Children's Passive Online Measurement

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Foreword

Ofcom is the regulator for online safety in the UK. Our role is to make sure online services, like websites and apps, meet their duties to protect their users under the Online Safety Act 2023 ('the Act'). To support these duties, it is essential that we have a robust evidence base on what people do online – the services they use and how much time they spend on them. It is to support this that Ofcom has carried out the **Children's Passive Online Measurement** (CPOM) study. This study complements our broader programme of children's research and engagement.

Ofcom currently uses Ipsos iris for audience measurement of the websites and apps visited by UK internet users aged 15+. Ipsos iris is endorsed by UKOM as the industry standard for online audience measurement and is based on passively measuring the internet use of a nationally representative panel of users across the PCs, smartphones and tablets that they use. We report this in our annual Online Nation report.

Until now, equivalent data has not been available for under-15s. The aim of CPOM is to use a similar passive measurement solution to Ipsos iris to measure the internet use of UK children aged 8-14. We have collected data from a nationally representative sample of 692 children, passively measuring their use of websites and apps across the PCs, smartphones and tablets that they use to get online.

This study follows a pilot among 162 children aged 8-12 that we conducted in 2023, aimed at understanding whether it would be possible to obtain robust and representative data from using a passive monitoring methodology for children. One of the challenges addressed in the pilot study was whether we would be able to exclude data from other users sharing the device used by the child panellist. A RAG system (see Data cleaning) was developed to identify and remove devices that had high likely adult usage, this learning was implemented in this study. The pilot was successful with Ofcom reporting the indicative findings in our Online Nation 2023 report. The findings we report here are from a much larger study where we took the learnings from the pilot and scaled it to achieve a more robust and more representative sample.

Passive measurement of children's online use is an important new tool in our broader programme of children's research. It is our intention to carry out future waves of CPOM to develop and fine tune an ongoing audience measurement system for UK children's use of the internet. This first wave produces reach and time spent data for websites and apps used by children, complementing data we collect through more traditional research methods where we can understand what activities take place when the children visit the websites and apps.

There are advantages in using a passive measurement system like CPOM to produce robust evidence on the services children use and the time they spend on them. Data collected is a detailed and factual representation of what panellists have done online. It mitigates issues around recall associated with surveys, which may be evident for less memorable online usage, or the filtered responses that children may give in surveys, for example not volunteering their use of adult spaces. And whereas it is only practical in survey-based research to ask about a small number of services, passive monitoring measures use of the long tail of the internet.

Our passive measurement study is currently limited in terms of the number of devices it monitors for an individual. Panellists were required to download the passive monitoring technology to at least one device that they primarily used at least once a week. In this study most panellists only had one device measured, with 91 panellists having 2 or more devices they used also measured. The study also does not include games consoles, which is a key online activity for some children. For a broader

understanding of online usage, including on games consoles, we can turn to our existing research studies (e.g. Children and Parents' media literacy).

All research methods are subject to non-response bias - and so while it is the case that sampling and weighting demographically ensures the data is representative of UK children aged 8-14, the sample is also defined by those who are willing to take part. Monitoring research is also subject to the hawthorn effect whereby participants adapt their behaviour because they know they are being tracked, even though they are informed that the data will be anonymised. While this is likely to diminish over time as participants 'forget' they are being tracked, it is possible that some data may be impacted. We might therefore want to consider 'reach' and 'usage' figures of adult services, for example, as potentially lower-bound estimates.

This study is based on data collected in November 2024 to March 2025, so may not be representative of internet use at other times of the year, for example during exam periods or some school holidays.

We welcome feedback on this research which should be sent to: market.research@ofcom.org.uk .

Overview

What we have found – in brief

- UK child internet users aged 8-14 spent an average of 2 hours 59 minutes a day online across smartphone, tablet or computer. Time spent online (via these devices) increases with age with 8-year-olds on average spending 1 hour 48 minutes per day online while 14-year-olds spent 4 hours 15 minutes per day online. Girls aged 13-14 spent almost an hour longer online per day compared to boys of the same age (3 hours 30 minutes vs 4 hours 29 minutes).
- The services that children spent most time on were YouTube and Snapchat – combined, they accounted for over half (52%, 1 hour 31 minutes) of the average time spent by UK 8-14-year-olds.
- UK 8-14-year-olds spent an hour (1 hour 1 minute) more per day online during the weekend compared to a weekday. 8-14s spent 2 hours 43 minutes per day online during a weekday and 3 hours 41 minutes per day during a weekend.
- UK 8-14-year-old smartphone and/or tablet users visited on average 28 apps in a month.
- YouTube was the highest-reaching service (96%) in a month. YouTube 8-14-year-old users spent on average 50 minutes per day on the service across smartphone, tablet or computer, with an average length of a single visit being 5 minutes.
- Forty-six percent of UK 8-14-year-olds visited Snapchat, notably most of these visitors use Snapchat daily with 40% of 8-14-year-olds visiting the platform each day. Reach was highest among older children, 73% of 13–14-year-olds visited Snapchat in a month, these users spent an average of 2 hour 13 minutes a day on Snapchat.
- Most of the social media services in the top ten have a minimum age requirement of 13+; however, there is a steep growth in take up of the popular social media services during the age range of 10-12. For instance, 27% of 10-year-olds visited Snapchat in a month, this increased to 64% among the 12-year-olds.
- 82% of UK online 8-14-year-olds visited a messaging and call service. WhatsApp is the highest reaching messaging and call service (64%).
- Roblox is the top-reaching games app, reaching 61% of UK online 8-14-year-olds across smartphone, tablet, computer. Roblox 8-14-year-old players spent on average 15 minutes on the game per day across smartphone, tablet and computer.
- Bytedance-owned Gauth: AI study companion (9%) was the highest reaching AI service among 8–14-year-olds. Gauth was predominantly visited by the 13-14-year-old age group (21%), followed by 8% of 10-12s.
- Eight percent of UK 8-14-year-olds visited a pornographic content service. Reach was highest among older children: 8-9 (3%), 10-12 (7%) and 13-14 (15%). Among the 13–14-year-olds, boys were more likely than girls to have visited a pornographic content service (19% vs 11%). Four percent of UK 8-14s visited Pornhub in a month. Nine per cent of UK 13-14s visited Pornhub, mostly boys (13-14s: boys 11% vs girls 6%).

Methodology

Objectives

Study summary

The requirements of the study were to measure a robust UK representative sample of online children aged 8-14s' use of websites and apps across smartphones, tablets and computers. The measurement was to include the websites and apps that were visited on the device(s) used by the child panellist and how long was spent on the services visited. To collect this data the recruited children had passive monitoring software installed on the devices they used with the data being reported back anonymously. The children's internet use was measured over a period of 28 consecutive days for each panellist between November 2024 and March 2025, which means that all results reflect usage patterns over that period, but are not necessarily representative of their use over, for example, a whole year.

This study used a single source sample where each panellist has one or more devices tracked, rather than multiple panels based on each device type (smartphone, tablet and computer), with the panels subsequently fused together to provide the final sample results. The single source method used favours more accurate deduplicated reach figures for the devices tracked. The advantages of a more modelled approach would be to address the problem of missing devices which is very difficult to address in a single source panel. It would not be cost-effective to measure all devices for a significantly sized single source panel. This is on the basis of different operating systems and panellist willingness versus the cost.

The sample was drawn using UK census data to ensure we obtained a nationally representative sample of 8-14-year-old children. The sample was weighted to correct slight sampling skews and bring the profile back into line with census population data. In places we have reported population reach figures which are calculated from the sample percentage reach multiplied by the universe of 5.6 million children aged 8-14.

Ofcom commissioned RealityMine and Yonder Consulting to conduct the research, with RealityMine providing the passive monitoring technology and Yonder Consulting conducting the recruitment and data processing.

