% vs. 38%), returning to the level previously seen in 2015, following a corresponding increase between 2015 and 2016.[42]

[41] As mentioned earlier, the data relating to the types of online activities that internet users carry out come either from the most recent wave of the Technology Tracker study or from the Media Literacy Tracker.
[42] Between 2016 and 2017 the Technology Tracker changed from a survey partly administered using a pencil and paper approach (PAPI) to one administered through a tablet (CAPI). As this change in methodology could affect the results shown, any difference between 2016 and 2017 has been tested at the 99% level, meaning that there is only a 1% probability that the difference is by chance.

In 2017, internet users aged 16-24 (31%) or 25-34 (31%) are more likely than average (20%) to say they have uploaded or added content online in the previous week, while those aged 55-64 (11%), 65-74 (4%) or aged 75+ (4%) are less likely.

Adult internet users in AB households (24%) are more likely than average (20%) to have done this in the previous week, while those in DE households (16%) are less likely.

Figure 63: Uploading content online: 2015-2017



Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker, H2 2015-2017
QE5A/ QE5B. Which, if any, of these do you use the internet for?/ And, which, if any, of these activities have you used the internet for in the last week? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (2413 in 2016, 2514 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (99% level) between 2016 and 2017

6. Content

This section looks at the ways in which adults engage with media content. It starts by looking at the extent to which users of media are concerned about the media they engage with.

It addresses their attitudes towards being online more generally, as well as their experience of and attitudes towards playing games online, with or against other people. It looks at their experience of watching content online and explores the ways in which they find out about on-demand or streaming content, as well as content on video-sharing sites.

It reports on how internet users access audio content online – whether listening to online radio, or free or premium streamed audio services.

It concludes by looking at the ways in which they find information online through the various sources available to them, as well as the sources they would turn to when learning new things.

Key findings

- Overall, concerns about what is on television (37%) are unchanged since 2016. While women are no more likely than men to say they have any concerns about what is on television, they are more likely to have particular concerns about harmful or offensive content (26% vs. 18%)
- Half of internet users (50%) say they are concerned about what is on the internet, also unchanged compared to 2016. They are, however, more likely to have particular concerns relating to risks to others or to society (27% vs. 22%) or about security/ fraud (25% vs. 20%).
- Close to half of adult internet users say they have encountered hateful content online in the past year (47%). This is more likely for 16-34s (59% for 16-24s and 62% for 25-34s). Two in five (40%) of those who were exposed to hateful content said they did something about the most recent example seen.
- Three in ten who use a mobile phone have concerns about mobile phones (29%), while a quarter (26%) who play games are concerned about gaming. Each of these measures is also unchanged compared to 2016.
- While most internet users recognise the benefits of being online – 79% agree that new communication methods have made life easier and 61% agree that being online inspires them to try new things – internet users are more likely to agree (40%) than disagree (26%) that they spend too much time online. They are also as likely to agree (31%) as to disagree (30%) that they would like to cut down on the amount of time they spend online.
- More than three in five internet users (62%) agree that the benefits of being online outweigh the disadvantages – rising to 72% among those aged 75 and over.
- More than half of adults (55%) say they ever watch on-demand or streamed content – TV programmes or films via online services like iPlayer, Netflix and Amazon prime.

- In 2017, internet users are more likely to say they have ever used subscription-based audio services like Spotify Premium or Apple Music (18% vs. 13%) and to have done so in the previous week (14% vs. 8%).
- While the overall incidence of playing games is unchanged since 2016, adults are more likely to play games online (16% vs. 13%).
- In 2017, internet users are more likely to have been online in the previous week to look for information on health-related issues (27% vs. 22% in 2016).
- Compared to 2016, internet users are less likely to say they have been online in the previous week to find information for their leisure time (33% vs. 37%), to compare products or services online – such as looking at reviews or doing price comparison searches (30% vs. 35%) or to access news/ politic/ current affairs websites (39% vs. 44%).
- Search engines are by far the most popular source when looking for information online; they are used by 95% of internet users in 2017, slightly lower than the 97% who said they used them in 2016. Use of the BBC website for this purpose is also lower than in 2016 (32% vs. 40%) while use of YouTube is higher (35% vs. 31%). YouTube is also the most popular online information source that people use to learn new things (74%), followed by Google at 69%.
- Nearly a quarter (23%) of internet users say that in the past month they've used 'lots of websites or apps' they've used before – rising to three in ten (31%) among 35-44s.

Concerns about media

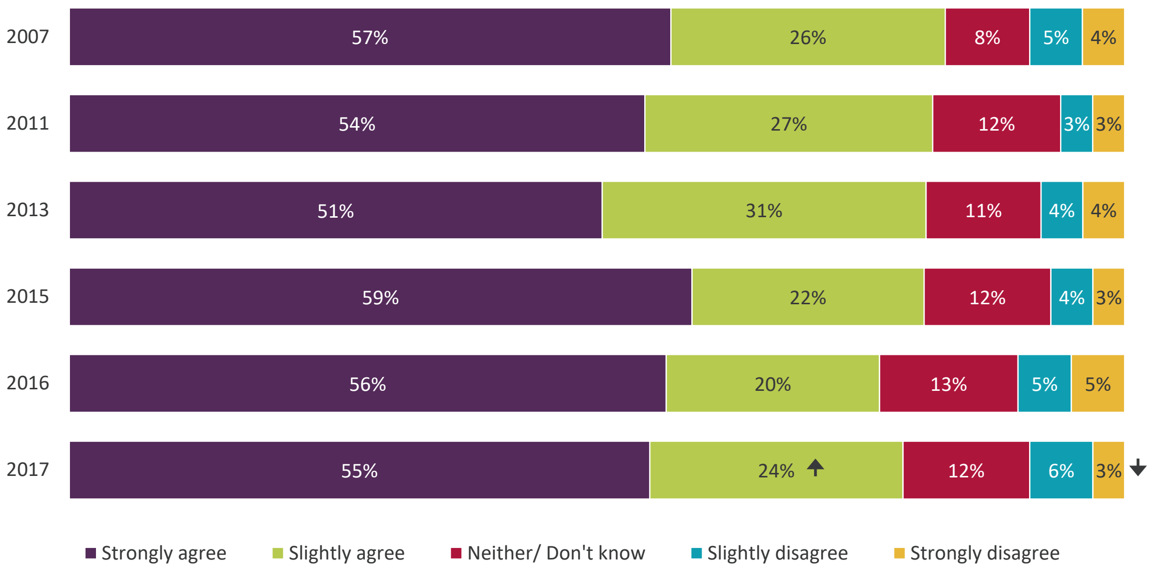
More than half of internet users agree strongly that people must be protected from seeing inappropriate or offensive content

As context for understanding more about the levels of concern people have about media, we ask about the extent to which they feel it is necessary for there to be protection against inappropriate or offensive content.

Figure 64 shows the overall levels of agreement and disagreement among internet users. The majority agree strongly that users should be protected from inappropriate or offensive content (55%); this measure is unchanged since 2016. While 3% of internet users disagree strongly with this statement, this is less than in 2016 (5%); this measure has returned to its 2015 level, following a corresponding increase between 2015 and 2016.

Overall, four in five internet users agree (79%). This is more likely for those aged 75+ (91%), those in DE households (85%) and women (85%) compared to men (73%).

Figure 64: Agreement with statement: *"Internet users must be protected from seeing inappropriate or offensive content"*: 2007-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN35A. I'm going to read out some things that other people have said about being online. Please use this card to tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement I read out – *"Internet users must be protected from seeing inappropriate or offensive content"* (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: Adults aged 16+ who go online (1553 in 2016, 1570 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

Concerns about media are unchanged compared to 2016

An important area that we monitor is the extent to which people have concerns about the media they use, and what types of concern they have. We ask users if they have any concerns about what is on television or the internet, or concerns about mobile phones or gaming. Figure 65 compares the overall mentions of any concerns among users of each of these platforms, over time.

Half of internet users (50%) say they have any concerns about what is on the internet. This compares to more than one in three (37%) of those with a TV in the household who say that they have concerns about television content. Three in ten mobile users (29%) say they have concerns about mobile phones and one in four (26%) of those who play games say they have concerns about gaming.

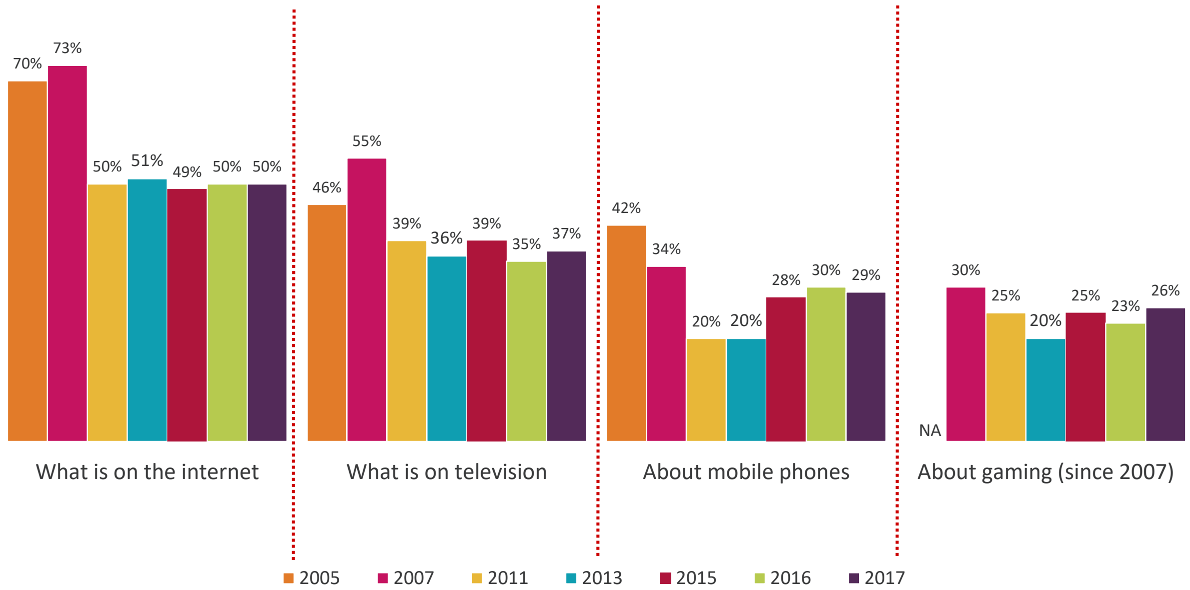
Concerns about media are unchanged since 2016.

In 2017, demographic variations are as follows:

- Internet: Users aged 16-24 (32%) are less likely than average (50%) to have concerns about what is online, while those aged 65+ are more likely (59%). Women (54%) are more likely than men (46%) to have concerns. Adults in AB households (57%) who go online are more likely than average to have concerns.

- Television: Users aged 75+ (53%) are more likely than average (37%) to have concerns about what is on TV, while those aged 16-24 (19%) and 25-34 (24%) are less likely. As with the internet, those in AB households are more likely to have concerns (43%).
- Mobile phones: Compared to the average (29%), concerns about mobile phones are higher for users aged 35-44s (36%). Mobile users in AB households (39%) are more likely than average to have concerns about mobile phones, and those in DE households are less likely (23%).
- Games: Compared to the average (26%), those who play games aged 16-24 (17%) are less likely to have concerns, and those aged 45+ are more likely (34%). Women are more likely than men to say they have concerns about gaming (32% vs. 24%).

Figure 65: Concerns about media among users: 2005-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN17/ T7/ M1/ G2. Can you tell me if you have any concerns about what is on the internet/ on TV. Do you have any concerns about mobile phones/ gaming? (unprompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who use each platform (variable base)

Concerns about TV content

Specific concerns about diversity in content and mistrusting content are more likely than in 2016

When asked if they have any concerns about what is on television, more than one in three (37%) adults with a TV in the household say they do, unchanged since 2016.

As shown in Figure 66, these concerns[43] relate mainly to harmful or offensive content (22%), or the poor quality of content or repeats (16%); both these measures are unchanged compared to 2016.

[43] The top three specific concerns about television are: violence in general (12%), too many repeats (9%) and offensive language (spoken or song lyrics) (9%). These specific (unprompted) concerns are then placed into the categories described.

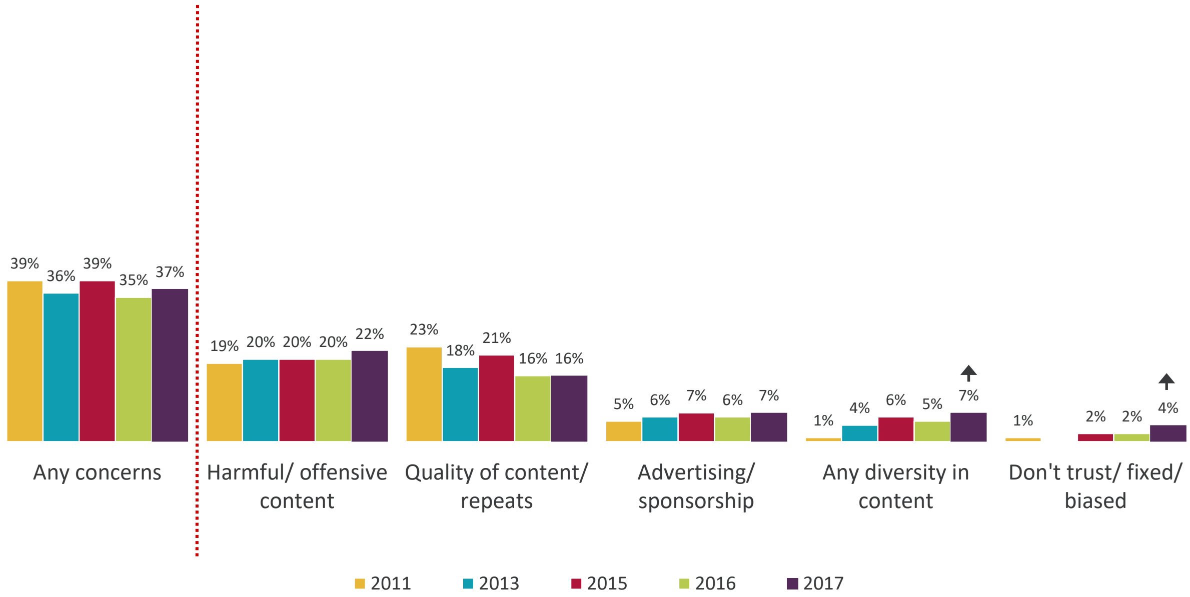
As in 2015 and 2016, less than one in ten have concerns about advertising/ sponsorship (7%), about diversity in content (7%) or about mistrusting content that they perceive to be fixed/ fake/ biased (4%). These latter two types of concern are more likely than in 2016, up from 5% and 2% respectively.

Adults aged 16-24 (9%) and 25-34 (13%) are less likely than average to have concerns about harmful or offensive content on television (22%) or to be concerned about quality of content/ repeats (10% for 16-24s, 8% for 25-34s vs. 16%). Those aged 65-74 (31%) are more likely than average to be concerned about harmful or offensive content. As discussed above, those aged 75+ are more likely than average to have concerns about television; this is attributable to their being more likely to be concerned about harmful or offensive content (40%) and about quality of content/ repeats (26%).

While AB adults are more likely than average to have any concerns about television, as discussed earlier, this difference are not seen for any specific type of content. Adults in DE households (17%) are, however, less likely to be concerned about harmful or offensive content.

Women are more likely than men (26% vs. 18%) to be concerned about harmful or offensive content and men are more likely to mistrust content that they perceive to be fixed/ fake/ biased (5% vs. 3% for women).

Figure 66: Concerns about television among users: 2011-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
T7. Can you tell me if you have any concerns about what is on TV? (unprompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: Adults aged 16+ with any TVs in the household (1801 in 2016, 1830 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

Concerns about internet content

Compared to 2016, internet users are more likely to have concerns related to risks to others, security/ fraud and advertising, and less likely to be concerned about offensive/ illegal content

Half of internet users say they have concerns about what is on the internet, unchanged since 2016. These concerns relate mainly to offensive/ illegal content (34%), risks to others/ society (27%) and concerns about security / fraud (25%). Other concerns include personal privacy (11%) and advertising (11%). In the past year, internet users are less likely to be concerned about offensive/ illegal content (34% vs. 38% in 2016) and are more likely to be concerned about risks to others/ society (27% vs. 22%), security/ fraud (25% vs. 20%) and advertising (1% vs. 11%).

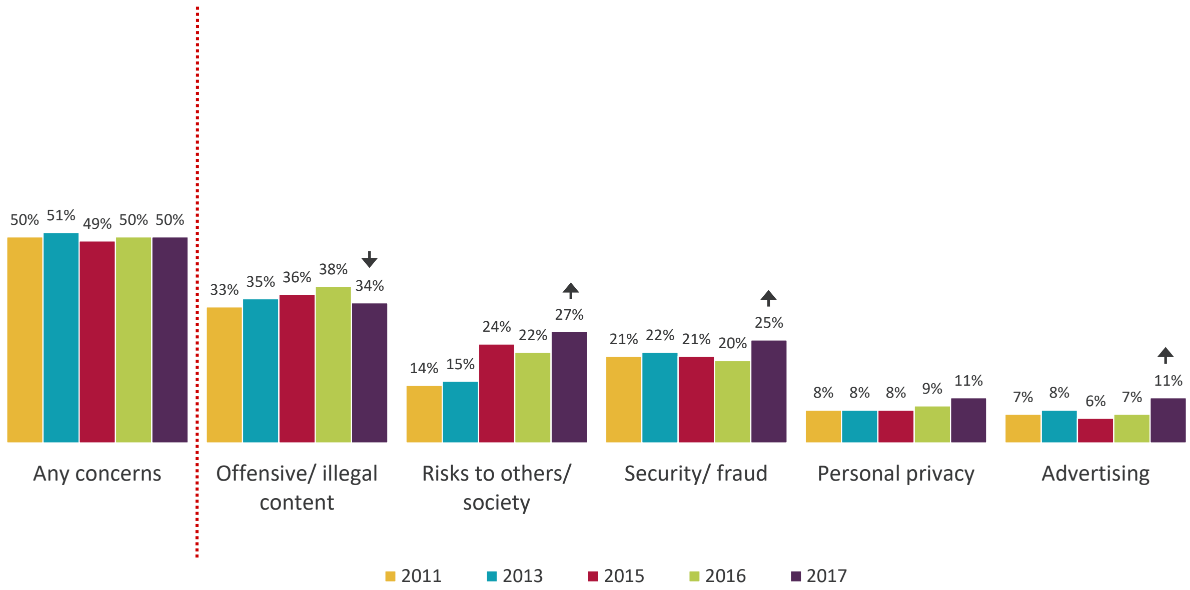
Although not shown on the chart, the top three specific[44] concerns about the internet mentioned by adult internet users are: strangers contacting children (19%), content unsuitable for children (17%) and sexual content/ pornography (16%).

As discussed earlier, in 2017 internet users aged 16-24 are less likely to have concerns about what is on the internet compared to internet users overall; this is attributable to their being less likely to have each of the five types of concerns shown in Figure 67. No other differences are apparent by age in 2017.

Adults in AB households are more likely to be concerned about: security/ fraud (33% vs. 25%), personal privacy (18% vs. 11%) and concerns about advertising (15% vs. 11%). In contrast, those in DE households are less likely concerned about security/ fraud (19%) and about personal privacy (6%).

Women are more likely than men to be concerned about offensive/ illegal content (37% vs. 31%) and about risk to others/ society (31% vs. 23%).

Figure 67: Concerns about the internet among users: 2011-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN17. Can you tell me if you have any concerns about what is on the internet? (unprompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: Adults aged 16+ who go online (1553 in 2016, 1570 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

[44] These specific (unprompted) concerns are then placed into the categories described.

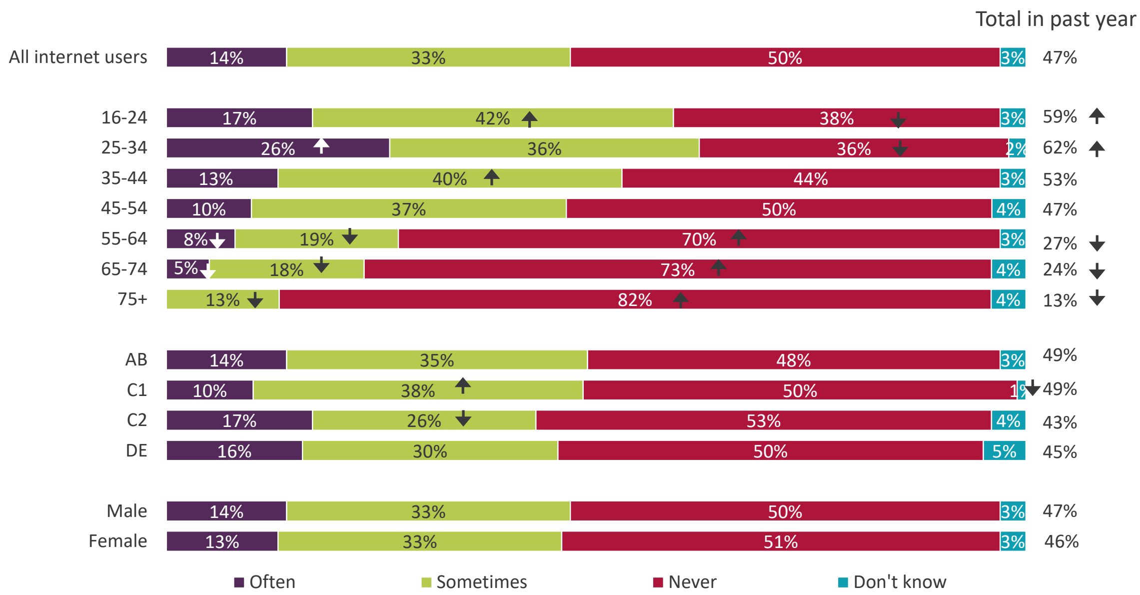
Close to half of internet users say they have encountered hateful content online in the past year

In 2017, in order to better understand exposure to hate speech online, internet users were asked the following question: *"In the past year, have you seen anything hateful on the internet that has been directed at a particular group of people, based on, for instance, their gender, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity?"* They were also provided with the following explanation: Examples of these sorts of things might be cruel or hateful comments or images that have been posted on social media, comments in response to an article that you read online, or videos posted on sites like YouTube. The results are shown in Figure 68.

In 2017, close to half of internet users say they have seen this kind of hateful content online in the past year (47%). One in seven (14%) say they 'often' see this, with the remaining third (33%) saying they 'sometimes' see it. Internet users aged 16-24 (59%) or 25-34 (62%) are more likely than internet users overall (47%) to say they have ever seen this type of content in the past year, while 55-64s (27%), 65-74s (24%) or those aged 75+ (13%) are less likely to say this.

A quarter of internet users aged 25-34 (26%) say they 'often' see this; this is higher than average (14%).

Figure 68: Internet users who say they have encountered hateful content online in the past year



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN18A. In the past year have you seen anything hateful on the internet that has been directed at a particular group of people, based on for instance their gender, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity? Examples of these sorts of things might be cruel or hateful comments or images that have been posted on social media, comments in response to an article that you read online, or videos posted on sites like YouTube (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1570 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all internet users and men compared to women

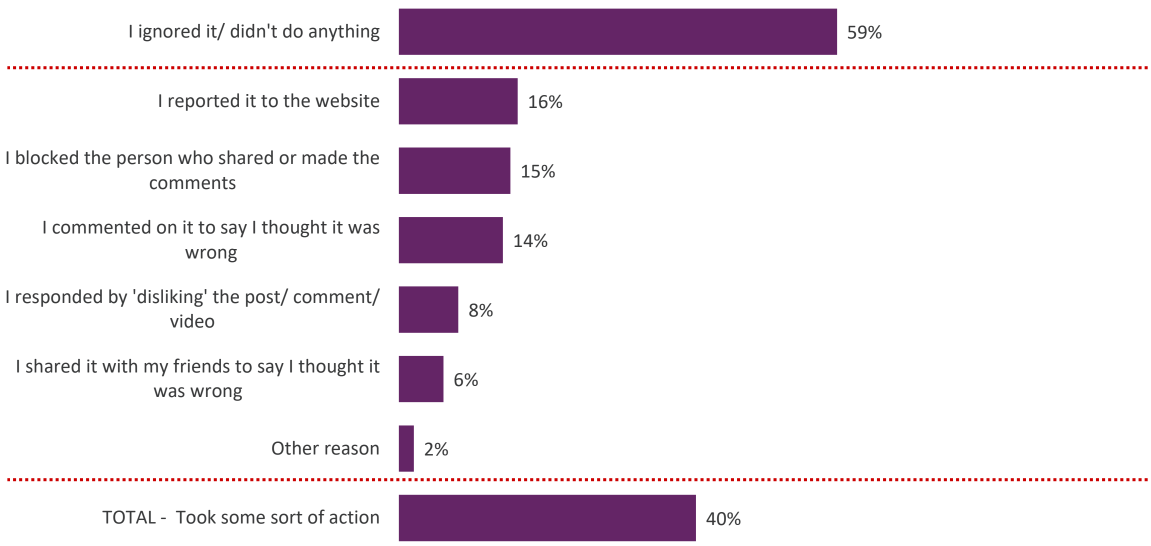
Two in five internet users who have seen something hateful online in the past 12 months say they did something about it

Those internet users who have seen hateful content online in the past 12 months were prompted with six possible actions and were asked to say which, if any, of these actions they had taken after seeing the most recent example of hateful content online.

Three in five (59%) say they ignored the hateful content or didn't do anything about it. A similar proportion of around one in six said they reported the hateful content to the website (16%), blocked the person who made/ shared the comments (15%), or commented to say they thought the content was wrong (14%). Less than one in ten mentioned any of the other actions.

There is only one difference by age: internet users aged 55 and over are less likely than average to say they reported the hateful content to the website (4% vs. 16%).

Figure 69: Actions taken as a result of seeing hateful content online



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN18B. What if anything did you do after you saw the most recent example of something hateful online? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All who have seen hateful content online in the past 12 months (702 in 2017)

Concerns about gaming

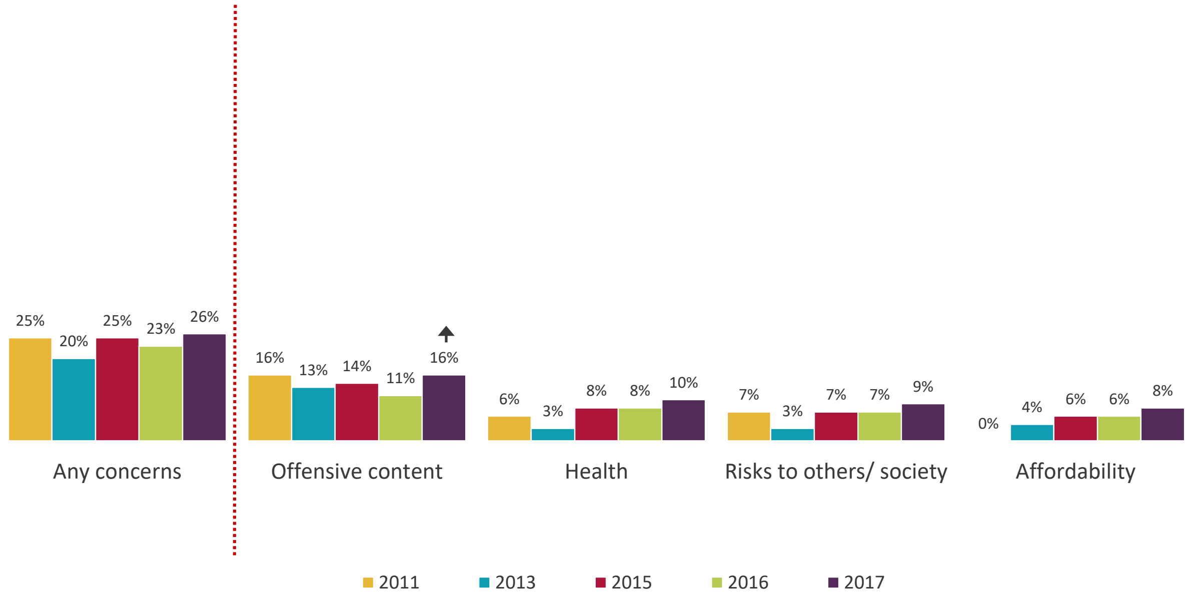
Adults who game are more likely than in 2016 to be concerned about offensive content

When asked if they had any concerns about gaming, around one in four adults who ever played games say they did (26%); this is unchanged since 2016 (23%). Concerns relate to offensive content (16%), health risks (10%), risks to others/ society (9%) and affordability (8%). Compared to 2016, adults who game are more likely to say they have concerns about offensive content (16% vs. 11%).

In 2017, 16-24s who play games are less likely than average to be concerned about offensive content (9% vs. 16%) or about risks to others/ society (3% vs. 9%). Adults aged 35-44 who play games are more likely than average to be concerned about risks to others/society (16%).

Women who play games are more likely than men to be concerned about health risks (16% vs. 6%).

Figure 70: Concerns about gaming among users: 2011-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
G2. Can you tell me if you have any concerns about gaming? (unprompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: Adults aged 16+ who play games (605 in 2016, 632 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

Concerns about mobile phones

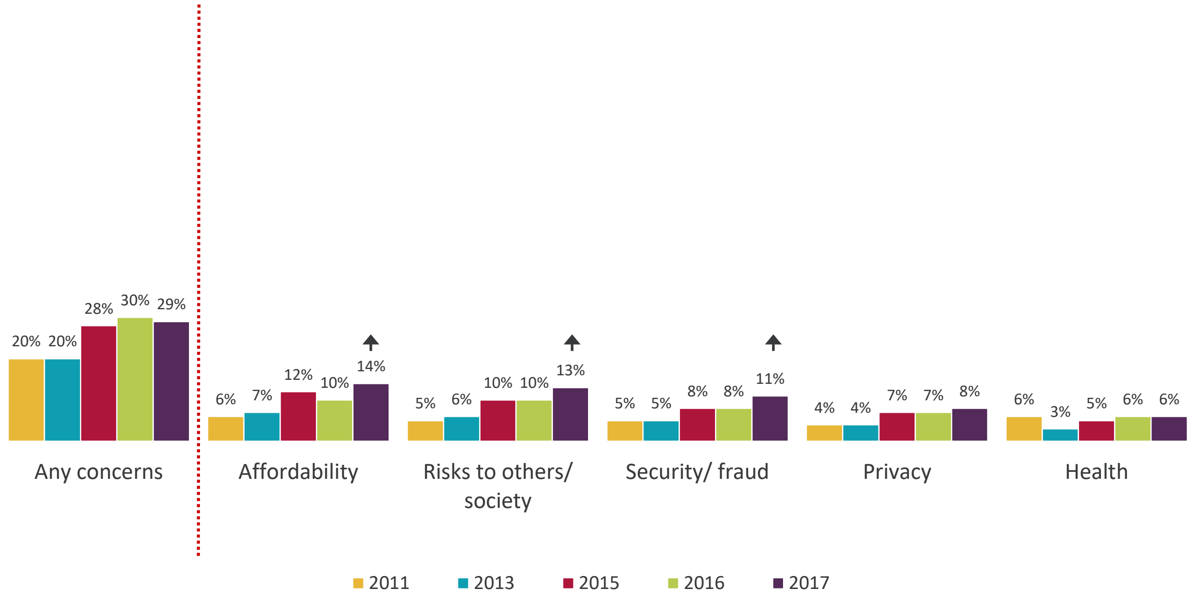
Compared to 2016, mobile phone users are more likely to be concerned about affordability, risks to others/ society and about security/ fraud

When asked if they have any concerns about mobile phones, three in ten (29%) who personally use a mobile phone say they do. No single category of concern dominates, with one in seven mentioning concerns relating to affordability (14%) or risks to others, or to society as a whole (13%). One in ten mention concerns about security/ fraud (11%) while fewer mention concerns relating to privacy (8%) or to health (6%). Unlike concerns overall, compared to 2016, specific concerns about affordability (14% vs. 10%), concerns relating to risks to others or to society as a whole (13% vs. 10%) and concerns about security/ fraud (11% vs. 8%) are more common.

Privacy concerns are lower among mobile phone users aged 16-24 (4% vs. 8%). Those aged 35-44 are more likely to have concerns about affordability (20%), risks to others or to society as a whole (18%) or security/ fraud-related risks (17%). Those aged 65-74 are less likely to have concerns about risks to others or to society as a whole (6%) or security/ fraud-related risks (5%). Those aged 75 and over are also more likely to have concerns about risks to others or to society as a whole (6%).

As mentioned earlier, users in AB households are more likely than average to have any concerns (39% vs. 29%), with this being attributable to them being more likely to have four types of concerns, those relating to: risks to others or to society as a whole (17%), security/fraud (17%), privacy (12%) and risks to health (9%). Privacy concerns are lower among users in DE households (5%) as are concerns about risks to others/ to society (8%).

Figure 71: Concerns about mobile phones among users: 2011-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
M1. Can you tell me if you have any concerns about mobile phones? (unprompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: Adults aged 16+ who personally use a mobile phone (1625 in 2016, 1623 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

Attitudes towards going online

Internet users aged 65 and over are most likely to agree that the benefits of being online outweigh any disadvantages

As detailed earlier in the introductory section of this report (Section 2), to complement the Media Literacy Tracking study in 2017, a separate survey was conducted online with adults aged 16+. This survey included a series of attitudinal statements about being online; internet users were asked the extent to which they agreed with each. These findings are included in this section of the report. As this survey was conducted online, to avoid any confusion the respondents are referred to as 'internet users' rather than as 'adults'.

Five of the statements addressed some of the more negative feelings about being online (those shown first in Figure 72) and five statements addressed the more positive aspects of going online. The statements are ranked according to the proportion of internet users who agree overall.

Half of all internet users agree (49%) with the statement: "*If I couldn't go online for a day I would feel like I was missing out on things*", with one in eight (17%) agreeing strongly. Two in five internet users (40%) agree that *"I spend too much time online"*, higher than the quarter (26%) who disagree.

While internet users are as likely to agree (31%) as to disagree (33%) that *"I would like to cut down on the time I spend online",* a sizeable minority, around one in ten (9%) agree strongly with this statement. Internet users overall are more likely to disagree (44%) than to agree (26%) with the statement: *"Other people think/ tell me I spend too much time online".* Half of all internet users (51%) disagree that "*Being online makes me feel like I'm always at work"*; more than the one in five (21%) who agree.

Four in five internet users (79%) agree that "*New communication methods have made life easier- e.g. online shopping and online banking save time and effort*" with agreement evenly split between those who agree strongly (40%) and those who agree slightly (39%). Two-thirds of internet users (67%) agree with the statement: *"I think I have a good balance between going online and doing other things"*, while only 9% disagree.

A similar proportion of internet users, around three in five, agree with each of the remaining statements: *"The benefits of being online outweigh any disadvantages"* (62%), "*Being online inspires me to try new things like travel, new restaurants or recipes, new experiences or entertainment*" (61%) and "*Being able to go online mean I am rarely bored*" (60%).

While not shown in Figure 72, there are differences by age. Internet users aged 16-24 and those aged 25-34 are more likely than average to agree that they spend too much time online (59% for 16-24s, 51% for 25-34s vs. 40% overall) and that they would like to cut down on the amount of time they spend online (50% for 16-24s and 42% for 25-34s vs. 31%). Both 16-24s and 25-34s are also more likely to disagree that they have a good balance between being online and doing other things (17% for 16-24s, 15% for 25-34s vs. 9% overall). Internet users aged 16-24 are also more likely than average to agree that other people think/ tell them they spend too much time online (43% vs. 26%) and that being online makes them feel like they're always at work (34% vs. 21%), while 25-34s are more likely to disagree that the benefits of being online outweigh any disadvantages (12% vs. 8%).

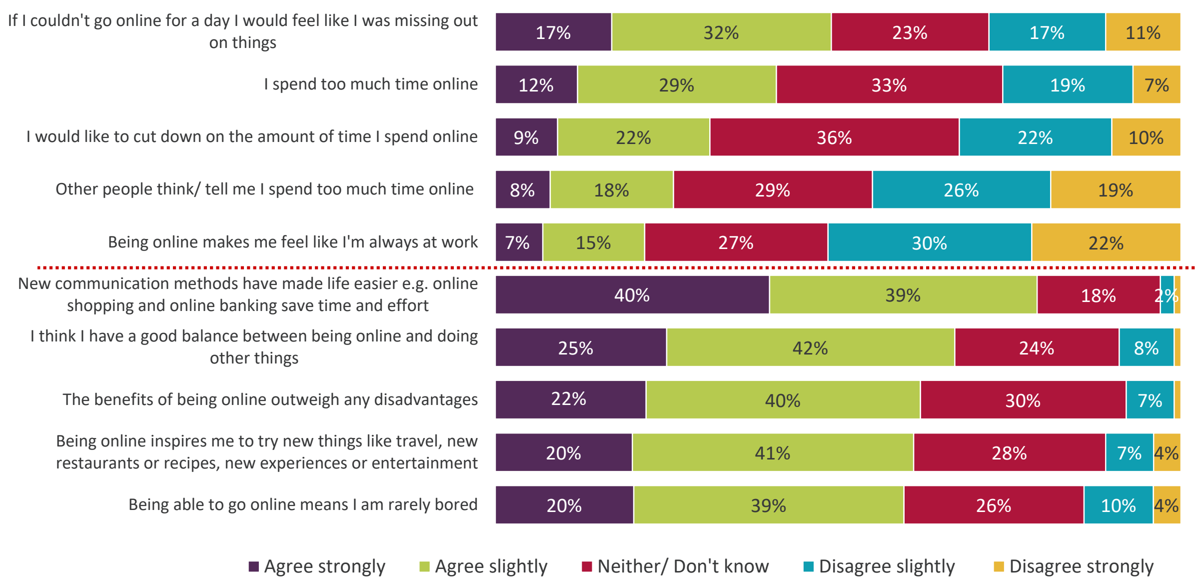
It is more common for internet users aged 35-44 to agree that they would feel they were missing out if they couldn't go online for a day (59% vs. 49% overall).

Internet users aged 55 and over are less likely than average to agree with four of the statements: that they spend too much time online (23% for 55-64s, 24% for 65+ vs. 40% overall), that other people think/ tell them they spend too much time online (14% for 55-64s, 19% for 65+ vs. 26%), that they would like to cut down on the amount of time they spend online (13% for 55-64s, 14% for 65+ vs. 31%) and that being online makes them feel like they are always at work (11% for both 55-64s and 65+ vs. 21%). They are more likely to disagree that they would feel they were missing out if they couldn't go online (39% for 55-64s, 41% for 65+ vs. 28%) and to agree that they have a good balance between being online and doing other things (77% for 55-64s, 84% for 65+ vs. 67%). Those aged 55+ are, however, the only age group to be more likely than average to agree that new communications methods have made life easier (87% for 55-64s, 88% for 65+ vs. 79% overall) and those aged 65+ are the only age group more likely to agree that the benefits of being online outweigh any disadvantages (72% vs. 62%).

There are few differences by household socio-economic group. Compared to the average (61%), internet users in DE households are less likely to agree (51%) that being online inspires them to try new things. Those in C2 households are more likely to agree strongly that they have a good balance between being online and doing other things (33% vs. 25% overall).

Women are more likely than men to agree strongly that they spend too much time online (14% vs. 9%). They are more likely than men to agree that they would feel they were missing out if they were unable to go online for a day (52% vs. 46%) and that being online inspires them to try new things (65% vs. 57%). Men are more likely than women to agree that the benefits of being online outweigh any disadvantages (66% vs. 59%).

Figure 72: Attitudes towards going online



Source: Ofcom adults' online survey 2017
Q18A-J. Here is a list of things that other people have said about going online. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1050)

Watching: TV content, short video clips and discoverability

On-demand/ streamed content

More than half of adults watch on-demand or streaming content

Adults aged 16 and over were asked whether they ever watched TV programmes or films via on-demand or streaming services. They were provided with the following definition of on-demand/ streamed content: *"By on-demand or streaming services I mean watching TV programmes or films via online services such as BBC iPlayer, Netflix, Amazon Prime, Sky Go and so on. This could be through your television service or on any device you use to go online".*

Figure 73 shows the incidence of watching on-demand/ streaming content among adults overall in 2016 and 2017 as well as by age, socio-economic group and gender, in 2017.

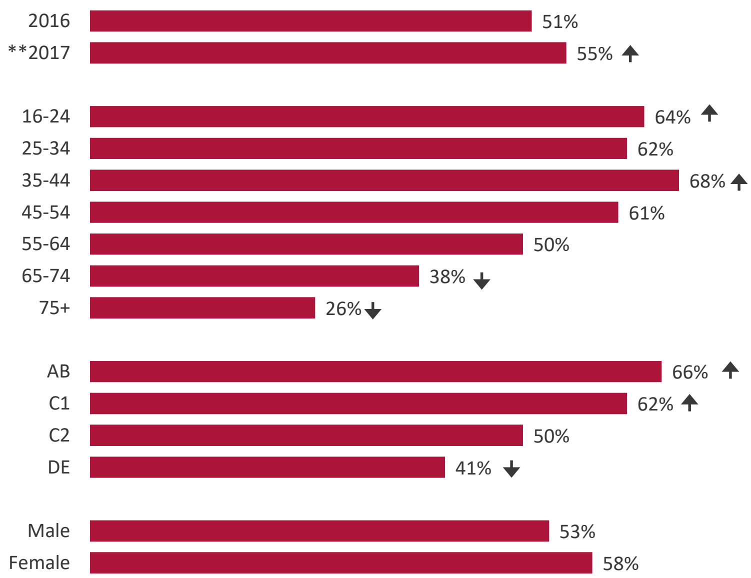
More than half of adults (55%) say they watch on-demand or streaming content; this is more likely than in 2016 (51%)[45].

In 2017, watching on-demand or streaming content is more likely among 16-24s (64%) and 35-44s (68%), compared to the average (55%). Those in AB (66%) or C1 (62%) households are also more likely to view this type of content.

Older adults are less likely to ever watch on-demand or streaming content (38% for 65-74s and 26% for the over-74s), as are those in DE households (41%).

There are no differences by gender in watching on-demand or streaming content.

Figure 73: Incidence of watching on-demand or streaming content



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
T2. Do you ever watch TV programmes or films via on-demand or streaming services? By on-demand or streaming services I mean watching TV programmes or films via online services such as BBC iPlayer, Netflix, Amazon Prime, Sky Go and so on. This could be through your television service or on any device you use to go online (prompted responses, single coded). ** In 2017 the definition of on-demand was expanded to specifically reference streaming services. In 2016 the question asked: Do you ever watch TV programmes or films on-demand? By on-demand we mean watching TV programmes or films via online services such as BBC iPlayer, Netflix, Amazon Prime, Sky Go etc. This could be through your television service or on any device you use to go online. Results over time should be seen as indicative only
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1875 in 2017, varies by demographic). Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between 2016 and 2017 at the overall level and by age/ socio-economic group compared to all adults and men compared to women

[45] In 2016 respondents were only asked about their experience of watching on-demand content. In 2017 this was expanded to include streaming content, which could account for the increase between 2016 and 2017. Results should therefore be seen as indicative only.

Content on video-sharing sites

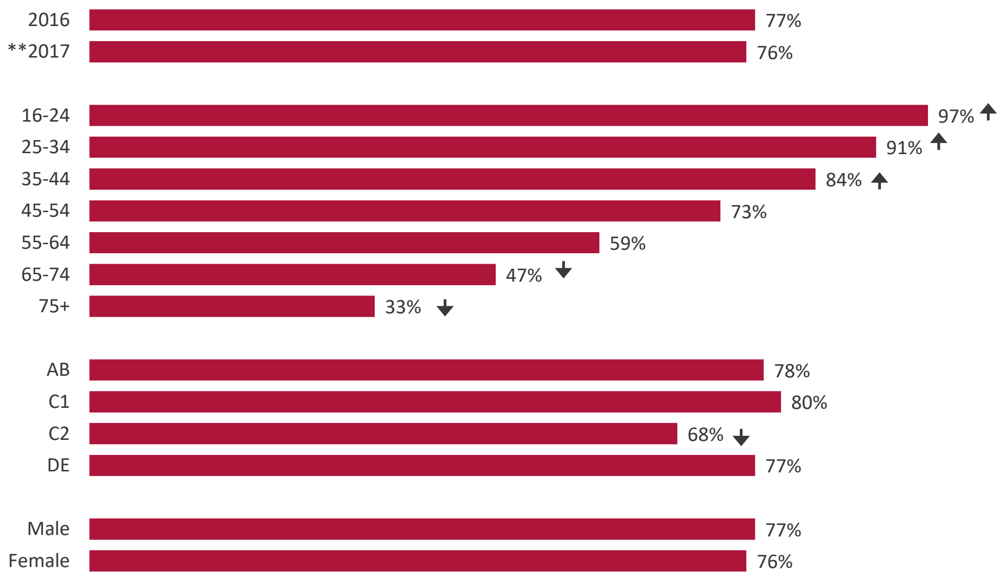
Three in four internet users say they watch content on video-sharing sites; this is more likely than average for 16-44s

Adults who go online (88% of adults overall) were asked whether they ever watched videos on sites or apps like YouTube, Vimeo, Snapchat or Facebook.

