

Americans compulsively check smartphones, survey finds

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Reporters check their smartphones at the US Capitol in Washington on September 30, 2013

The majority of US smartphone owners compulsively check handsets at least hourly, according to survey results released on Tuesday by mobile security firm Lookout.

About 63 percent of people surveyed said they check their smartphones

at least once each waking hour. There were nine percent who said they didn't let five minutes pass without looking at their [handsets](#).

The length of time between [smartphone](#) screen checks shrank with the ages of owners.

And while 33 percent of people said they would be mortified if contents of their smartphones were displayed on a big screen for all to see, fewer than half protected handsets with passcodes, the survey showed.

Slightly more than a quarter of the people surveyed were unaware that visiting dubious websites or clicking on questionable links could result in devices getting infected with software viruses.

"The findings show wireless users have a striking attachment to mobile devices and a concern about the exposure of their personal information," the survey findings stated.

"While consumers recognize [mobile security](#) is an important issue, people still don't take the right precautions."

Lookout advised people to protect devices with passcodes or other locking tools and to keep devices safe in zipped pockets or closed bags when out in public.

Lookout, which provides free security software for smartphones and tablets, also advised people to be wise about which websites are visited and which applications are downloaded.

The Harris Interactive [survey](#) conducted in August was commissioned by Lookout its partner US telecom service provider Sprint.

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