Fieldwork

Yonder undertook a qualitative recruitment exercise to ensure demographic requirements were met. Yonder recruited a total of 753 children aged 8-14 living in the UK via their parents/legal guardians, with a total of 704 fully completing the study, over a 28-day period. Informed consent was provided by both the parent/legal guardian and the child panellist, relevant data protection and safeguarding procedures were implemented.

Panellists were recruited as the primary user of the device(s) in the household and said the device(s) was/were not shared. Siblings were allowed to be recruited within the same household provided they were the target age and had their own primary device, which was different to the device of their sibling panellist.

Recruitment was conducted on a rolling basis starting in November 2024, with each participant's data collected for 28 consecutive days. There was a pause to recruitment and fieldwork during the

Christmas period to avoid potential loss of complete 28 days of measurement as children may be gifted new devices and there may be a risk of the monitoring software not being downloaded on their new device. As such there were two phases of fieldwork for this study. Phase 1 took place between 10th November 2024 - 28th December 2024, with a total of 217 completes. The phase 2 fieldwork took place from 7th January 2025 – 20th March 2025, with a total of 487 completes.

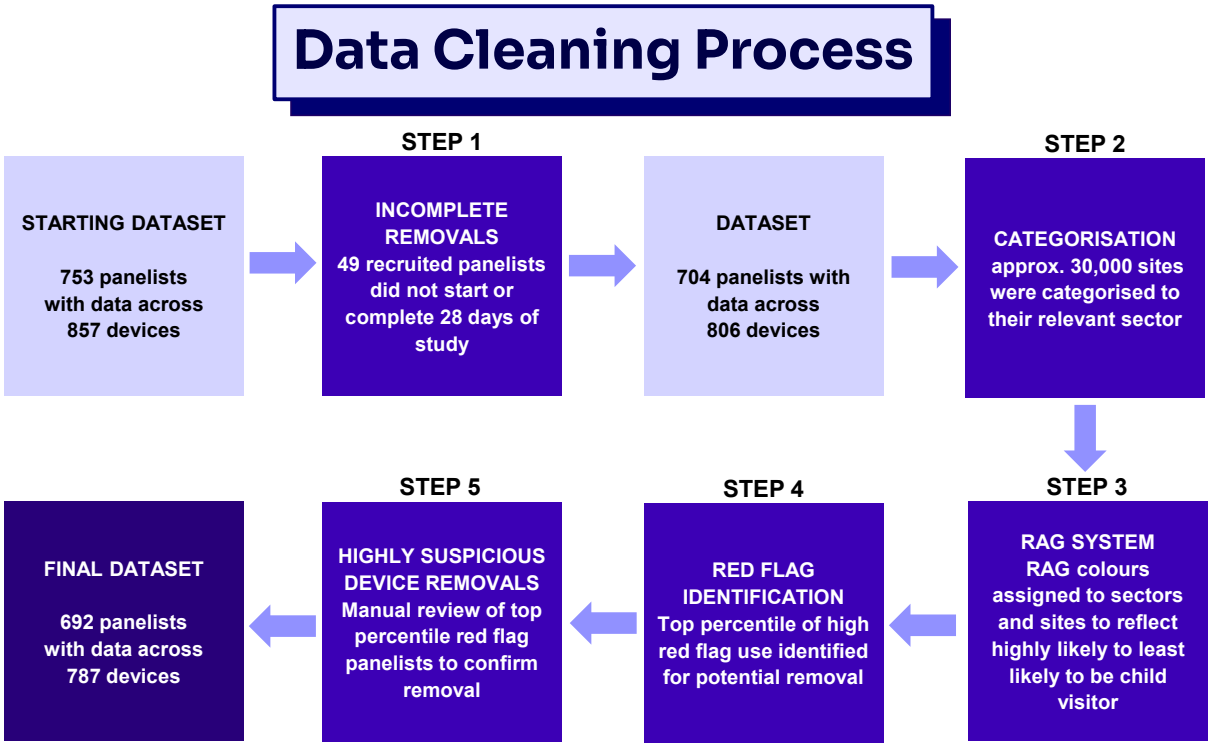
The RealityMine monitoring app/VPN was downloaded to at least one device that was used primarily by the child at least once a week to go online. Devices included were smartphones, computers/laptops and tablets, across operating systems iOS, Android and Windows.

Once the RealityMine technology was set up this automatically collected passive metering data of websites and apps visited on devices, frequency of visits and time spent on these platforms.

Data cleaning

From our pilot study in 2023 we understood that the usage of shared devices between parents and children is common, especially for younger children (8–10-year-olds), when they may not have their own devices. While respondents were initially recruited on the premise that the child was the primary user of the device, additional checks were put in place to monitor the level of 'adult' usage. A rules-based approach was developed to flag potential adult usage data. The cleaning process was implemented to identify and remove devices that were more likely to have been predominantly used by an adult.

This cleaning process identified 12 panellists and 19 devices which were removed from the final sample, leaving the unweighted base at a total a total of 692 8–14-year-olds with data across 787 devices.



Step 1 – Incomplete removals

753 children were recruited to take part in the study, however 49 either dropped out or did not complete the full 28 days of the study. They were subsequently removed, leaving 704 panellists who completed the 28 days of passive measurement.

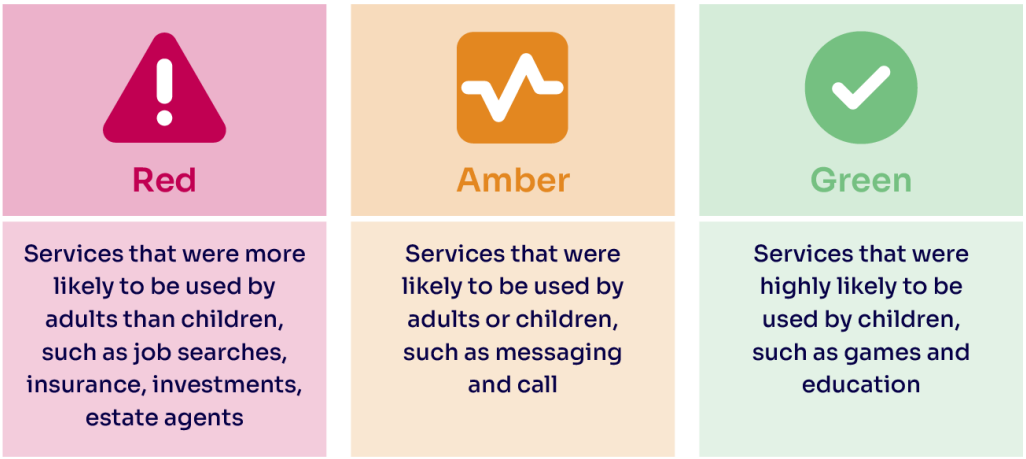
Step 2 - Categorisation

First the sites (websites and/or apps) that had been measured during the study were categorised to their relevant sector or best fit e.g. Gauth categorised as artificial intelligence. Ofcom manually categorised approximately 3,000 of the highest reaching sites, and following this Yonder used its proprietary AI learning tool to categorise approx. 27,000 sites. Yonder performed manual checks on the AI categorisation to ensure accuracy and manually overrode certain categorisations where relevant. In total approximately 30,000 sites were categorised.

Sites were assigned to one sector category.

Step 3 – RAG system

The categories were assigned a red/amber/green (RAG) colour and in some cases specific sites within a category were independently assigned a colour e.g. banking categorised as amber but child banking service GoHenry was categorised green. This RAG system was used to categorise sites and sectors that were likely to be used by children and those most likely to be used by adults. RAG colour was then applied to the entire dataset.



Step 4 – High red flag identification

Using the RAG system and the number of visits to apps and websites, Yonder identified the panellists with the highest level of red flag activity. Those panellists which were in the top 5% of red flag use were identified as high red flag users for potential removal. This percentile-based approach does not mean that all of these users visited a lot of red-flagged services as part of their total internet usage, just that they were the 5% of panellists that visited the most red-flagged services out of all participants. A total of 34 panellists were identified from this approach and were then investigated further (Step 5) to determine whether any highly suspicious (i.e. primarily used by an adult) devices should be removed.