In 2017, more than three in four adult internet users (76%) say they ever watch content on video-sharing sites; this increases to 97% of internet users aged 16-24, 91% of those aged 25-34 and 84% of 35-44s. Internet users aged 65-74 (47%), aged 75+ (33%) and those in C2 households (68%) are less likely than average (76%) to watch videos through these sites.

There has been no change in the incidence of watching content on video-sharing sites since 2016.[46]

Figure 74: Incidence of watching content on video-sharing sites



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN19A. Do you ever watch videos on sites or apps like YouTube, Vimeo, Snapchat or Facebook? (unprompted responses, single coded). ** In 2016, the definition only referenced YouTube and Vimeo. In 2017 this definition was expanded to include Snapchat and Facebook
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1570 in 2017, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between 2016 and 2017 at the overall level and by age/ socio-economic group compared to all internet users and men compared to women

[46] In 2016 respondents were asked about watching videos on sites or apps like YouTube or Vimeo. In 2017, this was expanded to also include watching this type of content on sites like Snapchat and Facebook. Results over time should therefore be seen as indicative only.

Content watched on video-sharing sites

Users of video-sharing sites are most likely to use these sites to watch music videos, although more than half watch tutorials

Internet users who say they ever watch videos on sites like YouTube, Vimeo, Snapchat or Facebook (76% of internet users; 67% of adults overall) are prompted with 12 options and asked to say which of these describe the types of videos they tend to watch on video-sharing sites or apps. The results are shown in Figure 75.

Three types of content are watched by a majority of users: music videos (63%), funny videos, jokes, pranks or challenges (59%), and 'how-to' videos, tips or tutorials (54%). Around one-third or more look at reviews of things they might want to buy (40%), short entertainment videos (film trailers, clips from TV programmes or highlights) (38%) or news, current affairs or documentaries (32%). At least a quarter say they watch sports/ football clips or videos (30%) or whole TV programmes or films (25%). Around one in ten or less watch game tutorials, walk-throughs/ watch other people play games (10%), view political speeches or campaigns (10%), or view vlogs from vloggers (8%). Four per cent say they have looked at religious speeches or events.

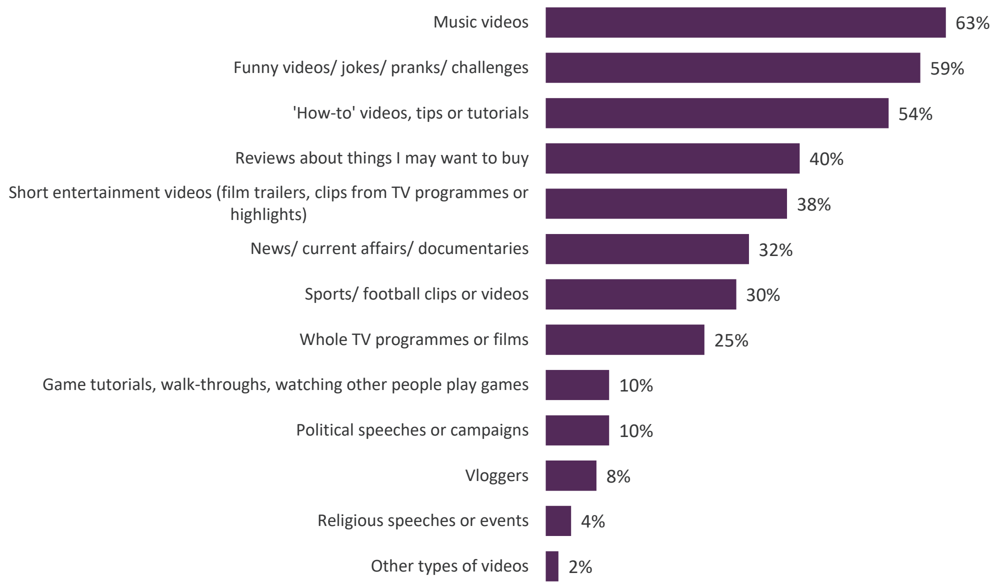
Compared to the average, there are six types of content that are more likely to be viewed by 16-24s and less likely to be viewed by over-64s: music videos (78% for 16-24s, 47% for 65+ vs. 63% overall), funny videos, jokes, pranks or challenges (72% for 16-24s, 32% for 65+ vs. 59% overall), short entertainment videos - films trailers, clips from TV programmes or highlights (53% for 16-24s, 24% for 65+ vs. 38% overall), whole TV programmes or films (33% for 16-24s, 11% for 65+ vs. 25% overall), game tutorials/ walk-throughs (23% for 16-24s, 3% for 65+, vs. 10% overall) and vlogs/ vloggers (22% for 16-24s, 1% for 65+ vs. 8%). Users aged 16-24 are also more likely than average to watch sports or football clips/ videos (39% vs. 30%) and those aged 25-34 are more likely to watch funny videos, jokes, pranks or challenges (71% vs. 59%).

Those aged 35-44 are less likely than average to watch games tutorials/ walk-throughs (5% vs. 10%).

Compared to the average, users of video-sharing sites in AB households are less likely to watch funny videos, jokes, pranks or challenges (51% vs. 59%). Those in DE households are less likely to watch 'how-to' videos, tips or tutorials (46% vs. 54%).

There are four types of content that are more likely to be viewed by men rather than women: news/ current affairs and documentary content (36% vs. 28%), sports/ football clips or videos (51% vs. 10%), game tutorials, walk- throughs, watching other people play games (13% vs. 7%) and political speeches and campaigns (12% vs. 8%).

Figure 75: Type of content watched on video-sharing sites



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN19B. And what types of videos do you tend to watch on these sites or apps? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All aged 16+ who ever watch content on video sharing sites (1161 in 2017)

Listening: radio and other audio services

Use of subscription-based streamed audio services is higher than in 2016

Three activities that internet users were asked about in the Technology Tracker survey[47] fall under the heading of 'listening to audio content online': listening to radio online and using streamed audio services, whether free or subscription-based.

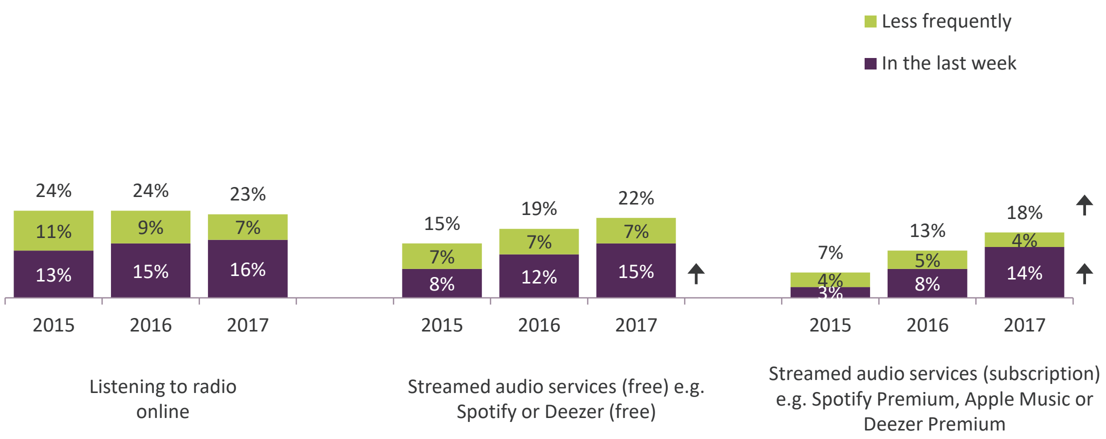
Figure 76 shows the proportion of adult internet users, between 2015 and 2017, who say they ever undertake each of these activities online, broken out into those who have done this in the previous week, and those who do so less frequently.

In 2017, more than one in five internet users say they have ever listened to radio online (23%), with a similar proportion (22%) saying they use free streamed audio services (like Spotify or Deezer). Slightly fewer users say they have ever used the subscription version of these services; for example, sites like Spotify or Deezer Premium or Apple Music (18%). For each of these types of audio service, use in the previous week is more likely than less frequent use. Around one in seven say they have listened to radio online (16%), free streaming services (15%) or to subscription-based streaming services (14%) in the previous week.

[47] As mentioned earlier, the data relating to the types of online activities that internet users carry out come either from the most recent wave of the Technology Tracker study or from the Media Literacy Tracker.

Compared to 2016, internet users are more likely to have ever used subscription-based streaming audio services (18% vs. 13%) and to have done so in the previous week (14% vs. 8%). They are also more likely to have used free streaming audio services in the previous week (15% vs. 12%).

Figure 76: Listening to audio services online: 2015-2017



Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker, H2 2015-2017
QE5A/ QE5B. Which, if any, of these do you use the internet for? / And, which, if any, of these activities have you used the internet for in the last week? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (2413 in 2016, 2514 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (99% level) between 2016 and 2017

As shown in Figure 77, in 2017, internet users aged 25-34 are more likely than average, and those aged 65-74 or 75+ are less likely than average to say they have been online to use all three types of audio services in the previous week.

Compared to internet users overall, those aged 16-24 are more likely to say they have listened to streamed audio services in the previous week, whether free or subscription-based, while 45-54s and 55-64s are less likely to say this.

Adult internet users in AB households are more likely than average to have been online in the previous week to listen to radio or to use subscription-based audio services, while those in C2 households are less likely to have used free streamed audio services.

Men who go online are more likely than women to say they have used streamed audio services, both free and subscription-based, in the previous week.

Figure 77: Listening to audio services online in the previous week, by age, gender and socio-economic group

	All internet users	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Listening to radio online	16%	17%	23% ↑	21%	16%	12%	5% ↓	1% ↓
Streamed audio services (free) e.g. Spotify or Deezer (free)	15%	30% ↑	22% ↑	17%	11% ↓	5% ↓	1% ↓	1% ↓
Streamed audio services (subscription) e.g. Spotify Premium, Apple Music or Deezer Premium	14%	25% ↑	24% ↑	16%	10% ↓	4% ↓	2% ↓	1% ↓

	All internet users	AB	C1	C2	DE	Male	Female
Listening to radio online	16%	20% ↑	15%	13%	15%	17%	15%
Streamed audio services (free) e.g. Spotify or Deezer (free)	15%	17%	16%	11% ↓	14%	17% ↑	12%
Streamed audio services (subscription) e.g. Spotify Premium, Apple Music or Deezer Premium	14%	19% ↑	14%	10%	10%	16% ↑	12%

Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker, H2 2017
QE5B. And, which, if any, of these activities have you used the internet for in the last week? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (2514 aged 16+,366 aged 16-24, 399 aged 25-34, 465 aged 35-44, 443 aged 45-54, 371 aged 55-64, 283 aged 65-74, 186 aged 75+, 616 AB, 807 C1, 533 C2, 553 DE, 1201 male, 1313 female)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age and socio-economic group compared to all internet users and men compared to women

Gaming

Playing games online

One in six adults play games online with or against other people, higher than in 2016

Adults who say they play games on any type of gaming device (as discussed at Figure 21 earlier, in this report) were asked whether they ever played games online, with or against other people.

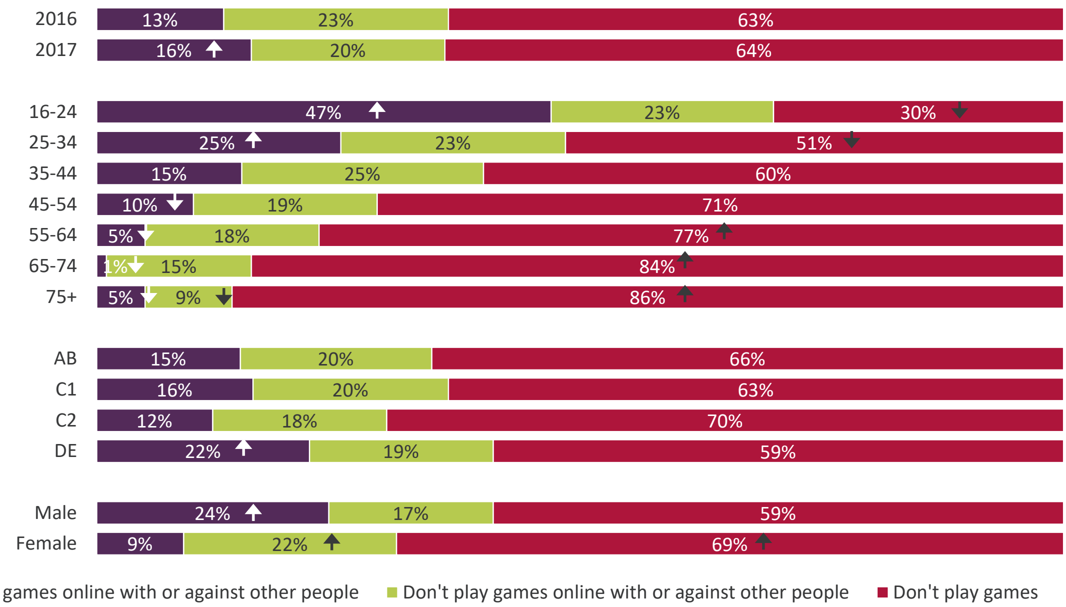
Figure 78 shows the incidence of online gaming, expressed as a proportion of adults overall.

As shown earlier, compared to the average, any type of gaming is more likely among younger adults (aged 16-34) and among men. This is also the case for online gaming with or against other people. While one in six adults overall (16%) play games online in this way, this is three times more likely for 16-24s (47%). Adults aged 25-34 (25%) are also more likely to do this, while over-44s are less likely (10% for 45-54s, 5% for 55-64s, 1% for 65-74s and 5% for over-74s).

Despite there being no increase in gaming overall between 2016 and 2017 (as shown in Figure 21), adults are now more likely to play games online (16% vs. 13%).

While adults in DE households are no more likely than adults overall to play games (41% vs. 36% - as shown in Figure 23), they are more likely to play games online (22% vs. 16%). A quarter of men (24%) play games online, compared to 9% of women.

Figure 78: Playing games online with or against other people



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
G3. Many games can be played online. Do you ever play games online with or against other people? (unprompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1875, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between 2016 and 2017 at the overall level and by age/ socio-economic group compared to all adults and men compared to women

Finding content and information

Discoverability of content

A quarter of 25-34s say they choose content to watch through on-demand or streaming services based on mentions on social media

Adults who ever watch TV programmes or films via on-demand or streaming services (55% of adults overall) are asked how they choose TV programmes or films to watch through these services.

More than half (58%) choose content because they have specific programmes they watch regularly, or they browse the service to see what is available (54%). All other responses are given by a minority of on-demand users.

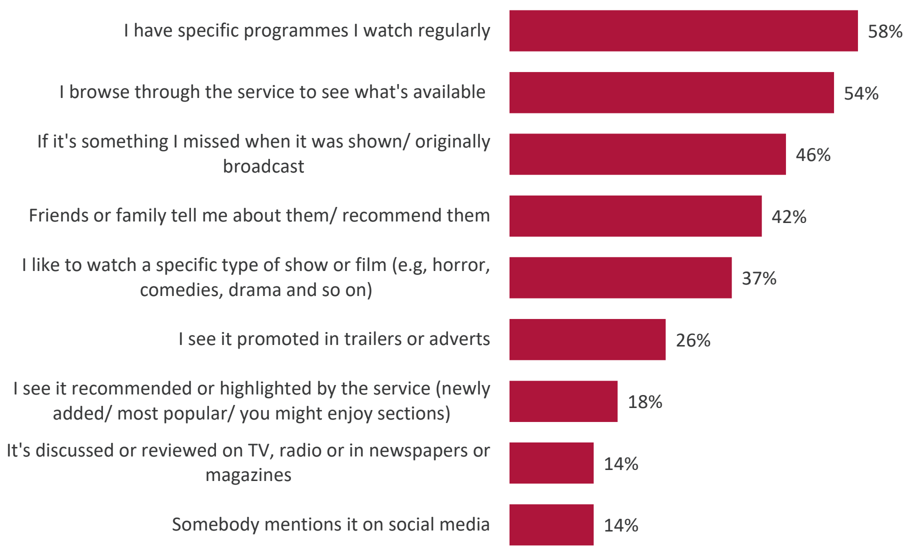
More than two in five (46%) say they choose content because they missed it when it was originally broadcast, or because of recommendations by friends or family (42%). More than a third (37%) say they choose content based on particular preferences for shows or films. A quarter say they choose content after seeing trailers or adverts on TV or radio (26%). Around one in five say that they discover content to watch because it is recommended to them by the service (18%) with fewer mentioning reviews in the mainstream media (14%) or mentions on social media (14%).

Viewers of on-demand/ streaming content aged 16-24 are less likely than average to say they view content because they missed it when it was originally broadcast (32% vs. 46%); this is more likely to be mentioned by 45-54s (56%). Viewers aged 16-24 (7%) and 25-34 (8%) are less likely than average (14%) to choose content based on reviews they see in the media, while this latter age group are more likely to say they choose content based on social media mentions (23% for 25-34s vs. 14% overall).

On-demand users aged 65 and over are less likely to say they choose content based on browsing the service to see what is available (43% vs. 54%), on friends' or family recommendations (27% vs. 42%), because they prefer to watch a specific type of show or film (19% vs. 37%) or through social media (2% vs. 14%).

There is only one difference by gender: men are more likely than women to say they watch on-demand/streaming content based on their preferences for watching a specific type of show or film (43% vs. 31%).

Figure 79: Ways in which on-demand or streaming content is chosen/ discovered



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
T3A. How do you choose what TV programmes or films to watch via on-demand or streaming services? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults who ever watch on-demand or streaming content (974)

Seven in ten who watch scheduled TV choose content based on their regular viewing habits

In addition to asking adults who ever watch TV programmes or films via on-demand or streaming services how they choose content to watch through these services, adults with a television were asked the following question in 2017: *"Do you ever watch TV programmes or films via scheduled TV – TV programmes that you watch at the time they are broadcast?"*

Those who said they watched scheduled television content (91% of those with a TV in the household) were then prompted with nine options and were asked how they choose TV programmes or films to watch via scheduled TV. The results, based on all with a TV in the household, are shown in Figure 80.

Seven in ten (69%) say they have specific programmes they watch regularly, while slightly less than half (47%) say they choose broadcast content after browsing to see what is available. A quarter (26%) either say they choose content based on affinity for a particular TV channel, or following recommendations from friends or family. A similar proportion, around one in five, say they choose broadcast content based on trailers/ adverts (19%) or through TV listings in newspapers or magazines (17%). Each of the other reasons for watching broadcast content are mentioned by less than one in ten.

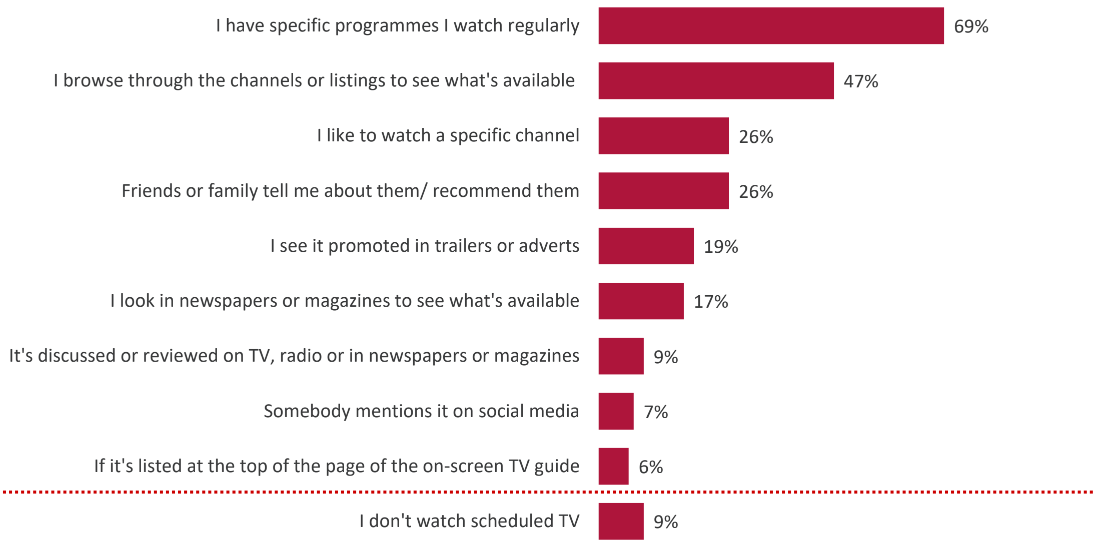
Watching scheduled TV is more likely among adults aged 75+ (95% vs. 91%), but otherwise does not vary by age, household socio-economic group or by gender.

Adults aged 16-24 are less likely than average to say that they choose content based on regularly watching specific programmes (57% vs. 69%) or after seeing reviews in the media (3% vs. 9%). Both 16-24s (12%) and 25-34s (12%) are more likely to say they choose content based on mentions on social media (7%), and are less likely to say they check TV listings in newspapers/magazines (11% for 16-24s, 9% for 25-34s vs. 17% overall). Adults aged 35-44 are also less reliant on TV listings (12%) for selecting content to watch.

Adults aged 55+ are less likely to select content to watch based on mentions on social media (4% for 55-64s, 3% for 65-74s and 1% for 75+ vs. 7% overall). Adults aged 65-74 and 75+ are more likely than average to say they have specific programmes they watch regularly (77% for 65-74s, 83% for 75+ vs. 69%) or that they check TV listings in newspapers/ magazines (29% for 65-74s, 38% for 75+ vs. 17%). Those aged 65-74 are also more likely to say they like to watch a particular channel (35% vs. 26%).

Adults in AB households are more likely than adults overall to say they select broadcast television content based on seeing it promoted in trailers/ adverts (24% vs. 19%) or having seen it discussed/ reviewed on TV, radio or in print media (14% vs. 9%). There are no differences by gender.

Figure 80: Ways in which broadcast content is chosen/ discovered



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
T3B. Do you ever watch TV programmes or films via scheduled TV – so TV programmes that you watch at the time they are broadcast? IF YES – How do you choose what TV programmes or films to watch via scheduled TV (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults with a television in the household (1808)

Finding information

In 2016 we revised the questions relating to type and frequency of internet use. A shorter set of questions were asked of adults who go online, and the frequency options that respondents could select were also amended.

Ofcom's Technology Tracker questionnaire also includes questions about types and frequency of internet use, so the specific online activities that are grouped under the heading of 'finding information online' have been included in this section of the report. These results are from the most recent wave of Technology Tracker research, which was conducted in 2017. The data from the Technology Tracker research are shown separately (Figure 81) from any similar data from the media literacy research (Figure 83).

Internet users are more likely than in 2016 to have been online to find health-related information in the previous week

Of the online activities that internet users were asked about on the Technology Tracker in 2017, three activities can be grouped under the heading of 'finding information'. These are:

- general surfing or browsing the internet;
- finding or downloading information for work, business, school, college, university or homework[48]; and
- finding information on health-related issues.

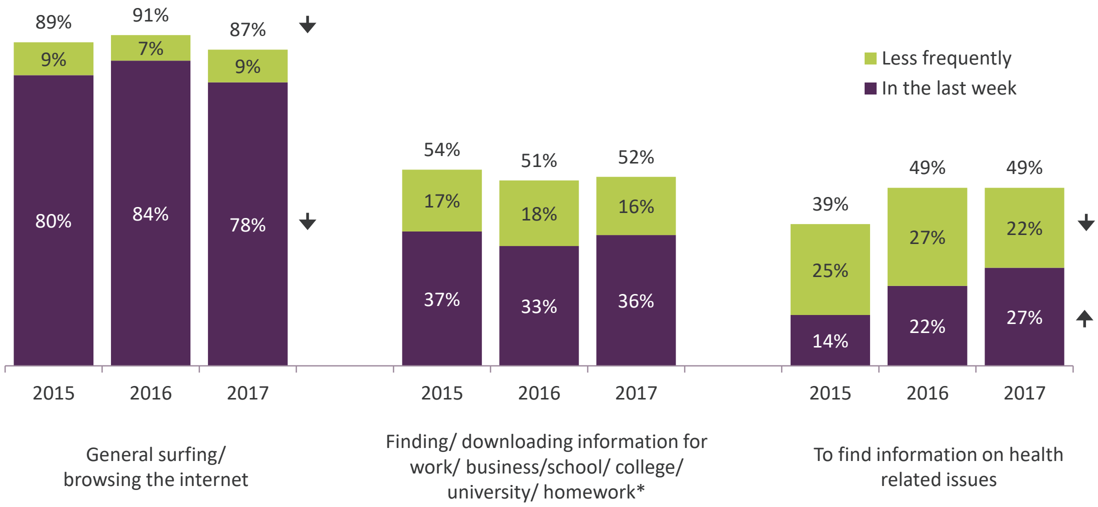
Figure 81 shows the proportion of adult internet users in each year from 2015 to 2017 who say they ever undertake each online activity, broken out into those who had done this in the previous week, as well as less frequently.

Close to nine in ten internet users (87%) say they use the internet for general browsing/surfing, with more than three-quarters (78%) saying they have done this in the previous week. More than half (52%) say they find or download information for work, business, school, college, university or homework, with more than one in three (36%) having done this in the previous week. Half of internet users (49%) say they go online to find information for health-related issues, with about half of these (27%) having done so in the previous week.

[48] Before 2016, finding information for work or business purposes was asked about separately to finding information for school/ college/ university/ homework; these two separate questions were combined into one question in 2016. The measure for 2015 is therefore showing a 'net' measure based on combining the separate questions.

Compared to 2016, overall use of the internet for browsing is less likely (87% vs. 91%), as is use in the previous week (78% vs. 84%). Internet users are, however, more likely to have been online in the previous week to find information on health-related issues (27% vs. 22%).

Figure 81: Finding information online, by activity type: 2015-2017



Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker, H2 2015-2017
QE5A/ QE5B. Which, if any, of these do you use the internet for? / And which, if any, of these activities have you used the internet for in the last week? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (2413 in 2016, 2514 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (99% level) between 2016 and 2017

Figure 82 shows any variation in the incidence of undertaking each of these activities online in the previous week, by age, socio-economic group and gender, in 2017.

Compared to internet users overall, those aged 16-24 are more likely to have gone online in the previous week to find or download information for work, business, school, college, university or homework (46% vs. 36%). Adults aged 25-34 are more likely to have gone online in the previous week for all three activities: general/ surfing or browsing the internet (83% vs. 78%), finding or downloading information for work, business, school, college, university or homework (47% vs. 36%), or to find information on health-related issues (35% vs. 27%). Those aged 35-44 are more likely to have been online in the previous week for browsing the internet (83%) or to find health-related information (32%).

Users aged 55+ are less likely to have gone online in the previous week to find or download information for work, business, school, college, university or homework (23% for 55-64s, 13% for 65-74s and 12% for 75+ vs. 36% overall). Those aged 65+ are also less likely than average to have been online in the previous week to find information on health-related issues (19% for 65-74s and 14% for 75+ vs. 27%).

Compared to the average for all internet users, adults in AB households are more likely to have been online in the previous week to look for all three types of information. Those in C2 households are less likely to have been online in the previous week to find health-related information (20% vs. 27%) and those in DE households are less likely to have been online for general surfing /browsing (69% vs.

78%) or to find or download information for work, business, school, college, university or homework (23% vs. 36%).

Men are more likely than women to say they have been online in the previous week for general surfing/ browsing (80% vs. 76%), while women are more likely than men to say they have looked for health-related information (30% vs. 25%).

Figure 82: Finding information online in the previous week, by age, gender and socio-economic group

All internet users		16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
General surfing/ browsing the internet	78%	81%	83% ↑	83% ↑	77%	76%	69%	58%
Finding/ downloading information for work/ business/school/ college/ university/ homework	36%	46% ↑	47% ↑	43%	37%	23% ↓	13% ↓	12% ↓
To find information on health related issues	27%	26%	35% ↑	32% ↑	28%	22%	19% ↓	14% ↓

All internet users		AB	C1	C2	DE	Male	Female
General surfing/ browsing the internet	78%	83% ↑	81%	77%	69% ↓	80% ↑	76%
Finding/ downloading information for work/ business/school/ college/ university/ homework	36%	47% ↑	38%	31%	23% ↓	37%	35%
To find information on health related issues	27%	35% ↑	28%	20% ↓	23%	25%	30% ↑

Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker, H2 2017
QE5B. And, which, if any, of these activities have you used the internet for in the last week? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (2514 aged 16+,366 aged 16-24, 399 aged 25-34, 465 aged 35-44, 443 aged 45-54, 371 aged 55-64, 283 aged 65-74, 186 aged 75+, 616 AB, 807 C1, 533 C2, 553 DE, 1201 male, 1313 female)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age / socio-economic group compared to all internet users and men compared to women

Internet users are less likely than in 2016 to go online to access news websites

Figure 83 shows the frequency with which internet users go online to undertake five specific activities that were asked about in the Media Literacy survey[49].

Three of the five activities shown have 'ever' been undertaken by the majority of internet users. More than two-thirds (68%) have ever been online to find information for their leisure time (including cinema and live music) while half of these (33%) had done so in the previous week.

More than three in five internet users (64%) have ever been online to compare products or services (such as looking at reviews or doing price comparison searches) or to access news websites or sites

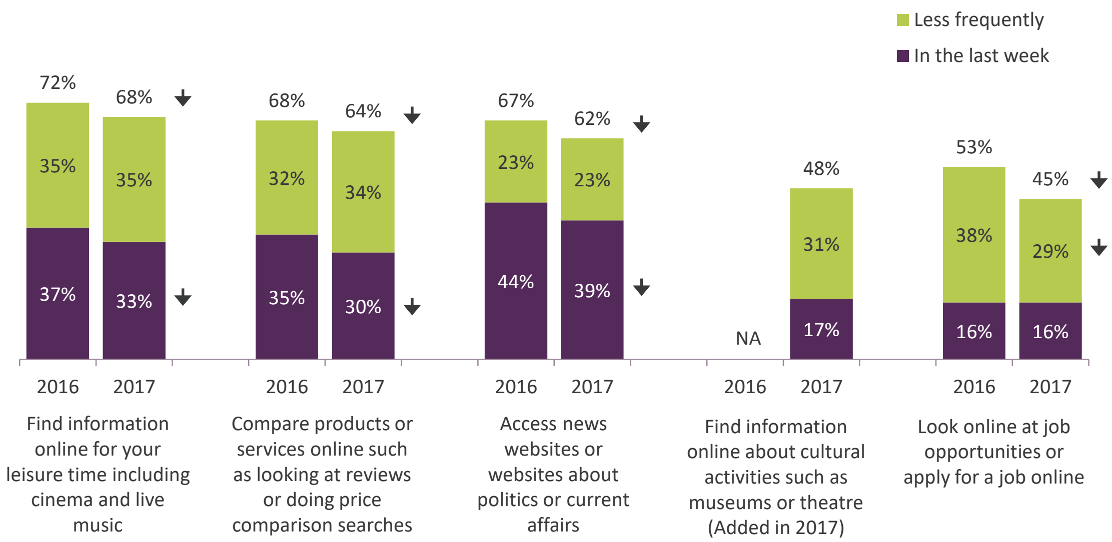
[49] Four of these activities were also asked about in 2016 so it is possible to show a trend for these measures. One activity – find information online about cultural activities such as museums or theatres - was added to the Media Literacy survey in 2017, so no trend data are available.

about politics or current affairs (62%). While three in ten (30%) have compared products or services online in the previous week, a higher proportion, four in ten (39%) had accessed news, politics or current affairs websites in the previous week.

Close to half (48%) of internet users say they have ever been online to find information about cultural activities such as museums or theatres, with less than one in five (17%) having done this in the previous week. More than two in five have looked online at job opportunities or applied for a job online (45%) with one in six (16%) having done this in the previous week.

Compared to 2016, and where it is possible to make a comparison over time, internet users are less likely to say they ever been online to find each of the types of information shown in Figure 83. Internet users are also less likely to have been online in the previous week for three of the four activities: finding information for leisure time (33% vs. 37%), comparing products or services online (30% vs. 35%) and accessing news websites (39% vs. 44%).

Figure 83: Finding information online, by activity type: 2016-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN13/ IN14. Which if any of these activities have you ever done online? / And which, if any, of these activities have you used the internet for in the last week? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1553 in 2016, 1570 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

Figure 84 shows how these types of online activity vary in 2017 by age, gender and socio-economic group.

Compared to the average (16%), internet users aged 16-24 (31%) and 25-34 (23%) are more likely to have been online in the previous week to look at job opportunities or to apply for a job online. In contrast, those aged 45+ are less likely to have been online for this purpose (10% for 45-54s, 6% for 55-64s, 1% for 65-74s and 0% for those aged 75+). As such, users aged 65-74 are less likely to have been online in the previous week for three of the four activities shown in Figure 84, and those aged 75 and over are less likely to have been online for all five activities.

Compared to the average, adults in AB households are more likely to have been online in the previous week to do four of the activities, and are as likely to have been online to look at job opportunities or apply for a job online (16%). Those in C2 households are less likely to have been online in the previous week for all five activities. Internet users in DE households are less likely to have been online to access news websites (29% vs. 39%), to find information for leisure time (25% vs. 33%), or to find information about cultural activities (10% vs. 17%). They are more likely to have been online in the previous week, compared to internet users overall, to look online at job opportunities or to apply for a job (23% vs. 16%).

Men are more likely than women to say they have been online in the previous week to access news websites (43% vs. 35%).

Figure 84: Finding information online in the previous week, by age, gender and socio-economic group

	All internet users	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Access news websites or websites about politics or current affairs	39%	33%	39%	40%	42%	42%	37%	27% ↓
Find information online for your leisure time including cinema and live music	33%	39%	36%	39%	33%	28%	19% ↓	13% ↓
Compare products or services online such as looking at reviews or doing price comparison searches	30%	33%	35%	31%	32%	27%	19% ↓	17% ↓
Find information online about cultural activities such as museums or theatre	17%	14%	15%	20%	20%	17%	15%	6% ↓
Look online at job opportunities or apply for a job online	16%	31% ↑	23% ↑	19%	10% ↓	6% ↓	1% ↓	0% ↓

	All internet users	AB	C1	C2	DE	Male	Female
Access news websites or websites about politics or current affairs	39%	50% ↑	41%	30% ↓	29% ↓	43% ↑	35%
Find information online for your leisure time including cinema and live music	33%	43% ↑	35%	25% ↓	25% ↓	34%	32%
Compare products or services online such as looking at reviews or doing price comparison searches	30%	36% ↑	33%	24% ↓	25%	32%	29%
Find information online about cultural activities such as museums or theatre	17%	28% ↑	15%	9% ↓	10% ↓	18%	16%
Look online at job opportunities or apply for a job online	16%	16%	13%	10% ↓	23% ↑	14%	17%

Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN14. And which, if any, of these activities have you used the internet for in the last week? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1570 in 2017, 243 aged 16-24, 269 aged 25-34, 294 aged 35-44, 250 aged 45-54, 224 aged 55-64, 149 aged 65-74, 140 aged 75+, 392 AB, 516 C1, 304 C2, 358 DE, 749 male, 821 female)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all internet users and men compared to women

Online information sources used

Search engines are the only online information source used by more than half of internet users

Adults who go online were prompted with a list of eight possible sources of information and were asked which sources, if any, they had ever used to look for information online. Figure 85 shows the results for 2016 and 2017.

A search engine (95%) is the only source used by a majority of internet users. Four in ten (40%) have ever used websites with user reviews (such as Amazon, TripAdvisor or OpenTable) or Wikipedia (39%), while a similar proportion (36%) say they have ever used a government or local council website or have ever used YouTube (35%). Around a third (32%) say they have used the BBC website and a quarter have ever used social media websites (26%) or online articles (24%).

Compared to 2016, internet users are less likely to say they have ever used search engine websites (95% vs. 97%) or the BBC website (32% vs. 40%) to look for information. They are more likely to say they have ever used YouTube for this purpose (35% vs. 31% in 2016).

Differences in the information sources used, by age, in 2017 are summarised below:

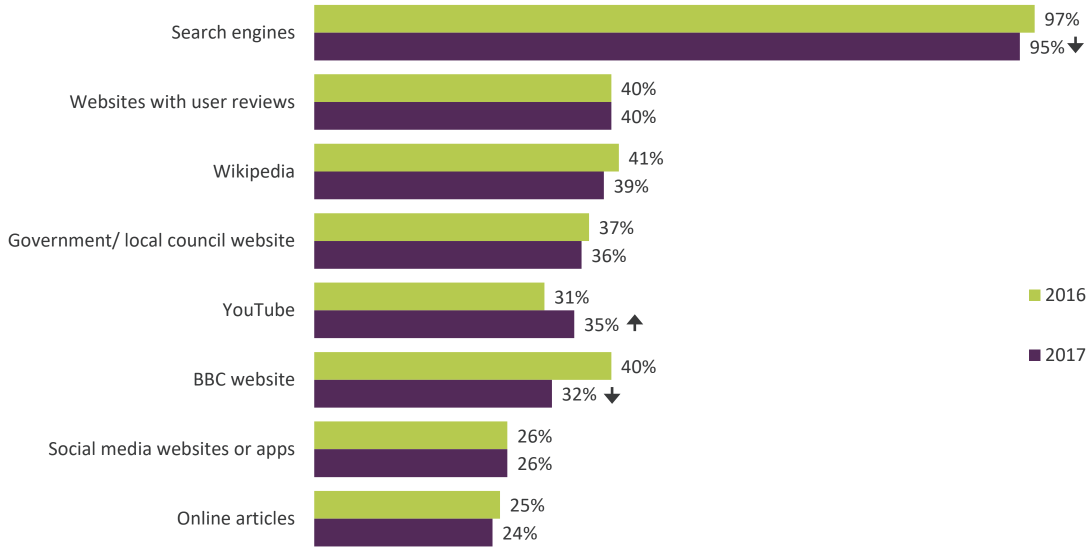
- Compared to the average, internet users aged 16-24 are more likely to have ever used four sources: YouTube (52% vs. 35%), Wikipedia (47% vs. 39%), social media (41% vs. 26%) or online articles (30% vs. 24%). They are less likely to use a government or local council website (26% vs. 36%). The YouTube website is more likely to be used by 25-34s (44% vs. 35%) and this age group is less likely to use the BBC website (23% vs. 32%).
- Those aged 35-44 are more likely to say they have ever used online articles (30% vs. 24%). Compared to the average, YouTube use is less likely among 45-54s (27% vs. 35%) as is use of social media (19% vs. 26%).
- Users aged 55-64 (25%) and 65-74 (22%) are less likely than users overall (35%) to say that they have ever used YouTube, and this latter age group is also less likely to have ever used social media (16%). 55-64s are, however, more likely than average to say they have used a government or local council website (44% vs. 36%).
- Adults aged 75 and over who go online are less likely to say they use seven of the eight sources, and they are as likely to say they use search engines to look for information (90%).

There are also differences by socio-economic group:

- Compared to internet users overall, five sources are more likely to have ever been used by adults in AB households: websites with user reviews (47% vs. 40%), Wikipedia (49% vs. 39%), government or local council websites (46% vs. 36%), the BBC website (40% vs. 32%) and online articles (32% vs. 24%). Three of these sources are less likely to be used by those in C2 or DE households: Wikipedia (29% for both C2s and DEs), government or local council websites (28% for both C2s and DEs) and the BBC website (24% for C2s and 23% for DEs). Those in C2 households are also less likely than average to use websites with user reviews (28%).

Men are more likely than women to say they have ever looked for information on Wikipedia (43% vs. 35%) or on YouTube (42% vs. 29%).

Figure 85: Sources used to look for information online: 2016-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN43. Please think about when you want to look for information about something online. Which, if any of these sources have you ever used to look for information online? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: Adults aged 16+ who go online (1553 in 2016, 1570 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

Online resources used for learning new things

Three-quarters of internet users would use YouTube to learn new things

The online survey included a series of questions relating to online resources used for learning; the findings are included in this section of the report.

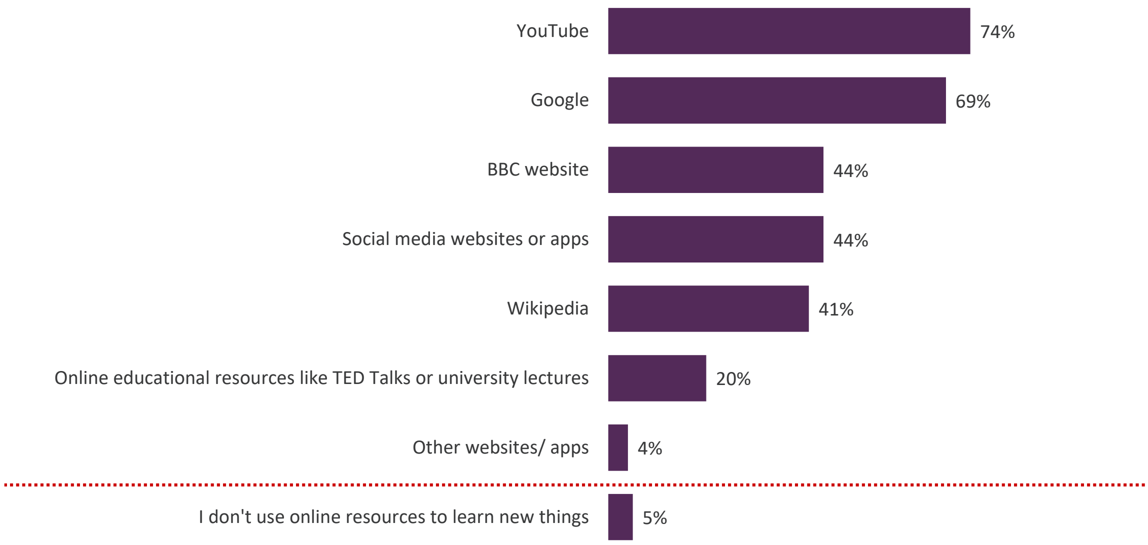
Internet users were asked the following question: *"Which, if any of these online resources would you use to learn new things - for example this might be a new recipe, a DIY project, learning a new language, how to play a musical instrument, how to make or create something etc.?"* The results are shown in Figure 86.

Two sources would be used by a majority of internet users; three-quarters would use YouTube for this purpose (74%) and seven in ten (69%) would use Google. At least two in five would use the BBC website (44%), social media sites or apps (44%) or Wikipedia (41%). About half of this amount (20%) would rely on online educational resources like TED Talks.

Only 5% of internet users say they don't use online resources to learn new things; this is less likely among 16-24s and 25-34s and more likely among 55-64s and those aged 65 and over. This pattern is repeated for use of YouTube and social media; 16-34s would be more likely than average to use these resources and those aged 55+ would be less likely. Those aged 65+ would also be less likely to use Google (55%) while 16-24s would be less likely to use the BBC website (34%).

Compared to internet users overall, those in AB households are more likely to say they would use two specific resources, and these same two resources are less likely to be used by those in DE households: the BBC website (52% for ABs vs. 34% for DEs vs. 44% overall) and online educational resources like TED Talks (28% for ABs vs. 10% for DEs vs. 20% overall). Internet users in DE households are also less likely than average to use Wikipedia (32%).

Figure 86: Online resources used for learning new things



Source: Ofcom adults' online survey 2017
Q3. Which, if any, of these online resources would you use to learn new things - for example, this might be a new recipe, a DIY project, learning a new language, how to play a musical instrument, how to make or create something etc.? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1050)

Compared to the average, 25-34s are twice as likely to say they would turn to social media first to learn new things

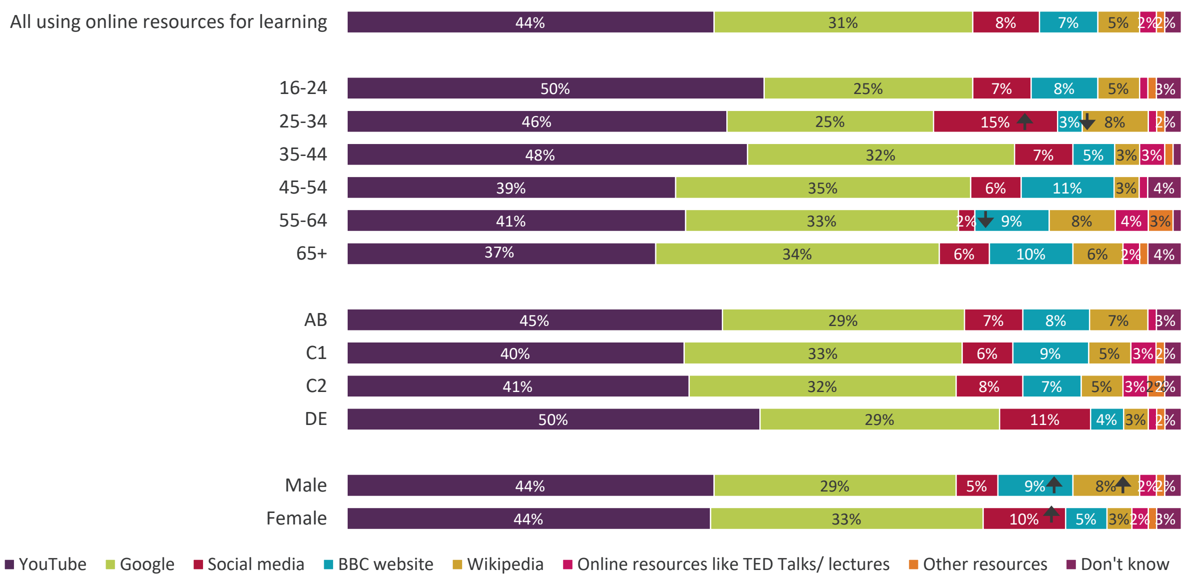
Internet users who say they would use any of the online resources for learning were also asked which resource they would turn to first to learn new things. The results are shown in Figure 87.

