

The apps that eat your wireless data

July 5 2011, By PETER SVENSSON , AP Technology Writer

(AP) -- If you have a cellphone with a monthly limit on how much data you can use, here are some tips on what types of phone use will gobble up your precious megabytes:

- Streaming video and [videoconferencing](#). The biggest offender. One minute of YouTube-quality video eats up 2 megabytes. If you're on a plan that gives you 200 megabytes per month, you can't even watch Lady Gaga's "Telephone" video once per day. If you're on a 2 gigabyte plan you can, but don't make your [iPhone](#) a replacement for a TV. In either case, it's fine to indulge in [YouTube](#) and [Netflix](#) if you're on Wi-Fi.

- Streaming audio. The second biggest offender, and potentially more serious. While video is something we need to see to enjoy, [Internet radio](#) is more of an accompaniment to other activities, such as jogging or doing dishes. That means some people like to keep it on for hours. Audio consumes about a quarter of the data that video does, but 10 minutes a day will break the bank if you're on a 200 megabyte plan. One hour a day of [Pandora](#) consumes nearly a [gigabyte](#), which you can afford if you're on a 2-gigabyte plan and don't use other data-hogging apps.

- Photos. If you're a real shutterbug, photos can consume significant amounts of data. Sending and viewing photos both count toward your monthly limit. Posting 10 photos per day eats up most of a 200 megabyte plan. If you're on a 2-gigabyte plan, you probably don't have to worry about photos.

- Maps. Navigation apps consume lots of data when they retrieve [map](#)

images, up to a megabyte a minute. You're also likely to use them for long periods of time when you're away from Wi-Fi, such as when you're driving. Watch out for these.

- [Web surfing](#). Web pages vary widely in size, so this will depend quite a bit on whether you like to visit graphically rich sites (lots of data) or spare, text-oriented ones (less data). But roughly speaking, ten pages a day will eat up about half of a 200 megabyte plan. Again, those on 2-gigabyte plans don't need to worry much about surfing.

- Facebook. Roughly equivalent to Web surfing. Status updates won't take much data, but sending photos and viewing friends' pictures will.

- Email. Most emails are tiny, in terms of data. Basically, you can send and receive email all you want, as long as they don't have attachments such as photos.

- Twitter. Like email, these short messages don't use much data, but if you follow a lot of people and click on links, usage adds up.

- Weather apps. Small, focused apps that report simple but useful things, such as the weather forecast, save data (and time) compared with looking up the same information on a Web page.

More information: AT&T's data calculator:

<http://www.att.com/standalone/data-calculator>

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Citation: The apps that eat your wireless data (2011, July 5) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-07-apps-wireless.html>

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