Step 5 – Suspicious device removal

Ofcom reviewed the internet usage of each panellist identified in Step 4. Ofcom processed and summarised the internet usage of these panellists to understand the proportions of usage under each flag colour and all the services that were visited on each of these panellists' devices. From this review Ofcom determined that only 12 panellists had suspicious usage and required complete removal with 2 panellists only having some, not all, of their devices removed, resulting in 19 device removals in total.

Sample profile

Census data was used to apply weighting to age, gender and household socio-economic group back to the known population of children aged 8-14 in the UK for the final 692 sample.

Soft quotas were also set to ensure a broad mix of those living in urban/rural areas, a mix of ethnic backgrounds, disability/limiting conditions. This ensured a broad mix of respondents took part in the study.

Age by gender

	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Weighted base	98	100	100	100	99	98	96
Age share	14%	15%	14%	15%	14%	14%	14%
Male	14%	14%	14%	15%	14%	15%	14%
Female	14%	15%	14%	14%	14%	14%	14%

Geography

England	85%
Northern Ireland	3%
Scotland	7%
Wales	5%

Ethnicity

White	76%
Ethnic Minority	28%

Social grade

ABC1	53%
C2DE	47%

Disability

None	86%
Disability	14%

Note: Due to rounding weighted base totals 691.

According to data from The Insights Family, for the first nine months of 2024, UK 8–14-year-olds smartphone users share by operating system was as follows: Apple (56%), Android (42%) and Huawei (2%). The Apple and Android share were used as a soft quota for devices monitored during the study.

Device type

	Number measured	Proportion
Smartphone	522	66%
Tablet	219	28%
Computer	46	6%
Total	787	100%

Operating system

	iOS/OSX	Android/Windows
Smartphone	63%	37%
Tablet	65%	35%
Computer	4%	96%
Total	60%	40%

Data terminology

Unless specified, this report refers to websites and/or apps as services or sites. Reach in this report is reach to UK individuals in the specified age group. Reach is counted as soon as app or site is opened.

This report refers to 28 days as a month. Reach in a month equates to service being visited at least once during the 28 days. This could include only a fleeting visit once in 28 days, so it's important to look at reach and time spent together to get a full impression on breadth and depth of service usage.

Where time spent data is referred to as per day this is based on total time spent by visitor in month divided by 28 days. This includes days where service users did not use the service.

Where figures do not add up to 100% this may be due to rounding.

Online use on games console, TV sets and smart devices are not within the scope of this study.

Panellists may have used other devices, that met the threshold of being used at least once a week, to go online during the study period that were not tracked.

Key findings

Time spent online

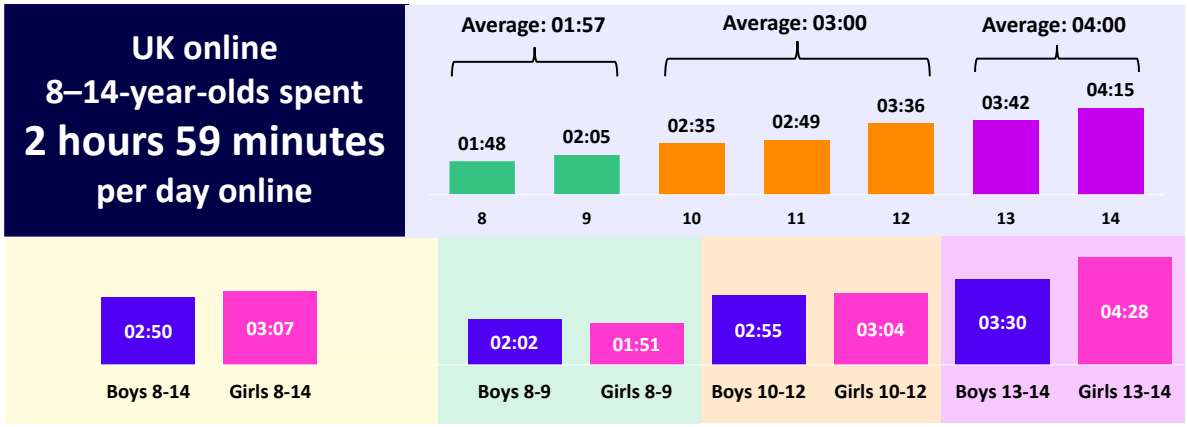
UK children are online most days. Our study found UK online 8–9-year-olds on average went online for 21 of the 28 days of measurement on the devices that were monitored - smartphone, tablet or computer. For 10-12-year-olds and 13-14-year-olds it was an average of 25 days online for each age group.

UK internet users aged 8-14 spent an average of 2 hours 59 minutes a day online across smartphones, tablets and computers. As child age increases, time spent online increases, online children aged 8-9 on average spent 1 hour 57 minutes a day online, 10-12s spent 3 hours, while 13-14s on average spent 4 hours.

Girls spent more time online than boys on the devices that were monitored. UK 8-14-year-old girls on average spent 3 hours 7 minutes per day, 17 minutes more than boys (2 hours 50 minutes). There were small differences in time spent by gender among the 8-9-year-olds and 10-12-year-olds. However, girls aged 13-14 spent almost an hour longer online per day compared to boys (3 hours 30 minutes vs 4 hours 29 minutes). Note that time spent online on games consoles was not included in the study.

8-14-year-olds spent just over an hour more per day online during the weekend compared to a weekday. 8-14s spent 2 hours 43 minutes per day online during a weekday and spent 3 hours 41 minutes per day during a weekend.

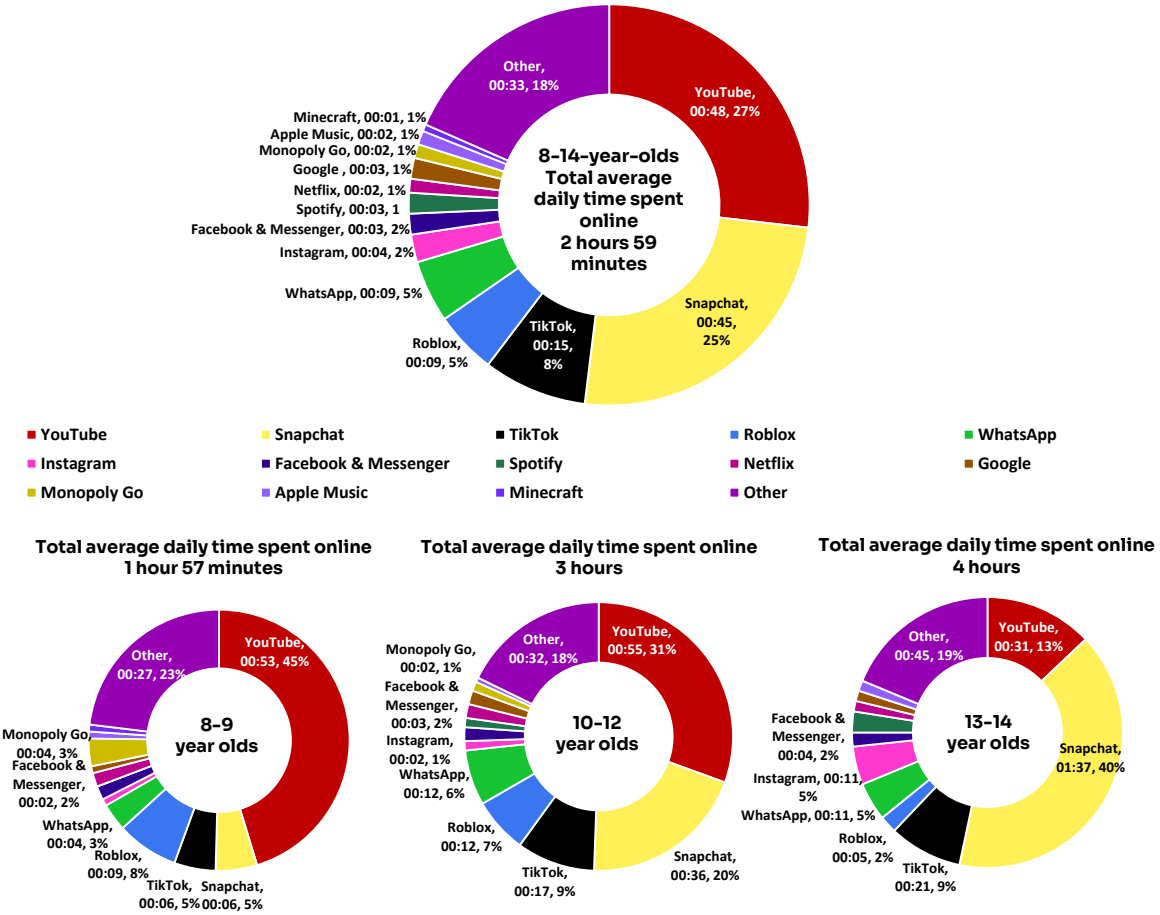
Figure 1: Average time spent online on smartphones, tablets and computers, per UK visitor per day: by age (hours:minutes)