More than two in five internet users who say they would use online resources for learning would turn to YouTube first (44%) and three in ten (31%) would turn to Google first. Less than one in ten internet users say they would use each of the remaining resources.

There are few differences by age; 25-34s are more likely than the average internet user to say they would first turn to social media (15% vs. 8%) and are less likely to say they would turn to the BBC website first (3% vs. 7%). Relatively few 55-64s would first turn to social media (2% vs. 8% average). There are no differences by household socio-economic group.

Women are more likely than men to say they would turn to social media first (10% vs. 5%), while men are more likely to say they would turn to the BBC website first (9% vs. 5%) or Wikipedia (8% vs. 3%).

Figure 87: Online resources internet users would turn to first to learn new things



Source: Ofcom adults' online survey 2017
Q4. And which one of these would you turn to first to learn new things - for example, this might be a new recipe, a DIY project, learning a new language, how to play a musical instrument, how to make or create something etc.? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who say they use online resources for learning (975 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all adults who do this and men compared to women

Use of websites or apps in the past month, not used before

Nearly a quarter of internet users say that in the past month they have used lots of websites or apps they haven't used before

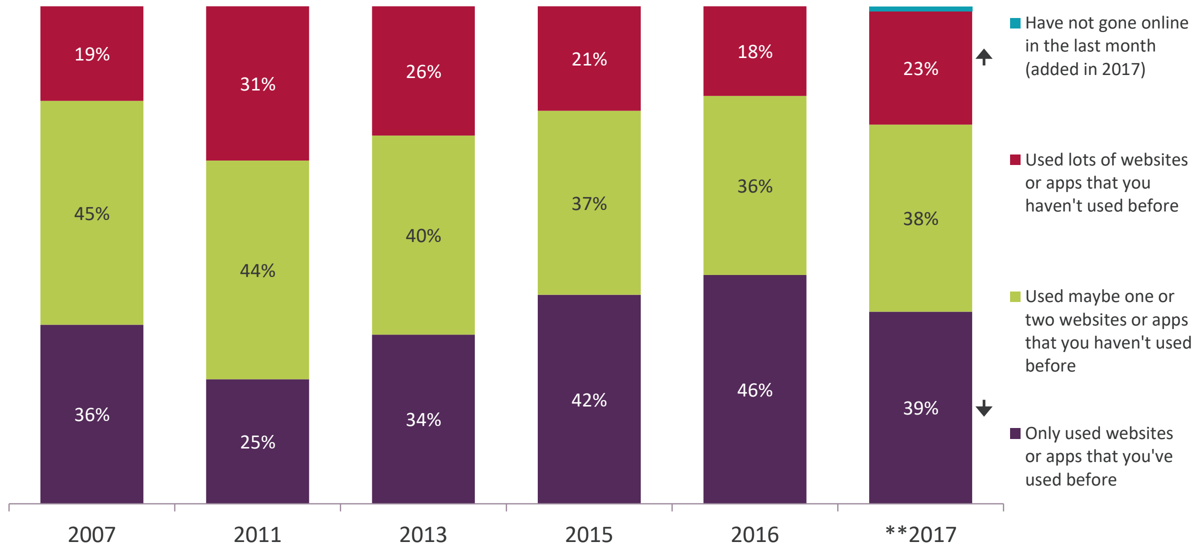
It is important to understand the extent to which people are willing to explore online, as context for many of their attitudes and behaviours. In order to have a proxy for this willingness to move beyond what is familiar online, we ask whether or not they usually use websites or apps that they haven't used before (in the last month[50] when they go online)[51].

Two in five (39%) internet users say they only used websites or apps that they've used before, and a similar proportion (38%) say they used 'maybe one or two' sites or apps that they haven't used before. Close to a quarter (23%) say that they used lots of websites or apps that they haven't used

[50] Before 2017 respondents were asked to think about 'most weeks when you go online'. This was amended in 2017 to ask specifically about 'in the last month when you have gone online'. This change could affect the trend that is shown in the Figure, so results should be seen as indicative only.
[51] Responses shown in the figure reflect those who expressed an opinion.

before. Compared to 2016,[52] internet users are less likely to say they only use websites or apps they've used before (39% vs. 46%) and are more likely to say they used lots of sites or apps they hadn't used before (23% vs. 18%).

Figure 88: Use of websites or apps in the last month not used before



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN12. In the last month, when you have gone online, have you…… (prompted responses, single coded). **In 2016 the question read: 'In most weeks when you go online do you usually…. As such results should be seen as indicative only
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online - excludes 'don't know' responses - (1554 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

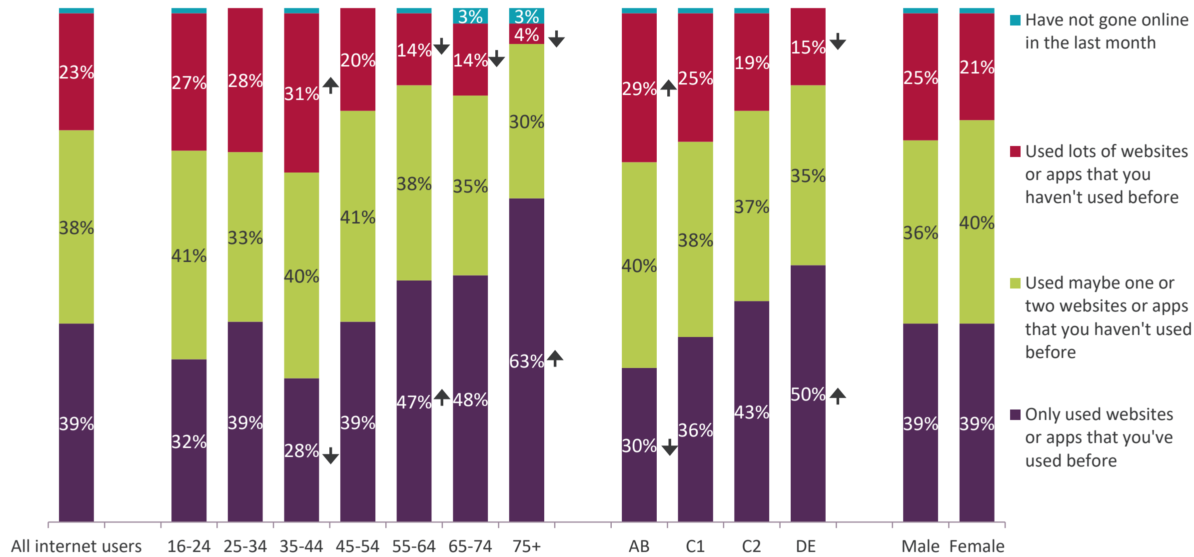
As shown in Figure 89, compared to the average internet user, those aged 35-44 are less likely to say that in the past month they've only used websites or apps they've used before (28% vs. 39%) and are more likely to say they've used lots of websites or apps they haven't used before (31% vs.23%). Broadly speaking, the reverse is true among internet users aged 55+; they are less likely to say they've used lots of websites or apps they've not used before, and are more likely to say they've only used websites or apps they've used previously.

Internet users in AB households are more likely than average to say they have used lots of websites or apps they've not used before (29% vs. 23%) and those in DE households are more likely to say they only used websites or apps they've used before (50% vs. 39%).

There are no differences between men and women.

[52] See footnote 50

Figure 89: Use of websites or apps in the last month not used before, by age, socio-economic group and gender



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN12. In the last month, when you have gone online, have you ….. (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1554 in 2017, varies by demographic) excludes 'don't know' responses
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) for age / socio-economic group compared to all internet users and men compared to women

Writing online reviews

Around half of internet users say that after purchasing a product or service they have ever written an online review – this is more likely among 35-44s

Internet users are asked whether *"after purchasing a product or using a service, do you ever write online reviews for other people to read about that product or service?"* If they say they do, they are asked whether they 'always' or 'sometimes' do this.

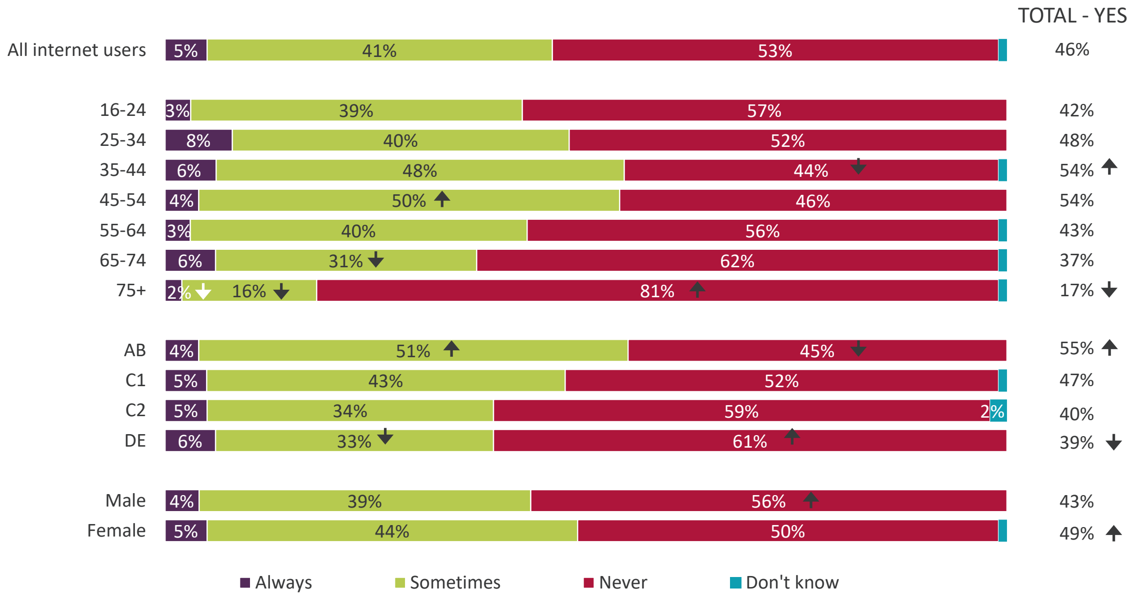
The results are shown at an overall level, and by age, socio-economic group and gender, in Figure 90.

Close to half (46%) of all internet users say they have ever written online reviews; this is more likely for 35-44s (54%) and those in AB households (55%). Internet users aged 75+ (17%) and those in DE households (39%) are less likely to say they have ever done this.

Five per cent of internet users say they 'always' write reviews, with the remaining two in five (41%) saying they 'sometimes' write reviews. Those aged 45-54 are more likely than adults overall to say they 'sometimes' write reviews (50%) and those aged 65-74 are less likely (31%) to say this.

Women (49%) are more likely than men (43%) to say they have ever written an online review.

Figure 90: Frequency of writing online reviews, by demographic group



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN44. After purchasing a product or using a service, do you ever write online reviews for other people to read about that product or service? IF YES – Is that always or sometimes? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1570 in 2017)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all internet users and men compared to women

Information sources used if unsure how to do something online

When stuck on how to do something online, adults are most likely to say they would ask for help, with most asking friends or family to help

Internet users are prompted with nine options[53] and are asked to say which of them they would do if they got stuck or were unsure about how to do something online. Three in five (60%) say they would ask a friend or family for help, while two in five (41%) say they would work it out for themselves.

One in five (20%) say they would watch 'how-to' videos on sites like YouTube or the BBC. Around one in ten would ask a colleague (12%) or would phone a helpline (10%). Six per cent say they would give up or get someone else to do it for them. Each of the other options is only mentioned by around one in 20 internet users or less.

Users aged 16-24 are more likely than average to say they would work it out for themselves (54% vs. 41%) and those aged 25-34 are more likely to watch 'how-to' videos on sites like YouTube or the BBC (27% vs. 20%). Those aged 35-44 are more likely to say they would ask a colleague for help (18% vs. 12%).

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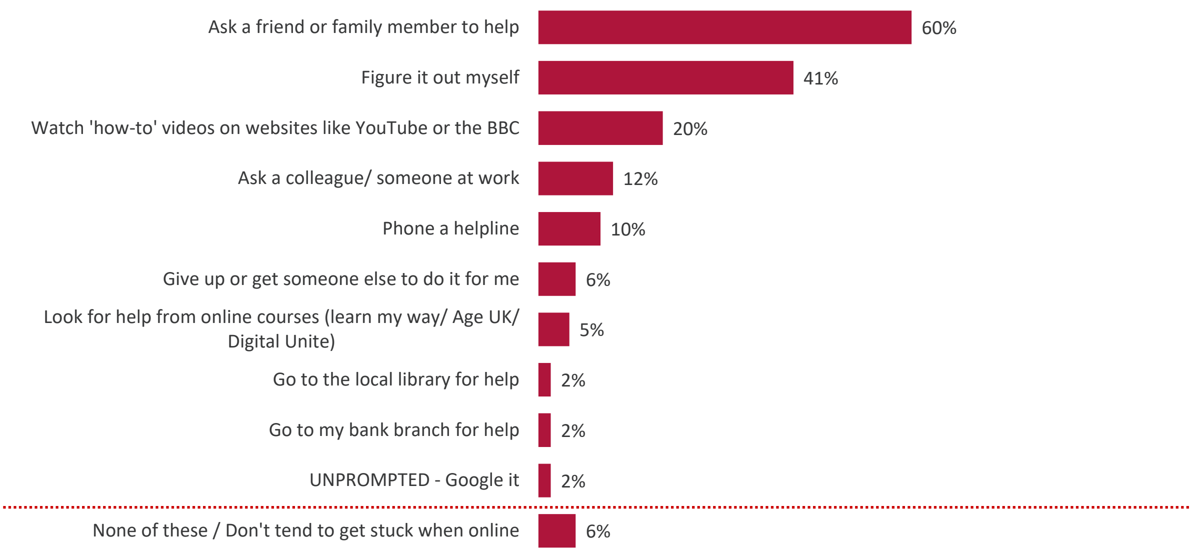
[53] They were also allowed to nominate something else, say they tended not to get stuck online, or to say that they were unsure.

Users aged 55 and over are more likely to say they would ask a friend or family member for help (69% for 55-64s, 72% for 65-74s and 87% for over-74s vs. 60% overall). Those aged 65 and over are less likely to say they would work it out for themselves (26% for 65-74s and 17% for over-74s vs. 41% overall). Compared to the average (20%), those aged 75+ (3%) are also less likely to say they would watch 'how-to' videos.

Asking a friend or family member for help is also more likely among internet users in DE households (67% vs. 60% overall).

Women are more likely than men to say they would ask a friend/ family member for help (70% vs. 50%) while men are more likely than women to say they would work it out for themselves (47% vs. 36%) or would ask a colleague (15% vs. 10%).

Figure 91: Sources of assistance when unsure of how to do something online



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN4. Which if any of the following would you do if you got stuck or were unsure about how to do something online? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: Adults aged 16+ who go online (1570 in 2017)

7. Critical thinking

This section looks at findings relating to adults' knowledge, behaviours and attitudes, on topics linked to critical thinking and understanding of the media they engage with.

It starts by examining the overall level of confidence users have in using the internet, before exploring adults' understanding of the main sources of funding for TV programmes and websites (and specifically, the main source of funding for BBC content and commercial operators, for each of these media). It also assesses internet users' awareness of the extent of media regulation across various types of content.

It reports on questions relating to online privacy and managing personal data by examining areas such as attitudes towards posting content on social media sites, checks made before entering personal data online, and awareness of and attitudes to online companies collecting information about what internet users do online.

It looks at the use of various online security measures and safety features, and the incidence of any negative online experiences. This chapter then goes on to look at users' awareness of and attitudes towards online advertising, before exploring behaviours and attitudes around content evaluation.

Key findings

- Overall, confidence as an internet user is unchanged since 2016. Close to nine in ten internet users (87%) continue to say they are confident, with half (49%) stating they are very confident.
- The majority of adults are aware how television programmes are mainly funded – whether on the BBC, through the PSB commercial channels, or on Sky or Virgin Media - although younger adults (16-24s) and those in DE households tend to have lower levels of awareness compared to the average.
- The majority of adults correctly identify the licence fee as the main source of funding for the BBC website (66%) and BBC iPlayer (56%). Both of these measures are unchanged since 2016. Awareness of the licence fee as the main source of funding for BBC TV programmes continues to be higher (80%) compared to these other BBC services.
- More than half (54%) of adults are aware how search engine websites are mainly funded and just less than half (45%) are aware how YouTube is mainly funded. Both of these measures are unchanged since 2016.
- In 2017, internet users are as likely to agree overall (38%) as they are to disagree overall (38%) that *"As long as the internet provides good websites it doesn't really matter who owns them or how they are funded".* They are, however, more likely to disagree strongly (20%) than they are to agree strongly (15%). This contrasts with the results as recently as 2013, where the reverse was true - internet users were more likely to agree strongly (22%) than they were to disagree strongly (12%).

- Internet users were asked which TV channels and online services they thought were subject to regulation, i.e. in addition to UK law had to abide by "'additional rules' *about offensive, harmful, unfair, inaccurate or biased content."* Close to three in ten (28%) incorrectly say that videos posted on YouTube by the general public have to abide by additional rules about offensive, harmful, unfair, inaccurate or biased content.
- More than seven in ten internet users (72%) say they are confident that they can manage who has access to their personal data online. While this overall measure of confidence is unchanged since 2016, internet users are less likely to say they are very confident (36% vs. 40% in 2016). Users aged 16-24 (48%) are more likely than average to say they are very confident, while those aged 55 and over are less likely (26% for 55-64s, 19% for 65-74s and 13% for 75+).
- While four in five (81%) social media/ messaging site users agree that they are confident in knowing how to control who has access to the photos and videos they share; three in ten (28%) say they are happy sharing personal photos and videos on social media with everyone.
- More than three-quarters of internet users (77%) who purchase online say they make appropriate checks or take appropriate actions before entering their debit/ credit card details online. However, one in four (23%) say they do at least one of the following less secure things: enter their details whenever required (4%), do so if it's the only way to buy the item they want (10%), or check to see if the site is listed on a search engine (11%).
- A majority of internet users say they are aware of the ways in which online companies can collect information about people based on what they do online, whether through the use of cookies (69%), collecting information from users' social media accounts (59%) or asking customers to opt in to marketing communications when registering online (58%).
- A minority (41%) of internet users say they are not happy for companies to collect and use their personal information. About a third of internet users say they are happy for companies to collect and use their personal information if they can opt-out at any point (35%), if the company is clear about how it will use their personal information (33%), or if they are reassured that their information will not be shared with other companies (32%).
- Six per cent of adult internet users say that in the past year they have had online contact from a person who was pretending to be someone else.
- One in eight (13%) who watch videos on video sharing sites say they have ever reported inappropriate content to YouTube; two-thirds (67%) of video-sharing site users are confident they know how to report such content to YouTube, although this is lower among those aged 55 and over. More than three in five (62%) are aware of the button/ flag on YouTube for reporting inappropriate content.
- More than four in five internet users (85%) say they are very (42%) or fairly (43%) confident at knowing which online content is advertising, and more than half (58%) are aware of personalised advertising. Compared to 2016, internet users are more likely to say they use ad-blocking filters or software (31% vs. 27%).
- Three-quarters (75%) of users of video-sharing sites are aware of the potential for vloggers to be paid to endorse the products they discuss – unchanged since 2016.

- When shown an image of links on Google, distinguished by a box with the word 'Ad' in it, 48% of search engine users understood that these were there because they were paid-for advertising, and not because they were the best or most relevant results. This measure is also unchanged since 2016.
- The majority (55%) of price comparison website users are unaware that the deals listed first on these sites might be paid-for content.
- While one in ten (10%) internet users say they do not consider whether the factual information they find online is truthful and 2% assume it is all truthful, the majority, three in five (59%), consider only 'some' of it to be truthful.
- Close to a quarter (23%) of social media site users say they wouldn't tend to check whether the information in news articles/stories (they read on social media) is true. Close to half (48%), however, would at least check whether the article was from a known or trustworthy organisation.

Confidence as an internet user

Confidence when going online

Half of those who go online say they are very confident users – unchanged since 2016

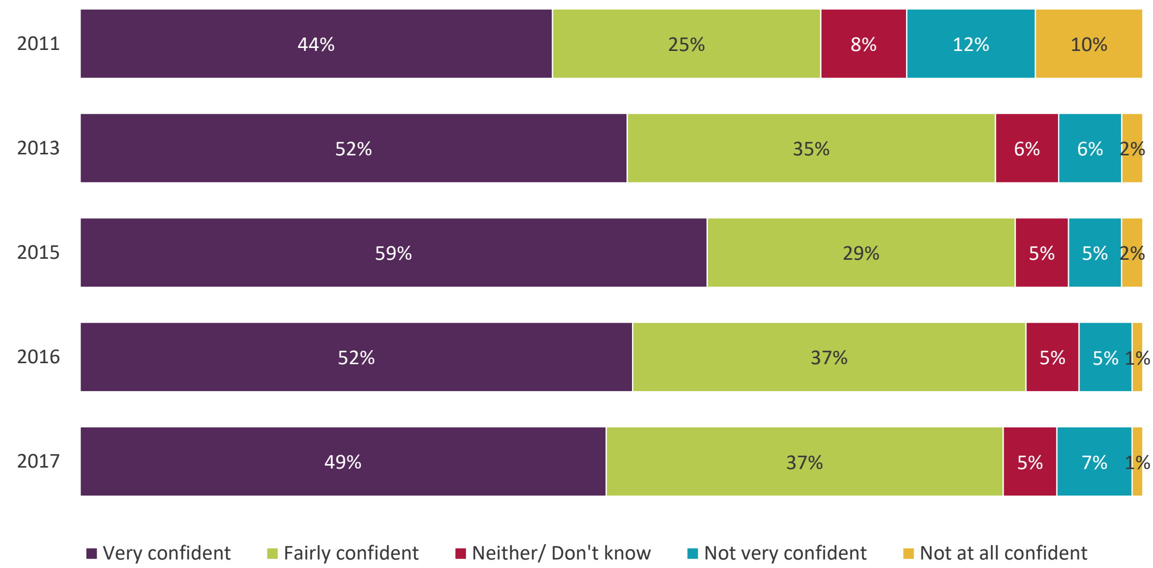
We ask internet users to rate their levels of confidence in several aspects of using the internet, and at an overall level as an internet user. The results for overall confidence as an internet user are discussed below, as a way of framing what users do online, which is discussed in the rest of this section.

As shown in Figure 92, half (49%) of UK adults who go online describe themselves as being very confident as an internet user, and more than one in three say they are fairly confident (37%). Overall, close to nine in ten (87%) say they are confident. Each of these measures is unchanged since 2016.

Internet users aged 16-24 (66%) and 25-34 (64%) are more likely to say they are very confident than the average adult internet user (49%), as are AB adults (56%); this is also the case for men compared to women (57% vs. 42%).

Over-54s are more likely than average to describe themselves as not confident (18% for 55-64s, 17% for 65-74s and 29% for over-74s, vs. 8% for all internet users). Internet users in DE households are also more likely to say they are 'not confident' (14%).

Figure 92: Confidence as an internet user: 2011-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN11A. Overall, how confident are you as an internet user? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: Adults aged 16+ who go online (1553 in 2016, 1570 in 2017)

Media funding

Adults are asked to say, without prompting, what they believe are the main sources of funding for television programmes and for particular websites. For each platform, questions are asked about the main source of funding for content on the BBC and for commercial operators.

BBC television funding

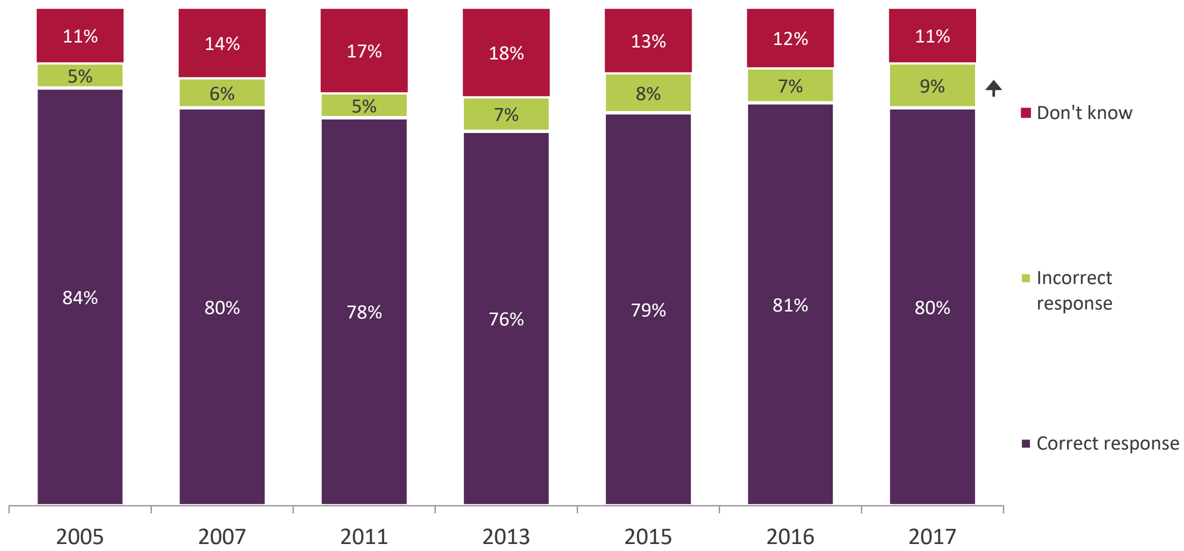
The majority of people know how BBC television programmes are mainly funded, but this is less likely among 16-24s and adults in DE households

As shown in Figure 93, awareness of the licence fee as the main source of funding for BBC television programmes has not changed since 2016 (80% in 2017 vs. 81% in 2016). In 2017, one in ten adults (9%) give an incorrect response (say something other than the licence fee), slightly higher than in 2016 (7%).

Adults aged 16-24 (47%) and those in DE households (69%) are less likely to be aware that the licence fee is the main source of BBC funding. Adults aged 55-64 (90%), 65-74s (89%) and over-74s (90%) are more likely than adults overall to give the correct response.

Men (82%) are more likely than women (77%) to say that the licence fee is the main source of funding.

Figure 93: Awareness of how BBC TV programmes are mainly funded: 2005-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
T4. How would you say BBC TV programmes are mainly funded? (unprompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1846 in 2016, 1875 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

Commercial television funding

Younger people are less likely to know how commercial television is funded

As shown in Figure 94, seven in ten adults are aware that advertising is the main source of funding for television programmes on the commercial stations (70%); this is unchanged since 2016 (73%).

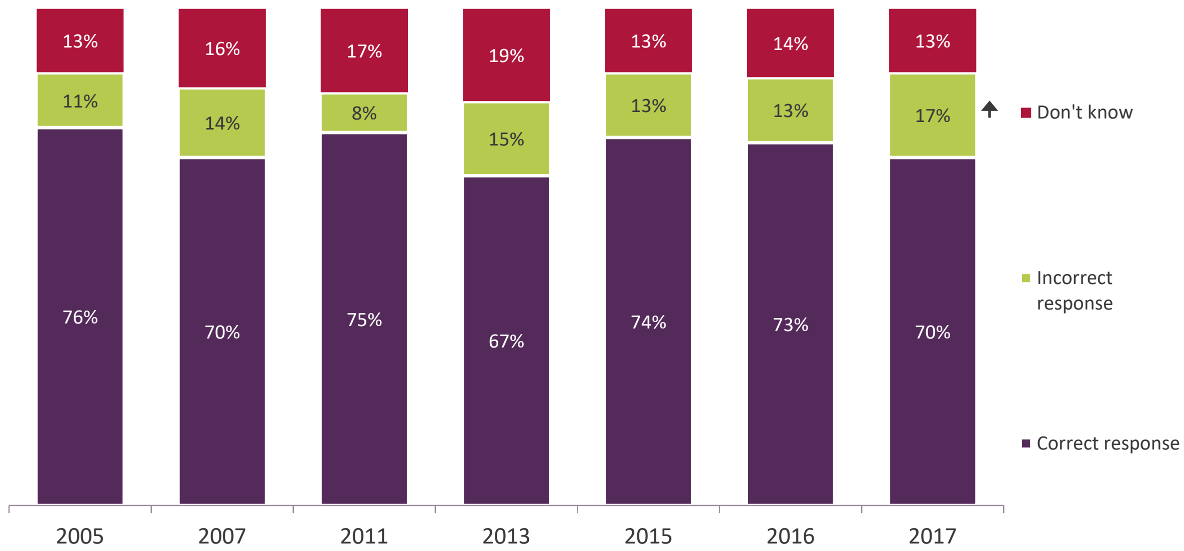
Adults aged 16-24 (56%) and those aged 25-34 (58%) are less likely than adults overall to give the correct response, while adults aged 55-64 (84%) or 65-74 (77%) are more likely.

Compared to the average, adults in DE households are less likely to give the correct response (62%).

Men are more likely than women to be aware that advertising is the main source of funding (73% vs. 67%).

In 2017, one in six adults (17%) give an incorrect response while one in eight (13%) are unsure. Compared to 2016, adults are more likely to give an incorrect response (up from 13%).

Figure 94: Awareness of how commercial TV programmes are mainly funded: 2005-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
T5. How would you say programmes are mainly funded on ITV, Channel 4 and Five? (unprompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1846 in 2016, 1875 in 2017)

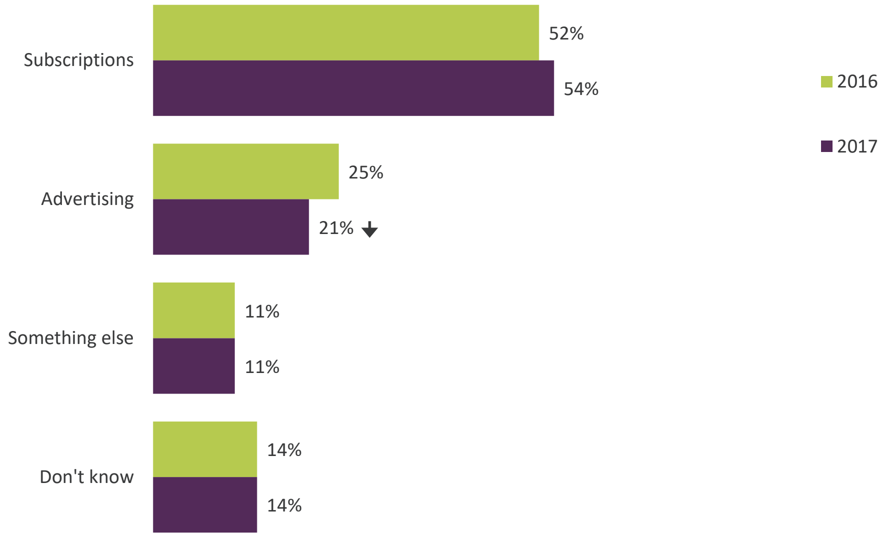
Adults are also asked about the main source of funding for the Sky and Virgin Media TV services. More than half (54%) of adults say the main source of funding is subscriptions, while one in five (21%) say that they are mainly funded through advertising.

There is little variation in knowledge about either of these sources of funding by demographics; compared to the average, over-74s (45%) and those in DE households (45%) are less likely to say that the main source of funding is subscriptions.

Compared to 2016, adults are less likely to say these channels are mainly funded through advertising (21% vs. 25% in 2016).

As in 2016, one in seven adults (14%) are unsure as to the main source of funding for these providers; this is more likely for 16-24s (22%) and over-74s (26%). Those in DE households are also more likely to be unsure (22%), as are women compared to men (18% vs. 9%).

Figure 95: Awareness of how the Sky and Virgin Media TV services are mainly funded: 2016-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
T6. How is the Sky or Virgin Media TV service mainly funded? (unprompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1846 in 2016, 1875 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

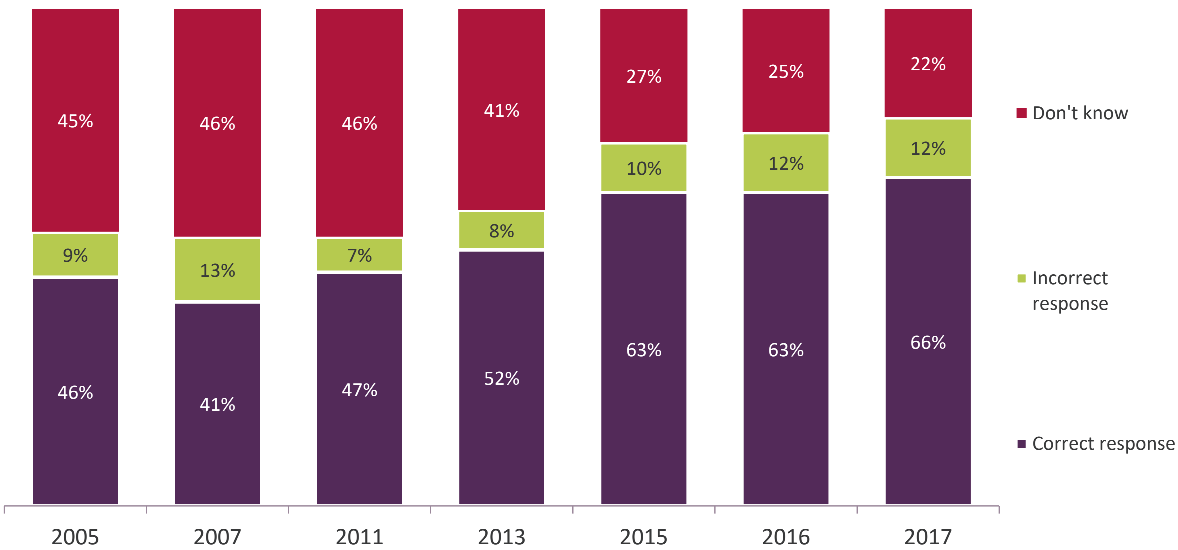
Funding of BBC website and iPlayer

Knowledge of how the BBC website and BBC iPlayer are funded is lower than for BBC TV

Two-thirds of adults (66%) correctly identify the licence fee as the main source of funding for the BBC website; this measure is unchanged since 2016.

Compared to the average, this response is more likely among 35-44s (75%), 45-54s (77%) and those in C1 households (72%), and less likely among 16-24s (39%) and DEs (56%).

Figure 96: Awareness of how the BBC website is mainly funded: 2005-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN31. How do you think the BBC's website is mainly funded? (unprompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1846 in 2016, 1875 in 2017)

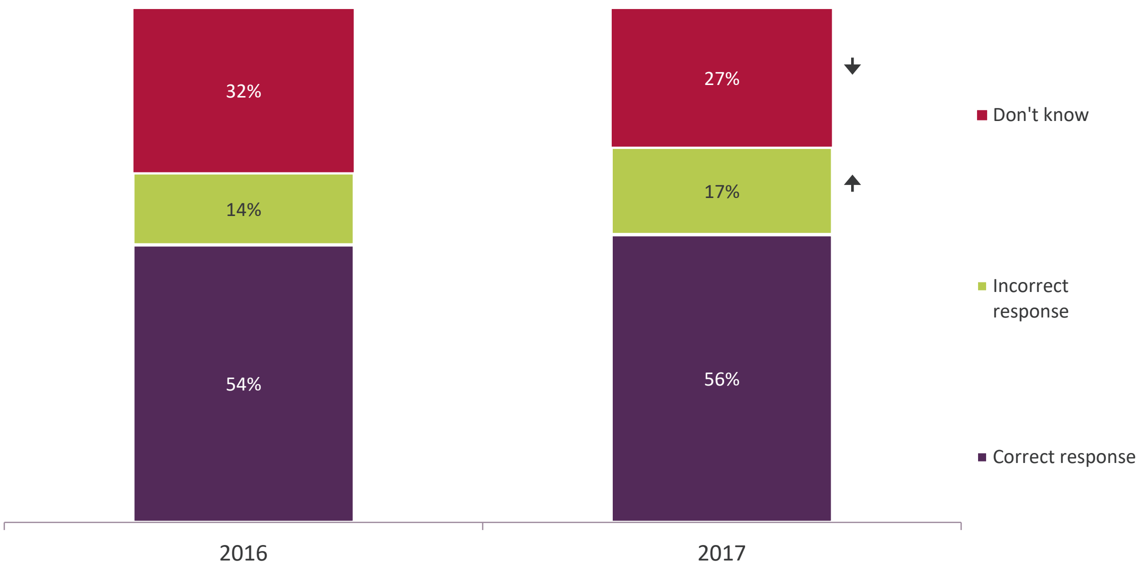
Adults are also asked about how the BBC's iPlayer service is mainly funded. More than half (56%) are aware that the licence fee is the main source of funding. Awareness is lower among 16-24s (36%) and over-74s (44%). Those aged 35-44 (64%), 45-54 (65%) and 55-64 (63%) are more likely to give the correct response.

Adults in AB households are more likely than average to give the correct response (63%) while those in DE households (45%) are less likely. Men are more likely than women to give the correct response (59% vs. 52%).

Slightly more than a quarter of adults (27%) say they are unsure[54] of the main source of funding; this is more likely for 16-24s (35%), those aged 75 and over (51%) and DEs (39%). Women are also more likely than men to say they are unsure (31% vs. 24%).

Adults are less likely than in 2016 to say they are unsure (27% vs. 32%) but are more likely to give an incorrect response (17% vs. 14% in 2016). As such, awareness that the licence fee is the main source of funding for the iPlayer service is unchanged.

Figure 97: Awareness of how the BBC iPlayer service is mainly funded: 2016-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN33. How do you think the BBC's iPlayer service is mainly funded? (unprompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1846 in 2016, 1875 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

[54] Either responding 'don't know' (25%) or stating they had never heard of the BBC iPlayer service (2%).

Funding of search engines

More than half of adults are aware of how search engines are mainly funded – unchanged since 2016

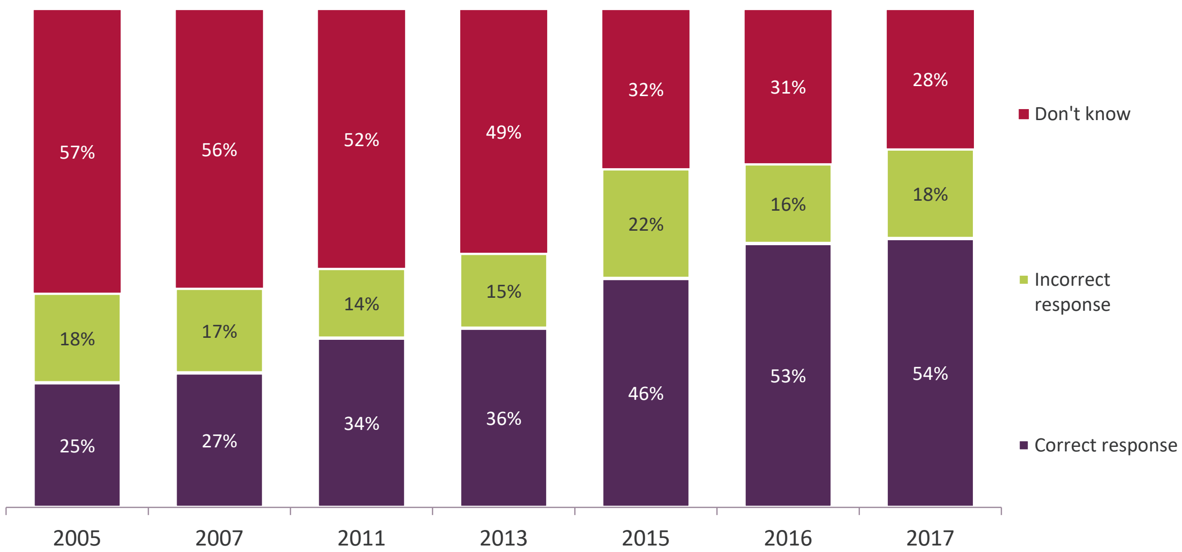
More than half (54%) of adults are aware of how search engine websites are mainly funded, close to three in ten (28%) are unsure[55], and nearly one in five (18%) give an incorrect response. Each of these measures are unchanged since 2016.

Compared to the average, those aged 35-44 (64%) are more likely to give the correct response[56], while 65-74s (41%) and over-74s (32%) are less likely.

Adults in AB households are more likely to be aware of how search engine websites are mainly funded (65%), while those in DE households (40%) are less likely.

While certain groups may be less likely to give a correct response, this tends to be because they are unsure, rather than incorrect. Compared to the average (28%), adults aged 65-74 (42%), 75+ (59%), and those in DE households (44%) are more likely to say they are unsure how search engine websites are mainly funded. Women are also more likely than men to be unsure (31% vs. 25%).

Figure 98: Awareness of how search engines are mainly funded: 2005-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN32. How do you think search engine websites such as Google or Bing are mainly funded? (unprompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1846 in 2016, 1875 in 2017)

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[55] Either responding 'don't know' (26%) or stating they had never heard of search engine websites (2%).
[56] Awareness is taken from two coded responses deemed as correct - 1) 'Advertising on the website' and 2) 'Advertisers pay when users click through from sponsored links to their website'.

Funding of YouTube

Less than half of adults are aware that the main source of funding for YouTube is advertising

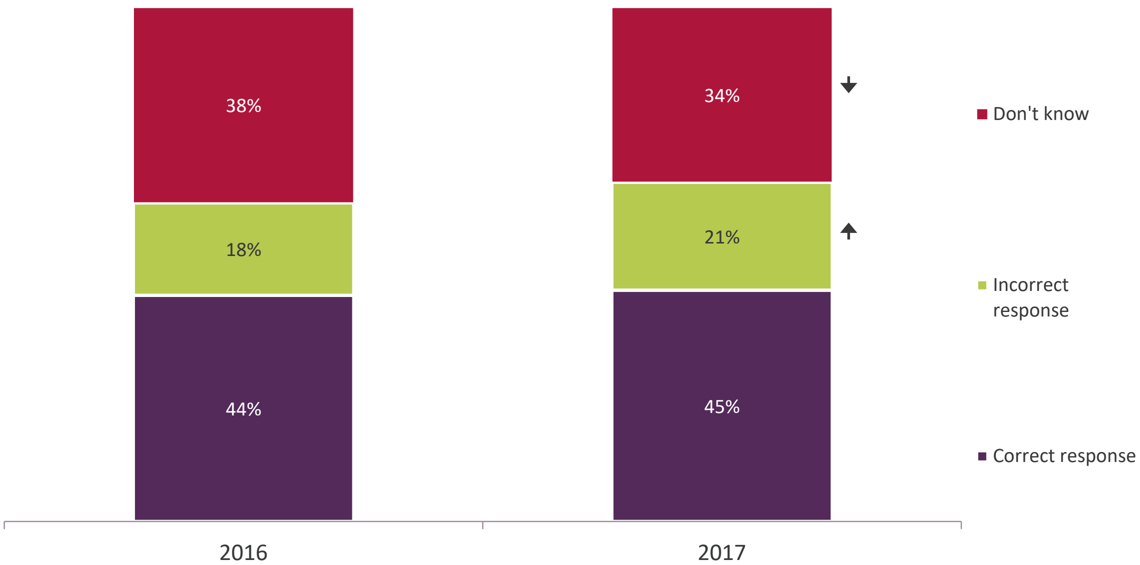
In 2017, more than four in ten adults (45%) are aware that the main source of funding for YouTube is advertising, with this response more likely among those aged 35-44 (54%). Adults aged 65-74 (32%) or over-74 (18%) are less likely to give the correct response.

Compared to adults overall, those in AB households are more likely to give the correct response (55%), while C2s (37%) and DEs (36%) are less likely. Men are also more likely than women to be aware that advertising is the main source of YouTube funding (49% vs. 41%).

One in three adults (34%) are unsure[57] how YouTube is funded; this rises to a majority of those aged 65-74 (53%) and over 74 (75%).

Compared to 2016, as for the BBC iPlayer service, adults are less likely to say they are unsure (34% vs. 38%) but are more likely to give an incorrect response (21% vs. 18% in 2016). Awareness of how YouTube is funded rises to half (50%) among internet users overall, and increases further, to 55%, among users of video-sharing sites such as Vimeo, Snapchat, Facebook and YouTube.

Figure 99: Awareness of how YouTube is mainly funded: 2016-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN34. How do you think YouTube is mainly funded? (unprompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1846 in 2016, 1875 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

[57] Either responding 'don't know' (32%) or stating they had never heard of YouTube (2%).

