

# The State of Technology Use Among Older Adults in the U.S.

Excerpts quoted from studies Published by Pew Research Center

## Older Adults and Technology Use

Pew Research Center, April 2014 [Click here for full article](#)

*Excerpts from the findings of this research:*

### 1. Internet and broadband adoption rates among seniors are steadily increasing, but still well below the national average.

- Six in ten seniors—59%—report using the internet. This is a six percentage point year-over-year increase from the 53% of older adults who went online at a similar point in 2012. [I]n May 2008, just 35% of older adults were internet users. [U]sage rates among seniors still trail the population as a whole by a substantial margin, as some 86% of all U.S. adults now go online.
- [B]roadband adoption is similar: 47% of seniors have a high-speed internet connection at home, up from the 39% of seniors with broadband in May 2012, but significantly below the current national broadband adoption rate of 70%.

### 2. Younger, higher-income, and more highly educated seniors use the internet and broadband at rates approaching—or even exceeding—the general population; internet use and broadband adoption each drop off dramatically around age 75.

- Among seniors with an annual household income of \$75,000 or more, 90% go online and 82% have broadband at home. For seniors earning less than \$30,000 annually, 39% go online and 25% have broadband at home.
- Fully 87% of seniors with a college degree go online, and 76% are broadband adopters. Among seniors who have not attended college, 40% go online and just 27% have broadband at home.

### 3. Older adults face a number of hurdles to adopting new technologies:

- **Physical challenges to using technology:** Around two in five seniors indicate a “physical or health condition that makes reading difficult or challenging” or a “disability, handicap, or chronic disease that prevents them from fully participating in many common daily activities”.
- **Skeptical attitudes about the benefits of technology**
- **Difficulties learning to use new technologies** A significant majority of older adults say they need assistance when it comes to using new digital devices. Just 18% would feel comfortable learning to use a new technology device such as a smartphone or tablet on their own, while 77% indicate they would need someone to help walk them through the process. And among seniors who go online but do not currently use social networking sites such as Facebook, 56% would need assistance if they wanted to use these sites.

#### 4. Once seniors join the online world, digital technology often becomes an integral part of their daily lives

- Among older adults who use the internet, 71% go online every day or almost every day, and an additional 11% go online three to five times per week. These older internet users also have strongly positive attitudes about the benefits of online information in their personal lives. Fully 79% of older adults who use the internet agree with the statement that “people without internet access are at a real disadvantage because of all the information they might be missing,” while 94% agree with the statement that “the internet makes it much easier to find information today than in the past.”

#### Social Media Usage: 2005-2015

Andrew Perrin. Pew Research Center. **October 2015.** [Click here for full article](#)

#### *Excerpts from the findings of this research:*

Across demographic groups, a number of trends emerge in this analysis of social media usage:

- 1. Age differences: Seniors make strides** – [U]sage among those 65 and older has more than tripled since 2010 when 11% used social media. Today, 35% of all those 65 and older report using social media, compared with just 2% in 2005.
- 2. Gender differences: Women and men use social media at similar rates.**
- 3. Socio-economic differences: Those with higher education levels and household income lead the way.**
- 4. Racial and ethnic similarities:** 65% of whites, 65% of Hispanics and 56% of African-Americans use social media today.
- 5. Community differences: More than half of rural residents now use social media.**

#### Percentage of device ownership among Adults in the U.S. Age 65+

Excerpted from several Pew Internet Studies [Click here for 2015 Report](#)