YouTube and Snapchat accounted for over half (52%) of the total time spent online by 8-14-year-olds. YouTube and Snapchat are the leading services in terms of time spent – combined, they accounted for over half (52%, 1 hour 31 minutes) of the average time spent by 8-14s – despite Snapchat not being one of the top ten reaching services overall (see High reaching services). YouTube and Snapchat were then followed by TikTok (8%, 15 minutes) the three combined accounted for 60% (1 hour 46 minutes) of the average time spent by 8-14s. The next 22% of daily time spent was accounted for by 10 further services. (see Social media and video sharing services for reach and time spent data)

Analysis by age group found 40% (1 hour 37 minutes[1]) of the average time spent online per day by 13-14-year-olds was on Snapchat. This was followed by YouTube 13%, 31 minutes and TikTok 9%, 21 minutes.

Figure 2: Share of average time spent online per day by UK online children aged 8-14, by service (hours:minutes): by age



Note: TV set, games consoles and smart speaker/display use not measured. Average time by internet user is based on all online 8-14-year-old children whether or not they visited the service. Facebook & Messenger includes visits to any of the following services – Facebook website, Facebook app or Messenger app.

Highest-reaching services

Alphabet-owned YouTube and Google search were the top-reaching services, reaching almost all 8–14-year-olds. This was followed by Meta's Facebook (incl. Messenger)[2] and WhatsApp. Apple's Music and iCloud services also appeared in the top ten (rank: 7, and 9). The top three services were also among the top three for UK adults.[3] However, unlike for adults, Roblox, Apple Music, Apple iCloud and Spotify appear in the 8-14s' top ten.

[1] This average time is based on all online 13-14-year-old children whether or not they visited Snapchat. See figure 8 for average time spent by users of the service.

[2] Facebook (incl. Messenger) includes visits to any of the following services – Facebook website, Facebook app or Messenger app.

[3] UK online adult reach in January 2025: Google 98%, YouTube 94% and Facebook & Messenger 93%. Source: Ipsos iris online measurement service, January 2025, internet users aged 18+.

Figure 3: Top ten services by UK 8–14-year-old reach: month

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
YouTube	Google	Facebook (incl. Messenger)	WhatsApp	Roblox	TikTok	Apple Music	Amazon	Apple iCloud	Spotify
96%	95%	75%	63%	61%	58%	58%	55%	51%	50%

Note: TV set, games console and smart speaker/display use not measured. Visitors to the Apple Music may not have an Apple Music subscription and may be using the service to access downloaded content and are listening/viewing this content offline.

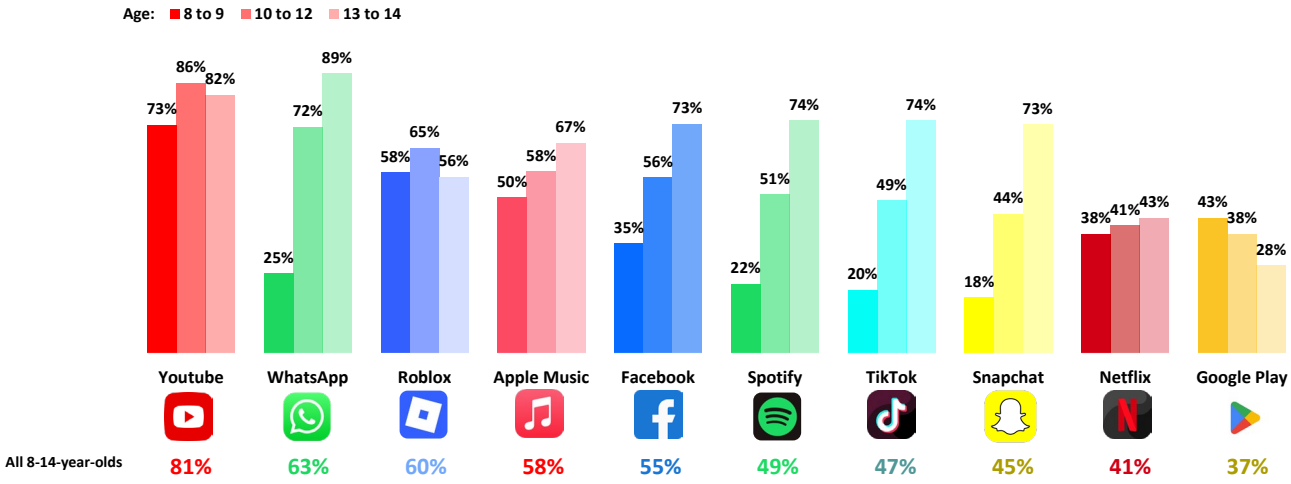
Highest-reaching apps[4]

UK 8-14-year-old smartphone and/or tablet users visited on average 28 apps in a month. As child age increases, the average number of apps visited in a month increases. 8-9s on average visited 26 apps, 10-12s 27 apps and 13-14s 30 apps.

Thirty-seven percent (2.1 million) of UK 8-14s visited the Google Play store spending on average 21 minutes in the store in a month. Less than 1% (0.6%, 0.03 million) of 8-14s visited the Apple App store app spending on average 32 minutes in the store in a month.

YouTube was the top-reaching app among UK 8-14-year-olds (81%, 4.6 million). While YouTube was the top-reaching app among 8-9s (73%) and 10-12s (86%), WhatsApp was the top-reaching app among 13-14-year-olds (89%) followed by YouTube (82%).