Attitudes towards the funding of online content

Internet users are more likely to disagree strongly than they are to agree strongly that: *"as long as the internet provides good websites it doesn't really matter who owns them or how they are funded"*

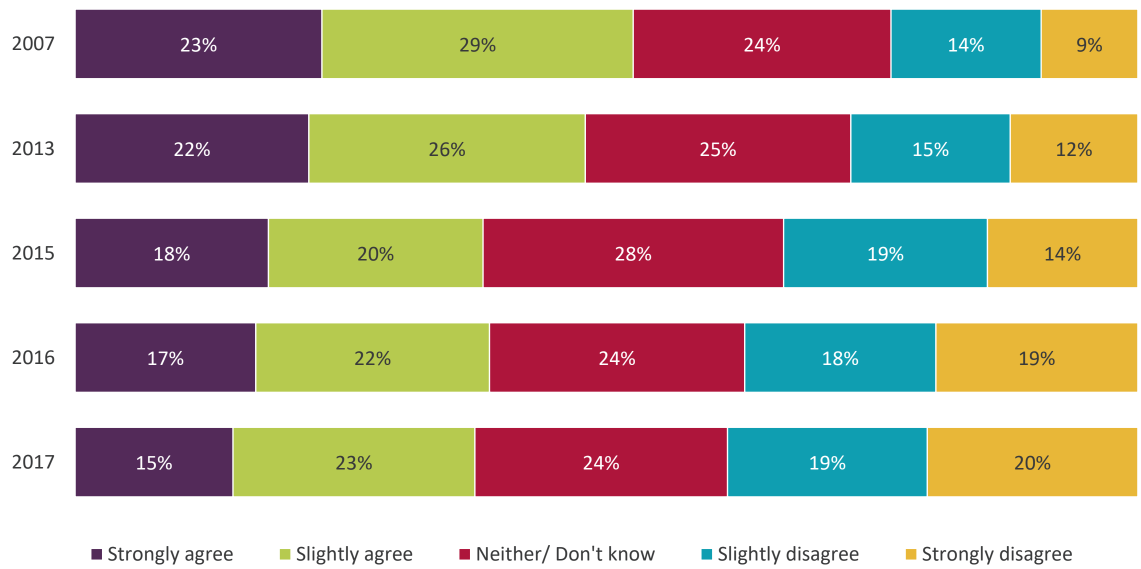
Adults who go online are asked the extent to which they agree with the statement*: "As long as the internet provides good websites it doesn't really matter who owns the websites or how they're funded"*.

In 2017, internet users are as likely to agree overall (38%) as they are to disagree overall (38%). They are, however, more likely to disagree strongly (20%) than they are to agree strongly (15%). This contrasts with the results as recently as 2013, when internet users were more likely to agree strongly (22%) than they were to disagree strongly (12%).

In 2017, those aged 45-54 (26%) are more likely than average to disagree strongly. Women are also more likely than men to disagree strongly (23% vs. 17%).

As shown in Figure 100, there has been no change in the extent of agreement with this statement, compared to 2016.

Figure 100: Agreement with statement: *"As long as the internet provides good websites it doesn't really matter who owns the websites or how they're funded"*: 2007-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN35B. I'm going to read out some things that other people have said about being online. Please use this card to tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement I read out – As long as the internet provides good websites it doesn't really matter who owns the websites or how they're funded (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: Adults aged 16+ who go online (1553 in 2016, 1570 in 2017)

Media regulation

Three in ten internet users say that videos posted on YouTube need to abide by rules relating to offensive, harmful, unfair, inaccurate or biased content

In the 2017 online study, internet users were asked about their understanding of the extent to which various types of media content are regulated.

Internet users were provided with the following explanation first:

Media regulation is a set of rules or guidelines about programmes or content. These guidelines apply to programmes and things you might watch on your TV or through online services.

All programmes and things that you might watch have to abide by UK law and not show anything illegal. However, some channels or services are more highly regulated than others, with additional rules about offensive, harmful, unfair, inaccurate or biased content.

Respondents were then asked the following question: "*Below is a list of different things you might watch. Which, if any, of these do you think have to abide by additional rules?"* The results are shown in Figure 101.

More than three in five (62%) internet users correctly identified that TV programmes broadcast on the main five PSB channels have to abide by additional rules about offensive, harmful, unfair, inaccurate or biased content. Fewer, more than two in five (45%), correctly say that TV programmes available on channels other than the main five PSB channels (such as ITV2, E4, Dave etc.) need to abide by additional rules.

More than half (56%) correctly think that TV programmes available on the BBC iPlayer service have to abide by these additional rules, while fewer (47%) say this about programmes available on the catch-up or on-demand services from the other PSB channels such as ITV Hub or All 4.[58] Two in five (39%) say this about content on streaming services such as Netflix or Amazon Prime.[59]

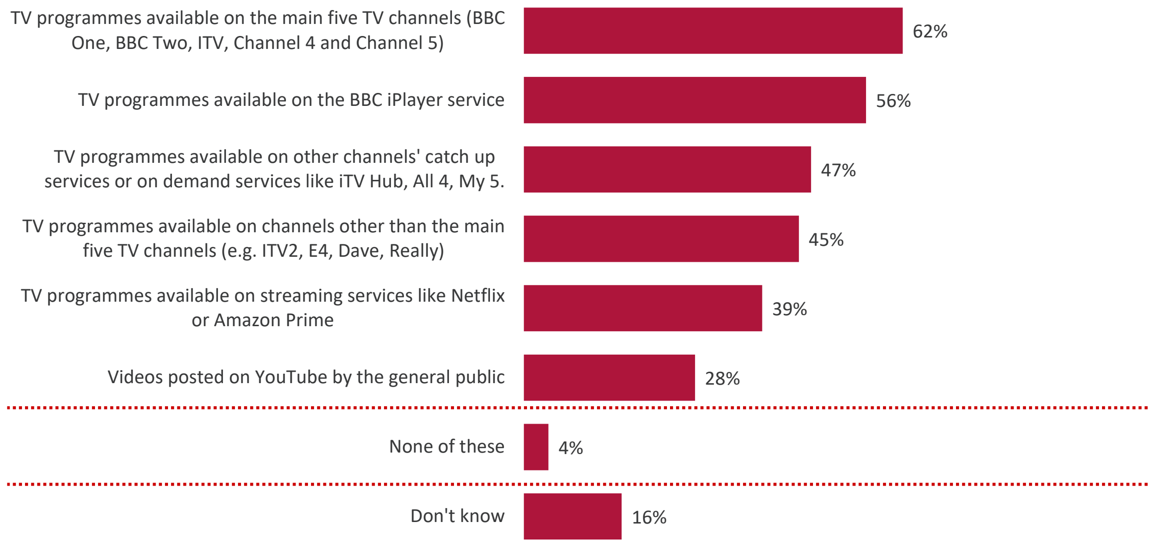
Three in ten (28%) incorrectly think that rules about offensive, harmful, unfair, inaccurate or biased content apply to videos posted on YouTube by the general public.

There is little variation in any of these responses by age, compared to internet users overall. Internet users aged 16-34 are less likely to say that programmes available on the other PSB channels' catch-up or on-demand services, such as ITV Hub or All 4, need to abide by additional rules (38% for 16-24s, 39% for 25-34s vs. 47% overall).

There are no differences compared to these averages by household socio-economic group, and no differences by gender.

[58] Which is in part correct, although catch-up or on demand services from PSB channels other than the BBC are subject to a lesser degree of regulation as they only have to adhere to high level rules about harmful content.
[59] Which is in part correct, although streaming services such as Netflix or Amazon Prime are subject to a lesser degree of regulation as they only have to adhere to high level rules about harmful content.

Figure 101: Awareness of the degree of media regulation, by content type, among internet users



Source: Ofcom adults' online survey 2017
Q10. Media regulation is a set of rules or guidelines about programmes or content. These guidelines apply to programmes and things you might watch on your TV or through online services. All programmes and things that you might watch have to abide by UK law and not show anything illegal. However, some channels or services are more highly regulated than others, with additional rules about offensive, harmful, unfair, inaccurate or biased content. Below is a list of different things you might watch. Which, if any of these do you think have to abide by additional rules? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1050)

Online privacy, managing personal data and online security

More than seven in ten internet users say they are confident in managing access to their personal data online, but they are less likely than in 2016 to feel *very* confident

Internet users were asked the extent to which they had confidence in knowing how to manage who had access to their personal data online[60].

The results are shown in Figure 102. More than seven in ten internet users (73%) say they are confident in this aspect of their internet use, with slightly more than a third (36%) saying they are very confident. Those who are not confident (16%) are more likely to say they are not very confident (11%) rather than 'not at all' confident (5%).

Compared to 2016, while internet users are as likely to be confident overall (73% vs. 72% in 2016), they are less likely to say they are very confident (36% vs. 40% in 2016). They are also, however, less likely to say they are not at all confident (5% vs. 8% in 2016).

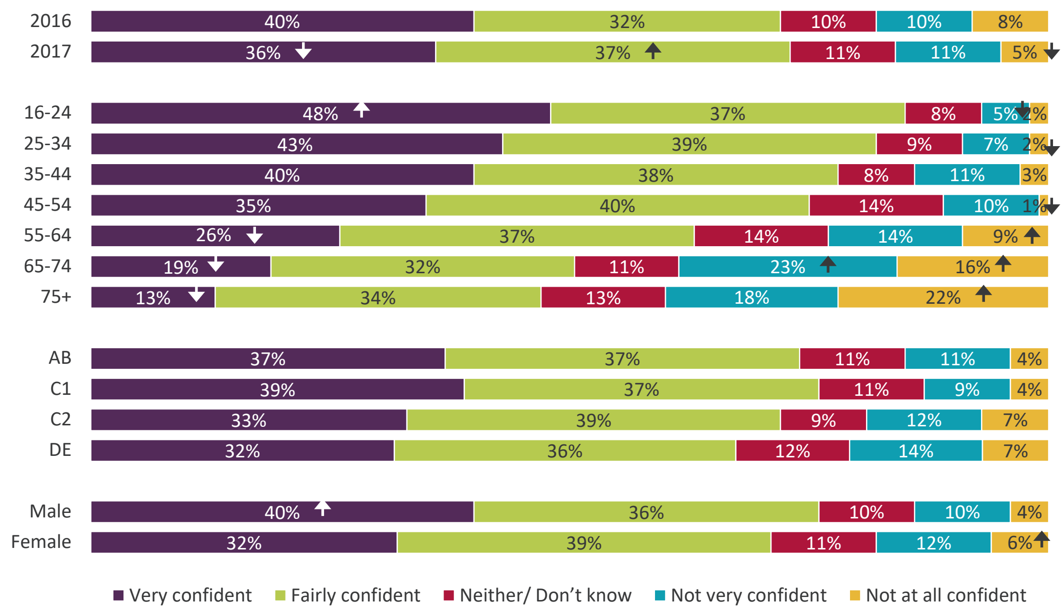
In 2017, internet users aged 16-24 (48%) are more likely than average to say they are very confident, although this is less likely among over-54s (26% for 55-64s, 19% for 65-74s and 13% for over-74s).

[60] Users are also prompted with the following explanation: 'By this I mean knowing how to stop companies from getting access to information like your personal details (like your address, phone number, date of birth etc.) or information on things like where you shop or your interests.

Those aged 65-74 (16%) and over 74 (22%) are more than three times as likely as internet users overall to say they are not at all confident.

Men are more likely than women to say they are very confident (40% vs. 32%).

Figure 102: Confidence in knowing how to manage access to their personal data online, by age, socio-economic group and gender



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN11C. How confident are you in knowing how to manage who has access to your personal data online? By this I mean knowing how to stop some companies from getting access to information like your personal details (like your address, phone number, date of birth etc.) or information on things like where you shop or your interests
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1570 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between 2016 and 2017 at the overall level, and by age / socio-economic group compared to all who go online and men compared to women

In 2017, six attitudinal statements about social media were added to the Media Literacy Tracker survey. These statements dealt with social media/ messaging site users' attitudes towards their use of these sites, together with the associated privacy and security issues. The results are shown in Figure 103 to Figure 108.

More than six in ten social media/ messaging site users say they accept the terms and conditions on these sites without reading them

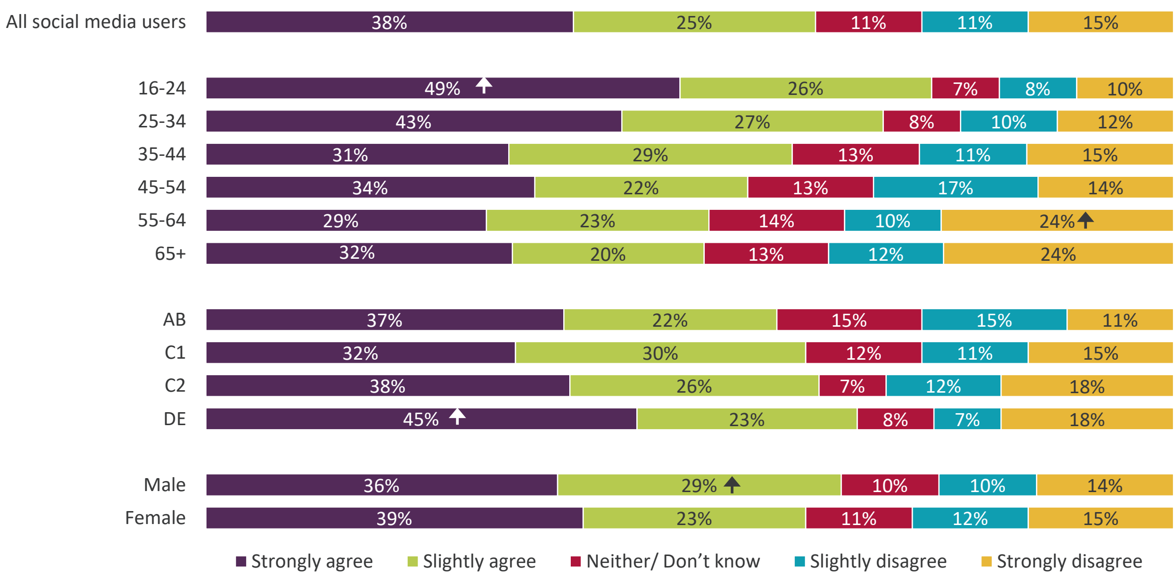
More than six in ten social media/messaging site users (63%) agree with the statement: *"I usually accept the terms and conditions without reading them on social media and messaging sites"*, with close to two in five (38%) agreeing strongly. A quarter of users disagree (26%) with 15% disagreeing strongly.

A majority of users in each of the demographic groups shown in Figure 103 agree with this statement.

Half of users aged 16-24 agree strongly (49%), higher than adults overall, while a quarter of those aged 55-64 (24%) disagree strongly, also higher than adults overall. There are no other variations by age, compared to the average, for this statement.

Users in DE households (45%) are more likely than average (38%) to strongly agree.

Figure 103: Agreement with statement: *"I usually accept the terms and conditions without reading them on social media and messaging sites"*, by age, gender and socio-economic group



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN27A. Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about social media – *"I usually accept the terms & conditions without reading them on social media and messaging sites"* (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ with a social media profile/ account (1182 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all with a social media profile/ account and men compared to women

Close to three in ten with a profile on a social media/messaging site or app say they are happy sharing photos and videos with everyone

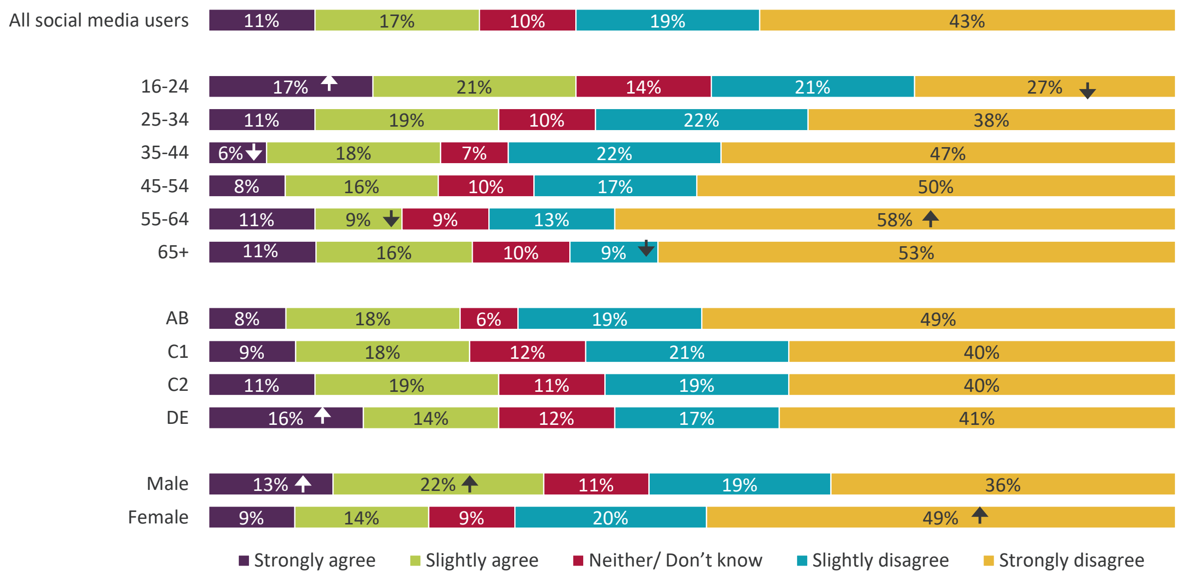
Those with a profile or account on social media, messaging sites or apps are more than twice as likely to disagree (62%) than to agree (28%) with the statement: "*I'm happy sharing personal photos and videos with everyone*".

One in ten (11%) agree strongly with this statement; this is more likely among 16-24s (17%) and less likely among 35-44s (6%). Those aged 55-64 (58%) are more likely than average (43%) to disagree strongly.

Those in DE households (16%) are more likely than average (11%) to agree strongly.

Men are more likely than women to agree overall (34% vs. 22%) as they are more likely to agree strongly (13% vs. 9%) and to agree slightly (22% vs. 14%). Half of women (49%) disagree strongly, higher than the proportion of men, at around a third (36%).

Figure 104: Agreement with statement: *"I'm happy sharing personal photos and videos with everyone"*, by age, gender and socio-economic group



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN27F. Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about social media – *"I'm happy sharing personal photos and videos with everyone"* (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ with a social media profile/ account (1182 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all with a social media profile/ account and men compared to women

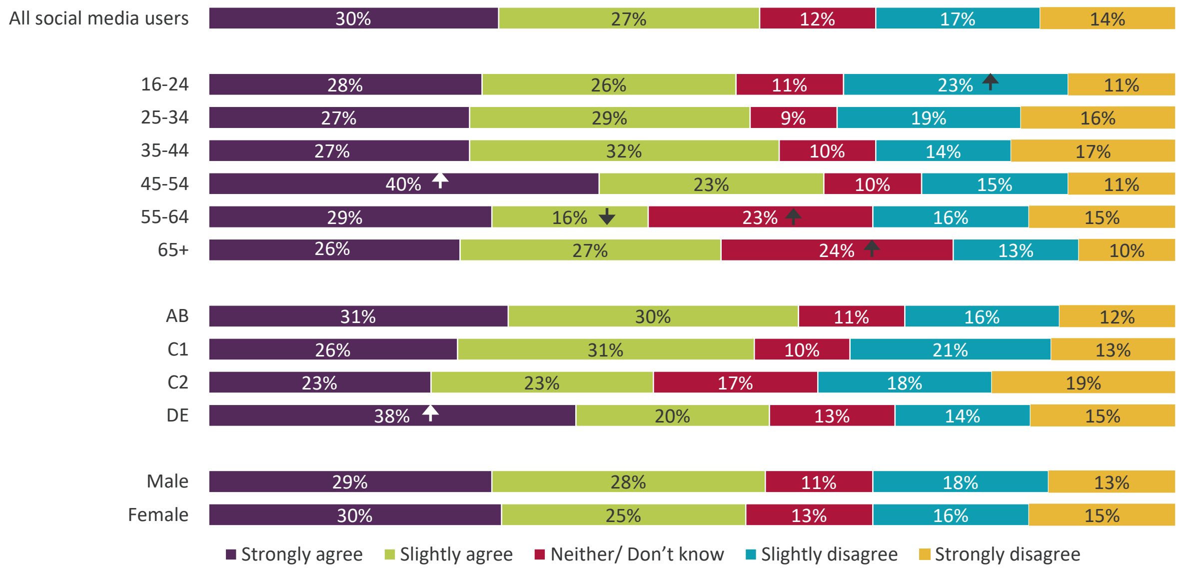
A majority of those with a profile on social media or messaging sites or apps are aware that once their post goes online they no longer have control over it

More than half (56%) of those with a profile or account on social media or messaging sites or apps agree with the statement: *"Once my post goes online I no longer have control over it"*. Three in ten (31%) disagree overall.

Four in ten (40%) users aged 45-54 agree strongly with this statement, which is higher than average (30%). While no age group is less likely than average to agree strongly, those aged 55-64 are less likely to agree overall (45% vs. 56%).

Users in DE households are also more likely than average to agree strongly (38% vs. 30%).

Figure 105: Agreement with statement: *"Once my post goes online I no longer have control over it"*, by age, gender and socio-economic group



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN27B. Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about social media – *"Once my post goes online I no longer have control over it*" (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ with a social media profile/ account (1182 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all with a social media profile/ account and men compared to women

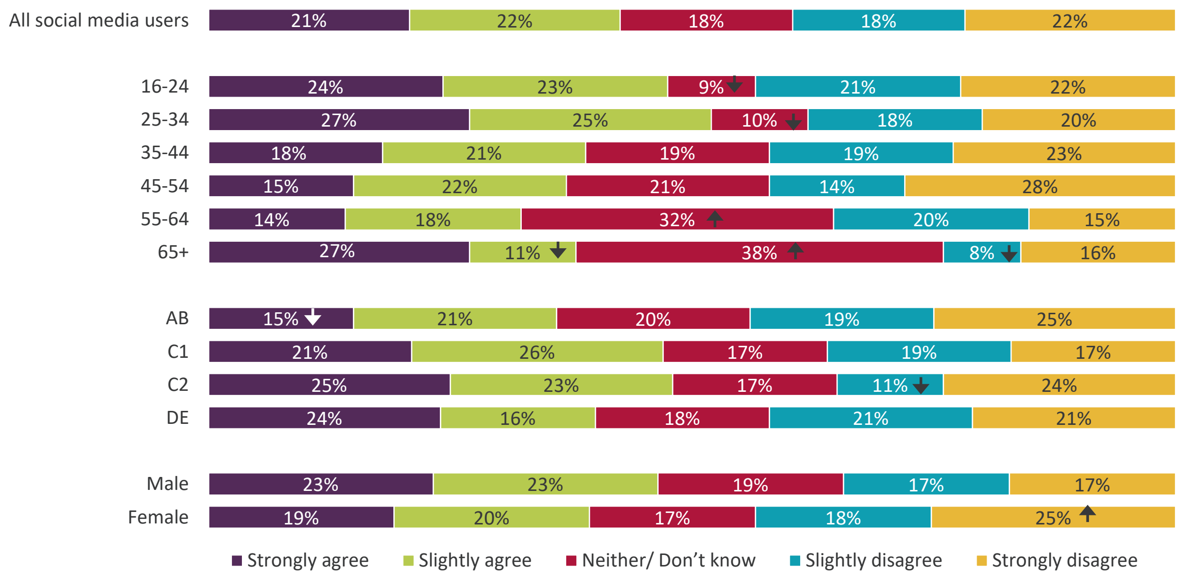
A minority of those with a profile on social media or messaging sites or apps feel it is easy to delete photos and videos online once they have been posted

Social media/ messaging site users are as likely to agree (42%) as to disagree (39%) that: *"It is easy to delete photos and videos from the internet after they have been posted"*.

Compared to the average, 25-34s are more likely to agree (52% vs.42%). Users aged 55-64 (32%) and 65 and over (38%) are more likely than average (18%) to give the 'neither/ nor' or 'don't know' responses, which suggests a significant degree of uncertainty about this statement among older users.

Adult users in AB households are less likely than average to agree strongly with this statement (15% vs. 21%). Women are more likely than men to disagree strongly (25% vs. 17%).

Figure 106: Agreement with statement: *"It is easy to delete photos and videos from the internet after they have been posted"*, by age, gender and socio-economic group



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN27C. Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about social media – *"It is easy to delete photos and videos from the internet after they have been posted"* (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ with a social media profile/ account (1182 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all with a social media profile/ account and men compared to women

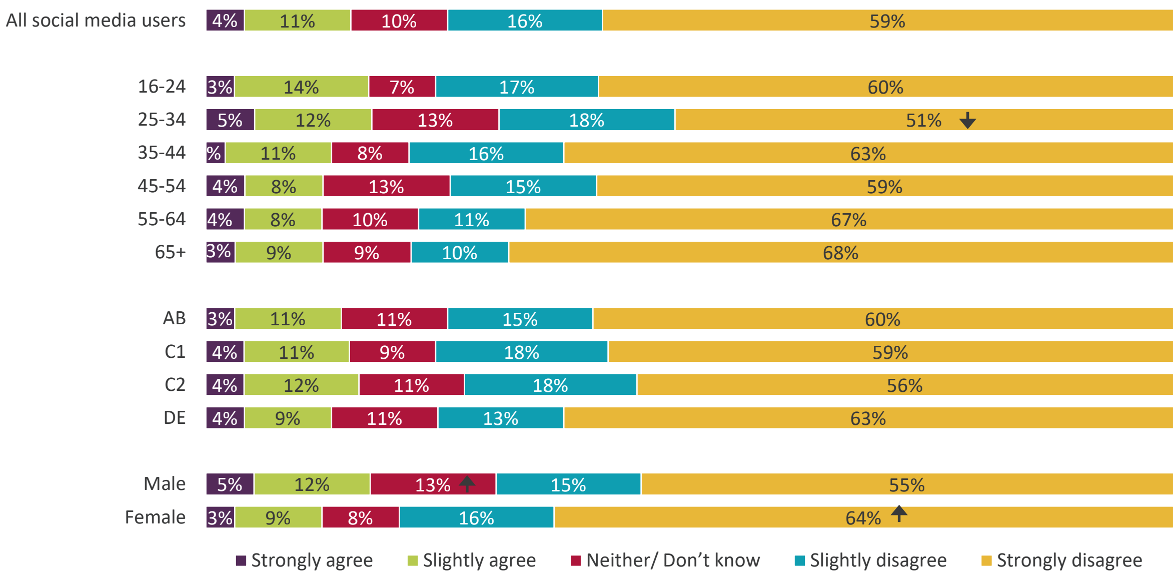
Three-quarters of those with a profile on social media or messaging sites or apps feel it is unacceptable to share a photo or video of other people without their permission

A majority of users in each of the groups shown in Figure 107 disagree strongly with the statement: "*It is OK to share a photograph or video of other people without their permission";* three in four of all social media/messaging site users (75%) disagree overall.

There are few variations in these incidences. Those aged 25-34 are less likely than average to disagree strongly (51% vs. 59%)

Men are more likely than women to agree (17% vs. 12%) and women are more likely to disagree (80% vs. 70%).

Figure 107: Agreement with statement: *"It is OK to share a photograph or video of other people without their permission"*, by age, gender and socio-economic group



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN27D. Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about social media – *"It is OK to share a photograph or video of other people without their permission"* (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ with a social media profile/ account (1182 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all with a social media profile/ account and men compared to women

Four in five of those with a profile on social media or messaging sites or apps are confident about controlling who sees the photos and videos they share

Four in five (81%) social media/ messaging site users agree with the statement: "*I am confident in using the settings on my social media account to control who sees the photos and videos I share"* with a majority (56%) agreeing strongly.

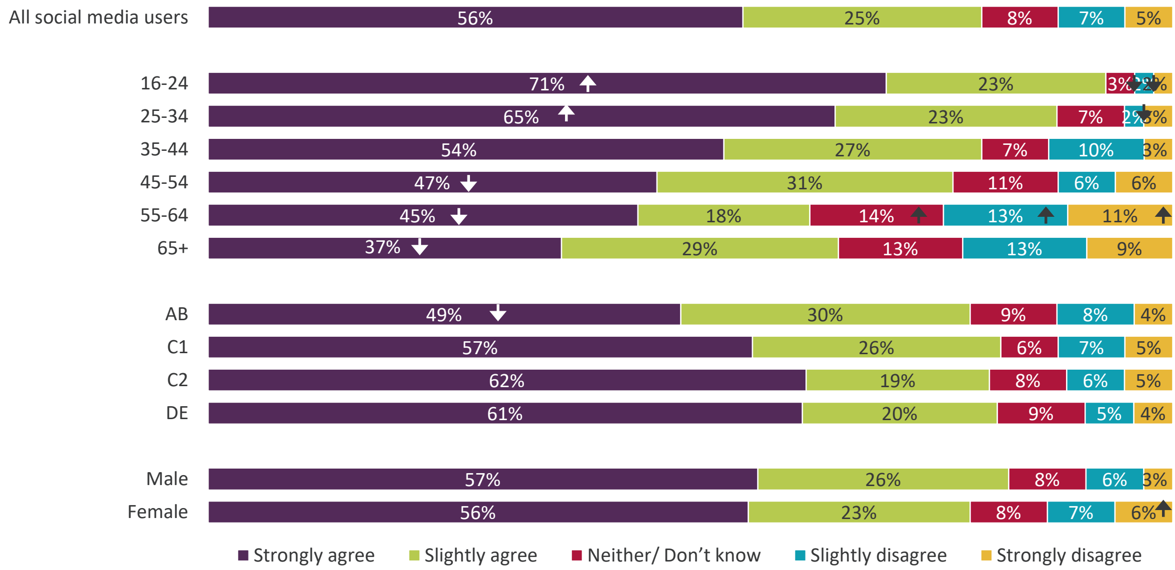
For each of the groups shown in Figure 108, the majority agree overall with the statement.

Users aged 16-24 (71%) and 25-34 (65%) are more likely than average (56%) to agree strongly, while those aged 45 and over are less likely to agree strongly (47% for 45-54s, 45% for 55-64s and 37% for those aged 65 and over).

Adult users in AB households are less likely than average to agree strongly (49% vs. 56%).

There is only one difference by gender: women are more likely than men to strongly disagree (6% vs. 3%).

Figure 108: Agreement with statement: *"I am confident in using the settings on my social media account to control who sees the photos and videos I share"*, by age, gender and socio-economic group



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN27E. Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about social media – I am confident in using the settings on my social media account to control who sees the photos and videos I share (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ with a social media profile/ account (1182 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all with a social media profile/ account and men compared to women

Checks made before entering personal information online

Three in ten internet users don't make appropriate/ any checks before entering their personal information online

Internet users who go online are prompted with a list of potential checks they could make, or actions they could take, before submitting their personal details online, and are asked which, if any, they carry out. They are also allowed to say that they register their details online whenever they are asked to do so.[61]

Five of these reasons (shown in green below) can be seen as 'appropriate' checks, while those in red are considered less reliable (or media-literate) responses, of the possible options respondents can choose from.

Looking first at these 'appropriate' checks, more than half (57%) say they check to see whether the site looks secure before registering their details online, while half (49%) say they check whether they are familiar with the company or brand. At least one in three say they look to see if there is a link on

[61] Three per cent of internet users spontaneously mentioned that they never registered with websites/ entered their personal details online, so have been excluded from the results shown.

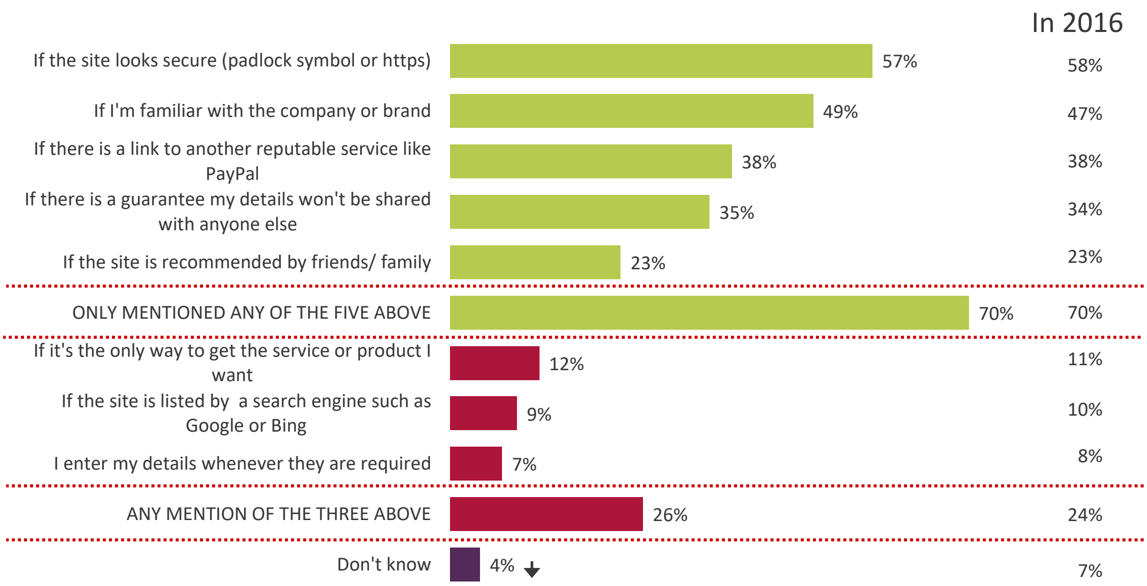
the website to a reputable service (like PayPal) (38%) or if there is a guarantee that their details won't be shared with anyone else (35%). One in four (23%) rely on peer review, by seeing if the site is recommended by friends or family.

Overall, seven in ten internet users make at least one of these five checks; this is less likely among those aged 75 and over (59%) and for men (67%) compared to women (72%).

One in ten rely on checking whether the site is listed by a search engine (9%), and one in eight would register if it was the only way to get the product or service they wanted (12%). Less than one in ten say they tend to enter their personal details whenever they are required (7%). As such, one in four internet users (26%) give at least one of these less reliable responses. This incidence is lower for 65-74s (15%).

Compared to 2016, there has been no change in any of the types of checks made before registering with websites.

Figure 109: Checks made before registering with websites



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN39. Lots of websites now ask you to register your personal details with them, which if any of these things do you do before registering personal details online? I look to see: (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online who say they register personal details online (1516 in 2016, 1525 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

Checks made before entering financial information

A third of internet users who have bought things online don't check to see if the site has the padlock symbol or 'https'

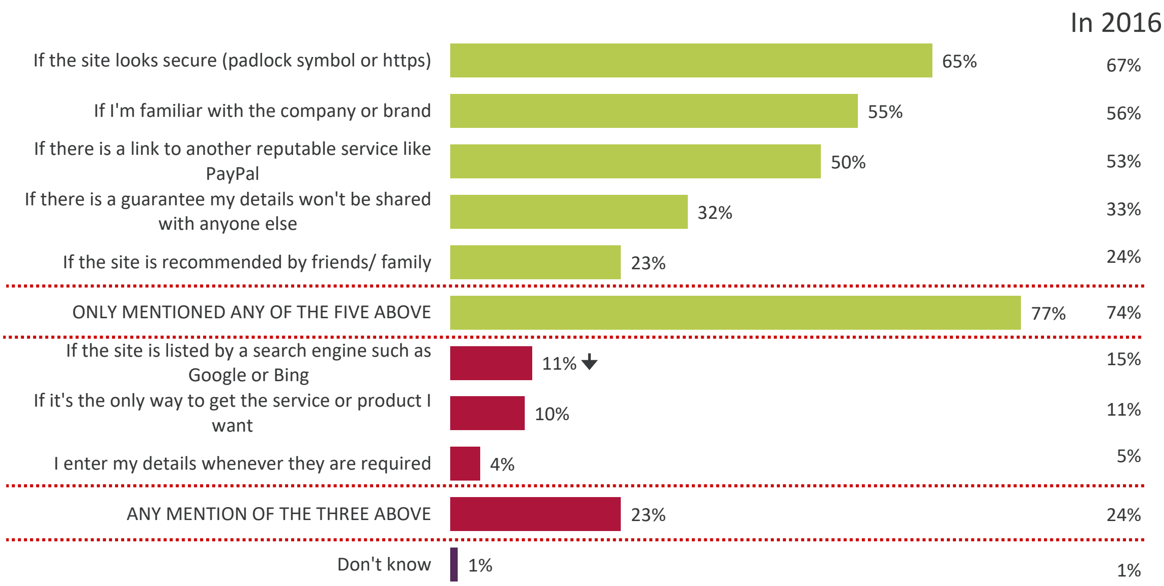
Internet users are also asked about the types of checks they make or actions they take when buying online, before entering their debit or credit card details. They are also allowed to say they do not purchase online, and the 12% of internet users who gave this response have been excluded from the analysis shown in Figure 110.

Two in three internet users who buy things online (65%) say they check to see if the site looks secure, while more than half check to see if they are familiar with the company or brand (55%) and half look for a link to another reputable service (50%). One in three look for a guarantee that their details will not be shared with anyone (32%) and one in four rely on recommendations from their friends or family (23%). More than three in four internet users make any of these 'appropriate' (or media-literate) checks (77%); this incidence does not vary by age or household socio- economic group. Nor does it vary between men and women.

One in ten of those who purchase online say they look to see if the site they are purchasing from is listed on a search engine (11%), or say they go ahead with the purchase anyway if it is the only way to get what they want (10%). Four per cent say they enter their credit or debit card details online whenever they are asked to do so. One in four (23%) internet users who purchase online say they do at least one of these three less-secure things. There are no differences in this incidence by age or socio-economic group compared to the average, and there are no differences between men and women.

There is only one difference compared to 2016: those who purchase online are less reliant on checking whether the site they are purchasing from is listed on a search engine (11% vs. 15% in 2016).

Figure 110: Checks made when purchasing online before entering debit or credit card details



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN38. When you buy things online, which if any of these things do you do before entering your credit or debit card details? I look to see... (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who say they buy things online (1309 in 2016, 1335 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

Security measures in place

A third of internet users say they do not use anti-virus or anti-spyware software

As shown in Figure 111, internet users are prompted with nine possible security measures and are asked to say which, if any of these, they, or someone else in the household, do at home.

There are two security measures that are used at home by a majority of internet users. Two in three internet users (65%) say they use security software such as anti-virus or anti-spyware packages, while 55% say they use strong passwords on devices used to go online.

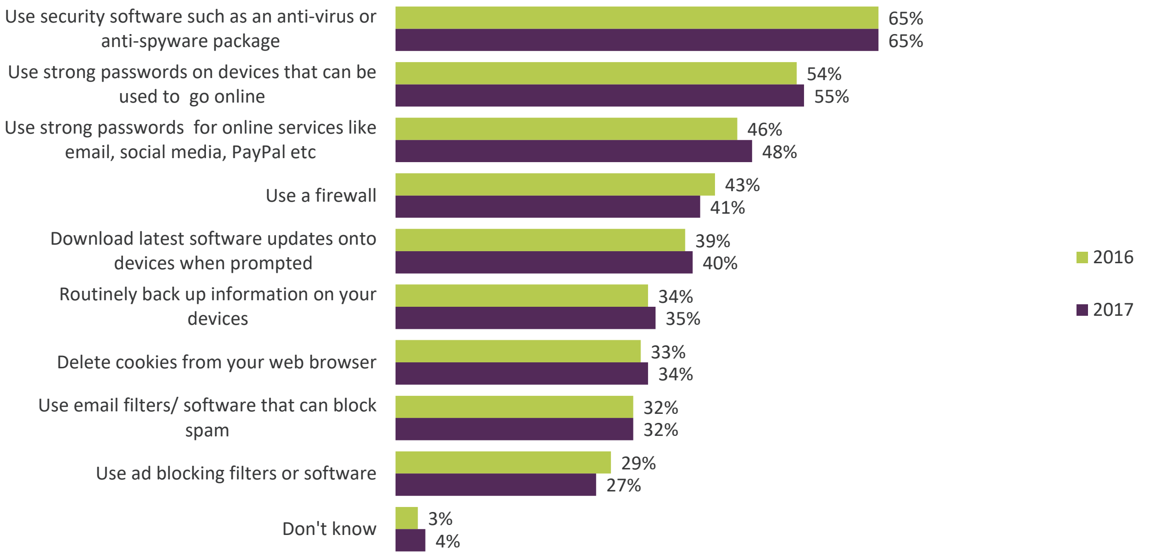
At least four in ten use strong passwords for online services like email, social media, PayPal etc. (48%), use a firewall (41%) or download the latest software updates onto their devices when prompted (40%). Around a third say they routinely back-up information on their devices (35%), delete cookies from their web browsers (34%) and use email filters or software that can block spam (32%). More than one quarter (27%) say they use ad-blocking filters or software.

There are no differences in these incidences compared to 2016.

In 2017, there are differences in use by demographic group compared to the average, summarised below:

- Compared to the average, internet users aged 25-34 are less likely to use two of these features: security software such as anti-virus or anti-spyware packages (56% vs. 65%) and a firewall (29% vs. 41%).
- Adults aged 35-44 are more likely to use ad-blocking filters or software to stop seeing some types of online adverts (35% vs. 27%) while those aged 55-64 are more likely to use a firewall (50% vs. 41%).
- Adults aged 65-74 are less likely to say they delete cookies from their web browser (23% vs. 34%) or use ad-blocking filters or software (18% vs. 27%).
- With the exception of anti-virus anti-spyware packages and using a firewall, internet users aged 75+ are less likely to use each of the other seven security features.
- Adults in AB households are more likely than average to say they use eight of the nine online security features, and are as likely to use strong passwords on devices that can be used to go online. In contrast, those in DE households are less likely to use all nine security features.
- Those in C1 households are more likely than average to say they use security software such as anti-virus or anti-spyware packages (72% vs. 65%) while those in C2 households are less likely to use these features (56%).
- Men are more likely than women to say they use a firewall (47% vs. 36%) and ad-blocking filters or software (30% vs. 24%).

Figure 111: Security measures in place at home among internet users: 2016-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN6. Which, if any of these things do you or someone in your household do at home? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: Adults aged 16+ who go online (1553 in 2016, 1570 in 2017)

Awareness of and attitudes towards online companies collecting information about what internet users do online

Seven in ten internet users are aware of companies using cookies to collect information about what users do online

In 2017 questions were added to the Media Literacy study to understand internet users' awareness of and attitudes towards online companies collecting information about what they do online.

Internet users were prompted with five options and were asked the following question: "*There are many ways that online companies can collect information about people based on what they do online. Which, if any of the following ways are you aware of?"*[62]

The results are shown in Figure 112. A majority of internet users are aware of four of the five options, with awareness highest (69%) for the use of cookies[63] to collect information about the websites people visit or the products/ services that interest them. Six in ten (59%) are aware of companies collecting information from social media accounts (about users' interests, 'likes', location, references and so on) or of companies asking customers to register with a website or app and to choose to opt in or opt out of receiving further information from them (58%). There is lower

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[62] Respondents were also provided with the following explanation: By online companies, this might be Facebook, Twitter, Google, Amazon and so on.
[63] If required, respondents were provided with the following definition of a cookie: When you go online through a browser (like Google Chrome/ Internet Explorer/ Firefox and so on) small text files known as cookies are retained on your computer or mobile phone which contain information about a specific visit to a website or app.

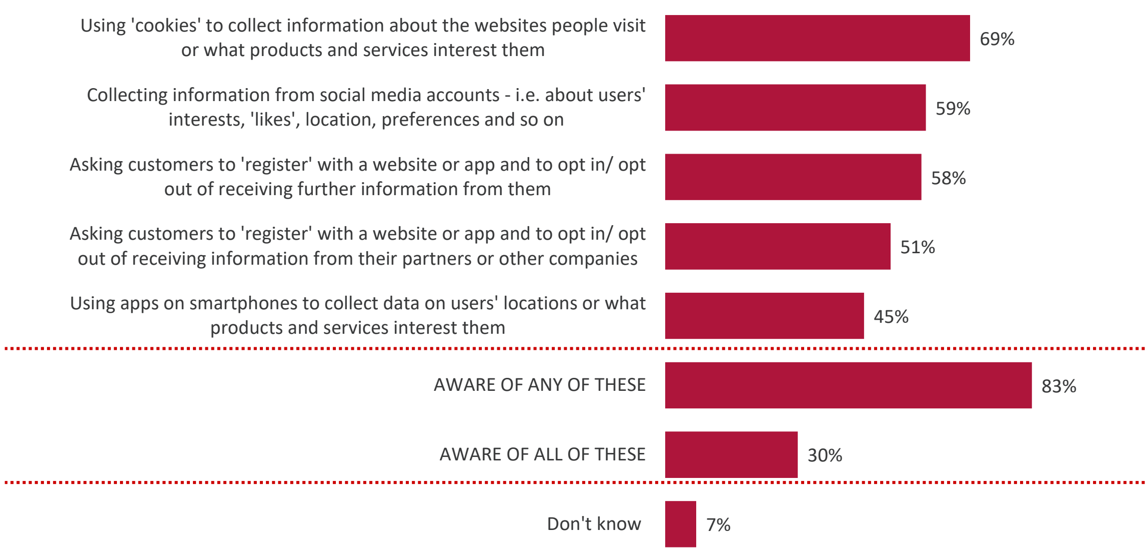
awareness (51%) of the ability to opt in or out of receiving information from other partners or selected companies.

