

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP SERIES

DIGITAL ACCESS



DIGITAL ACCESS is the process of making sure that everyone has access to technology. Digital access also includes making sure that everyone knows how to use the technology. The U.S. Census Bureau has many statistics about digital access.

In 2013, 83 percent of U.S. households had a computer, but only 74 percent of households had access to the internet. Internet access can be difficult to get in rural areas. The cost of internet can also be very expensive. Laws have been passed requiring companies to provide internet at an affordable cost. For example, the Federal

Communications Commission (FCC) has required Comcast to provide internet essentials to low income families for \$9.95 per month. Google Fiber, which features connections at 1,000 megabits per second and instant downloads, has free monthly packages in some of the larger urban areas, including Kansas City.

WHO'S ONLINE

- Age 15-34
- Age 35-44
- Age 45-64
- Age 65 and older



- 92%
- 92%
- 86%
- 65%

As you can see, the use of computers in ages 65 and older is a lot lower than the other ages. So, how do senior citizens use the internet?

SENIOR CITIZENS & THE WEB

- Communicate with family and friends 70%
- Research medical information 53%
- Online shopping 46%
- Reading the local news 40%
- Watching TV, movies, or video 17%



Learn more in a video trailer about a Cyber-Seniors documentary: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bemDf6wuHJo>.

TEENS & THE WEB

Teens are heavy mobile users. Eighty-eight percent have access to smart phones and use phones to access the internet. Some of the most popular ways teens use the internet is for texting, social media, video games and streaming movies, television and music.

- Facebook 49%
- Snapchat 39%
- Instagram 38%
- Twitter 26%
- Pinterest 8%



Academic Standards: Reading nonfiction text for main idea and supporting details. Making text-to-self and text-to-world connections. Making inferences.



Talk About It

What obstacles might make it difficult for all citizens to have digital access? What are some possible solutions? Based on the information you read, how is computer use different for senior citizens and young adults? Have

there been other events in history where one group has had access to resources that were denied to others due to race, gender, or socioeconomic status? How does digital access compare and contrast to this event?



In the News

Many newspapers have online editions available. Online newspapers allow for breaking news updates, and give readers a chance to interact with stories as they leave comments. Stories and links



can quickly be shared on social media. Compare and contrast the online and print edition of your newspaper. What are the pros and cons of each? Which do you prefer? Why?

Try It

Survey your classmates. What technology is available to each student—computer, smart phone, tablet, etc. How would you rate the digital access for your classmates? What technology is available in your school?

How have different generations had access to technology? Interview your parents and

grandparents. Tell them about your favorite tools and gadgets and how you use media. Ask them how their generation used media. How comfortable do they feel using current technology?

Create a simile to explain your media life: "My media life is like...."