Figure 4: Top ten apps by UK 8–14-year-old reach in month: by age



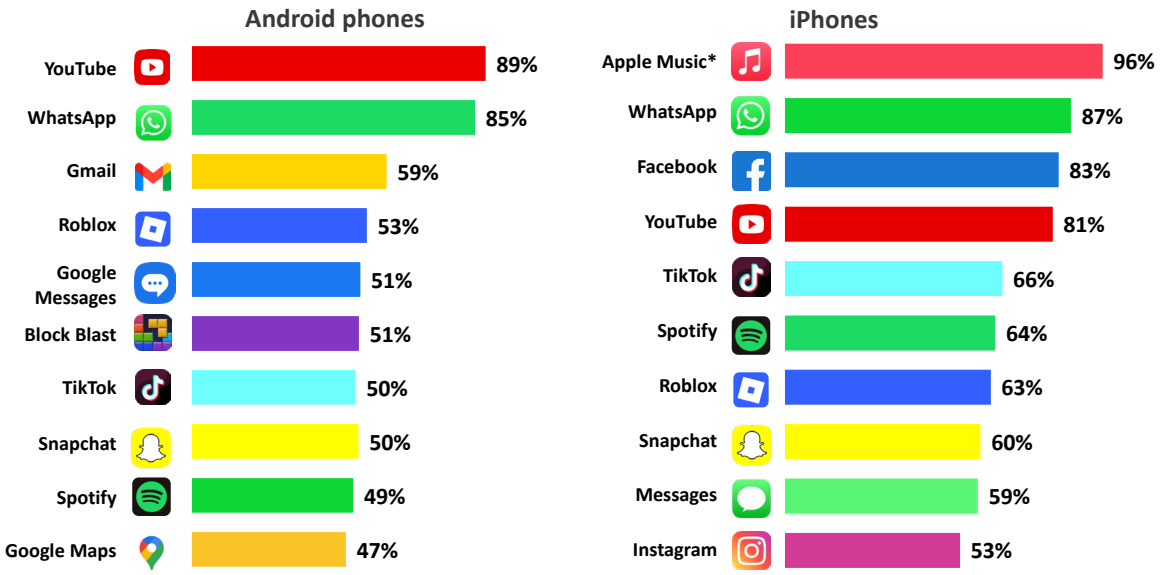
Note: Games console, TV set and smart speaker/display use not measured. Visitors to the Apple Music app may not have an Apple Music subscription and may be using the app to access downloaded content and are listening/viewing this content offline.

There is a notable difference in top-reaching smartphone apps when comparing Android phones with iPhones. Four of the top ten Android apps are owned by Alphabet (YouTube, Gmail, Google Messages and Google Maps), while two of the top ten iOS apps are Apple-owned apps (Apple Music

[4] Smartphone or tablet using base: 671

and Messages). Meta-owned WhatsApp, Facebook and Instagram all appear in the top ten for iPhone users, but only WhatsApp appears in the top ten for Android phone users.

Figure 5: Top ten smartphone apps, Android phones vs iPhones, based on reach as a % of the selected smartphone universe: 8-14-year-olds (in month)



*Note: *Visitors to the Apple Music app may not have an Apple Music subscription and may be using the app to access downloaded content and are listening/viewing this content offline.*

Search

96% (5.4 million) of UK 8–14-year-olds visited a search service.

Google search was the highest-reaching search service among 8-14s (95%, 5.4 million). Google was followed by Bing (22%, 1.3 million), Yahoo (10%, 0.6 million), Yandex (9%, 0.5 million) and DuckDuckGo (3%, 0.2 million). On average an 8-14-year-old Google search user visited the service 152 times during the month – Bing 17, Yahoo 10, Yandex 10, DuckDuckGo 4. On average an 8-14 Google search visitor spent 75 minutes in the month on the service (3 minutes per day), Bing visitors 6 minutes, Yahoo visitors 3 minutes, Yandex visitors 4 minutes and DuckDuckGo visitors 6 minutes in a month.

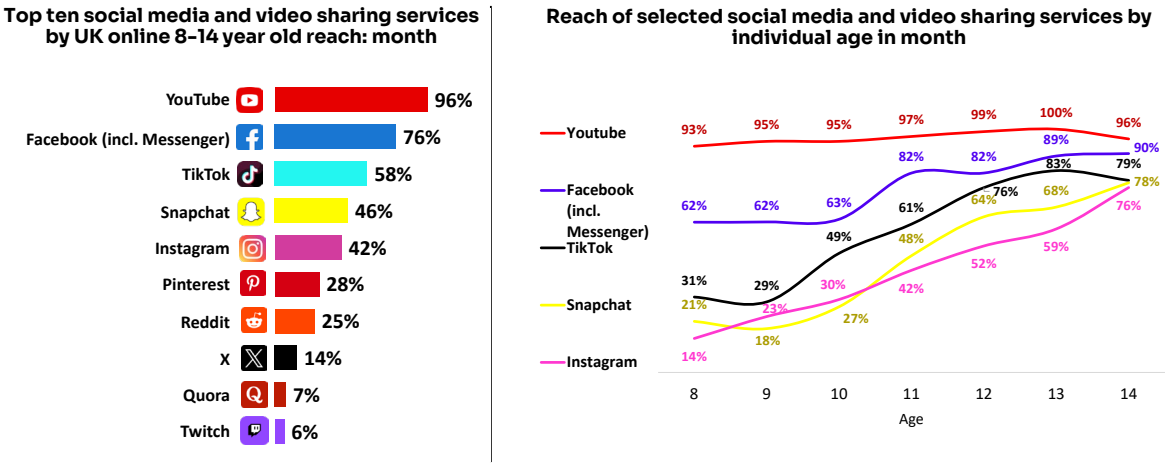
Social media and video sharing services

96% of UK 8-14-year-olds visited a social media or video-sharing services. Ninety-two per cent of 8-9s visited any social media or video-sharing service, 97% of 10-12s and 98% of 13-14s. There is a steep growth in take up of most of the leading social media or video sharing services among 10-12-year-olds - see figure 6.

Overall, 46% of 8-14s visited Snapchat, notably most of these visitors use Snapchat daily with 40% of 8-14s visiting the platform per day. In comparison, 71% visited YouTube per day, 36% Facebook (incl. Messenger), 31% TikTok and 20% Instagram.

13–14-year-old Snapchat users spent an average of 2 hours 13 minutes a day on Snapchat, visitors aged 10-12 on average spent 1 hour 18 minutes and visitors aged 8-9 spent 28 minutes.[5]

Figure 6: Highest-reaching social media and video sharing services by UK online 8-14-year-old



Note: TV set and smart display use not measured.

YouTube 8-14-year-old users spent on average 50 minutes per day on the service, with an average length of a single visit being 5 minutes. Despite the high reach of Facebook (incl. Messenger) users are spending very little time on the service – an average of 4 minutes per day.

On average an 8-14-year-old Snapchat user visited the service 841 times during the month, while a Facebook (incl. Messenger) user visited the service 83 times during a month. The total number of visits to the other popular social media services – YouTube (297), TikTok (190) and Instagram (177) in month.

[5] This average time is based on only those who visited Snapchat. See figure 2 for average time spent by all internet users whether or not they visited Snapchat.

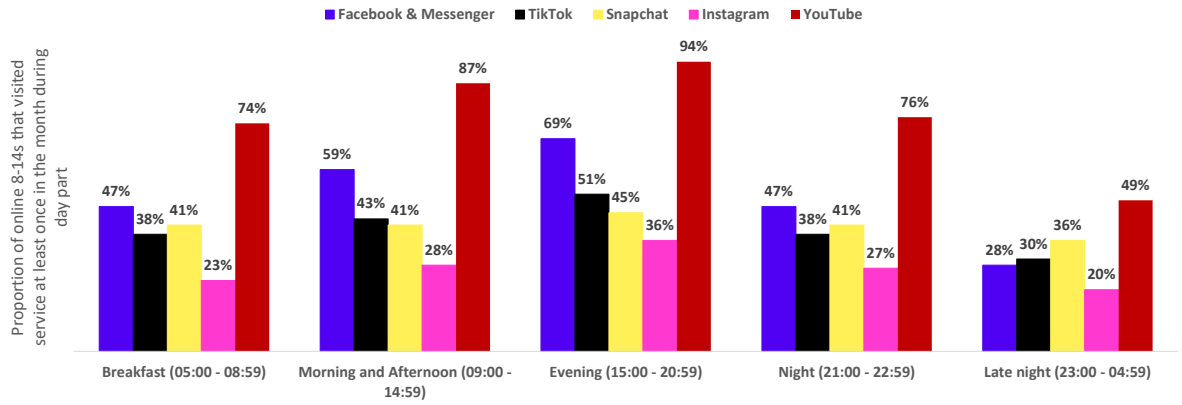
Figure 8: Reach and average time spent per day by UK 8-14-year-old to the top ten reaching social media and video sharing services