A minority of internet users (45%) are aware of apps on smartphones that collect data on users' locations or on what products or services interest them. More than four in five (83%) are aware of any of these five ways in which companies can collect information about what people do online, with three in ten (30%) aware of all five.

There are some variations by demographic group:

- Internet users aged 35-44 are more likely than average to say they are aware of four of the five ways in which companies can collect information about people, based on what they do online. They are as likely to be aware of companies using cookies.
- Internet users aged 65-74 are less likely to be aware of companies asking customers to register with a website or app to receive information from them (43% vs. 58%) or from their partners or other companies (39% vs. 51%), and also the use of apps on smartphones to collect data on users' location or their preferences (25% vs. 45%).
- While internet users aged 75+ are less likely than average to be aware of each of the five ways, more than half (56%) are aware of at least one of the ways in which online companies can collect information about people based on what they do online.
- Internet users in AB households are more likely than average to be aware of each of the five ways in which companies can collect information about internet users' activities online. Those in DE households are less likely than average to be aware of four of these five ways, and equally likely to be aware of smartphone apps collecting data on users' location and their preferences.

Figure 112: Awareness of ways in which online companies can collect internet users' personal information



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN52. There are many ways that online companies can collect information about people based on what they do online. Which, if any of the following ways are you aware of? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1570)

Internet users are not necessarily averse to companies collecting information about them online, particularly if they can opt out at any time, or they are told about how their data will be used

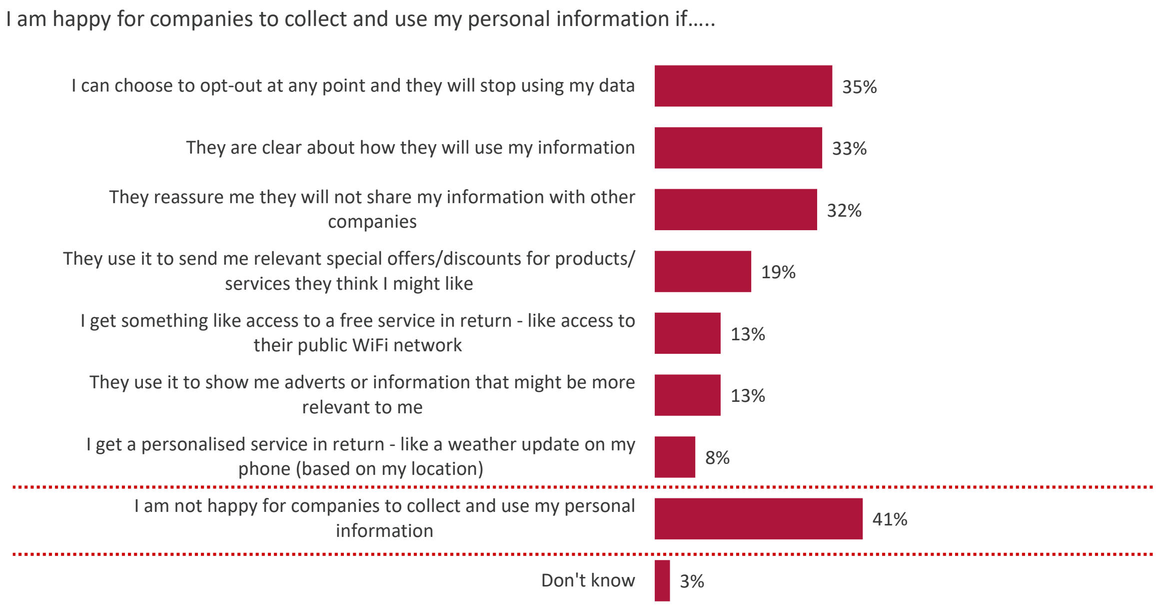
In 2017, internet users were asked about their attitudes towards companies collecting their personal information online.

As shown in Figure 113, around a third of internet users (35%) say they are happy for companies to collect and use their personal information if they can chose to opt-out at any point (and the company will stop using their data); if the company is clear about how they will use their information (33%) or if they are reassured that their information will not be shared with other companies (32%).

One in five (19%) say they are happy for their information to be collected and used if they are sent relevant special offers/ discounts in return. One in eight do not mind their information being used in exchange for access to a free service like wifi (13%) or they are provided with targeted adverts or more relevant information (13%). Eight per cent are happy to receive a personalised service (such as a weather update on their phone) in return for their personal information.

Overall, however, four in ten internet users (41%) say they are not happy for companies to collect and use their personal information. Compared to this average, those aged 16-24 (29%) and 25-34 (30%) are less likely to say this, while those aged 55-64 (50%) and 75+ (69%) are more likely to say this.

Figure 113: Attitudes towards online companies collecting users' personal information online



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN53. Please read the full list of statements on this card about how people feel about online companies collecting and using their personal information. If you agree with any of these statements please just tell me the number that corresponds with each (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1570)

More than seven in ten smartphone users know how to decide to use location services on their smartphone

In 2017, adults who use a smartphone were asked the extent to which they agreed with the following statement: "*I know how to make decisions about using location services on my mobile*".[64]

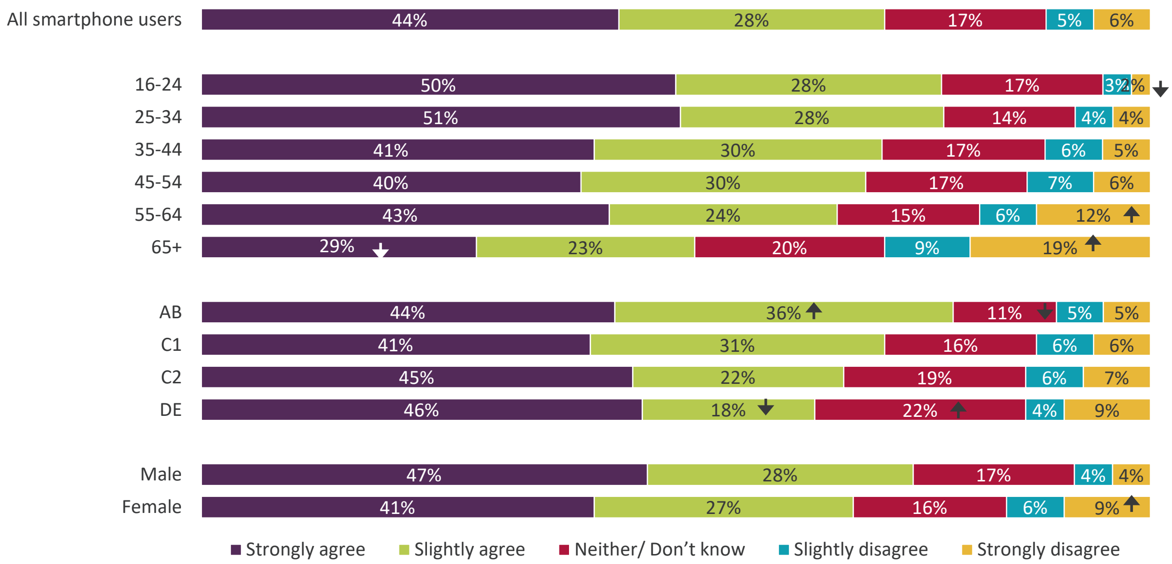
As shown in Figure 114, more than seven in ten smartphone users agree overall (72%); higher than the one in eight (12%) who disagree. More than two in five (44%) agree strongly while 6% disagree strongly.

Those aged 25-34 are more likely to agree (79% vs. 72%) and smartphone users aged 65 and over are much more likely to disagree strongly (19% vs. 6% overall).

Compared to the average (72%) users in AB households are more likely to agree (80%) while those in DE households are less likely to agree (65%). Women are more likely than men to disagree (15% vs. 8%).

[64] Respondents were also provided with the following definition of location services, if required: Location services monitor your location to provide information to your phone based on where you are - this might be an updated weather forecast, bars, pubs or petrol stations near you or help you to plan a journey

Figure 114: Agreement with statement: *"I know how to make decisions about using location services on my mobile"*, among smartphone users, by age, gender and socio-economic group



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
M9. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement *"I know how to make decisions about using location services on my mobile"*. If necessary**:** Location services monitor your location to provide information to your phone based on where you are - this might be an updated weather forecast, bars, pubs or petrol stations near you or help you to plan a journey (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ with a smartphone (1289 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all who use a smartphone and men compared to women

Experience of negative online events

Six per cent of adult internet users say that in the past year they have had online contact from someone who was pretending to be some online else

Internet users are prompted with eight[65] types of event and were asked to say which, if any, they have experienced in the past 12 months, as shown in Figure 115.

More than one in five (23%) say they have experienced any of these events, with 14% saying they have experienced a computer virus on any device used to go online. Less than one in ten internet users say they have experienced each of the other seven events. Six per cent of adult internet users say that in the past year they have had online contact from someone who was pretending to be someone else.

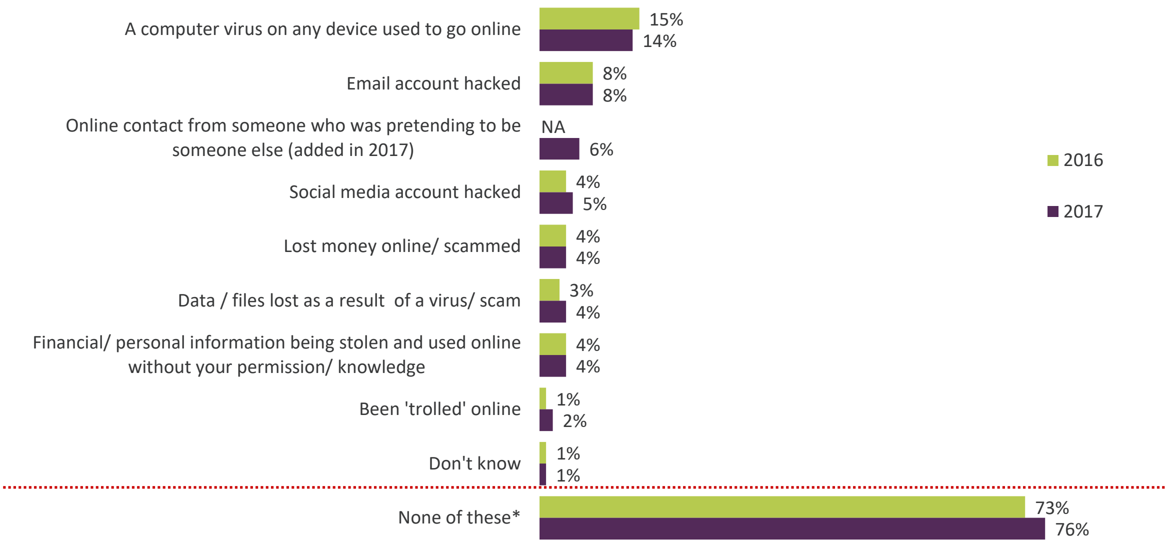
Internet users aged 16-24 are more likely to say they have lost data or files as a result of a virus or other scam (7% vs. 4%) and those aged 35-44 are more likely to say their email account (13% vs. 8%) or their social media account (9% vs. 5%) has been hacked.

[65] In 2016 internet users were only prompted with seven types of events, 'online contact from someone who was pretending to be someone else' was added in 2017. In order to show a comparable measure for 'none of these' between 2016 and 2017, those who mentioned this response have been excluded from the trend analysis.

Internet users aged 75 and over are less likely to say they have experienced any of these events (11% vs. 23%).

There are no differences by household socio-economic group compared to the average, and no differences between men and women. There are also no differences compared to 2016.

Figure 115: Experience of negative online events in the past 12 months: 2016-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN7. Have you personally experienced any of the following issues in the past 12 months? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: Adults aged 16+ who go online (1553 in 2016, 1570 in 2017) * The 'none of these' figure for 2017 excludes any mention of those who stated they had experienced online contact from someone who was pretending to be someone else, in order to compare the data between 2016 and 2017

Reporting inappropriate content on YouTube

While two-thirds of video-sharing site users overall are confident they know how to report inappropriate content to YouTube, more than half of those aged 65+ are not confident

Three-quarters of internet users (76%) watch content on video-sharing sites like YouTube, Vimeo, Snapchat or Facebook (as reported in Figure 74). It is, therefore, important to understand the extent to which users of these sites are aware of how they can report inappropriate content.

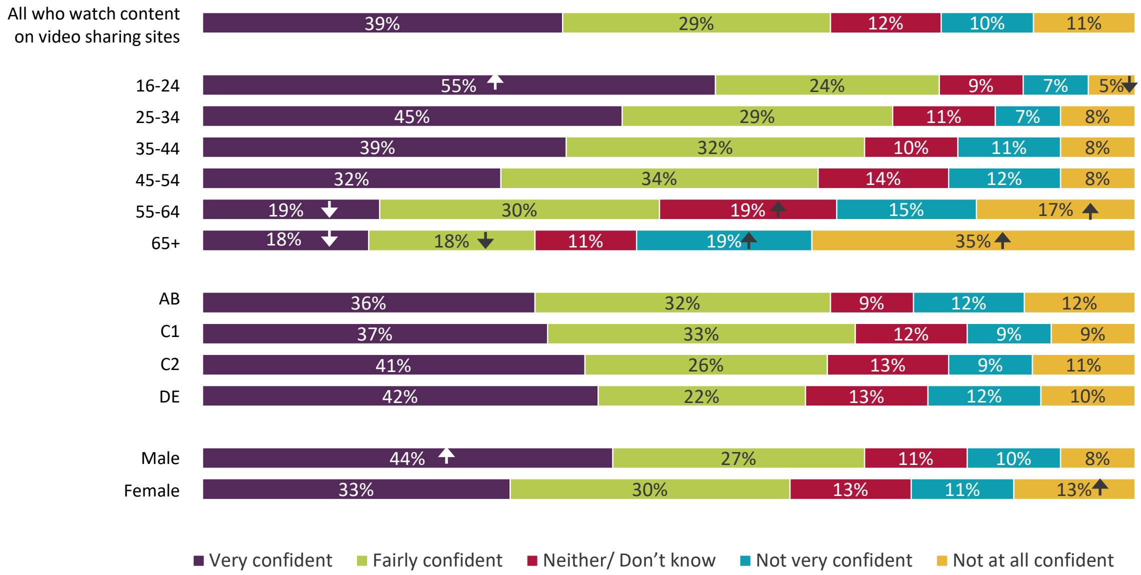
In 2017, video-sharing site users were asked the following question: "*If you found something on YouTube that you considered inappropriate, how confident would you be in knowing how to report the inappropriate content to YouTube?"* The results are shown in Figure 116.

Two-thirds of users (67%) are confident they know how to report inappropriate content to YouTube, with two in five (39%) saying they are very confident. One in five (21%) say they are not confident; this is split evenly between those who say they are not very confident (10%) and those who say they are not at all confident (11%).

Compared to the average, users aged 16-24 are more likely to say they are very confident (55% vs. 39% overall). Users aged 55-64 are more likely to say they are not confident (32% vs. 21%); this measure increases to more than half (54%) among those aged 65 and over, on account of more than a third saying they are not at all confident (35%).

A quarter of women (24%) who use video-sharing sites say they are not confident, compared to one in five men (18%).

Figure 116: Confidence in knowing how to report inappropriate content to YouTube, by age, gender and socio-economic group



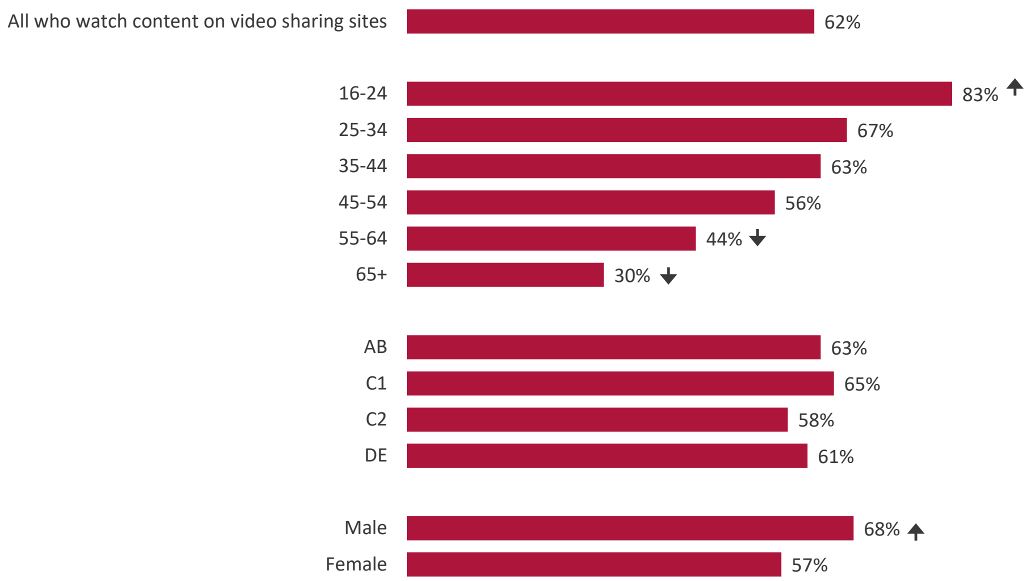
Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN20A. If you found something on YouTube that you considered inappropriate, how confident would you be in knowing how to report the inappropriate content to YouTube? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All aged 16+ who ever watch content on video sharing sites (1161 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all who watch content on video sharing sites and men compared to women

In addition to asking video-sharing site users about their confidence in knowing how to report inappropriate content to YouTube, we asked them about their awareness of the reporting button or flag on YouTube, used to report such content.

More than three in five (62%) users are aware of the button or flag for reporting inappropriate content; this is more likely among users aged 16-24 (83%) and less likely among those aged 55+ (44% for 55-64s and 30% for those aged 65+).

Men are more likely than women to be aware of the button or flag (68% vs. 57%).

Figure 117: Awareness of button/ flag for reporting inappropriate content on YouTube, by age, gender and socio-economic group



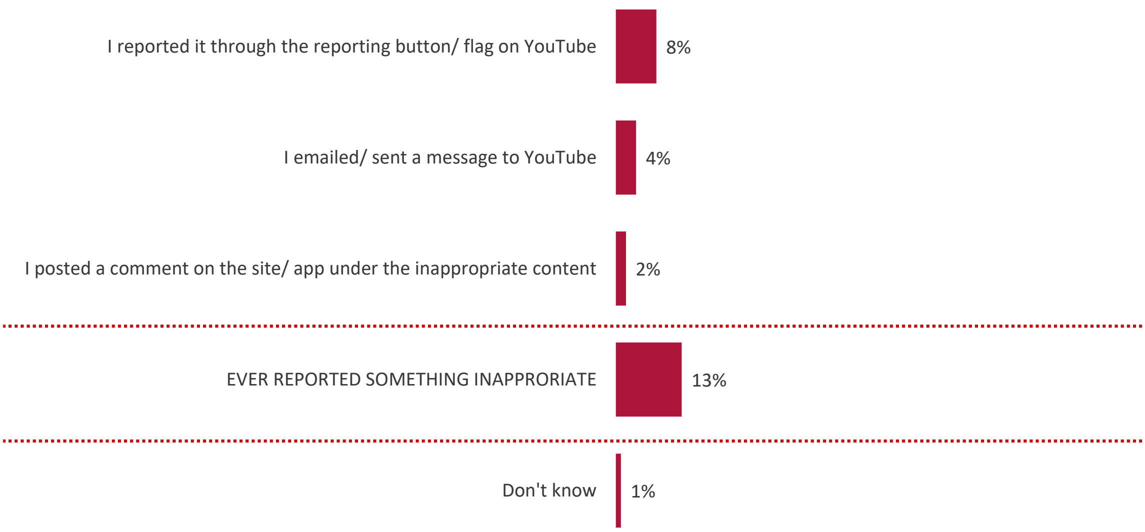
Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN20B. Did you know there is a reporting button or flag on YouTube which can be used to report inappropriate content? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All aged 16+ who ever watch content on video sharing sites (1161 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all who watch content on video sharing sites and males compared to females

One in eight who watch content on video sharing sites say they have ever reported inappropriate content to YouTube

One in eight (13%) who watch content on video-sharing sites say they have ever reported inappropriate content to YouTube. This is more likely among 16-24s (18%) and less likely among those aged 65 and over (0%).

Those who have ever reported content to YouTube were prompted with three options and were asked how they had reported the content. Most of those who had reported content to YouTube – 8% of those who watch content on video-sharing sites – used the reporting button or flag, while 4% of those who watch content on video-sharing sites emailed/ messaged YouTube about the inappropriate content. Two per cent of users say they posted a comment under the content.

Figure 118: Experience of reporting inappropriate content to YouTube



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN20C. Have you ever reported inappropriate content to YouTube? IF YES: How did you report this inappropriate content to YouTube? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All aged 16+ who ever watch content on video sharing sites (1161 aged 16+, varies by demographic)

Online advertising

Confidence in recognising advertising when seeing or reading things online

More than four in five internet users say they are confident they can identify online advertising

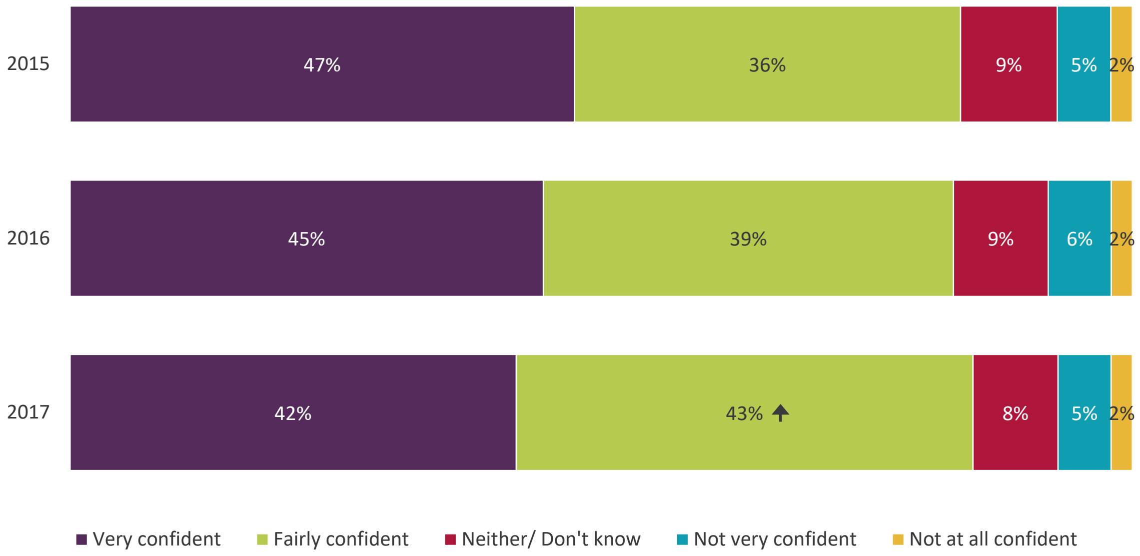
A majority (85%) of internet users are either very or fairly confident that they know what is and is not advertising online. However, less than half (42%) are very confident. Less than one in ten (7%) say they are not confident (either not very, or not at all). Each of these measures is unchanged since 2016. While there has been an increase in the proportion of internet users saying they are 'fairly' confident (43% vs. 39%) this has not increased overall confidence levels.

Compared to the average (42%), those aged 25-34 (51%) are more likely to say they are very confident in identifying online advertising.

Internet users aged 65-74 (17%) and 75+ (21%) are more likely than average (7%) to say they are not confident.

Men are more likely than women to say they are very confident (46% vs. 37%).

Figure 119: Confidence in recognising online advertising: 2015-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN11D. I'm going to read out some questions about confidence using the internet, for each one please say which of the options on the card applies to you. When you see or read things online, how confident are you in recognising what is advertising and what is not? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1553 in 2016, 1570 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

Personalised advertising

More than half of internet users are aware of personalised advertising

Internet users are prompted with two options and are asked which one applies to any advertising they might see on a website or app that they visit[66].

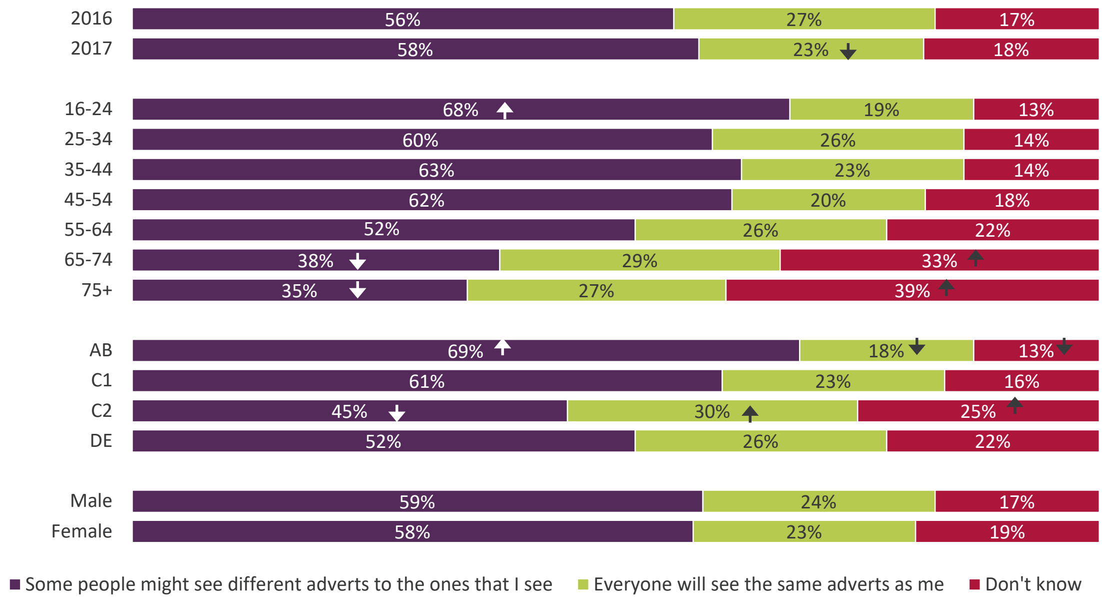
Figure 120 shows that more than half of internet users (58%) are aware of personalised advertising, in that they are aware that some people might see different adverts to those that they see. Almost a quarter of internet users (23%) state that everyone would see the same adverts, with almost one in five (18%) unsure. Compared to 2016, internet users are no more likely to be aware of personalised advertising, but they are less likely to say that everyone will see the same adverts (23% vs. 27%).

Compared to the average, awareness of personalised advertising is higher among 16-24s (68%) and those in AB households (69%).

Lower awareness is found in internet users aged 65-74 (38%) and 75+ (35%), as well as among those in C2 (45%) households, although each of these groups is also more likely than average to be unsure.

[66] The specific question stated: *When someone in the same country as you visits the same website or app at the same time as you, which one of these things applies to any advertising you can see?* The purpose of this question is to gauge the extent to which internet users are aware of personalised advertising.

Figure 120: Awareness of personalised online advertising, by age, socio-economic group and gender



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN48. When someone in the same country as you visits the same website or app at the same time as you, which one of these things applies to any advertising you can see? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1570 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between 2016 and 2017 at the overall level and by age/ socio-economic group compared to all who go online and men compared to women

Seven in ten adults who use video sharing sites are aware of the potential for product endorsement by vloggers

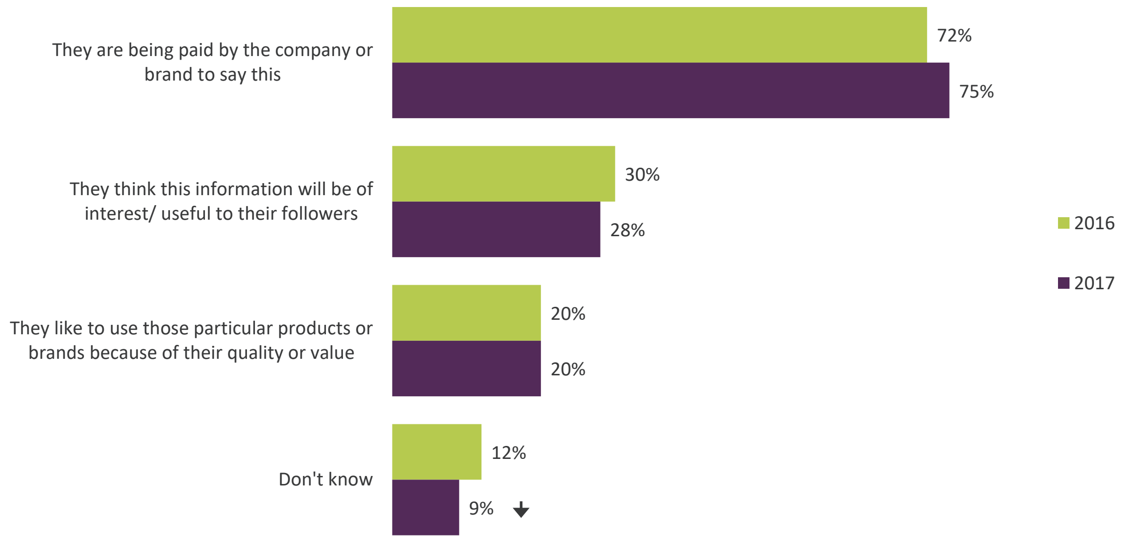
Adults who go online who ever watch content on video-sharing sites (like YouTube, Vimeo, Snapchat and Facebook) are asked about vloggers endorsing or promoting brands on sites like YouTube. They are offered three choices of response and asked which of these might explain why vloggers might say favourable things about a particular product or brand[67].

Three in four users of video-sharing sites (75%) are aware that the vloggers might be being paid by the company to say favourable things. This incidence does not vary by age compared to the average. There are also no differences between men and women. Adults in AB households are, however, more likely than average to be aware of the potential for product endorsement (85%) while those in C2 households are less likely (65%).

One in ten users are unsure (9%); this response is more likely among users aged 55-64 (16%) and less likely among those in AB households (4%). Compared to 2016, users are less likely to be unsure (12%).

[67] The specific question stated: 'On sites like YouTube some vloggers with lots of followers like Zoella or Thatcher Joe might say good things about a particular company or product or brand, such as Nike clothing, a new game, or clothes from TopShop. Which, if any, of these are reasons why they might say good things about these products or brands?'

Figure 121: Understanding of potential product endorsement by vloggers among users of video-sharing services: 2016-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN51. On sites like YouTube some vloggers with lots of followers like Zoella, or Thatcher Joe might say good things about a particular company or product or brand, such as Nike clothing, a new game, or clothes from TopShop. Which if any of these are reasons why they might say good things about these products or brands? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: Adults who ever watch videos on video sharing sites (1114 in 2016, 1161 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

Attitudes towards online advertising

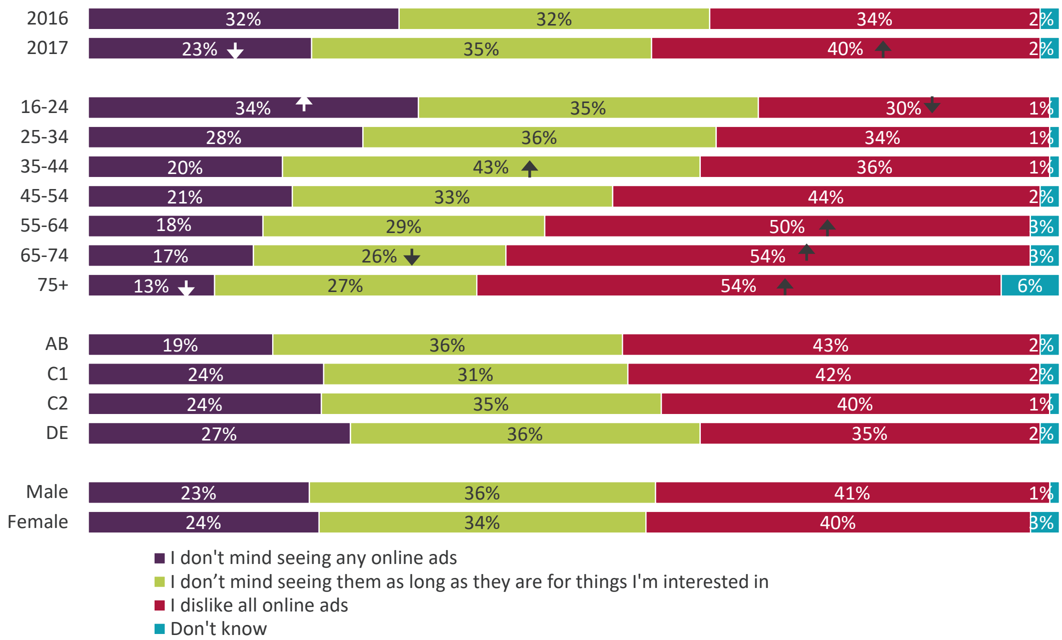
Two in five internet users say they dislike all online advertising, higher than in 2016

Internet users are prompted with three statements about online advertising and are asked to say which one best applies. The results are shown in Figure 122.

A quarter of internet users (23%) say they don't mind seeing any online ads, more than a third (35%) don't mind seeing them as long as they are relevant to them, and two in five (40%) say they dislike all online adverts. Compared to 2016, internet users are less likely to say they don't mind seeing any online ads (23% vs. 32%) and are more likely to say they dislike all online ads (40% vs. 34%).

In 2017, users aged 16-24 are more likely to say they don't mind seeing online adverts (34%), while those aged 55 and over are more likely to say they dislike all online ads (50% for 55-64s, 54% for 65-74s and 54% for 75+).

Figure 122: Attitudes towards online advertising, by age, socio-economic group and gender



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN49. Which of the following statements best describe your feelings about online advertisements (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1570 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between 2016 and 2017 at the overall level, and by age / socio-economic group compared to all who go online and men compared to women

Action undertaken to avoid online advertising

Half of internet users say they have taken some form of action to avoid seeing any online ads

Internet users are also asked whether they have taken any action to avoid seeing online adverts. They are prompted with four options and asked to say which they have ever done, as well as being given the option to say they haven't taken any actions to avoid seeing online adverts.

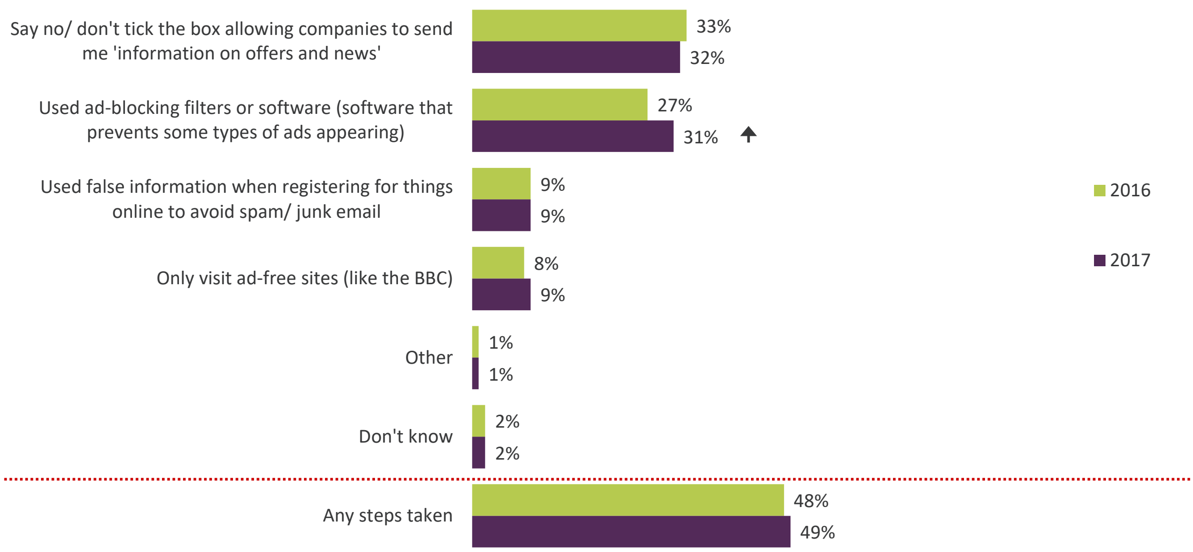
As shown in Figure 123, one-third (32%) say they opt out of marketing communications, while a similar proportion (31%) say they use ad-blocking filters or software. One in ten (9%) say they deliberately provide false information, when required, to avoid spam, and only visit ad-free sites (9%).

Half (49%) say they have taken any of these actions to avoid seeing any online ads; this incidence is lower among internet users aged 65 and over (38% for 65-74s and 28% for 75+) and those in C2 (41%) or DE households (40%). Internet users in AB households are more likely than average to say they have done any of these things (60%).

Compared to 2016, while the overall incidence of taking any steps to avoid online adverts is unchanged, users are more likely to say they use ad-blocking filters or software (31% vs. 27%).

While not shown in Figure 123, the overall incidence of taking any steps to avoid online adverts increases to 56% for those who say they dislike seeing any online ads. This is because they are more likely to opt out from marketing communications (39% vs. 32% overall) and to use ad-blocking filters (37% vs. 31%).

Figure 123: Steps taken by internet users to avoid online adverts: 2016-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN50. Which, if any, of the following steps have you taken to avoid seeing online ads? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1553 in 2016, 1570 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

Recognising sponsored content in search engine results

Three in five search engine users can identify sponsored links in search engine results

Adults who had used a search engine website in the last year[68] are shown a picture of the results returned by Google for an online search for 'walking boots'. Their attention is drawn to the first two results at the top of the list (underneath the pictures), which are distinguished by a green box with the word 'Ad' written in it. They are then prompted with three options and asked whether any of these apply to these first two results. These options are[69]:

- These are adverts/ sponsored links/ paid to appear here
- These are the best results/ the most relevant results
- These are the most popular results used by other people

The results are shown in Figure 124. Three in five adults who use search engines (58%) state that the first results are sponsored links/ advertising/ paid to appear there. More than one in five say they are the best or most relevant results (23%) and one in five (19%) say they are the most popular results used by other people. Around one in seven (14%) say they are unsure.

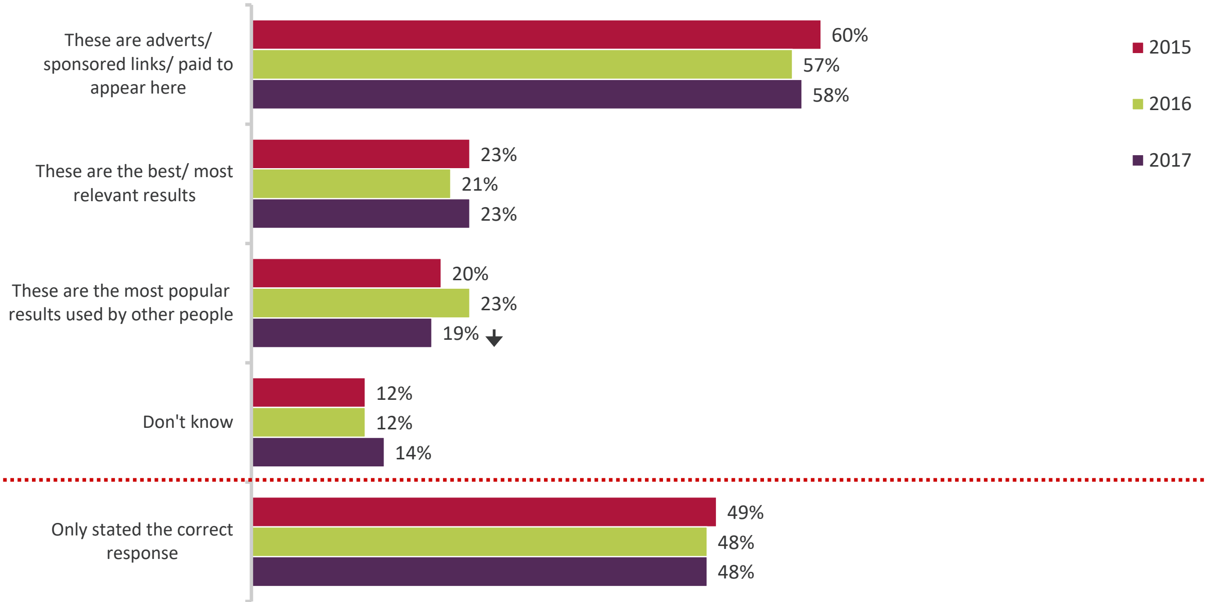
[68] In previous years this was asked of those who had ever used a search engine rather than those who had used in the past year
[69] They are also allowed to nominate another reason, or say that they are unsure.

Compared to the average, those aged 75+ are more likely to say they are unsure (35%) and are less likely to say that the first two results are adverts (45%).

Adults in AB households (64%) are more likely than adults overall to recognise the results as advertising, while those in C2 households are less likely (49%).

Search engine users are allowed to select more than one response to this question, so it is also worthwhile looking at those who give only the correct response and do not select either of the other options. Close to half (48%) only give the correct response; that is, they state that the results flagged are adverts and not the most relevant nor the most popular results. This incidence does not differ by age or socio-economic group, compared to the average. There are also no differences by gender.

Figure 124: Understanding of paid-for results returned by Google searches, among adults who use search engine websites or apps: 2015-2017



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN47. Here's an image (showcard of image) from a Google search for 'walking boots'. Do any of these apply to the first two results shown under the pictures? (prompted responses, multi-coded). NB – question amended in 2017 to be asked of those who have used search engines in the last year, rather than those who than ever used a search engine.
Base: Adults aged 16+ who go online and have ever used search engine websites or apps/ have used websites or apps in the last year (1516 in 2016, 1508 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

Understanding how search engines work

Six in ten users understand how search engines operate

Users of search engines in the past year[70] (97% of internet users overall) are asked to say which of the following statements is closest to their own opinion:

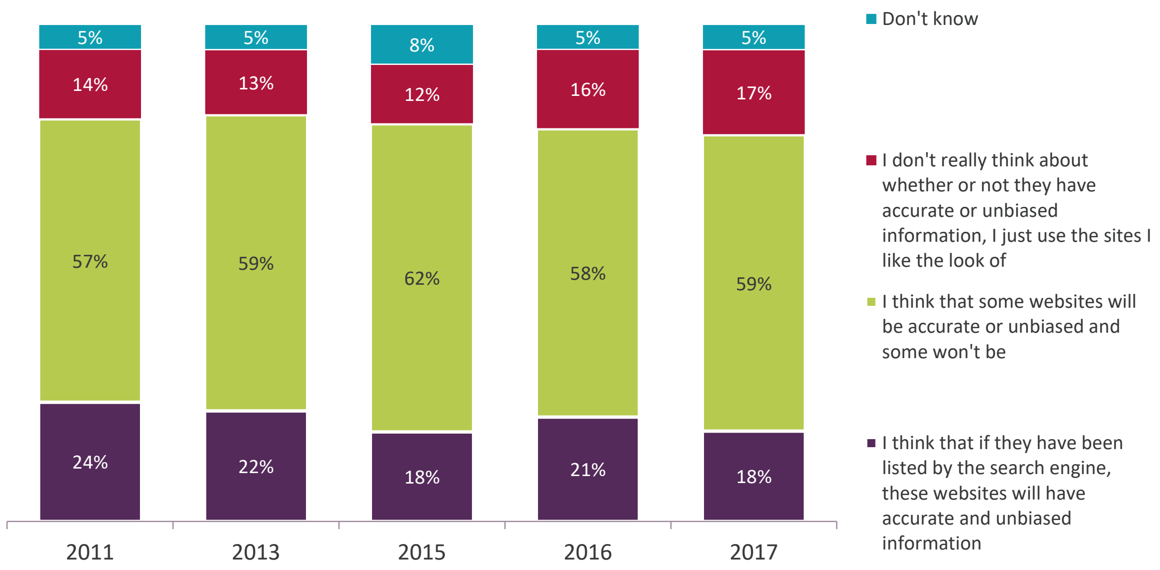
- I think that if they have been listed by the search engine, these websites will have accurate and unbiased information.
- I think that some of the websites will be accurate or unbiased and some won't be.
- I don't really think about whether or not they have accurate or unbiased information, I just use the sites I like the look of.

Around six in ten (59%) feel that some of the websites returned will be accurate or unbiased while others will not be; in other words, a response that shows a level of critical understanding or awareness about the provenance of content. Compared to this average, DEs are less likely to demonstrate a critical understanding of search engine results (48%), with no differences by age or between men and women.

Close to one in five adults (18%) say that if results are listed by the search engine, the websites will be accurate/ unbiased. This response does not vary by age or household socio-economic group compared to the average. There are no differences by gender.

A similar proportion (17%) say that they don't really think about whether or not the websites have accurate to unbiased information – they just use them because they like the look of them.