Social media service	UK child reach by age				Average time spent by internet users per day by age (hours: minutes)				Average time spent by visitors to service per day (hours:minutes) by age			
	8-14	8-9	10-12	13-14	8-14	8-9	10-12	13-14	8-14	8-9	10-12	13-14
YouTube	96%	92%	97%	98%	00:48	00:55	00:56	00:31	00:50	00:57	00:57	00:32
Facebook (incl. Messenger)	76%	62%	76%	89%	00:03	00:02	00:03	00:04	00:04	00:03	00:04	00:05
TikTok	58%	30%	62%	81%	00:15	00:06	00:17	00:21	00:26	00:18	00:27	00:26
Snapchat	46%	19%	46%	73%	00:45	00:06	00:37	01:38	01:37	00:29	01:18	02:13
Instagram	42%	19%	41%	68%	00:04	<00:01	00:02	00:11	00:10	00:03	00:05	00:16
Pinterest	28%	12%	31%	40%	<00:01	<00:01	00:01	00:02	00:03	00:02	00:03	00:05
Reddit	28%	13%	33%	39%	<00:01	<00:01	<00:01	<00:01	<00:01	<00:01	<00:01	<00:01
X	14%	4%	13%	24%	<00:01	<00:01	<00:01	<00:01	00:02	<00:01	<00:01	00:03
Quora	7%	4%	11%	5%	<00:01	<00:01	<00:01	<00:01	<00:01	<00:01	<00:01	<00:01
Twitch	6%	1%	5%	11%	<00:01	<00:01	<00:01	<00:01	00:02	00:17	00:01	00:02

Note: Average time spent per day calculated using total time spent over 28 days divided by 28 days. Average time by internet user is based on all online 8-14-year-old children whether or not they visited the service whereas average time spent by visitors to service is only based on those that visited the service. For this reason, the time will be higher for those that visited the service compared to all internet users. Where <00:01 in table this equates to less than 30 seconds. games console, TV set and smart display use not measured.

Almost half (49%) of UK 8-14-year-olds used YouTube late at night. These children on average spent 47 minutes on YouTube during the hours of 23:00-04:59 per week. Over a third of 8-14s used Snapchat late at night spending one hour per week on the service during this time, TikTok late night users spent 34 minutes, Instagram 10 minutes and Facebook 6 minutes. The most popular time to visit the top five social media services was during the evening (15:00-20:59).

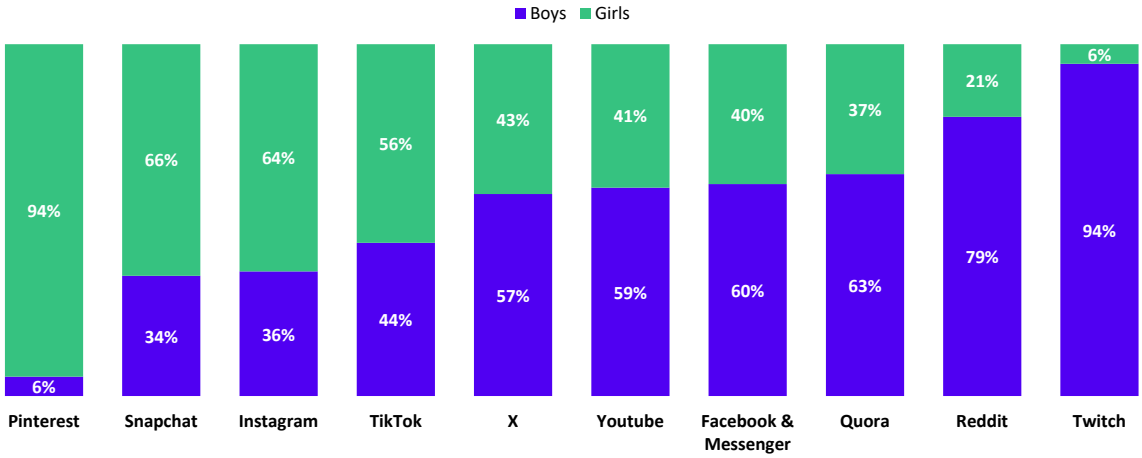
Figure 9: UK 8-14-year-old reach to the top five social media services during daypart in the month



Note: children that visited specified daypart at least once during the month.

8-14-year-old girls accounted for the majority of time spent on Pinterest, Snapchat, Instagram and TikTok. Almost all the time spent on Pinterest was by girls aged 8-14, while almost all the time spent on Twitch was by boys.

Figure 10: Share by gender of total time spent by UK children aged 8-14 in a month on the top ten reaching social media services



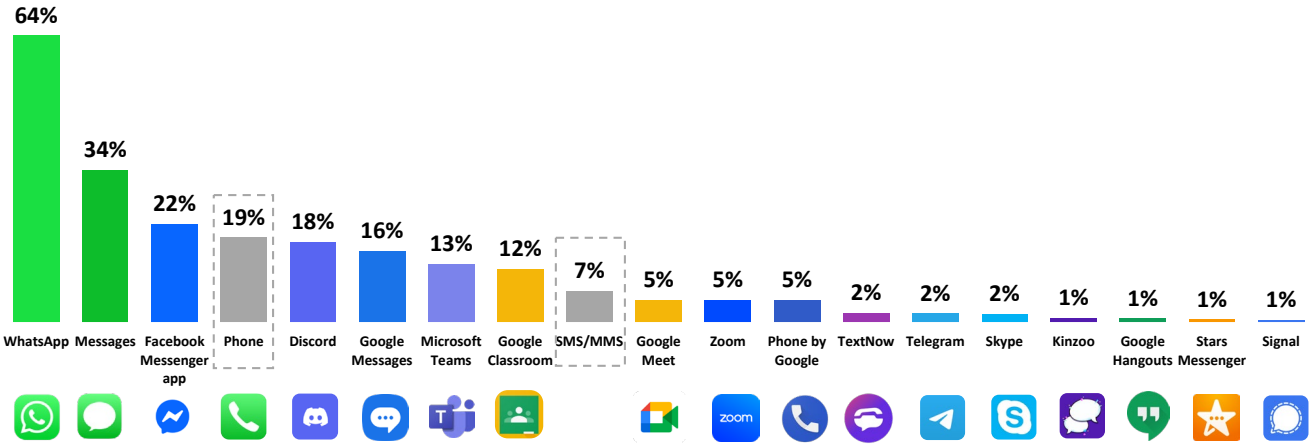
Note: Games console, TV set and smart display use not measured.

Messaging and calls

82% of UK 8-14-year-olds visited a messaging and call service. WhatsApp is the highest-reaching messaging and call service (64%). WhatsApp reach was highest among older children: 8-9s (25%), 10-12s (72%) and 13-14s (89%). Fifty-seven percent of 8-14-year-olds visited WhatsApp per day (8-9s (22%), 10-12s (63%) and 13-14s (79%)). On average 8-14-year-old WhatsApp visitors visited the service 196 times during the month and spent on average 15 minutes on it a day. On average

WhatsApp users aged 13-14 visited the service 259 times during the month, with girls aged 13-14 visiting 304 times and boys aged 13-14 visiting on average 217 times.

Figure 11: Top ten online messaging and call services by UK 8-14-year-old reach in month



Note: Phone and SMS/MMS as grey boxed are not online services. Facebook messaging service can be accessed via the main Facebook platform and is not counted here. Microsoft Teams desktop app use not measured. Messaging functionality is also available on multi-service sites such as social media services, which include messaging and call functionalities as part of their overall proposition e.g. Snapchat chat and Instagram direct messages. This study is unable to measure use of messaging services within sites. Ofcom's Parents' and Children's online behaviour and attitudes survey 2024, Question: Which, if any of these apps or sites does your child use to send messages or make video or voice calls? Results for 8-15-year-olds for high-reaching services not reported on in chart: 44% Snapchat, 35% TikTok direct messages and 27% Instagram direct.

Sixteen per cent of 8-14s visited Life360, a family locator app that allows users to share their location with family members and friends and includes a group messaging feature. Its highest reach was among 13-14-year-olds (26%).