Figure 125: Understanding of how search engines operate: 2011-2017



[70] In previous years this question was asked of those who had ever used a search engine rather than those who had used in the past year

Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN46. When you use a search engine to find information, you enter a query in the search box and the search engine will then show some links to websites in the results pages. Which one of these is closest to your opinion about the level of accuracy or bias of the information detailed in the websites that appear in the results pages? (prompted responses, single coded) NB – question amended in 2017 to be asked of those who have used search engines in the last year, rather than those who have ever used a search engine.
Base: Adults aged 16+ who go online and have ever used search engine websites or apps/ have used websites or apps in the last year (1516 in 2016, 1508 in 2017)

Adults who understand that some of the websites returned by search engines will be accurate and unbiased, while some will not be, are more likely to recognise that the first two results for the online search for 'walking boots' (as discussed in Figure 124 above) are sponsored links (65% vs. 58% overall), and are more likely to give only this correct response (53% vs. 48%).

Understanding how price comparison websites work

The majority of price comparison website users are unaware that the deals listed first might be paid-for content

As discussed earlier (section 2), in 2017, the online survey includes a series of questions relating to comparing deals online and the use of price comparison websites. One question focuses specifically on price comparison website users' understanding of the deals that are listed first on these sites; this is reported in this section.

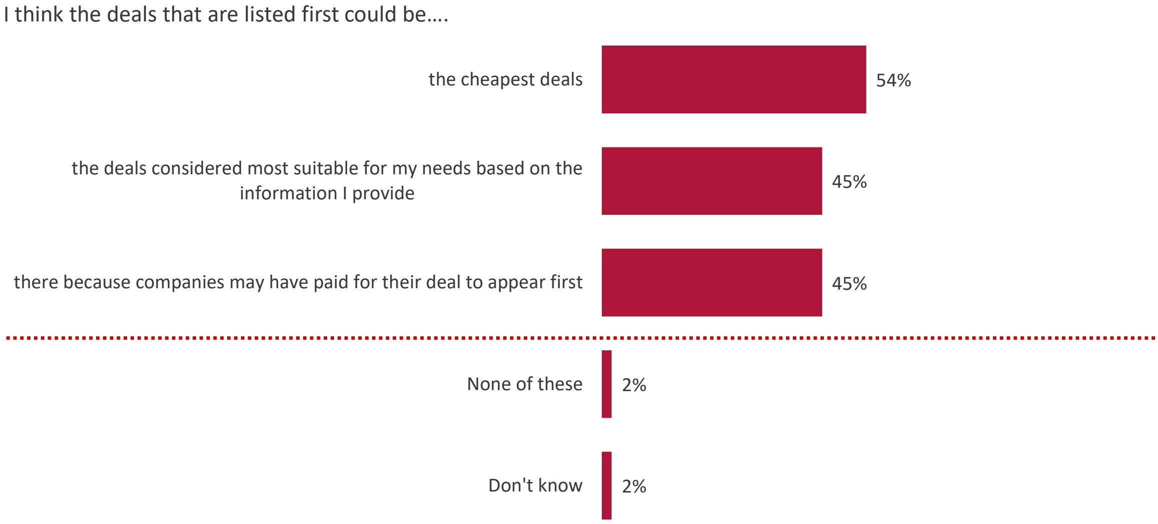
Adults who go online and who have ever used price comparison websites (91% of all internet users) are asked the following question*: "Which of the following options could apply to the deals listed first in the search results returned by price comparison websites? When I use a price comparison website, I think that the deal or deals that are listed first could be...."*.

They are then prompted with three options, together with the option of saying that none of these options apply or that they are unsure. The results are shown in Figure 126.

More than half (54%) say that the deals listed first might be the cheapest deals, while slightly less than half (45%) say they could be the deals considered most suitable for their needs based on the information they provided.

Forty-five per cent of price comparison website users also say the deals listed first might be there because companies have paid for the deal to appear first; this therefore means that a majority (55%) are *not aware* that the deals listed first might be paid-for content. This incidence does not vary by age, but is more likely than average among those in DE households (69%). Women are also more likely than men to be unaware that the deals listed first might be paid-for content (61% vs. 49% for men).

Figure 126: Understanding of the deals listed first by price comparison websites



Source: Ofcom adults' online survey 2017
Q7. Which of the following options could apply to the deals listed first in the search results returned by price comparison websites? When I use a price comparison website, I think that the deal or deals that are listed first could be...(prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online that have ever used price comparison websites (953)

Content evaluation

In 2017, questions were added to the media literacy study to better understand the trust placed in online content, in terms of whether internet users (and in particular social media users) make judgements about the truthfulness of what they see online. This section also addresses whether internet users make checks or verify the information they find online.

Truthfulness of online content

Ten per cent of internet users say they do not consider whether the factual information they find online is truthful

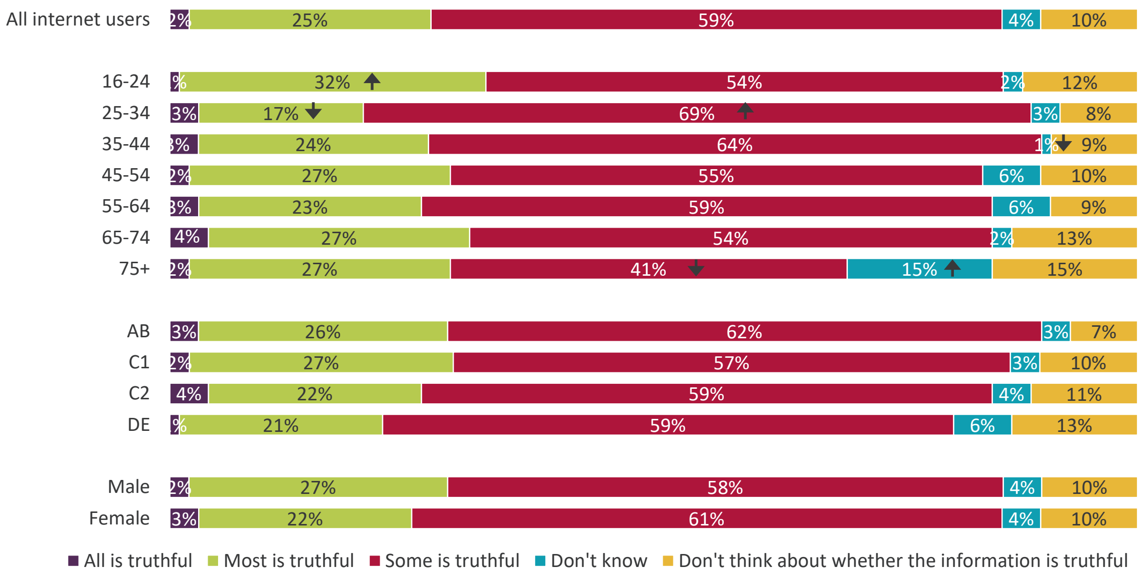
Adults who go online are asked the following question: "*Thinking generally, when you find factual information online, perhaps on search engines like Google, do you ever think about whether the information you find is truthful?"* Those respondents who say they do consider whether the information is truthful are then asked: "*Do you believe that all the information you find online is truthful, most of it is truthful or just some of it is truthful?"*

As shown in Figure 127, one in ten (10%) internet users say they don't think about whether factual information they find online is truthful. There is no variation in this response by age or household socio-economic group compared to this average. There are also no differences by gender.

The majority of internet users (59%) say they consider 'some' of the information to be true – showing a degree of critical understanding; and this response is higher for 25-34s (69%). Internet users aged 75 and over are less likely to say that 'some' of the information is true (41%) as they are also more likely than average to be unsure (15% vs. 4%).

Two per cent of internet users consider 'all' the information to be true; this incidence does not vary by age or socio-economic group compared to the average. Nor does it differ between men and women. A quarter of internet users (25%) think that 'most' of the information is truthful – 16-24s are more likely to say this (32%)

Figure 127: Extent to which internet users believe the truthfulness of factual information they find online, by age, gender and socio-economic group



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN36. Thinking generally, when you find factual information online, perhaps on search engines like Google, do you ever think about whether the information you find is truthful? IF YES - Do you believe that all the information you find online is truthful, most of it is truthful or just some of it is truthful? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: Adults aged 16+ who go online (1570 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all who go online and men compared to women

Two-thirds of social media users are aware that only some of the information they see on social media is true

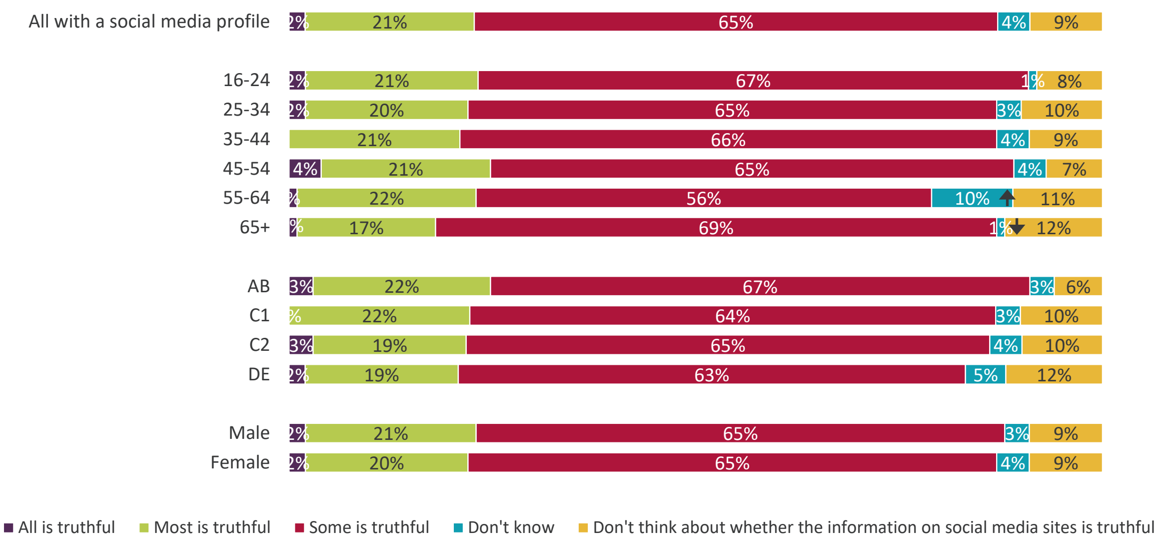
The same question (as reported on in Figure 127) was asked of those with a social media profile or account about content posted on social media sites or apps. The results are shown in Figure 128.

Similar to internet users overall, one in ten (9%) social media site users say they don't think about whether the content posted on these sites is truthful.

One in five users (21%) say that most of the information is truthful, while 2% consider all the information to be truthful.

There are no differences, by age or socio-economic group, compared to these averages, and there are no differences by gender.

Figure 128: Extent to which users believe the truthfulness of information they see on social media sites, by age, gender and socio-economic group



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN24. Generally, when you visit social media sites or apps like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, or YouTube, do you ever think about whether the information posted on these sites or apps is truthful? IF YES - Do you believe that all the information you see on these sites or apps is truthful, most of it is truthful or just some of it is truthful? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ with a social media profile /account (1182 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age / socio-economic group compared to all with a social media profile/ account and men compared to women

More than three in five social media users agree that the photos or videos that people post online makes their life look more interesting than it is

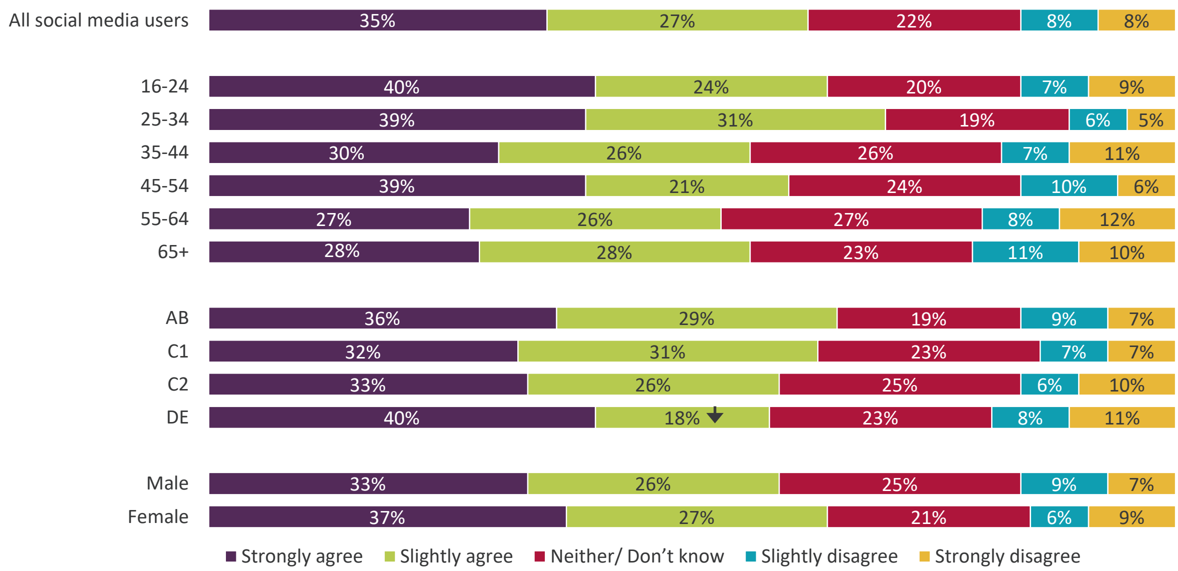
Adults with a social media profile or account were also asked the extent to which they agreed with the statement: *"The images or videos that other people post online make their life look more interesting than it is"*.

Social media site users are much more likely to agree (62%) than disagree (16%) with this statement. They are also more likely to agree strongly (35%) than they are to agree slightly (27%).

There is little variation in these responses by age. Compared to the average (62%), users aged 25-34 are more likely to agree with this statement (70%).

These overall levels of agreement or disagreement do not vary by household socio-economic group compared to the average for social media users; nor do results vary by gender.

Figure 129: Agreement with statement: *"The images or videos that other people post online make their life look more interesting than it is"*, by age, gender and socio-economic group



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN26. To what extent do you agree with this statement – The images or videos that other people post online make their life look more interesting than it is? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ with a social media profile/ account (1182 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all with a social media profile/ account and men compared to women

Checks made on online content

More than two in five internet users who consider the truthfulness of the information they find online say they would check the content across different websites

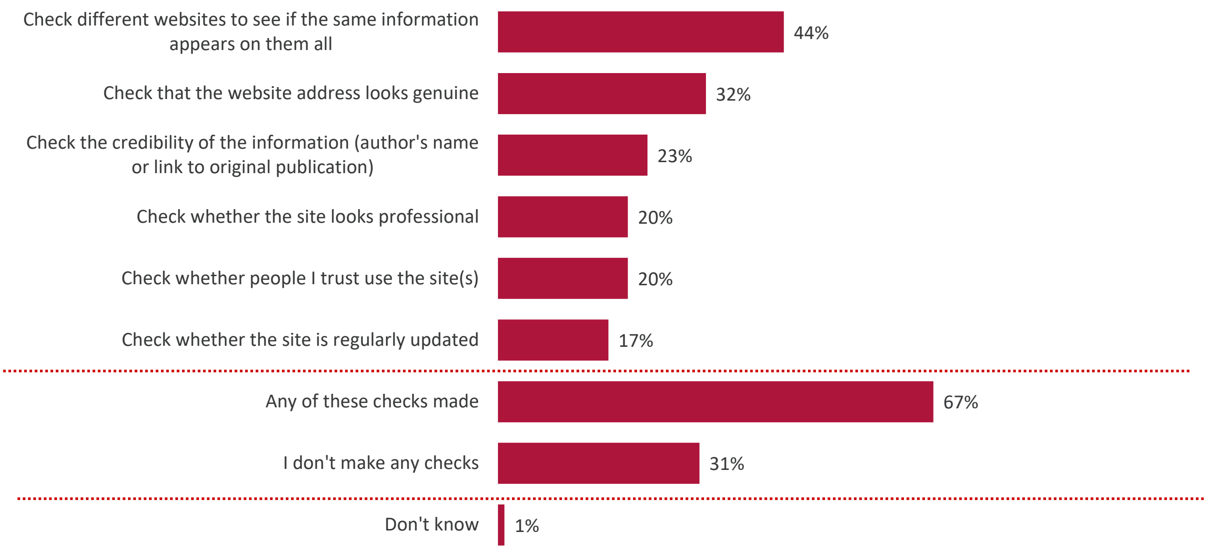
As reported in Figure 127, in 2017, internet users were asked to think about going online to look for factual information, and whether they ever considered the truthfulness of this information. One in ten (10%) internet users say they don't think about whether the factual information they find online is truthful. The remaining nine in ten internet users, who say they do consider this, were asked a further question.

They were prompted with potential checks they might make and were asked: *"When you find factual information online, perhaps on search engines like Google, do you check if the information is truthful in any of these ways?"* The results are shown in Figure 130.

More than two in five who consider whether the information they find online is truthful would check different websites to see if the same information appears on them all (44%), making this the most popular of the prompted checks. One-third (32%) would check that the website address looks genuine, and one in five would check the credibility of the information (e.g. the author's name or link to the original publication) or check whether other people they trust use the site (both 20%). One in six (17%) check whether the site is regularly updated.

Three in ten (31%) internet users who would consider the truthfulness of online information say they do not make any of the six checks they were prompted with. This incidence increases to close to half (48%) among those aged 65 and over. Women are more likely than men to say they would not make any of the six checks (36% vs. 26%).

Figure 130: Checking the accuracy of factual information found online



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN37. When you find factual information online, perhaps on search engines like Google do you check if the information is truthful in any of these ways? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: Adults aged 16+ who would consider whether the information they find online is truthful (1316)

Nearly a quarter of social media site users say they wouldn't tend to check news articles on social media to see if they were true

Adults with a social media site profile or account were asked the following question: "*When you read or see a news story or article on social media sites or apps which, if any, of these things would you ever do if you wanted to check the information in the article to see if it was true?*"

As shown in Figure 131, two-thirds (67%) say they would potentially make any of the eight checks they were asked about. At least three in ten say they would check to see if the article was by an organisation they had heard of (37%), would check whether it was by an organisation they thought was trustworthy (34%) or would check to see if the same information appears anywhere else (31%). A quarter would judge how professional the article appears (26%) or would think about the article to assess the likelihood of it being true (25%) or would look at the comments to see what people had said about the article (24%). Less than one in five would think about whether the person who shared the story could be trusted (18%) or would assess whether it was a first-hand account, reported by someone who saw it for themselves (11%).

Close to a quarter (23%) of social media site users say they would not tend to check the information in the article to see if it was true.

Grouping together some of these potential checks, close to half (48%) would assess whether the source of the article was a known or trustworthy organisation, and one-third (32%) would rely on a 'peer-based' judgement, either by looking at what others had said about the story, or by assessing whether the person who shared the story was trustworthy.

Compared to these averages, there are few differences by age: social media site users aged 65 and over are less likely to say they would make any of these checks (54% vs.67%) on account of their being less likely to check whether the article was by an organisation they considered trustworthy (22% vs. 34%).

Two checks are more likely than average to be made by those in AB households, and these same two checks are less likely to be made by those in DE households: to check if the article is by an organisation they consider trustworthy (41% for ABs, 25% for DEs vs. 34% average) and to look at how professional the article appears (35% for ABs, 17% for DEs vs. 26% average). Those in AB households are also more likely to think about the article content to assess how likely it is to be true (32% vs. 25% average).

Four checks are more likely to be made by men than by women: checking whether it is by an organisation they consider trustworthy (38% vs. 30%), thinking about the article to assess the likelihood of its being true (28% vs. 22%), looking at the comments to see what other people have said about the article (28% vs. 21%) and thinking about whether the person who shared the story can be trusted (21% vs. 16%).

Figure 131: Potential checks made on news stories or articles appearing on social media to verify if they are true

Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN25. When you read or see a news story or article on social media site or apps which, if any, of these things would you ever do if you wanted to check the information in the article to see if it was true? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ with a social media profile / account (1182 aged 16+, varies by demographic)

8. Newer, narrow and non-users of the internet

This section explores in detail the behaviour and attitudes of adults who are less familiar with using the internet. In addition to those who do not personally use the internet at all (non-users), we categorise those who do use the internet in two ways:

- Recency of take-up i.e. when they first started using the internet. In particular we focus on those who say they first started using the internet less than five years ago - *newer* users.
- Breadth of use i.e. the number of activities they do online. The main focus is on those who have done between one and four categories of internet activity, out of the 15 assessed. We term these *narrow* users.

For *non-users* of the internet we explore the following:

- The incidence within the overall adult population, as well as their demographic profile compared to internet users.
- The extent to which they have asked someone else to use the internet on their behalf (i.e. proxy use) in the past year – and what this has been for.
- Their reasons for not going online and what, if anything, would encourage them to do so.

Key findings

- 'Newer users' are defined as those who first went online less than five years ago. Seven per cent of all internet users are newer users – this rises to 23% for those aged 75 and over and 14% for adults in DE households.
- Compared to 'established' internet users (those who first went online at least five years ago, newer users are more than twice as likely to only use devices other than a computer to go online (58% vs. 27%); a quarter of newer users only use a smartphone to go online (23% vs. 9% for established users).
- Newer users have a lower estimated weekly volume of use compared to established users (12.2 vs. 24.9 hours). This difference is due to lower volume of use in each location: at home, in the workplace/ place of education, and anywhere else.
- Compared to established users, newer users are less confident internet users and are more likely to only use websites or apps they have used previously.
- While newer users are as likely as established users to be aware that the licence fee is the main source of funding for the BBC website, newer users are less likely to be aware that this is also the main source of funding for the BBC iPlayer (39% vs. 61%). Compared to established users, newer users are also less likely to be aware of the main source of funding for search engine websites (34% vs. 61%) and for the YouTube website (22% vs. 52%).

- Newer users are as likely as established users to be aware that the results returned by search engines may contain inaccurate or biased information, but less likely than established users to recognise sponsored content returned by search engines. Newer users also have lower awareness of personalised online advertising.
- Compared to established users, newer users are less likely to say they use all nine security measures they are prompted with. Less than half say they use security software such as an anti-virus or anti-spyware package (33% vs. 67% for established users). A quarter of newer users say they use strong passwords on devices used to go online (24% vs. 58% for established users) or on online services like email, social media and PayPal (24% vs. 51%).
- While seven in ten (69%) established internet users say they would, in some way, verify the factual information they find online, this is true of only half (49%) of newer users.
- 'Narrow users' are defined as those who carry out between one and four of the 15 types of online use we asked internet users about. They comprise one quarter (25%) of all internet users. Those aged 55 and over are more likely than average to be narrow users (32% of 55-64s, 49% of 65-74s and 55% of over-74s). Internet users in DE households are also more likely to be narrow users (37%).
- While three in four internet users (76%) go online outside the home, this is less likely for narrow users (56%). Narrow users are also less likely than internet users overall to go online every day (59% vs. 81%).
- Narrow users are less likely than average to watch on-demand television content overall, to watch content on broadcaster catch-up services and to watch content via a mobile phone or online.
- Twelve per cent of adults in the UK are non-users of the internet, unchanged since 2014. This increases to 18% for 55-64s, 35% for 65-74s and close to half (47%) of those aged 75+. More than one in five adults in DE households (22%) are non-users.
- Given the high proportion of older people in the DE socio-economic group, additional socio-economic group analysis was conducted among adults of working age to explore whether the differences in non-use of and newer use of the internet are driven by age, socio-economic group, or both. This additional analysis revealed that these differences persist among working-age households, and the differences are therefore likely to be driven by both age and socio-economic group.
- More than half of non-users (52%) say they don't go online because 'they don't see the need/ being online is not for people like them' - this is particularly the case among internet users aged 65+. Non-users aged under 65 are more likely to say their reasons for not going online relate to the associated costs.
- Six per cent of non-users say they have asked someone to go online on their behalf, in the past year, to apply for benefits (Universal Credit, housing employment, health and so on). This figure is up from 2% last year.

- More than three in five non-users say that nothing would encourage them to go online in the next 12 months (63%), although this is less likely for non-users aged 16-64 (47%) than for those aged 65+ (74%).

Newer internet users

This sub-section looks in detail at 'newer' users of the internet. Ideally, newer users of the internet would be those who first started going online in the last couple of years. However, we need to ensure that any group of new users is large enough (at least 100 respondents) to enable comparison with established internet users.

In 2017, 2% of internet users had first started going online in the past one to two years (42 respondents), with a further 5% first having gone online in the past three to four years (91 respondents). We therefore define 'newer internet users' as those who first started using the internet up to five years ago, and 'established users' as those who first started using it five or more years ago.

Incidence of newer users within the online population

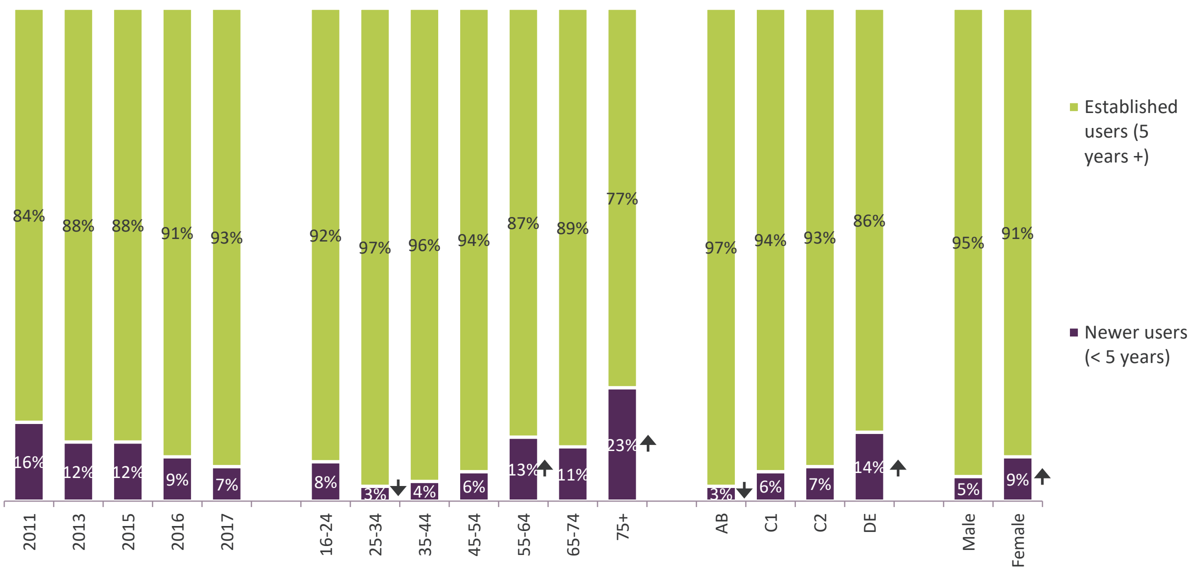
Those who go online aged 75 and over are more likely to be newer users

Across all UK adult internet users, 7% are newer users, with the remaining 93% established internet users. Compared to 2016 there has been no change in the incidence of newer internet users, following a decrease between 2015 and 2016 (from 12% to 9%). Although not shown in Figure 132, the majority of internet users (71%) say they first started going online ten or more years ago, also unchanged since 2016.

As shown in Figure 132, compared to the average, those aged 25-34 are less likely to be newer users (3%) and those aged 55-64 (13%) and the over-74s (23%) are more likely.

Compared to the average, those in the DE (14%) socio-economic group are more likely to be newer users, while those in AB households are less likely (3%). In 2017, women (9%) are more likely than men (5%) to be newer users.

Figure 132: Proportion of newer and established users, by year, age, socio-economic group and gender



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN3. How long ago did you first start going online? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1570 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between 2016 and 2017 at the overall level and by age/ socio-economic group compared to all who go online and men compared to women

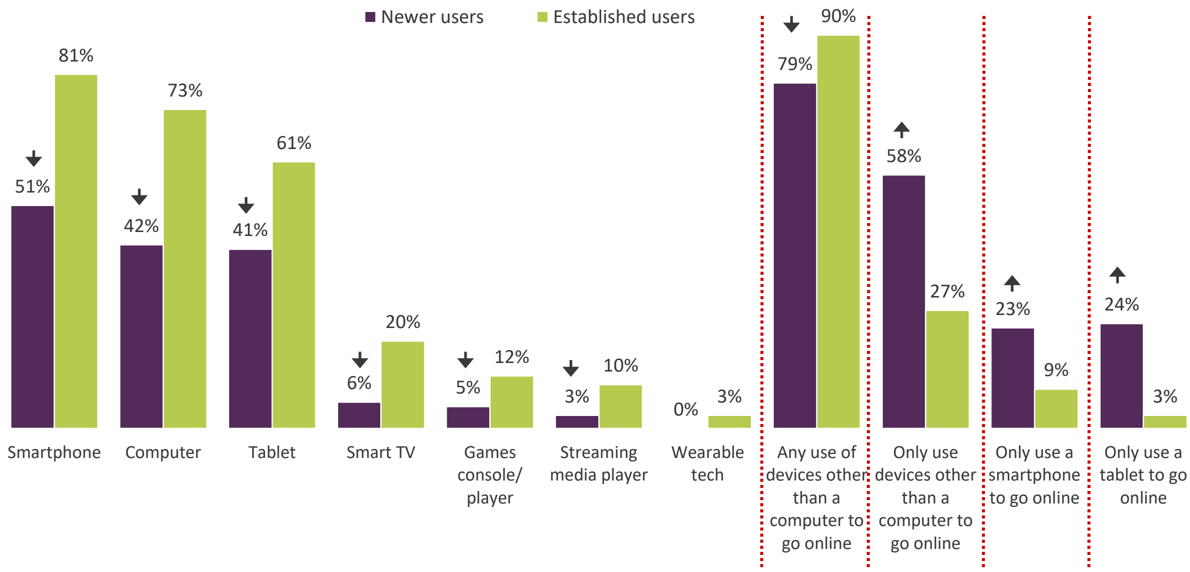
Devices used to go online

The smartphone is the only device used to go online by the majority of newer users, and nearly a quarter of newer users only go online on a smartphone

Compared to established users, newer internet users are less likely to go online through most of the devices shown in Figure 133. Only one device is used to go online by a majority of newer users – the smartphone (51%).

Newer users are, however, more likely than established users to only go online through devices other than a computer (58% vs. 27%). Close to a quarter of newer users only go online on a tablet (24%) or a smartphone (23%); each of these measures is higher than for established users (3% and 9% respectively).

Figure 133: Devices used to go online: newer vs. established users



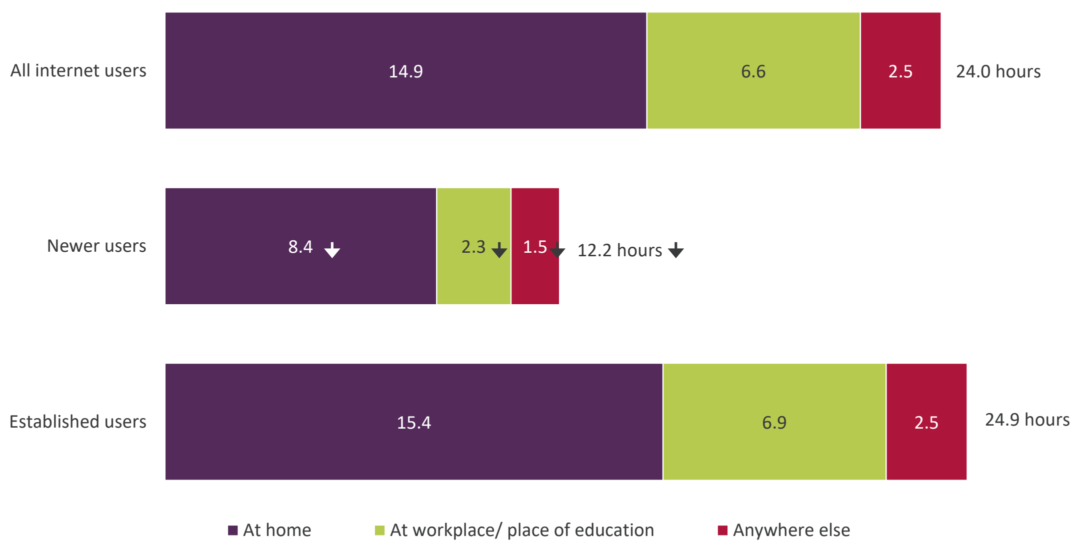
Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN2. Do you go online using any of these devices? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online who first went online less than 5 years ago (133), 5+ years (1384)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between newer and established users

Newer users go online for fewer hours in a typical week

As shown in Figure 134, newer users estimate that they spend half as many hours online in a typical week compared to established users (12.2 hours vs. 24.9 hours).

This difference is due to a lower volume of use at home (8.4 vs. 15.4 hours), in the workplace or place of education (2.3 vs. 6.9 hours) and elsewhere (1.5 vs. 2.5 hours).

Figure 134: Volume of internet use per week: newer vs. established users

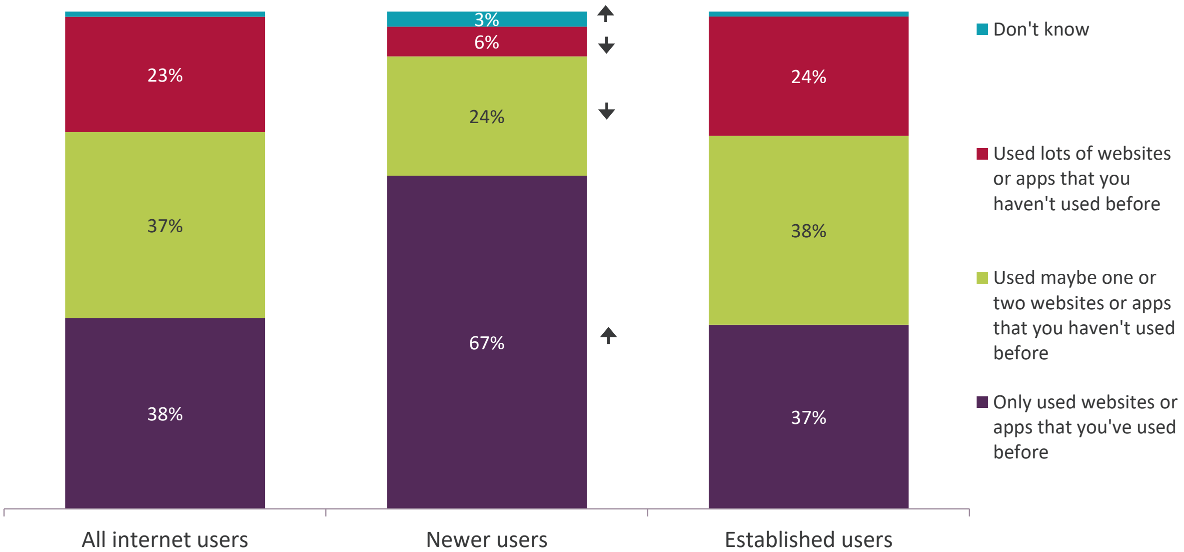


Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN5A-C. How many hours in a typical week would you say you use the internet at home /at your workplace or place of education/ anywhere else? (unprompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1570) who first went online less than 5 years ago (133), 5+ years (1384)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between newer and established users

In the past month, the majority of newer users have only used sites and apps they have used before

In the past month when they have been online, newer users (67%) are more likely than established users (37%) to say that they have only used websites or apps they have used before. Consequently, they are less likely than established users to say they "used one or two sites or apps they haven't used before" (24% vs. 38%) or to say they "used lots of websites or apps they haven't used before" (6% vs. 24%).

Figure 135: Use of websites or apps in the last month not used before: newer vs. established users



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN12. In the last month, when you have gone online, have you …... (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1570) who first went online less than 5 years ago (133), 5+ years (1384)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between newer and established users

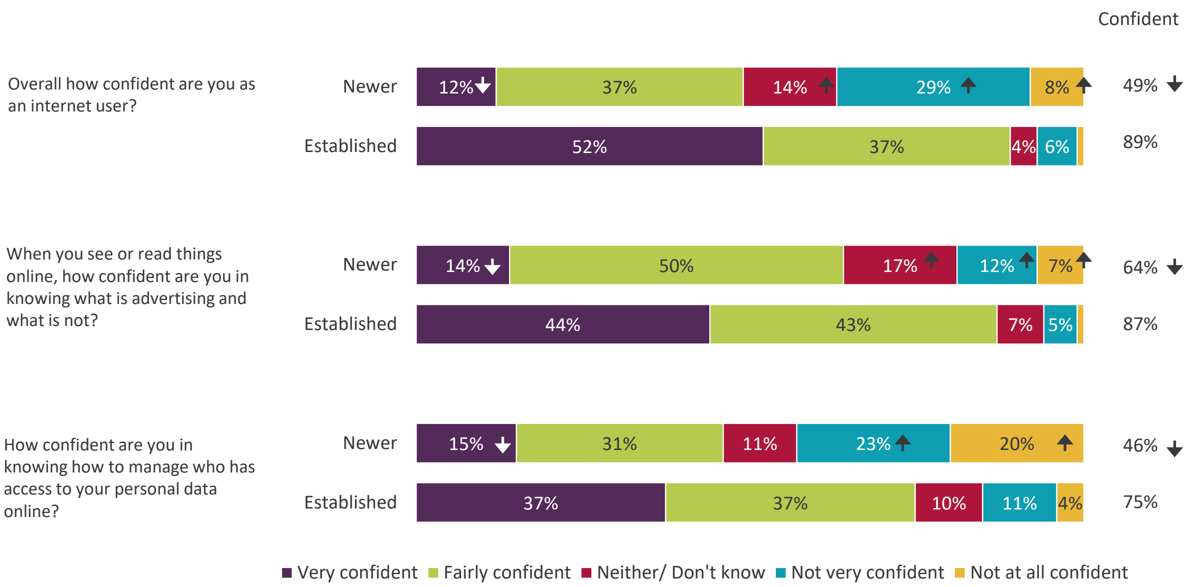
Confidence as an internet user

Newer users are less confident in their use of the internet

Figure 136 shows the self-reported ratings of confidence, across the different aspects of using the internet, as given by newer and established users. For each aspect, newer users are less likely to describe themselves as confident and are more likely to describe themselves as not confident (either not very, or not at all confident).

Compared to newer users, established users are four times as likely to describe themselves as 'very confident' internet users overall; one in eight (12%) newer users say they are very confident compared to more than half (52%) of established users. Established users are three times as likely to describe themselves as 'very confident' in knowing what is advertising and what is not (44% vs. 14% for newer users) and twice as likely to rate themselves as 'very confident' that they know how to manage who has access to their data online (37% vs. 15%).

Figure 136: Confidence as an internet user: newer vs. established users



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN11A/C/D. I'm going to read out some questions about confidence using the internet, for each one please say which of the options on the card applies to you (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who first went online less than 5 years ago (133), 5+ years (1384)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between newer and established users

Awareness of sources of funding for websites and online services

Newer internet users are less likely to be aware of the main sources of funding for certain websites or online services

Adults are asked to say, without prompting, what they believe to be the main sources of funding for particular websites and online services. Figure 137 shows the results among those who go online, split by newer/ established users, for four online sites or services: the BBC website, search engine websites, the BBC iPlayer service and YouTube.

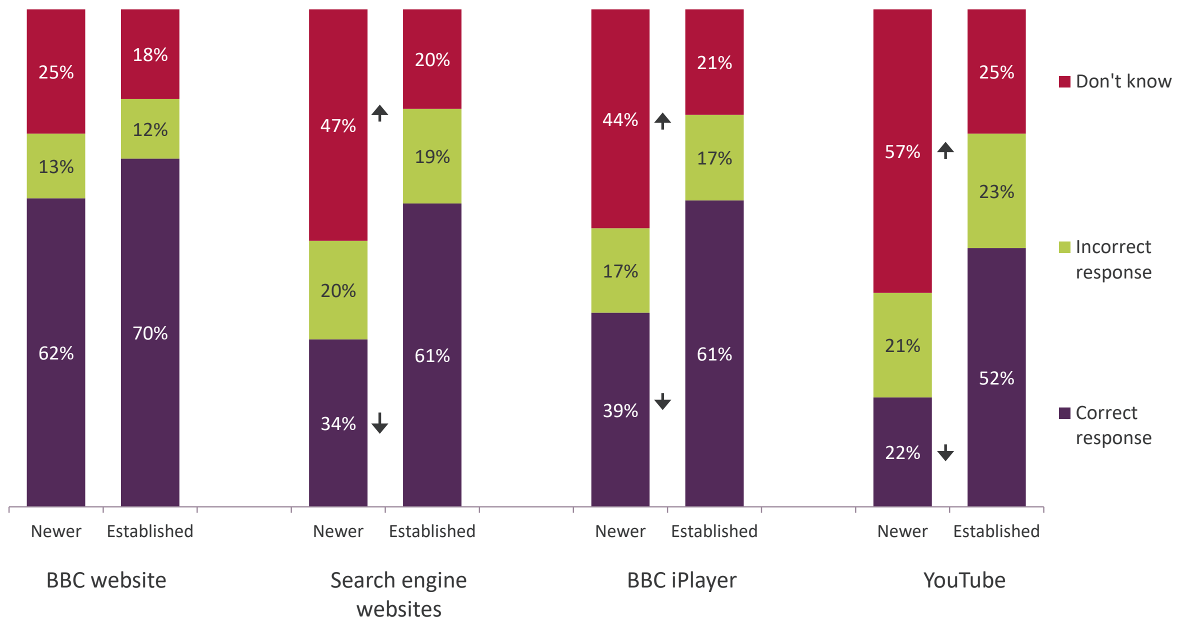
Across three of the four, newer internet users are less likely than established users to give the correct response.

While the majority of established users are aware of how each of the four websites/ services are mainly funded, this is true only for the BBC website (62%) among newer users. Newer users are, however, as likely as established users (70%) to be aware that the licence fee funds the BBC website.

Four in ten newer internet users (39%) say they are aware that the licence fee funds the BBC iPlayer service. One in three newer users (34%) give the correct response regarding the main source of funding for search engine websites[71], while only one in five newer users (22%) are aware that advertising is the main source of funding for YouTube.

For each of the four online sites or services, newer users are no more likely than established users to give an incorrect response. For three of the four online websites/ services, newer internet users are more likely than established users to say they are unsure[72]; they are as likely as established users to be unsure about the main source of funding for the BBC website (25% vs. 18%).

Figure 137: Awareness of how websites or online services are funded: newer vs. established users



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN31/ IN32 /IN33/ IN34. How do you think the BBC's website is mainly funded/ How do you think search engine websites such as Google or Bing are mainly funded? / How do you think the BBC's iPlayer service is mainly funded / How do you think YouTube is mainly funded? (unprompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online who first went online under 5 years ago (133), 5+ years (1384)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between newer and established users.
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Understanding search engines results

Half of newer users understand how search engines work

Adults who have used a search engine in the last year (90% of newer users, 97% of established users) are asked to say which of the following statements is closest to their own opinion:

- *"I think that if they have been listed by the search engine, these websites will have accurate and unbiased information."*

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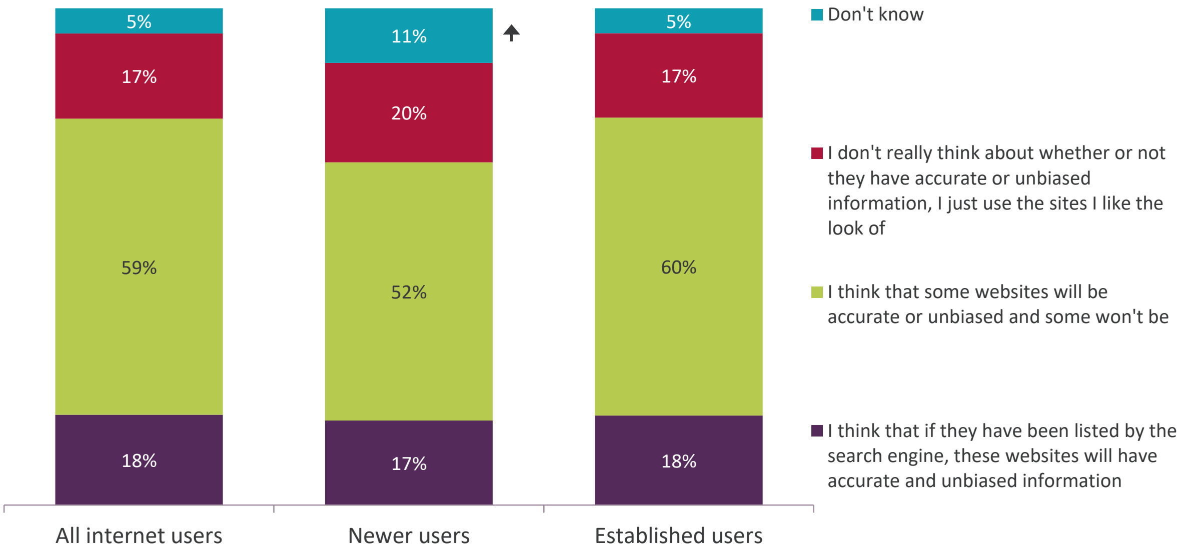
[71] Awareness is taken from two coded responses deemed as correct - 1) 'Advertising on the website' and 2) 'Advertisers pay when users click through from sponsored links to their website'.
[72] Either because they gave a 'don't know' response or said they had never heard of the service.