Email

50% of UK 8-14-year-olds visited an email service.

Google's Gmail was the highest reaching (31%, 1.8m) email service among UK online 8-14-year-olds. This was followed by Microsoft's Outlook (20%, 1.1m), Spark Mail (4%, 0.2m) and Yahoo Mail (2%, 0.1m). Gmail visitors spent 16 minutes on the service in the month, while Outlook visitors spent 38 minutes.

Games[6]

Roblox is the top-reaching games app, reaching 61% (3.5m) of UK 8-14-year-olds across smartphone, tablet, computer. After Roblox there is a longtail of games apps each reaching 14% or less of online 8-14-year-olds (see figure 13). Roblox had the highest reach for all three child age groups (8-9s: 59%, 10-12s: 67% and 13-14s: 56%); however, there were differences in ranking in the remaining top ten, although mostly consist of the same games. Roblox 8-14-year-old players spent on average 15 minutes on the game per day across smartphone, tablet, computer. 10-12s on average spent the most time - 18 minutes per day, followed by 8-9s 16 minutes and 13-14s 9 minutes per day.

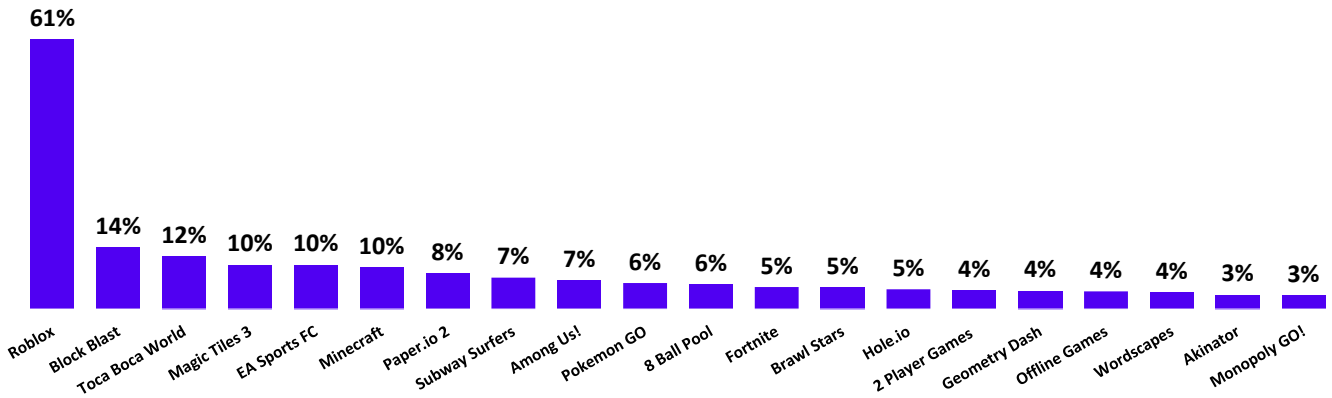
[6] Games consoles was not measured as part of the study. See Methodology.

Toca Boca World was the second highest-reaching games app among 8-9s (16%, 258k) across smartphone, tablet or computer. Toca Boca World is a game aimed at young children, and there was a drop in reach as age increases with 15% of 10-12s using the game (ranked 3rd) and 4% of 13-14s (ranked 17th). On average 8-14s Toca Boca World players spent 3 minutes per day on the game.

Block Blast! was the second-highest reaching game among UK 10-12s (18%, 0.4 million) and 13-14s (16%, 0.3 million) across smartphone, tablet or computer. On average 8-14-year-old Block Blast users spent 5 minutes on the game per day, girls spent more time than boys (6 minutes vs boys 4 minutes).

Twelve percent (0.6 million) of 8-14s visited the Xbox website or app, while 9% (0.5 million) visited the PlayStation website or app.

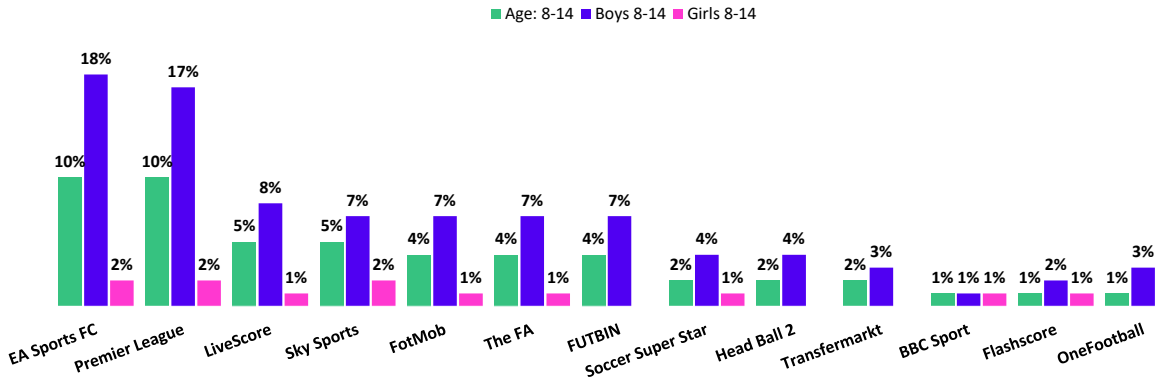
Figure 12: Top twenty gaming apps by UK 8-14-year-old reach in a month



Football

Online services related to football, such as games or football news, skewed in reach towards boys. Game EA Sports FC was the most visited football-related services reaching 10% of UK 8-14-year-olds in a month, however most of these visitors were boys (18% vs girls 2%). 8-14-year-old visitors to EA Sports FC spent on average 3 minutes per day on the service.

Figure 13: Top football-related services by UK 8-14-year-old reach in month: by gender

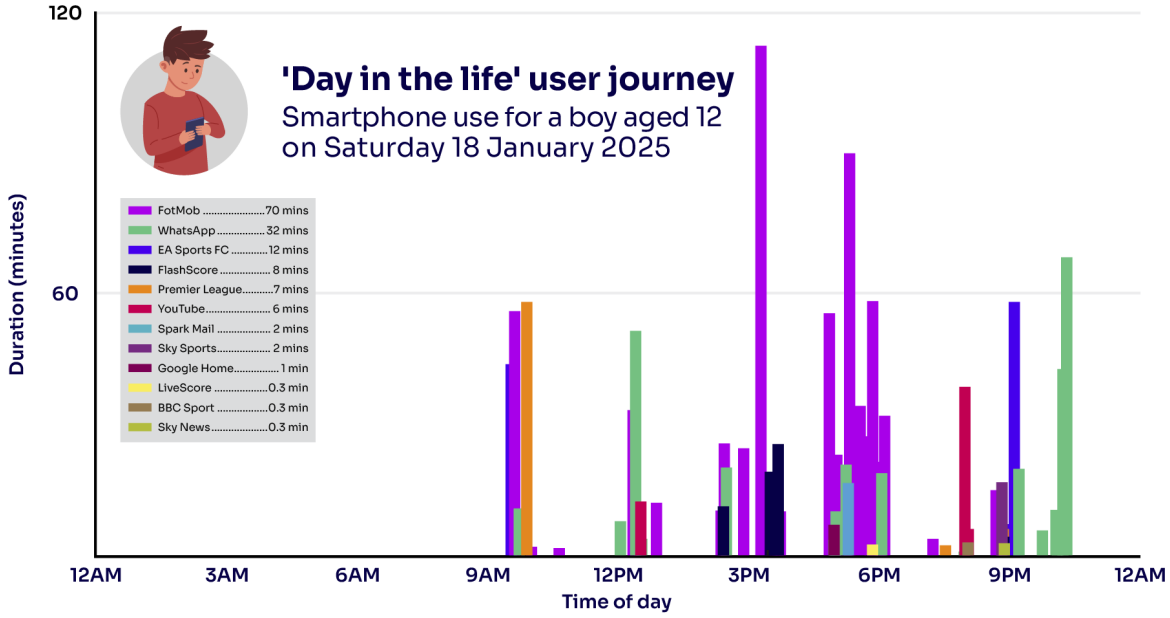


Note: Visitors may not necessarily have visited Sky Sports or BBC Sport for Football related reasons.