- *"I think that some of the websites will be accurate or unbiased and some won't be."*
- *"I don't really think about whether or not they have accurate or unbiased information, I just use the sites I like the look of."*

Figure 138 shows that one in six newer users (17%) and a similar proportion of established users (18%) feel that results returned by search engines will be accurate and unbiased. Newer users are also as likely as established users to give the correct response – that some websites will be accurate or unbiased and some will not (52% vs. 60%). Newer users are, however, more likely to say they are unsure (11% vs. 5%).

Figure 138: Opinions on search engine accuracy: newer vs. established users



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN46. When you use a search engine to find information, you enter a query in the search box and the search engine will then show some links to websites in the results pages. Which one of these is closest to your opinion about the level of accuracy or bias of the information detailed in the websites that appear in the results pages? (prompted responses, single coded).
Base: All adults aged 16+ who have used a search engine in the last year (1508) who first went online under 5 years ago (117), 5+ years (1343)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between newer and established users

Newer users are less likely to identify advertising in search engine results

Adults who have used use search engine websites in the last year are shown a picture of the results returned by Google for an online search for 'walking boots'. Their attention is drawn to the first two results distinguished by a green box with the word 'Ad' written in it. They are then prompted with three options and asked whether any of these apply to these first two results. These options are[73]:

- These are adverts/ sponsored links/ paid to appear here
- These are the best results/ the most relevant results

[73] They are also allowed to nominate another reason, or say that they are unsure.

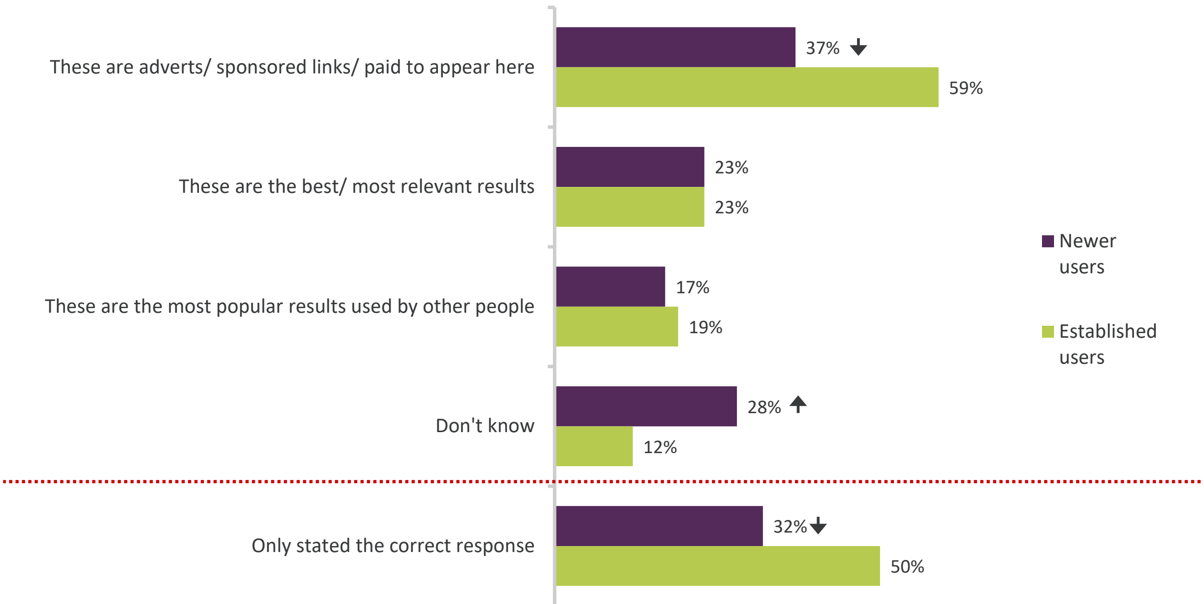
- These are the most popular results used by other people

The results are shown in Figure 139 below. Less than two in five newer users (37%) who have used search engines say that the first two results are 'sponsored links/ advertising/ paid to appear there', compared to six in ten established users (59%).

While newer users are no more likely to nominate either of the incorrect responses – either 'the best/ most relevant' results (23% vs. 23% for established users) or 'the most popular results used by other people' (17% vs. 19%) - they are more likely to be unsure (28% vs. 12%).

Search engine users are allowed to select more than one response to this question, so it is also worthwhile looking at those who give *only* the correct response and do not select either of the other options. Half of the established users (50%) only give the correct response; that is, they state that the results flagged are adverts. This is less likely for newer users (32%).

Figure 139: Understanding of paid-for results returned by Google searches, among adults who use search engine websites or apps: newer vs. established users



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN47. Here's an image (showcard of image) from a Google search for 'walking boots''. Do any of these apply to the first two results shown under the pictures? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: Adults aged 16+ who go online and use search engine websites or apps who first went online less than 5 years ago (117), 5+ years (1343)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between newer and established users.
.

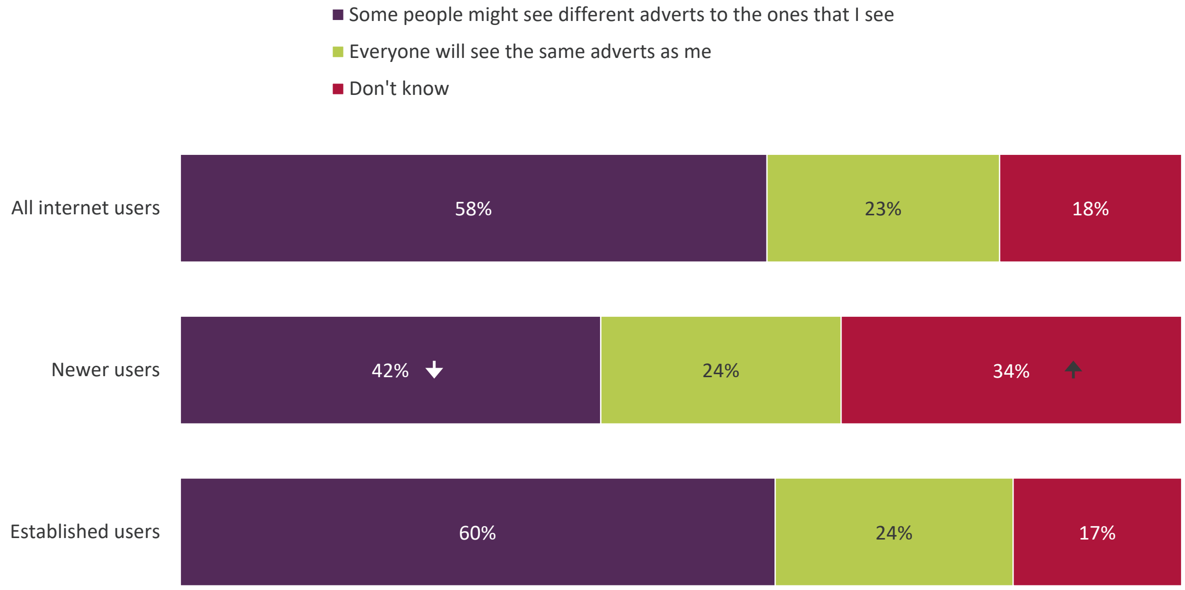
Understanding of personalised advertising

Two in five newer users are aware of personalised online advertising, compared to three in five established users

Internet users are prompted with two options and asked which one applies to any advertising they might see on a website or app that they visit[74].

Figure 140 shows that while three in five established internet users (60%) are aware of personalised advertising, in that they are aware that some people might see different adverts to those that they see, this accounts for only two in five newer users (42%). A quarter of newer and established users (24% for both) state that everyone sees the same adverts. Newer users are twice as likely as established users to say they are unsure (34% vs. 17%).

Figure 140: Awareness of personalised online advertising: newer vs. established users



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN48. When someone in the same country as you visits the same website or app at the same time as you, which one of these things applies to any advertising you can see? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1570) who first went online less than 5 years ago (133), 5+ years (1384)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between newer and established users

[74] The specific question stated: When someone in the same country as you visits the same website or app at the same time as you, which one of these things applies to any advertising you can see? The purpose of this question is to gauge the extent to which internet users are aware of personalised advertising.

Online security measures and safety features

Only a quarter of newer internet users say they use strong passwords for online services or on devices used to go online

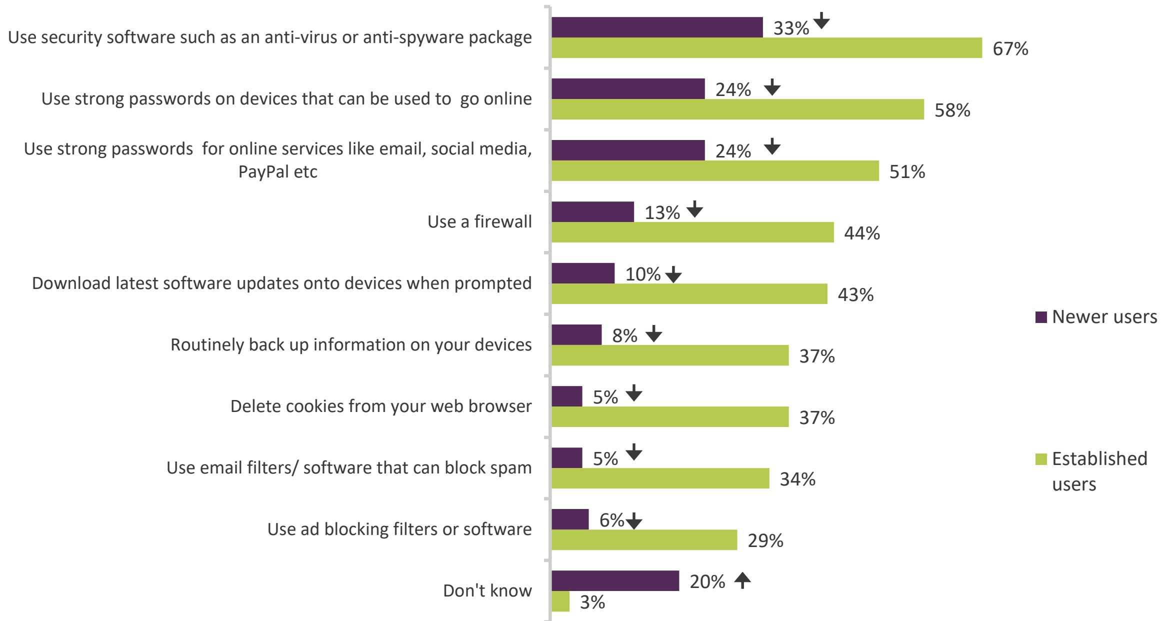
As shown in Figure 141, internet users are prompted with nine possible types of security measures and asked to say which if any of these they, or someone else in the household, do or use at home.

Compared to established users, newer internet users are less likely to say they use each of these nine types of security measures.

While there are three types of security measures used by a majority of established users – anti-virus or anti- spyware packages (67%) and strong passwords on devices that can be used to go online (58%) or on online services like email, social media, PayPal etc. (51%) – none are used by a majority of newer users.

The most common security measure used by newer users is anti-virus or anti-spyware packages, used by a third (33%). A quarter say they use strong passwords on devices that can be used to go online (24%), or for online services like email, social media or PayPal (24%).

Figure 141: Security measures used within the home: newer vs. established users



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN6. Which, if any of these things do you or someone in your household do at home? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who first went online less than 5 years ago (133), 5+ years (1384)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between newer and established users

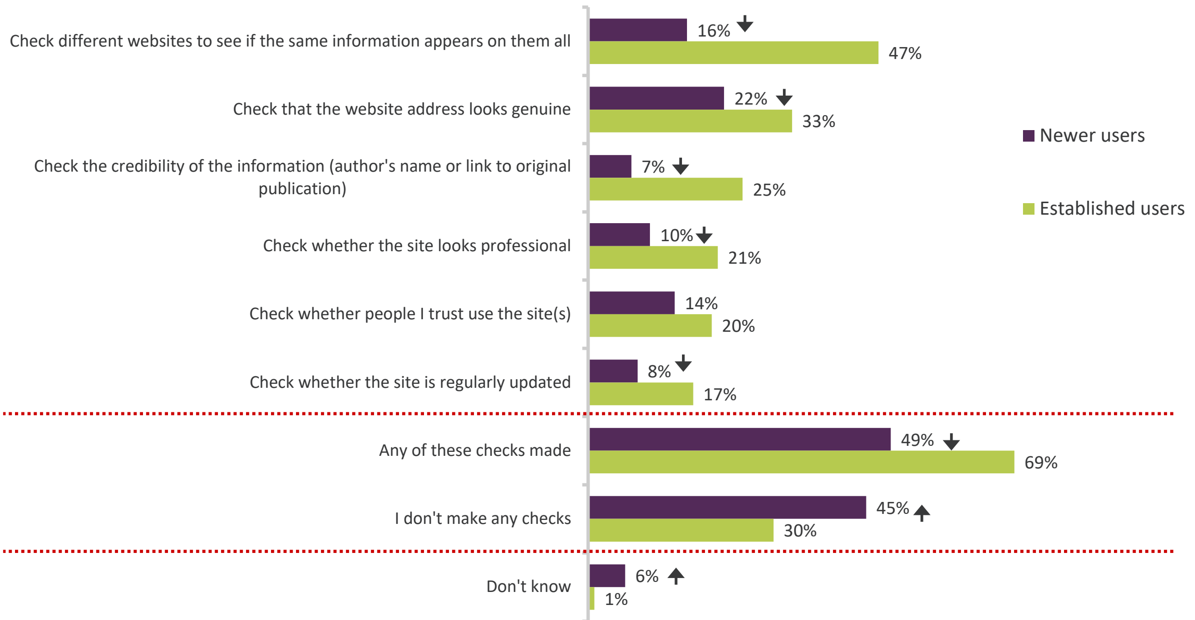
While around half of newer internet users say they would verify factual information online, they are less likely than established users to do this

Internet users are asked whether they check the accuracy of the factual information they find online.

Figure 142 shows that around half of newer users (49%) say they make any of the six checks they are prompted with, and this is less likely than among established users (69%).

Five of the six checks are less likely to be made by newer users: checking different websites to see if the same information appears on them all (16% vs. 47%), checking that the website address looks genuine (22% vs. 33%), checking the credibility of the information (7% vs. 25%), checking whether the site looks professional (10% vs. 21%) and checking whether the site is regularly updated (8% vs. 17%).

Figure 142: Verification of factual information online: newer vs. established users



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN37. When you find factual information online, perhaps on search engines like Google do you check if the information is truthful in any of these ways? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: Adults aged 16+ who would consider whether the information they find online is truthful who first went online under 5 years ago (101), 5+ years (1176)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between newer and established users

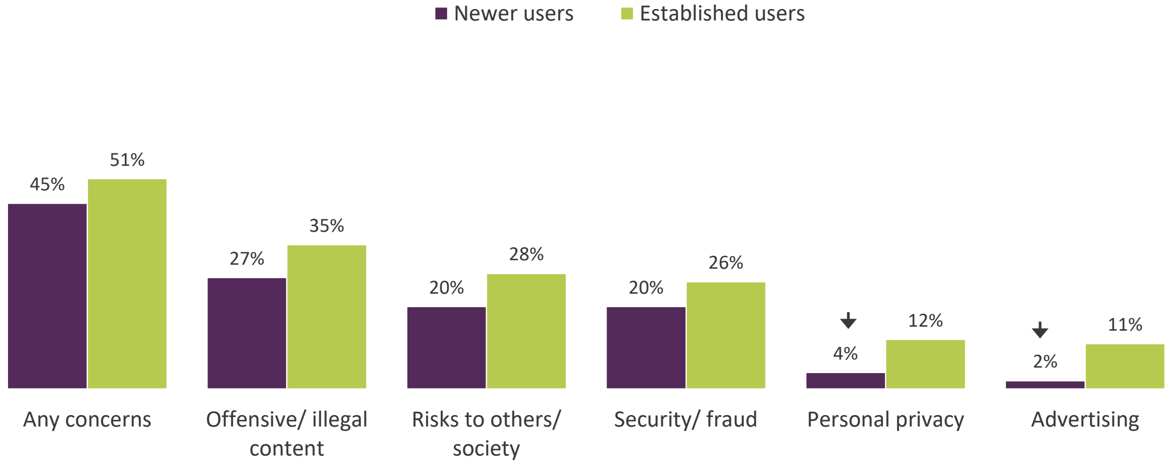
Concerns about the internet

While concerns overall about the internet do not differ between newer and established internet users, newer users are less likely to be concerned about personal privacy or advertising

Figure 143 shows that more than two in five newer users (45%) have concerns about what is on the internet; this incidence is comparable to that seen for established users (51%).

More than a quarter of newer internet users have concerns about offensive or illegal content (27%) while one in five have concerns about the risks to others or to society (20%), or concerns relating to security or fraud (20%). Few newer users have concerns about personal privacy (4%) or about advertising (2%), and each of these types of concern are less likely than among established users (12% and 11% respectively).

Figure 143: Concerns about the internet: newer vs. established users



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN17. Can you tell me if you have any concerns about what is on the internet? (unprompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who first went online less than 5 years ago (133), 5+ years (1384)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between newer and established users

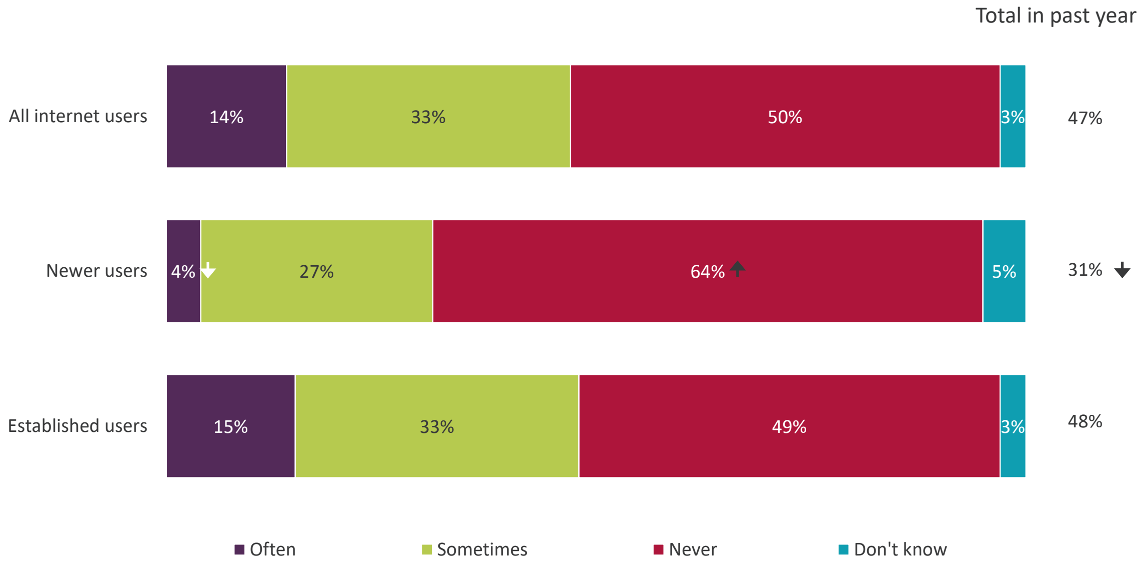
Experience of seeing hateful content online

Newer internet users are less likely to say they have seen hateful content online in the past year

In 2017, in order to better understand exposure to hate speech online, internet users were asked the following question: *"In the past year, have you seen anything hateful on the internet that has been directed at a particular group of people, based on, for instance, their gender, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity?"* They were also provided with the following explanation: *"Examples of these sorts of things might be cruel or hateful comments or images that have been posted on social media, comments in response to an article that you read online, or videos posted on sites like YouTube"*. The results are shown in Figure 144.

Three in ten newer internet users say they have seen this kind of hateful content online in the past year (31%), less likely than among established users (48%). Four per cent of newer users say they have 'often' seen this type of content, less likely than established users (15%), and more than one quarter (27%) of newer users say they have 'sometimes' seen hateful content online in the past year.

Figure 144: Experience of seeing hateful content online in the past year: newer vs. established users



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN18A. In the past year have you seen anything hateful on the internet that has been directed at a particular group of people, based on for instance their gender, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity? Examples of these sorts of things might be cruel or hateful comments or images that have been posted on social media, comments in response to an article that you read online, or videos posted on sites like YouTube (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (1570) who first went online less than 5 years ago (133), 5+ years (1384)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between newer and established users

Narrow internet users

In previous years the breadth-of-use analysis included in this report was run from Ofcom's Media Literacy Tracker. Since 2016, the breadth-of-use analysis included here uses the Technology Tracker data.

In the Technology Tracker study, internet users are asked whether they have ever undertaken 24 individual online activities. Twenty-three of the 24 activities[75] have been grouped into 15 types of online use. Internet users have been categorised as narrow, medium or broad users of the internet, depending on how many of these 15 types of use they ever make.

Narrow users are defined as those ever carrying out up to four of the 15 types of online use, medium users ever carry out between five and nine types, and broad users ever carry out between ten and 15 types.

The 15 types of use are:

1. Email – send or receive emails.

[75] For the purpose of this analysis the activity 'General surfing/ browsing the internet' has not been included.

2. Transactions - online shopping (purchasing goods/ services/ tickets etc.), trading/ auctions e.g. eBay.
3. Communications – Communicating via instant messaging e.g. Facebook Chat, Skype Chat, Snapchat, making voice calls using a VoIP service e.g. Skype, making video calls e.g. via FaceTime, Skype.
4. Banking
5. Social media – using social networking (such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Bebo or Snapchat), using Twitter (browsing, reading, posting on site).
6. News – accessing news.
7. Information for work/ school/ college – finding/ downloading information for work/ business/ school/ college/ university/ homework.
8. Health – find information on health-related issues.
9. Government services – Using local council/ government sites e.g. to find information, to complete processes such as tax returns, to contact local MP.
10. Watch short video clips – Watching short video clips (e.g. on YouTube, Dailymotion, Vimeo or Facebook).
11. Watching TV content – watching TV programmes or film content online.
12. Radio/ audio services – listening to radio, streamed audio services (free) e.g. Spotify (free) or Deezer (free), streamed audio services (subscription) e.g. Spotify Premium, Apple Music or Deezer Premium.
13. Upload/ add content to the internet – uploading/ adding content to the internet e.g. photos, videos, blog posts.
14. Games – playing games online or interactively.
15. Remote - Accessing files through a cloud service such as Dropbox, Google Drive, Microsoft OneDrive or Apple iCloud, remotely control TV services at home such as Sky+, Sky Q or Tivo using an online device, remotely control or monitor household appliances e.g. fridge, cooker, washing machine, tumble dryer and/ or home heating, lighting or security system or home energy consumption.

Incidence of narrow users within the online population

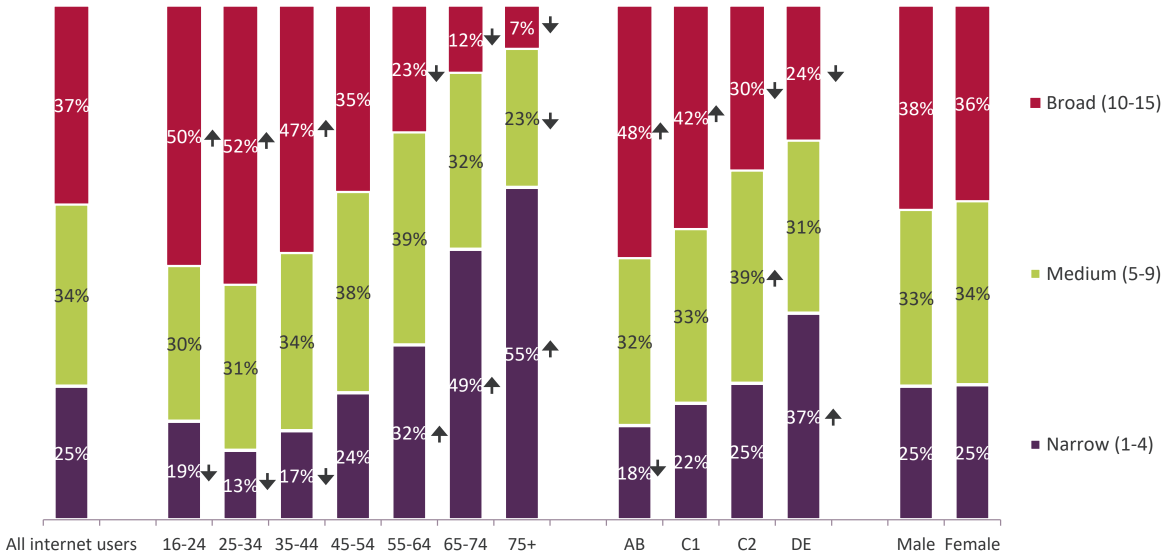
Internet users aged 55+ and those in DE households are more likely to be narrow users

Figure 145 compares the distribution of narrow, medium and broad users in 2017, across the different demographic groups.

Narrow users account for 25% of all internet users, medium users account for 34% of internet users and broad users for 37%.

Those aged 55 and over are more likely than average to be narrow users (32% for 55-64s, 49% for 65-74s and 55% for over-74s), while those aged 16-44 are less likely to be narrow users (19% for 16-24s, 13% for 25-34s, 17% for 35-44s). Compared to the average, those in the DE socio-economic group (37%) are more likely to be narrow users, while those in AB households are less likely (18%).

Figure 145: Breadth of use of the internet, by demographic group



Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker, H2 2017
QE5A. Which, if any, of these do you use the internet for? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (2514 in 2017, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all who go online and men compared to women

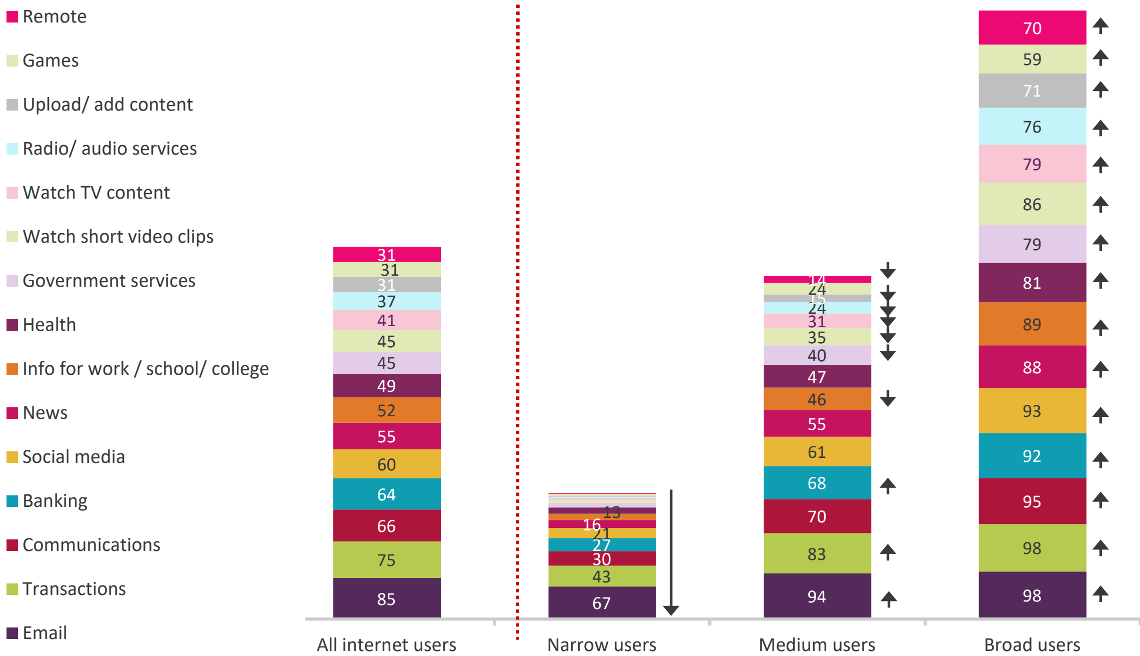
Types of online activity undertaken

The only type of activity undertaken by a majority of narrow internet users is email

Based on the breadth-of-use analysis, it is reasonable to expect that narrow users will be less likely to have conducted most of these types of activity. Figure 146 clearly shows the contrast between narrow users, who are less likely to have ever done all 15 activities, and broad users, who are more likely to have ever done them.

And while a majority of the narrow users have ever undertaken only one of these types of activity – email (67%) – a majority of broad internet users have undertaken all 15 types.

Figure 146: Categories of internet use: narrow, medium and broad users



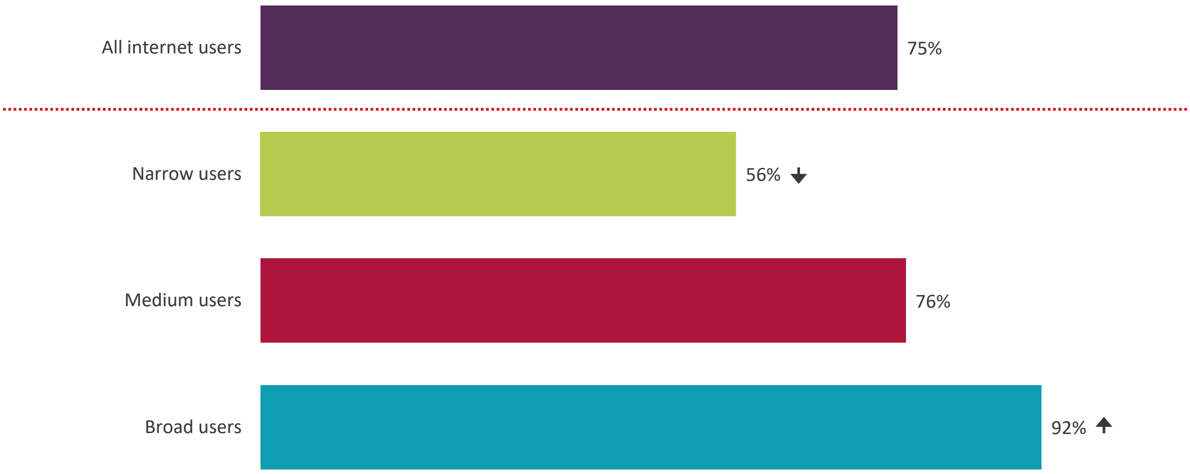
Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker, H2 2017
QE5A. Which, if any, of these do you use the internet for? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (2514 in 2017), narrow (678), medium (862) and broad users (853)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between any of the breadth of user categories and all internet users

Internet use – location and frequency of use

While more than half of narrow users say they go online outside the home, this is lower compared to broad users

In 2017, three-quarters (75%) of all internet users say they go online outside the home. This is less likely among narrow users (56%) and more likely among broad internet users (92%).

Figure 147: Use of the internet outside the home: narrow, medium and broad users



Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker, H2 2017
IN6. Do you ever go online anywhere other than in your home at all? IF YES: Where is that? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (2514 in 2017), narrow (678), medium (862) and broad users (853)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between any of the breadth of user categories and all internet users

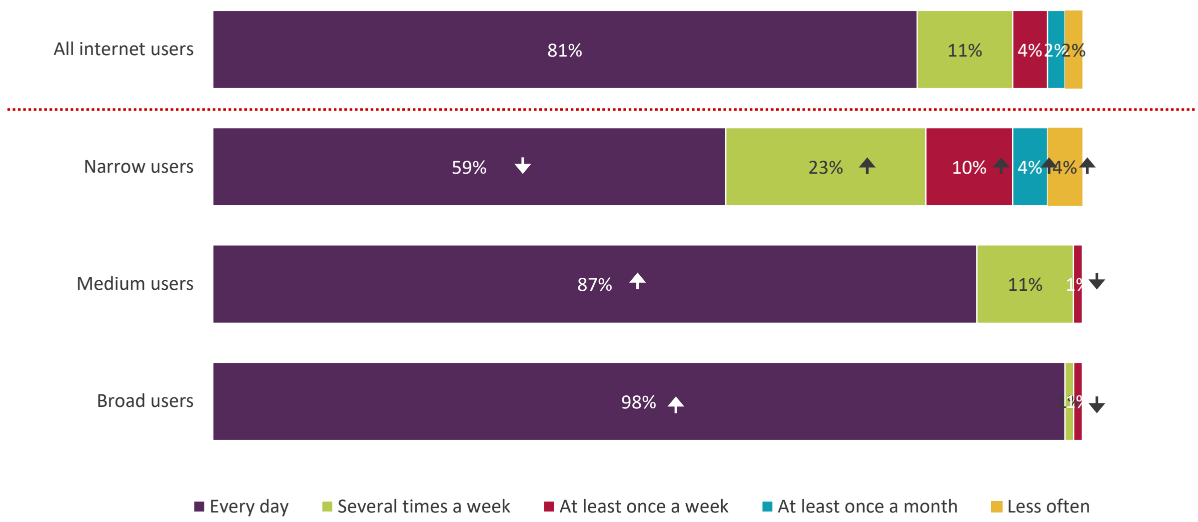
Two in five of narrow internet users say they go online less often than every day

As shown in Figure 148, four in five internet users say they go online every day (81%), with one in ten (11%) going online several times a week. A further 4% say they go online at least once a week and fewer do it at least once a month (2%).

Compared to the average (81%), narrow users are less likely to say they go online every day (59%); they are more likely to say they go online less frequently, whether several times a week (23%), at least once a week (10%) or at least once a month (4%). As such, two in five (41%) narrow users say they go online less frequently than every day.

In contrast, nearly all broad users (98%) say they go online every day.

Figure 148: Frequency of internet use: narrow, medium and broad users



Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker, H2 2017
QE23. And how often do you personally use the internet nowadays either at home or elsewhere? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (2514 in 2017), narrow (678), medium (862) and broad users (853)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between any of the breadth of user categories and all internet users

Online knowledge and understanding of VoIP

More than four in five narrow users are aware of VoIP

While awareness of VoIP among narrow users is high, at 82%, this is lower than average (90%). For broad users, awareness is near-universal (96%).

Figure 149: Awareness of VoIP: narrow, medium and broad users

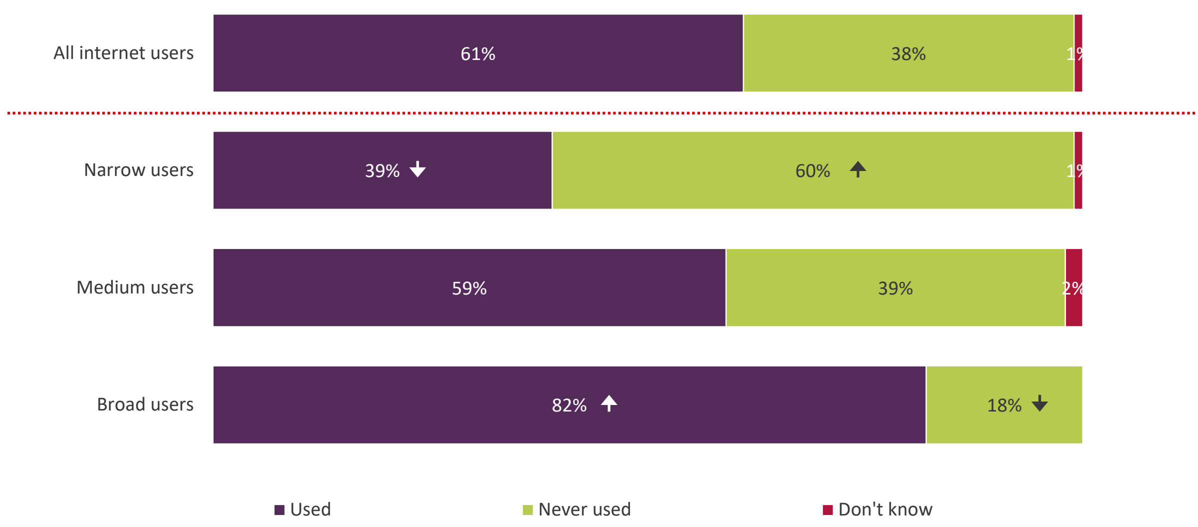
Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker, H2 2017
QE29. Before now, were you aware that you could make voice calls or video calls using the internet? (unprompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (2514 in 2017), narrow (678), medium (862) and broad users (853)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between any of the breadth of user categories and all internet users

Two in five narrow users have ever used VoIP

In addition to asking about awareness of VoIP, adult internet users were asked whether they or anyone in the household had ever used these services to make voice calls using the internet. The results are shown in Figure 150.

Three in five internet users (61%) have ever used VoIP services to make voice calls; this incidence is lower for narrow users (39%) and higher for broad users (82%).

Figure 150: Use of VoIP: narrow, medium and broad users



Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker, H2 2017
QE30. Have you or anyone in your household ever used one of these services to make voice calls using the internet at home? (unprompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (2514 in 2017), narrow (678), medium (862) and broad users (853)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between any of the breadth of user categories and all internet users

On-demand viewing

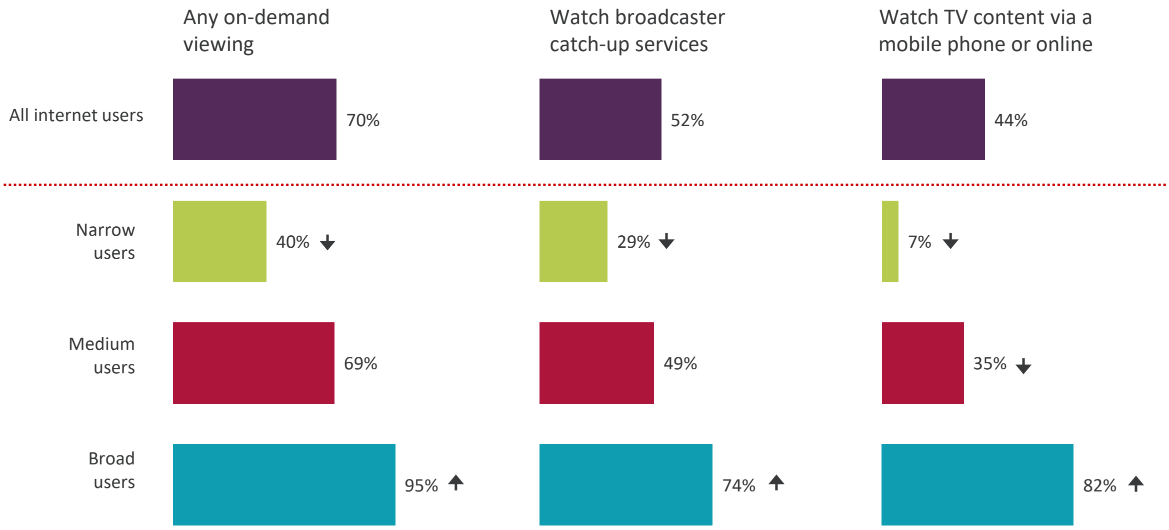
Narrow users are less likely to watch television content through broadcaster catch-up services and to watch on-demand content more generally

All respondents on the Technology Tracker survey are asked about their television viewing habits. Figure 151 shows the results relating to viewing that requires online connectivity in order to access television content.

Half of all internet users say they watch broadcaster catch-up services[76] (52%); this is less likely among narrow users (29%) and more likely among broad users (74%). Overall, seven in ten of all internet users say they watch any type of on-demand content[77] (70%); this is also less likely for narrow users (40%) and more likely for broad users (95%).

More than four in ten internet users (44%) say they watch television content on a mobile phone or online, this is less likely for narrow users (7%) and medium users (35%), and more likely for broad users (82%).

Figure 151: Use of on-demand services: narrow, medium and broad users



Source: Ofcom Technology Tracker, H2 2017
Derived from several questions
Base: All adults aged 16+ who go online (2514 in 2017), narrow (678), medium (862) and broad users (853)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between any of the breadth of user categories and all internet users

Non-users of the internet

This section looks at the incidence of non-use of the internet, i.e. those who say they do not go online, and compares the demographic profiles of internet users and non-users in 2017. This section uses data from the 2017 Media Literacy Tracker.

[76] Having selected 'TV programmes/ films on broadcaster services (e.g. BBC iPlayer, ITV Hub, All 4, My 5 or Sky Go)' when asked: Do you use any of the following types of services to view online TV programmes or films via any type of device (including a mobile phone, tablet or TV set).

[77] Based on those respondents who said they either a) used their DVR to watch recorded programmes b) watched content on broadcaster services, c) watched live TV content online as it was broadcast d) purchased content through pay-per-view services or stand-alone subscription services e) watched other free professional TV programmes or video channels or f) watched TV programmes or films via a mobile phone or online.

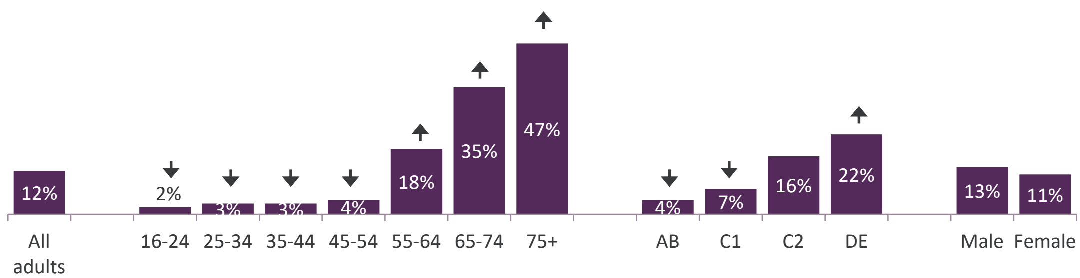
Incidence of non-user of the internet within the adult population

Non-use of the internet is more likely among those aged 55+

Figure 152 shows that 12% of adults in the UK are non-users of the internet, and that this is more likely for the over-54s (18% for 55-64s, 35% for 65-74s and 47% for those aged 75+) and for adults in DE households (22%).

While not shown in the chart, there has been no change in the incidence of non-users in the past three years (14% in 2014, 13% in 2015, 14% in 2016).

Figure 152: Incidence of non-use of the internet, by demographic group



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN1. Do you ever go online? (unprompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1875 aged 16+, varies by demographic)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) by age/ socio-economic group compared to all adults and men compared to women

Demographic profile of non-users versus internet users

A third of non-users are aged 75 and over

Figure 153 compares the age, socio-economic group and gender profile of internet users and non-users.

Non-users are more likely than users to be aged 65 or over. More than three in five (62%) non-users are in this age bracket, compared to 14% of internet users.

Close to half of non-users are in the DE socio-economic group, compared to one in five internet users (45% vs. 22%).

Figure 153: Demographic profile of all UK adults: users and non-users of the internet

Demographic	All UK adults	Internet users	Non-users of the internet
Aged 16-24	13%	14%	2%
Aged 25-44	37%	41%	9%
Aged 45-64	30%	30%	27%
Aged 65-74	11%	9%	29%
Aged 75+	10%	5%	34%
AB	27%	29%	9%
C1	27%	28%	16%
C2	22%	21%	29%
DE	25%	22%	45%
Male	49%	49%	53%
Female	51%	51%	47%

Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN1. Do you ever go online? (unprompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16+ (1875 aged 16+,1570 internet users, 305 non-users of the internet)

Reasons for not going online

More than half of non-users say they do not go online because they do not see the need

Non-users of the internet are prompted with eight options[78] and are asked to say which describe the reasons why they don't go online. The results are shown in Figure 154. There is only one reason mentioned by more than half of all non-users: 52% say it is because it is not for people like them/ they don't see the need. Around one in five non-users (19%) have safety concerns, either mentioning that they don't trust the internet or that being online is not safe or secure. A similar proportion, one in six, say it is because they don't have the right equipment (17%) or because being online is too complicated (16%). Slightly fewer say it is because they don't have the right help or know how to start (14%). One in ten non-users mention that the equipment needed to go online is too expensive (11%) or that getting online itself is too complicated (11%). Any other reason is mentioned by 7% of non-users or less.

Overall, one in five non-users (22%) mention a reason for non-use relating to it being too complicated, while 15% mention a cost-related reason.

Given the relatively low numbers of non-users, any further analysis by age is limited to looking at any differences among those aged under and over 65. Non-users aged 65 and over are more likely than those aged 16-64 to say they don't go online because they do not see the need (57% vs. 42%), or

[78] As well as an option to give some other response or to say they are unsure.

because it is not for people their age (4% vs. 0%). In contrast, younger non-users are more likely than those aged 65+ to say it is due to cost (25% vs. 7%), whether the cost of the equipment (19% vs. 5%) or the cost of being online (12% vs. 3%).