Figure 14 is a visual representation of a 12-year-old boy's iPhone use. This panellist is highly interested in football and staying up to date with the match scores, he regularly visits FotMob during

the day – a real time football score and statistics site (notably visits are during match times). This boy uses a variety of other sources too to stay up to date on football, including: Flashscore, Premier League, Livescore, Sky Sports and BBC Sport.

Figure 14: A 'day in the life' user journey: One panellist's iPhone use over 24 hours, a boy aged 12 on Saturday 18 January 2025



Note: Key provides total time spent on services for the day.

Education

76% of UK 8-14-year-olds visited an education-related service in a month.

Duolingo was the highest-reaching education service, reaching 21% of UK 8-14s in a month. Duolingo was followed by Wikipedia[7] (17%), Sparx (17%) and ClassCharts (10%). 8–14-year-old users of Duolingo spent on average 3 minutes on the service each day.

Artificial Intelligence[8]

37% (2.1 million) of UK 8-14-year-olds visited an Artificial Intelligence (AI) service in a month. Reach was highest among older children: 8-9 (27%), 10-12 (35%) and 13-14 (50%).

Bytedance-owned Gauth: AI study companion (10%, 0.6 million) was the highest reaching AI service among 8–14s in a month. Gauth was predominantly visited by 13-14-year-olds (22%), followed by 8% of 10-12s (none of the 8-9s in our sample visited Gauth). On average an 8-14-year-old Gauth user visited the service 33 times during the month, with an average length of a single visit being 29 seconds. 8-14-year-old visitors to Gauth spent on average 17 minutes in a month.

ChatGPT (9%, 509k) was the second highest-reaching AI service among 8-14s in a month. ChatGPT was followed by Character AI (4%, 0.2 million), parent company OpenAI (3%, 0.2 million), Talkie AI

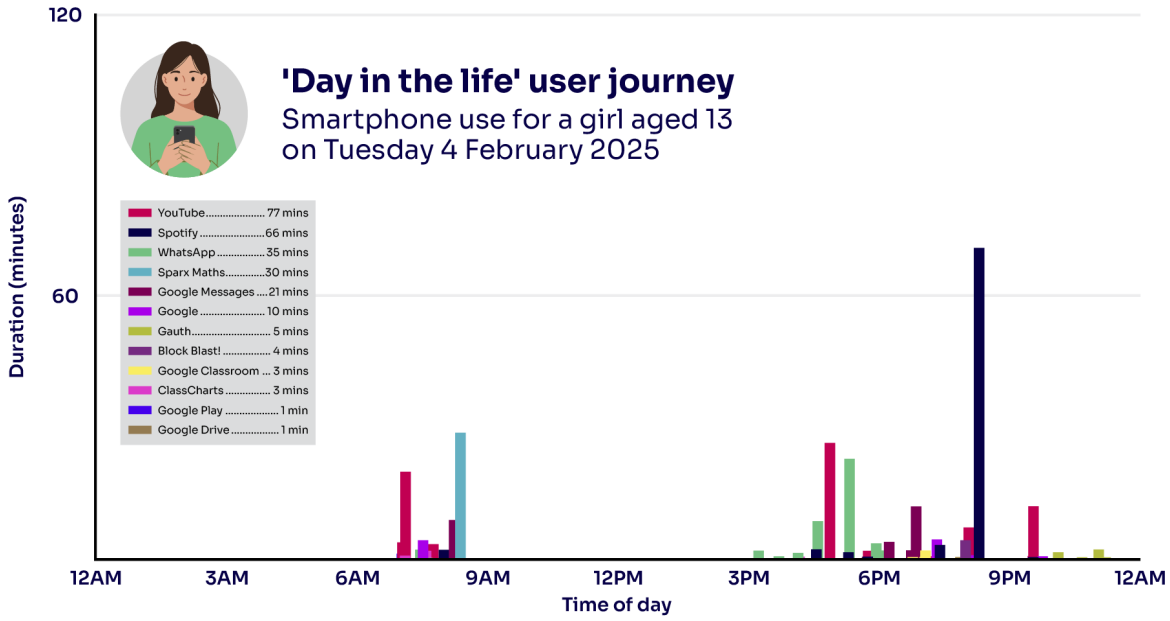
[7] Wikimedia Foundation Inc. which includes Wikipedia and Wikimedia reached 22% of UK 8-14s.
[8] AI functionalities built into existing services e.g. Snapchat My AI or Google Gemini, cannot be reported on via this study. See survey results from Ofcom's Online Nation 2024 report on Generative AI for latest findings on such services.

(3%, 0.1 million) and DeepAI (1%, 0.07 million). Similar to Gauth, ChatGPT was mostly visited by 13-14s (17%), followed by 10-12s (8%) and 8-9s (3%). 8-14-year-old visitors to ChatGPT spent on average 34 seconds per day on the service (16 minutes in a month).

Character AI and Talkie AI were the AI services with the highest average time spent. Character AI visitors spent 20 minutes per day on the service, while Talkie AI visitors spent 9 minutes per day.

Figure 15 is a visual representation of a 13-year-old girl's iPhone use on a school day. The panellist uses her iPhone before school spending most of her time on YouTube and Sparx Maths. Sparx Maths is a site that supports student with their Maths homework. Between 10:00pm -11:00pm the girl also uses Gauth, the AI study and homework helper app. Aside from YouTube, the data suggests this girl does not have access to the other popular social media services on her iPhone.

Figure 15: A 'day in the life' user journey: One panellist's iPhone use over 24 hours, a girl aged 13 on Tuesday 4 February 2025



Note: Key provides total time spent on service for the day. Audio play when Spotify app is closed is not measured, only foreground app use time is measured.

Pornographic content

8% of UK 8-14-year-olds visited a pornographic content service in a month. Reach was highest among older children: 8-9 (3%), 10-12 (7%) and 13-14 (15%). Among the 13–14-year-olds, boys were more likely than girls to have visited a pornographic content service (19% vs 11%).

Pornhub (4%) was the highest reaching pornographic content service among UK 8-14-year-olds in a month. Nine per cent of UK 13-14s visited Pornhub, mostly consisting of 13-14-year-old boys (13-14s: boys 11% vs girls 6%). 8-14-year-old visitors to Pornhub spent on average 9 minutes on the service in a month. Among 8-14s, Pornhub was followed by Chaturbate (1.9%), Stripchat (1.5%), OnlyFans (0.7%) and Jerkmate (0.7%) as the highest-reaching pornographic content services. 8-14-year-old visitors to Chaturbate spent on average less than 1 minute on the service in a month and visitors to Stripchat spent on average 14 minutes on the service in a month. 8-14 visitors to OnlyFans and Jerkmate spent on average less than 1 minute on these services, suggesting they may not have progressed past login page.

Video streaming

Netflix was the highest-reaching (42%, 2.4 million) video service among UK 8–14-year-olds across smartphone, tablet or computer in a month. 8–14-year-old users of Netflix spent on average 2 hours 15 minutes on the service in a month on a smartphone, while those that used Netflix on a tablet spent on average 3 hour 15 minutes on the service on the device in a month.

Disney+ was the second highest-reaching (19%, 1.1 million) video service among UK 8–14-year-olds across smartphone, tablet or computer in a month. On average 8–14-year-old users of Disney+ spent 52 minutes on the service in a month on a smartphone, while those that used Disney+ on a tablet spent on average 2 hours 35 minutes on the service on the device in a month.

Among the public service broadcaster's video streaming services, BBC iPlayer and ITVX reached 8% and 5% of UK 8–14-year-olds respectively across smartphones, tablets and computers, with Channel 4 reaching 3%.