Figure 154: Reasons for not going online, by age of non-user

	All non- internet users aged 16+	Aged 16-64	Aged 65+
It's just not for people for like me/ I don't see the need	52%	42%	57% ↑
I don't trust the internet/ being online is not safe/secure	19%	23%	17%
I don't have the right equipment	17%	17%	16%
Using the internet, finding your way around on the internet is too complicated	16%	12%	20%
I don't have the right help to know how to start	14%	9%	16%
The equipment needed to go online is too expensive/ not worth the money	11%	19% ↑	5%
Getting online/ getting connected to the internet is too complicated	11%	9%	12%
Being connected to the internet is too expensive/ not worth the money	7%	12% ↑	3%
UNPROMPTED - I'm not interested	4%	2%	7%
UNPROMPTED - I'm too old for it/ not for people my age	3%	0%	4% ↑
UNPROMPTED - Don't need to as someone else in the household (husband/wife) goes online	2%	2%	1%
Other	5%	9%	3%
Don't know	3%	5%	1%
ANY REASON RELATING TO 'BEING TOO COMPLICATED'	22%	19%	26%
ANY REASONS RELATING TO 'COST'	15%	25% ↑	7%

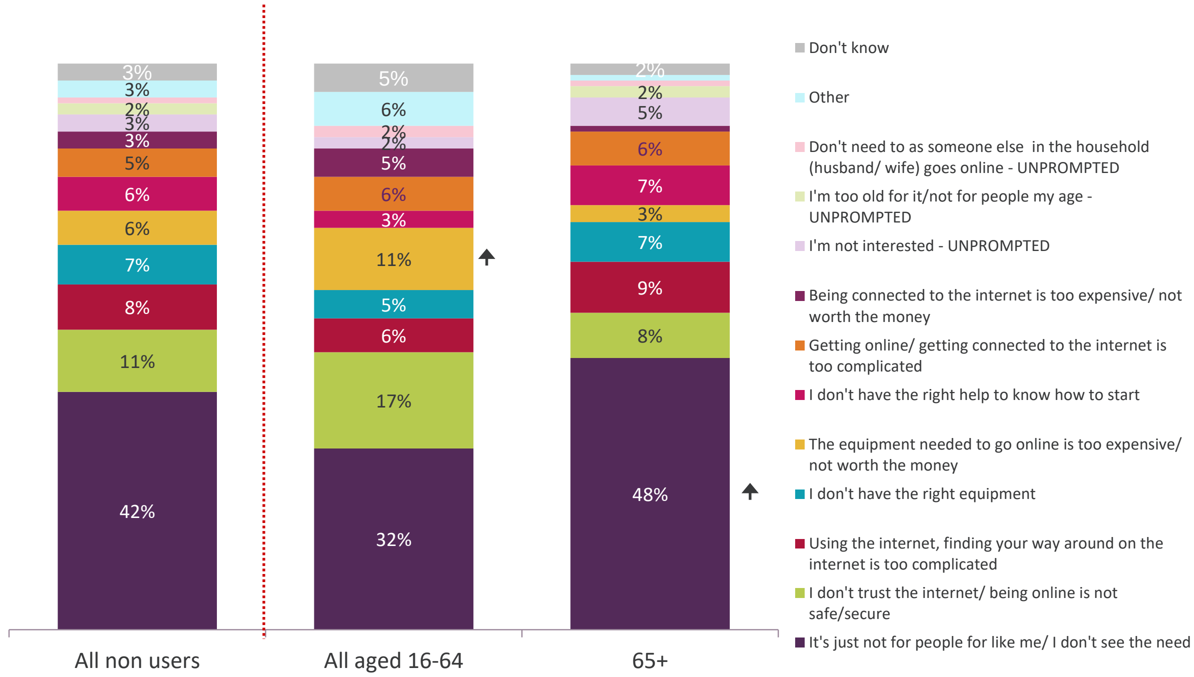
Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN8A. Which of these reasons describe why you don't go online? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: Adult internet users aged 16+ who do not go online (305 aged 16+, 114 aged 16-64, 191 aged 65+)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between non-users aged 16-64 and those aged 65+

Non-users aged 16-64 are more likely than over-64s to say their main reason for not going online is due to cost

Non-users of the internet are also asked to say which one is their *main* reason for not going online. More than four in ten of all non-users say it 'is not for people like them/ they don't see the need' (42%), with one in ten (11%) saying they don't trust being online as it is not safe/secure. Less than one in ten give any other response as their main reason for not being online.

There are only two differences by the age groups shown in Figure 155; non-users aged 16-64 are more likely than the over-64s to say the main reason for going online is because 'the equipment needed to go online is too expensive/ not worth the money' (11% vs. 3%). Those aged 65 and over are more likely than those aged 16-64 to say the main reason is because 'it's just not for people like me/ I don't see the need' (48% vs. 32%).

Figure 155: Main reason for not going online, by age of non-user



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN8B. Which one of the following best describes the main reason why you don't go online? (prompted responses, single coded)
Showing response given by >1% of non–users
Base: Adult internet users aged 16+ who do not go online (305 aged 16+, 114 aged 16-64, 191 aged 65+)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between non-users aged 16-64 and those aged 65+

Proxy use of the internet by non-users

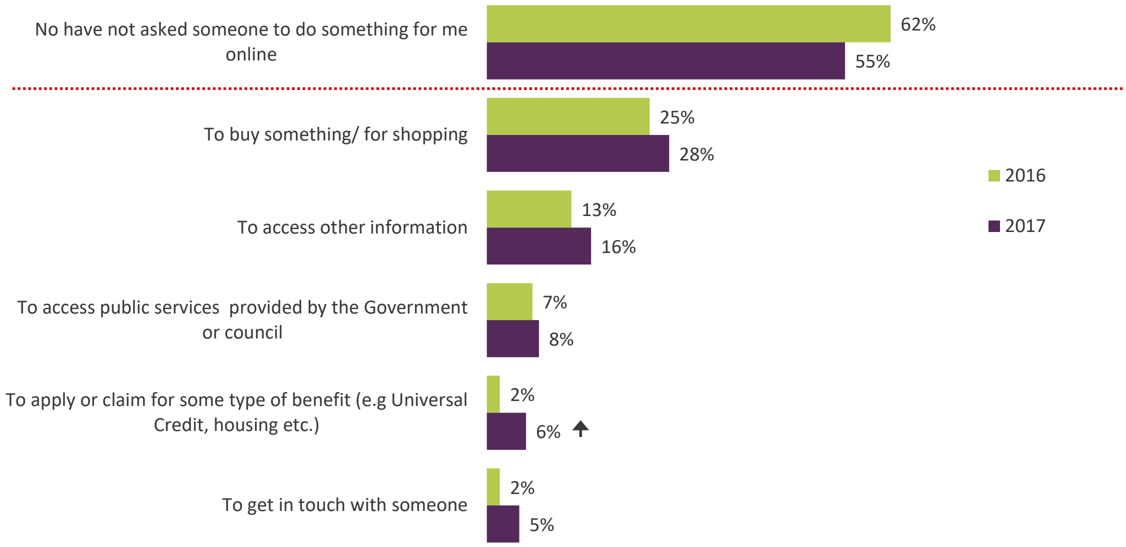
More than two in five non-users have asked someone else to use the internet on their behalf in the past year

We ask non-users of the internet whether they have asked someone else to do something for them online in the past year. If they say they have, they are prompted with five options and asked to say which of these reasons applies to them.

More than two in five (44%) non-users say they have made a 'proxy' use of the internet in this way, with more than a quarter saying it was to buy something (28%) and one in six (16%) saying it was to access information (other than public service information). Eight per cent say it was to access public services provided by the government or council (e.g. doctor or hospital appointments, to apply for a bus pass or to get information about tax etc.). A similar proportion say it was to apply for or claim some type of benefit (e.g. Universal Credit, housing, health, employment and so on) (6%) or to get in touch with someone (5%).

Compared to 2016, while overall proxy use of the internet in the past year is no more likely, proxy use to apply or claim for some type of benefit is more likely (6% vs. 2%).

Figure 156: Proxy use of the internet in the past year, among non-users



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN9. In the past year have you asked someone else to do something for you on the internet? IF YES: And was it to do any of the following or to do something else? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: Adult internet users aged 16+ who do not go online (293 in 2016, 305 in 2017)
Arrows show significant changes (95% level) between 2016 and 2017

More than three in five non-users say that nothing would encourage them to go online in the next 12 months.

Non-users are prompted with nine possible reasons[79] and asked to say which, if any, would prompt them to go online in the next 12 months.

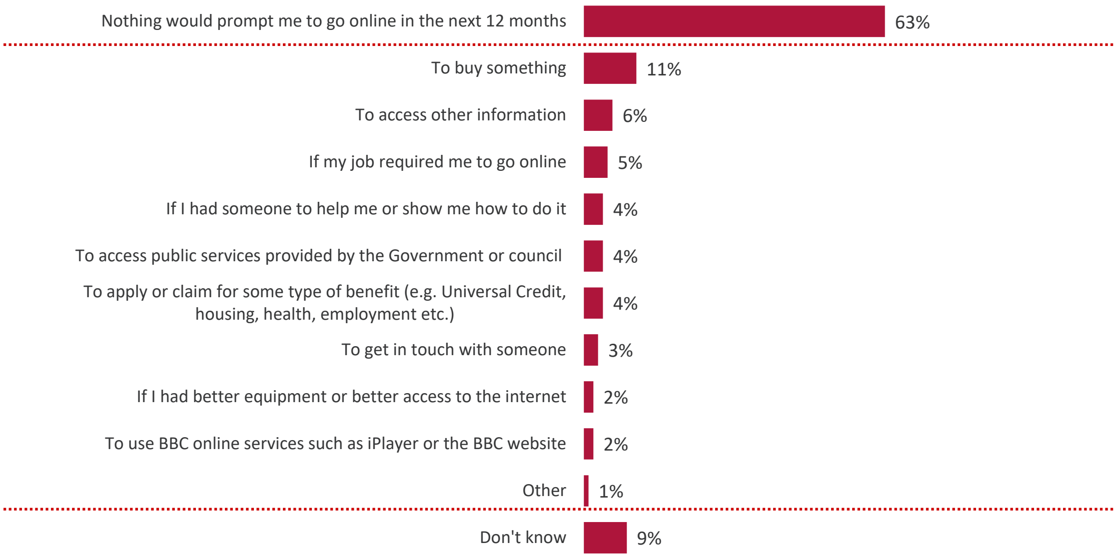
More than three in five (63%) say that nothing would prompt them to go online in the next 12 months; this is less likely among non-users aged 16-64 (47%) than among over-64s (74%). The proportion saying this has decreased since 2016 (75%).[80]

Among all non-users, close to three in ten (28%) mention something that would prompt them to go online. One in ten (11%) say they would be prompted to go online to purchase something, while around half this number (6%) say they would go online to access to access information (other than public service information) or if their job required them to go online (5%). All other 'prompts' to go online are mentioned by less than 5% of non-users.

Compared to the over-64s, non-users aged 16-64 are more likely to say they would be prompted to go online if their job required them to do this (12% vs. 0%), or to apply or claim for some type of benefit (8% vs. 0%).

[79] As well as an option to give some other response or to say they are unsure.
[80] However, it is worth noting that in 2017 non-users were prompted with seven possible reasons for going online compared to nine in 2016 which could account for this change.

Figure 157: Possible reasons to go online in the next 12 months



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN10. And would any of these reasons prompt you to go online in the next 12 months? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: Adult internet users aged 16+ who do not go online (305 aged 16+)

A1. Adults' of working age: differences by household socio-economic group

This section explores differences in the media use, behaviour and attitudes of adults of working age (aged 16-64) by household socio-economic group, and in particular comparing those in the DE socio-economic group[81] with adults outside the DE socio-economic group (i.e. those in AB/C1/C2 households).

Throughout this report there is clear evidence that adults in DE households and older adults (aged 65+) differ in terms of their media use and critical understanding, when compared to adults overall. As older adults tend to be over-represented in the DE socio-economic group[82], older adults have been excluded from this analysis, in order better to understand whether these differences are driven by age, socio-economic group, or both.

In this section we therefore explore the following:

- Access to and use of devices/ media within the home.
- Devices used to go online and incidence of 'newer' internet use.
- Use of websites not used before and confidence as an internet user.
- Awareness of ways in which online companies can collect internet users' personal information.
- Awareness of the main source of funding for TV programmes, websites and online services and opinions on the accuracy of results returned by search engines.

Our analysis shows that there are socio-economic differences among working age adults across media use, behaviour and attitudes, which are not accounted for by age. However, we are not able to identify the cause of those differences. There are a number of factors that could be relevant. For instance, adults aged 16-64 in DE households are more likely than those in ABC1C2 households to be living with a long-term illness, disability or infirmity (23% vs. 7%).

Key findings

- Compared to 16-64s in AB/C1/C2 households, those in DE households are less likely to have access to, and therefore to use, media in the home such as mobile phones, computers and tablets.
- Adults aged 16-64 in DE households are three times more likely than those in non-DE households to be non-users of the internet (12% vs. 4%).

[81] Social grading divides up households based on the job of the highest income earner, social grade D comprises semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers and E comprises state pensioners, casual and lowest grade workers, unemployed with state benefits only.
[82] A quarter of adults aged 16+ are in DE households (25%); this rises to one in three (32%) among adults aged 65 and over.

- Among those that go online, adults of working age in DE households are much more likely than those in non-DE households to only use a smartphone to go online (20% vs. 7%); they are also much more likely to be newer internet users – having first been online less than five years ago (14% vs. 4% among 16-64s in non-DE households).
- There are also differences in the types of things they do online. Those aged 16-64 in DE households are more likely to only use websites or apps they've used before (48% vs. 33% for those in non-DE households) and are less likely to access news content online or to have ever been online to access public or civic services.
- Internet users of working age in DE households are less confident users compared to those in non-DE households. They are also less confident in knowing how to manage who has access to their personal data online. This is corroborated by their being less aware of the ways in which online companies may collect information about what people are doing online.
- Adults aged 16-64 in DE households are less likely than those in non-DE households to be aware that the licence fee is the main source of funding for BBC TV programmes (65% vs. 81%), the BBC website (58% vs. 69%) and the BBC iPlayer service (48% vs. 60%). They are also less likely to say that advertising is the main source of funding for TV programmes on ITV, Channel 4 and Five (61% vs. 71%) and to say that subscriptions mainly fund content on Sky and Virgin Media (44% vs. 59%). They are also less likely to say that YouTube is mostly funded by advertising (41% vs. 51%) and to identify the correct sources of funding of search engine websites (45% vs. 61%).
- Search engine users aged 16-64 in DE households are less likely than those in ABC1C2 households to be aware that the results returned by search engines may contain inaccurate or biased information (49% vs. 62%).

Access to and use of devices/ media within the home

Adults aged 16-64 in DE households are less likely than those in non-DE households to have access to, and to use, most devices/ media within the home

In the Media Literacy Tracker we ask respondents about a range of media platforms/ devices to find out which, if any, they have access to at home and which they personally use. The results are shown in Figure 1 for adults aged 16-64, those aged 16-64 in DE households and those in non-DE (AB/C1/C2) households.

A majority of UK adults aged 16-64 in ABC1C2 households have access to seven of the devices shown in Figure 1: a mobile phone (97%), a desktop, laptop or netbook computer (82%), a tablet (75%), a standard (non-smart) TV set (61%), a digital video recorder (DVR) (60%), a radio set (58%) and a smart TV set (57%). In contrast, only four of these devices are owned by a majority of adults aged 16-64 in DE households: a mobile phone (93%), a standard TV set (68%), a desktop, laptop or netbook computer (58%) and a tablet (55%).

Compared to those in non-DE households, those aged 16-64 in DE households are more likely to own a standard TV set (68% vs. 61% for non-DE households) and are as likely to own a games console or player (42% vs. 47% for non-DE households). They are however, less likely to own each of the remaining eight devices shown.

As a result of these lower levels of household ownership compared to non-DE households, adults aged 16-64 in DE households are less likely to use each of these eight devices: mobile phone (89% vs. 94% in non-DE households), a desktop, laptop or netbook computer (53% vs. 76%), a tablet (46% vs. 68%), a radio set (34% vs. 46%), a DVR (32% vs. 51%), a smart TV set (36% vs. 53%), a streaming media player (12% vs. 23%) and wearable technology (5% vs. 13%). Adults of working age in DE households are also less likely to use a smartphone[83] (77% vs. 87% for those in non-DE households).

Use of a standard (non-smart) TV set is higher among 16-64s in DE households (60%) than among those in non-DE households (51%).

Figure 158: Summary of access to and use of devices/ media at home: ABC1C2 16-64s vs. DE 16-64s

	All aged 16-64		All 16-64 ABC1C2		All 16-64 DE	
	Access	Use	Access	Use	Access	Use
Any mobile phone	96%	92%	97%	94%	93% ↓	89% ↓
Smartphone	NA	85%	NA	87%	NA	77% ↓
Computer	76%	70%	82%	76%	58% ↓	53% ↓
Standard TV set	63%	53%	61%	51%	68% ↑	60% ↑
Tablet	70%	62%	75%	68%	55% ↓	46% ↓
Radio set (DAB or otherwise)	54%	43%	58%	46%	43% ↓	34% ↓
DVR/ Digital Video Recorder	55%	46%	60%	51%	39% ↓	32% ↓
Smart TV set	52%	49%	57%	53%	38% ↓	36% ↓
Games console /games player	46%	26%	47%	25%	42%	28%
Streaming media player	25%	20%	28%	23%	15% ↓	12% ↓
Wearable technology	16%	11%	19%	13%	7% ↓	5% ↓
ANY TV	97%	89%	97%	89%	97%	88%

Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
A1/ A2. Can you please look at this list and tell me which of these you have at home? (prompted responses, multi-coded)/ And which of these devices that you just said you had at home do you personally ever use, for any purpose? (prompted responses, multi-coded).
Base: All adults aged 16-64 (1395), all 16-64s in ABC1C2 households (1027), all 16-64s in DE households (368)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between 16-64s in DE households and 16-64s in ABC1C2 households for access to and for use of devices

Internet use and devices used to go online

More than one in ten 16-64s in DE households are non-users of the internet

More than nine in ten (94%) of all adults aged 16-64 go online. This incidence rises to nearly all adults of this age in AB/C1/C2 households (96%). As such, the incidence of non-use of the internet is three times higher among 16-64s in DE households (12%) than among those in non-DE households (4%)

[83] It is not possible to show data for access to a smartphone within the home, only personal use.

Figure 159: Incidence of internet use: ABC1C2 16-64s vs. DE 16-64s

Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN1. Do you ever go online? (prompted responses, single-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16-64 (1395), all 16-64s in ABC1C2 households (1027), all 16-64s in DE households (368)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between 16-64s in DE households and 16-64s in ABC1C2 households

One in five adults aged 16-64 in DE households only go online on a smartphone

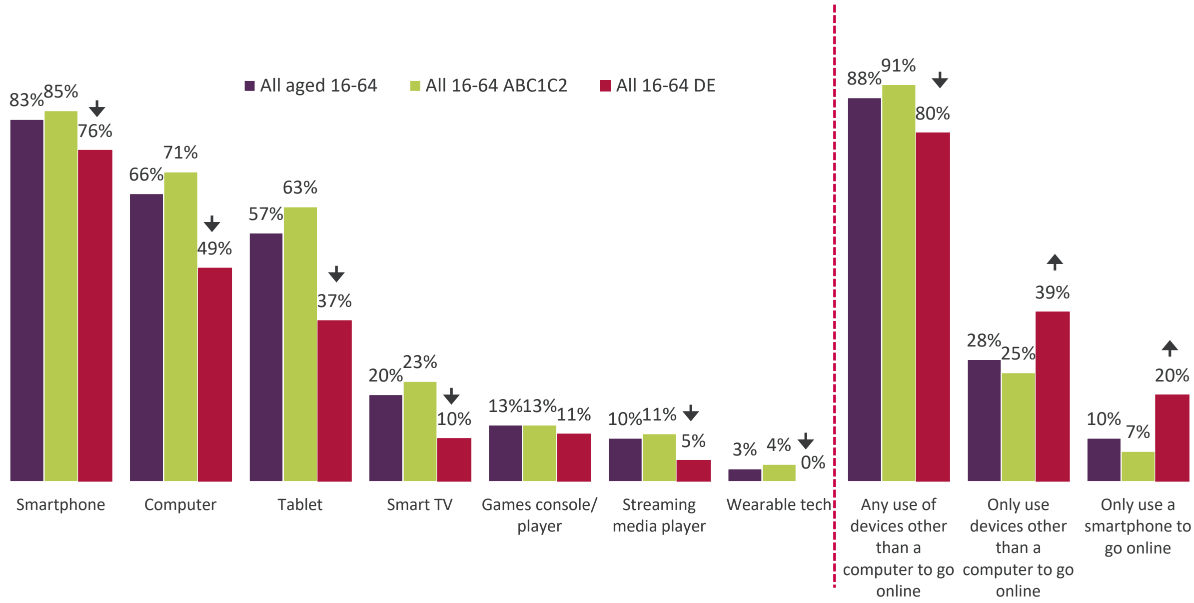
Compared to those in non-DE households, adults aged 16-64 in DE households are less likely to go online through nearly all of the devices shown in Figure 3, with only one device used to go online by a majority of adults aged 16-64 in DE households – a smartphone (76%). This group are as likely as those in non-DE households to go online through a games console or player (11% vs. 13% for those in non-DE households).

While a quarter (25%) of adults aged 16-64 in non-DE households only go online on devices other than a computer, this increases to two in five (39%) among those in DE households. One in five (20%) adults aged 16-64 in DE households only use a smartphone to go online (compared to 7% in non-DE households).

As well as being more likely to only use a smartphone to go online, 16-64s in DE households are more likely than those in non-DE households to say they use up their smartphone data allowance 'very often/ in most months' (20% vs. 11%).

While not shown in Figure 3, adults aged 16-64 in DE households have a lower weekly volume of internet use (totalled across use at home, at work/place of education or anywhere else) compared to those in non-DE households (23 vs. 27.1 hours). This difference exists despite those in DE households spending more time online at home in a typical week (17.9 vs. 15.2 hours among those in non-DE households). Adults of working age in DE households do, however, have a lower volume of use in the workplace or place of education (2.6 vs. 9.1 hours).

Figure 160: Devices used to go online: ABC1C2 16-64s vs. DE 16-64s



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN2. Do you go online using any of these devices? (prompted responses, multi-coded)

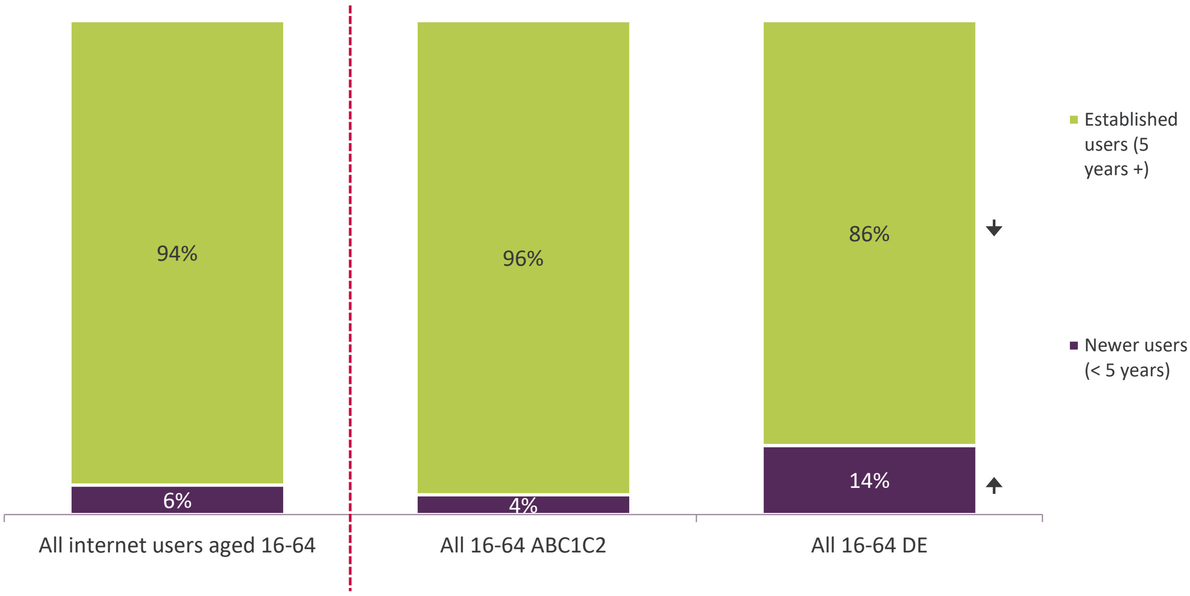
Base: All adults aged 16-64 (1395), all 16-64s in ABC1C2 households (1027), all 16-64s in DE households (368)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between 16-64s in DE households and 16-64s in ABC1C2 households

Incidence of newer internet users within the online population of adults aged 16-64

One in seven adults aged 16-64 in DE households who go online are newer internet users

Across all UK adult internet users aged 16-64, 6% are 'newer' users (having first started using the internet under 5 years ago), with the remaining 94% 'established' internet users (who first started using at least five years ago). As shown in Figure 4, adults of working age in DE households are more likely than those in non-DE households to be newer internet users (14% vs. 4%).

Figure 161: Proportion of newer and established users: ABC1C2 16-64s vs. DE 16-64s

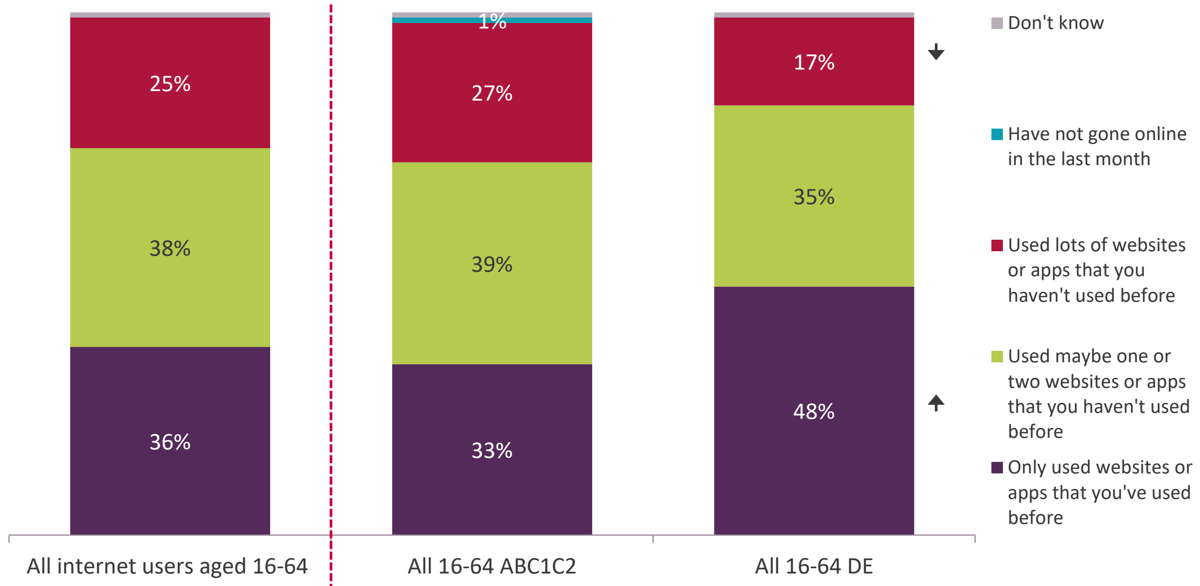


Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN3. How long ago did you first start going online? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16-64 who go online (1281), all 16-64s in ABC1C2 households (974), all 16-64s in DE households (307)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between 16-64s in DE households and 16-64s in ABC1C2 households

In the previous month, close to half of internet users aged 16-64 in DE households only used sites and apps they have used before

In the previous month when they have been online, internet users aged 16-64 in DE households (48%) are more likely than those in non-DE households (33%) to say that they have only used websites or apps they have used before. Consequently, they are less likely than those in non-DE households to say they 'used lots of websites or apps they haven't used before' (17% vs. 27%).

Figure 162: Use of websites or apps in the last month not used before: ABC1C2 16-64s vs. DE 16-64s



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN12. In the last month, when you have gone online, have you …… (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16-64 who go online (1281), all 16-64s in ABC1C2 households (974), all 16-64s in DE households (307)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between 16-64s in DE households and 16-64s in ABC1C2 households

Differences are also apparent in the types of activities undertaken online. Compared to those aged 16-64 in non-DE households, those in DE households are less likely to have ever:

- accessed news websites or websites about politics or current affairs (53% vs. 66% for those in non-DE households);
- completed government processes online – such as updating Universal Credit, renewinga driving licence or passport etc. (52% vs. 63%);
- looked online for public services information on government sites such as ni.direct/ gov.uk or HMRC (52% vs. 62%);
- paid bills or checked bills online (45% vs. 60%);
- paid online for council tax or for another local council service (parking ticket, congestion charge etc.) (35% vs. 51%); or
- signed an online petition or used a campaigning website such as change.org (36% vs. 45%).

Confidence as an internet user

Internet users of working age in DE households are less confident users than those in non-DE households

Figure 6 shows the self-reported ratings of confidence, across the different aspects of using the internet, as given by users aged 16-64 in DE and non-DE households.

Those aged 16-64 in DE households are less likely than those in non-DE households to say they are confident *"overall as an internet user"* (84% vs. 92%) and to say they are confident in *"knowing how to manage who has access to their personal data online"* (70% vs. 79%). In both these instances those in DE households are more likely than those in non-DE households to say they are 'not confident' with these aspects of their internet use (either not very, or not at all confident).

While 16-64s in DE households are as likely as those in non-DE households to say that when they see or read things online they are confident "in knowing what is advertising and what is not" (84% vs. 89% in non-DE households), internet users in DE households are more likely to say they are 'not confident ' (8% vs. 4% for those in non-DE households).

Figure 163: Confidence as an internet user: ABC1C2 16-64s vs. DE 16-64s

Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN11A/C/D. I'm going to read out some questions about confidence using the internet, for each one please say which of the options on the card applies to you (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16-64 who go online (1281), all 16-64s in ABC1C2 households (974), all 16-64s in DE households (307)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between 16-64s in DE households and 16-64s in ABC1C2 households

Awareness of companies collecting personal information online

Adults of working age in DE households are less likely to be aware of the ways in which online companies may collect information about what they do online

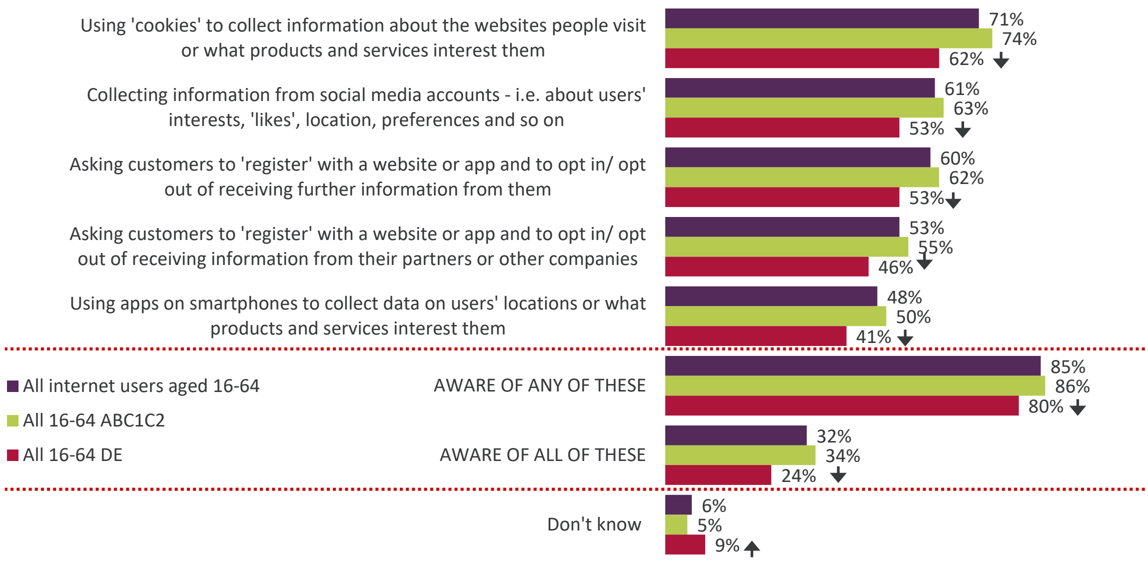
In 2017 questions were added to the Media Literacy study to understand internet users' awareness of and attitudes towards online companies collecting information about what they do online.

Internet users were prompted with five options and were asked the following question: "*There are many ways that online companies can collect information about people based on what they do online. Which, if any, of the following ways are you aware of?*"[84]

The results are shown in Figure 7. At least half of internet users aged 16-64 in AB/C1/C2 households are aware of each of the five ways, while this applies to only three of the five options among users in DE households. Among 16-64s in DE households, awareness is highest for the use of cookies[85] to collect information about the websites people visit or the products/ services that interest them (62%), and lowest for using apps on smartphones to collect data on users' locations or on what products or services interest them (41%).

Compared to those in non-DE households, adults aged 16-64 in DE households are less likely to be aware of each of the five ways that we asked about, in which companies can collect information about what people do online. Eighty per cent of those in DE households are aware of at least one of these ways, lower than the 86% of those in non-DE households.

Figure 164: Awareness of ways in which online companies can collect internet users' personal information: ABC1C2 16-64s vs. DE 16-64s



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN52. There are many ways that online companies can collect information about people based on what they do online. Which, if any of the following ways are you aware of? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: All adults aged 16-64 who go online (1281), all 16-64s in ABC1C2 households (974), all 16-64s in DE households (307)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between 16-64s in DE households and 16-64s in ABC1C2 households

[84] Respondents were also provided with the following explanation: By online companies, this might be Facebook, Twitter, Google, Amazon and so on.
[85] If required, respondents were provided with the following definition of a cookie: When you go online through a browser (like Google Chrome/ Internet Explorer/ Firefox and so on) small text files known as cookies are retained on your computer or mobile phone which contain information about a specific visit to a website or app.

Awareness of how BBC TV, commercial TV and Sky and Virgin Media TV services are mainly funded

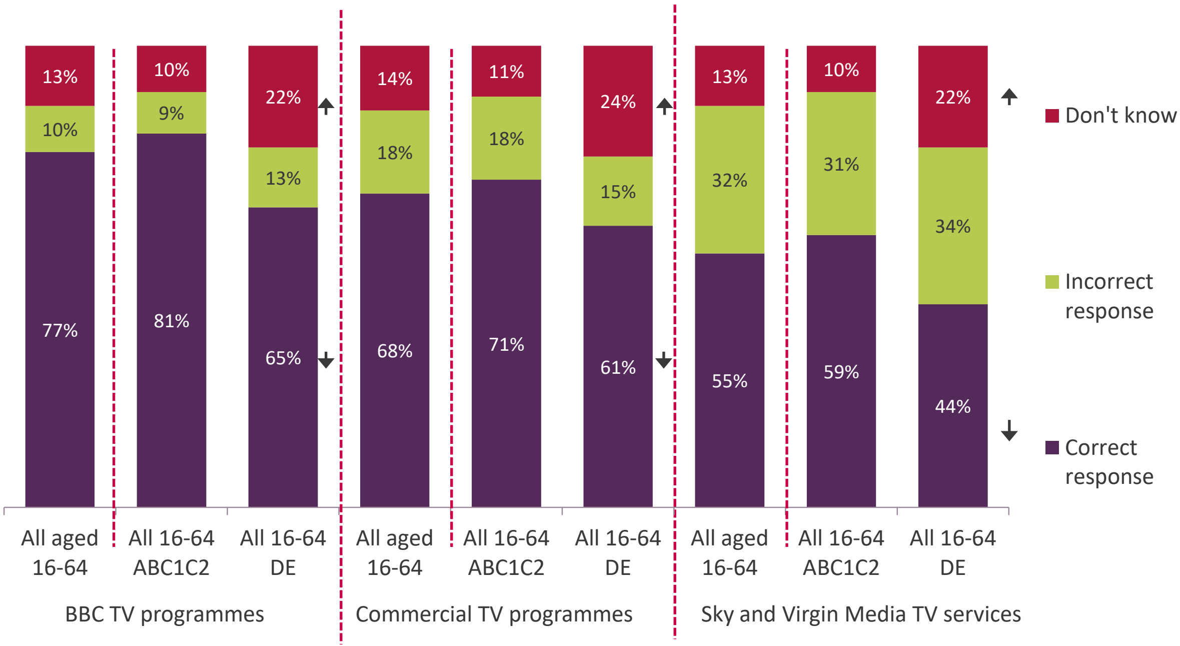
Adults aged 16-64 in DE households are less likely to be aware of the main source of funding for TV content

Adults are asked to say, without prompting, what they believe are the main sources of funding for BBC TV programmes, programmes on ITV, Channel 4 and Five and those on Sky and Virgin Media TV services.

Figure 9 shows the results among adults aged 16-64 overall, and split by those in AB/C1/C2 households and those in DE households.

Across all three types of television content, 16-64s in DE households are less likely than those in non-DE households to give the correct response about the main source of funding. But while 16-64s in DE households are no more likely to give an incorrect response, they are more likely to be unsure.

Figure 165: Awareness of how BBC TV/ commercial TV and Sky and Virgin Media TV services are mainly funded: ABC1C2 16-64s vs. DE 16-64s



Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
T4/ T5/ T6. How would you say BBC TV programmes are mainly funded/ How would you say programmes are mainly funded on ITV, Channel 4 and Five?/ How is the Sky or Virgin Media TV service mainly funded? (unprompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16-64 (1395), all 16-64s in ABC1C2 households (1027), all 16-64s in DE households (368)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between 16-64s in DE households and 16-64s in ABC1C2 households

Awareness of main source of funding for websites and online services

Adults aged 16-64 in DE households are also less likely to be aware of the main source of funding for certain websites or online services

Adults are asked to say, without prompting, what they believe are the main sources of funding for particular websites and online services. Figure 9 shows the results among those aged 16-64, split by those in DE and non-DE households, for four online sites or services: the BBC website, search engine websites, the BBC iPlayer service and for YouTube.

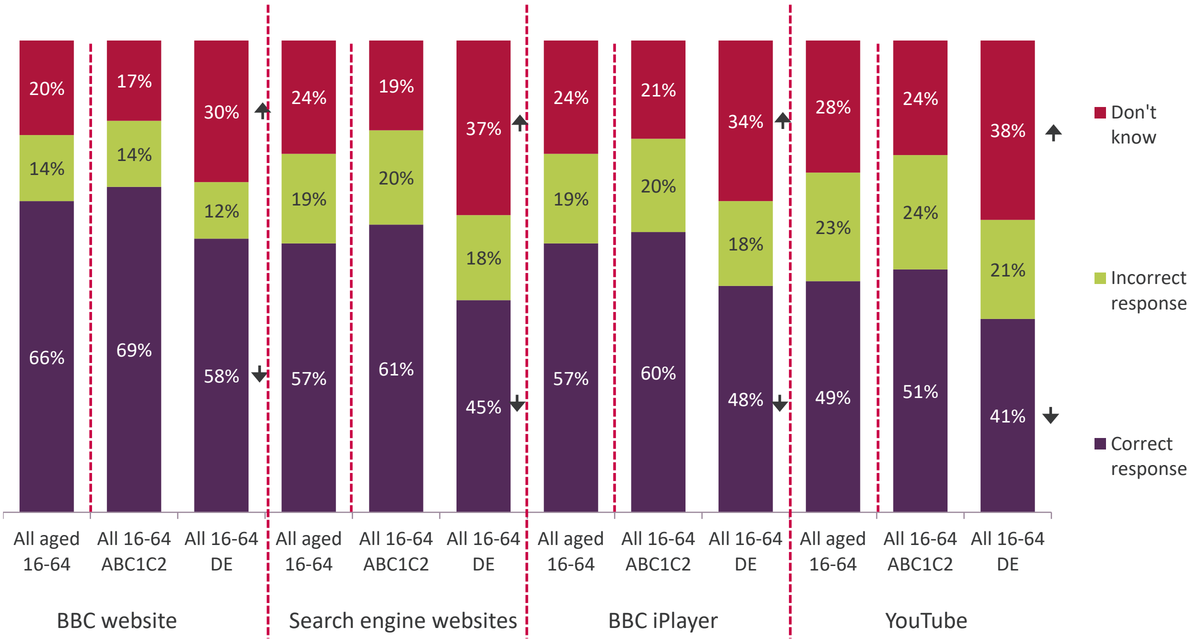
Across each of the four, those of working age in DE households are less likely than those in non-DE households to give the correct response.

While the majority of 16-64s in non-DE households are aware of how each of the four websites/ services are mainly funded, this is true only for the BBC website (58%) among those in DE households.

Close to half (48%) of adults aged 16-64 in DE households say they are aware that the licence fee funds the BBC iPlayer service, with slightly fewer (45%) giving the correct response regarding the main source of funding for search engine websites[86]. Two in five 16-64s in DE households (41%) are aware that advertising is the main source of funding for YouTube.

For each of the four online sites or services, 16-64s in DE households are no more likely than those in non-DE households to give an incorrect response; they are, however, more likely than those in non-DE households to say they are unsure[87] .

Figure 166: Awareness of how websites or online services are funded: ABC1C2 16-64s vs. DE 16-64s



[86] Awareness is taken from two coded responses deemed as correct - 1) 'Advertising on the website' and 2) 'Advertisers pay when users click through from sponsored links to their website'.
[87] Either because they gave a 'don't know' response or said they had never heard of the service.

Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN31/ IN32 /IN33/ IN34. How do you think the BBC's website is mainly funded/ How do you think search engine websites such as Google or Bing are mainly funded? / How do you think the BBC's iPlayer service is mainly funded / How do you think YouTube is mainly funded? (unprompted responses, single coded)
Base: All adults aged 16-64 (1395), all 16-64s in ABC1C2 households (1027), all 16-64s in DE households (368)
Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between 16-64s in DE households and 16-64s in ABC1C2 households.

Understanding search engine results

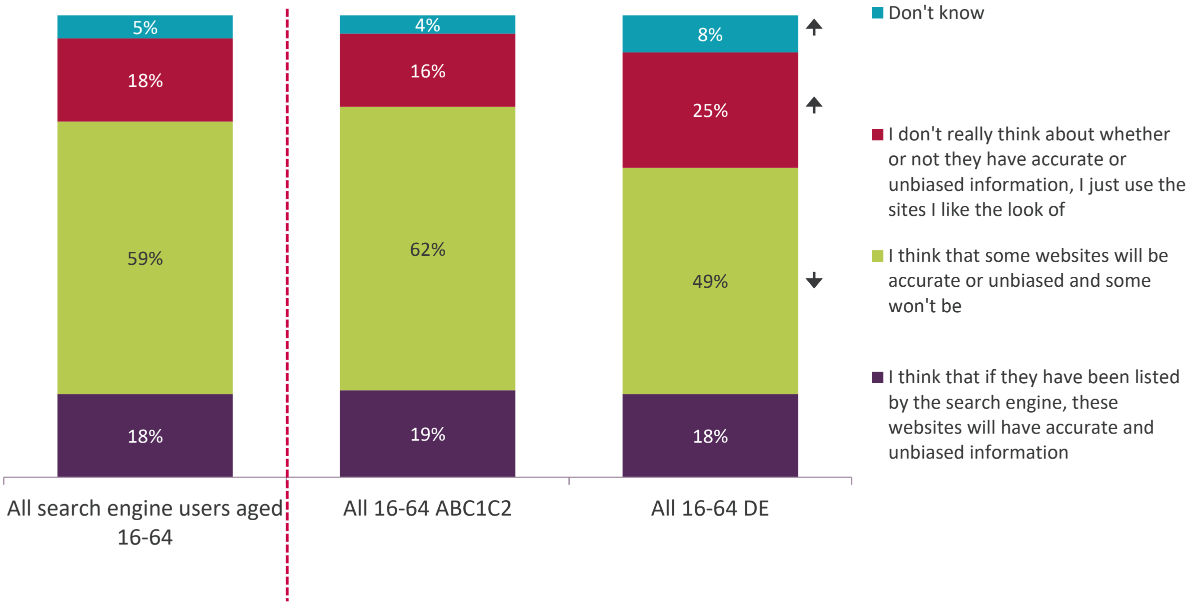
Half of adult search engine users aged 16-64 in DE households understand how search engines work, less than in non-DE households

Adults who have used a search engine in the last year (97% of internet users aged 16-64 in non-DE households, 98% of those in DE households) are asked to say which of the following statements is closest to their own opinion:

- "I think that if they have been listed by the search engine, these websites will have accurate and unbiased information."
- "I think that some of the websites will be accurate or unbiased and some won't be."
- "I don't really think about whether or not they have accurate or unbiased information, I just use the sites I like the look of."

Figure 10 shows that around one in five (18%) search engine users aged 16-64 in DE households, and a similar proportion of those in non-DE households (19%) feel that results returned by search engines will be accurate and unbiased. While around half (49%) of users aged 16-64 in DE households give the correct response – that some websites will be accurate or unbiased and some will not – this is lower than among those in non-DE households (62%). Users of working age in DE households are, however, more likely to say they don't really consider the accuracy of the information returned (25% vs. 16%) or to say they are unsure (8% vs. 4%).

Figure 167**: Opinions on search engine accuracy: ABC1C2 16-64s vs. DE 16-64s**



Source: Ofcom Adult Media Literacy Tracker 2017
IN46. When you use a search engine to find information, you enter a query in the search box and the search engine will then show some links to websites in the results pages. Which one of these is closest to your opinion about the level of accuracy or bias of the information detailed in the websites that appear in the results pages? (prompted responses, single coded). Base: All adults aged 16-64 who have used a search engine in the last year (1240), all 16-64s in ABC1C2 households (942), all 16-64s in DE households (298). Arrows show significant differences (95% level) between 16-64s in DE households and 16-64s in ABC1C2 households.