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Ways to Reduce Data Usage in Your Home

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🕐 JANUARY 26, 2017   👤 ASHLEA   💬 9 COMMENTS

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The other day my husband and I got a letter in the mail from our internet service provider stating that new data limits will be set on our current internet plan. While this does stink, it doesn't necessarily mean that we'll be paying more. In fact, our provider (Cox Communications) is one of the last to enforce such limits.

How much data is your family *actually* using? This should be listed on your account/statement depending on which internet service provider you have. With Cox, we will get an email when we reach 85% of the data usage for the month and again when we hit 100% of our data usage for the month. Curious to see just how much you can stream/data you can use before going over? This handy tool will help

My family is currently only using about half of the allocated data usage, and according to my husband (the former cable guy at said company) only about 2% of households will surpass this 1TB per month limit.

Still going over? Read on, friend.

WAYS TO REDUCE DATA USAGE IN YOUR HOME

1. Turn off maps/GPS/locator in apps on your phone. These location services are constantly running in the background and if your phone is connected to your home's wifi that's just soaking up the data.   Go to settings and location to see which apps are tracking you and turn them off. Bonus: it's kinda creepy.
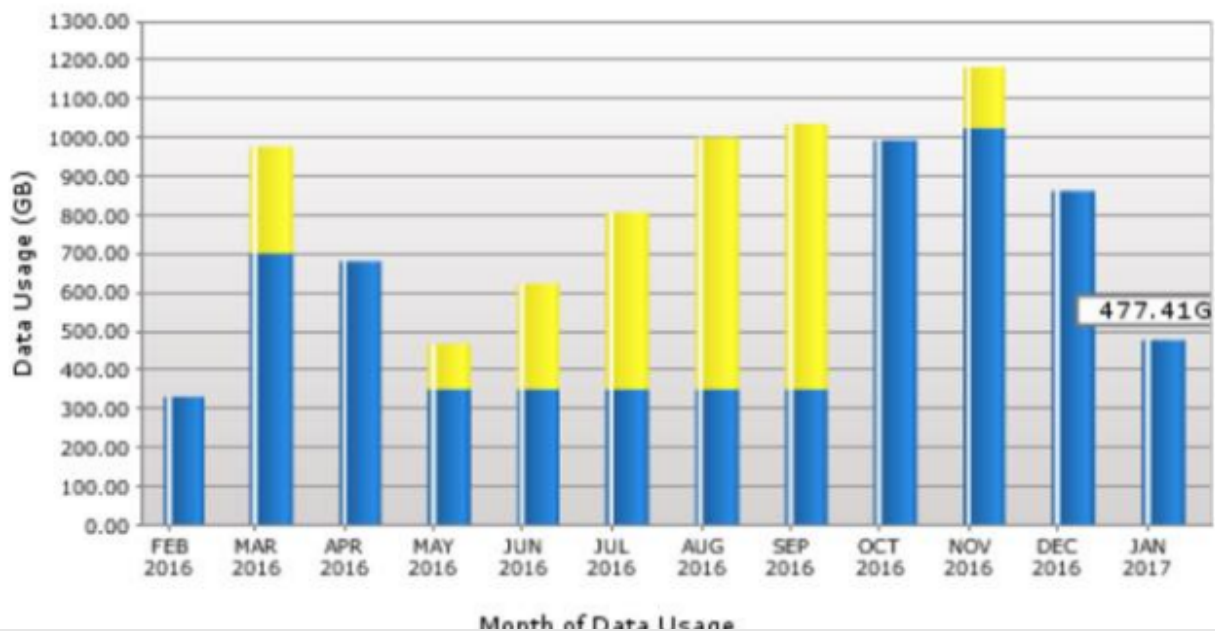
2. Switch browsers on your computer. Google Chrome compresses (ie: uses less) data on laptops and computers. Hey, it all adds up. If you're not looking to change browsers, consider going to the "light" version of your preferred browser.

3. Download your music instead of streaming. Streaming music and/or video hogs up the data. Instead, play from your iTunes library or bust out those old CDs.

4. Get off the wifi. Do you have unlimited cell phone data? I know we do. While the wifi *will* speed up your phone's browser, it also goes against the data usage in your home. If you've got unlimited phone data, get off that wifi, yo!

5. Check your router. There are routers that allow you to see what all is connected at a given time, and you can allot data usage per day to certain devices.

6. Don't just turn off the TV. My kids have a horrible habit of turning off the TV while leaving the Roku, Chromecast or Amazon Fire Stick streaming. Get them in the habit of turning it all off at once.

7. Use lower quality streaming on YouTube. Do you watch a lot of YouTube videos? There are several channels I subscribe to and watch frequently. Did you know you can watch in lower quality which uses less data? On YouTube, just click the settings on the video (the gear) and change the quality of the video.

8. Lower the quality of streaming on Netflix. Why play Ultra HD/4K quality if you don't have a 4K TV? Lower that to a decent/tolerable level and save that data. Don't want to lower that quality *all the time*? Just do it when you notice you're about to go
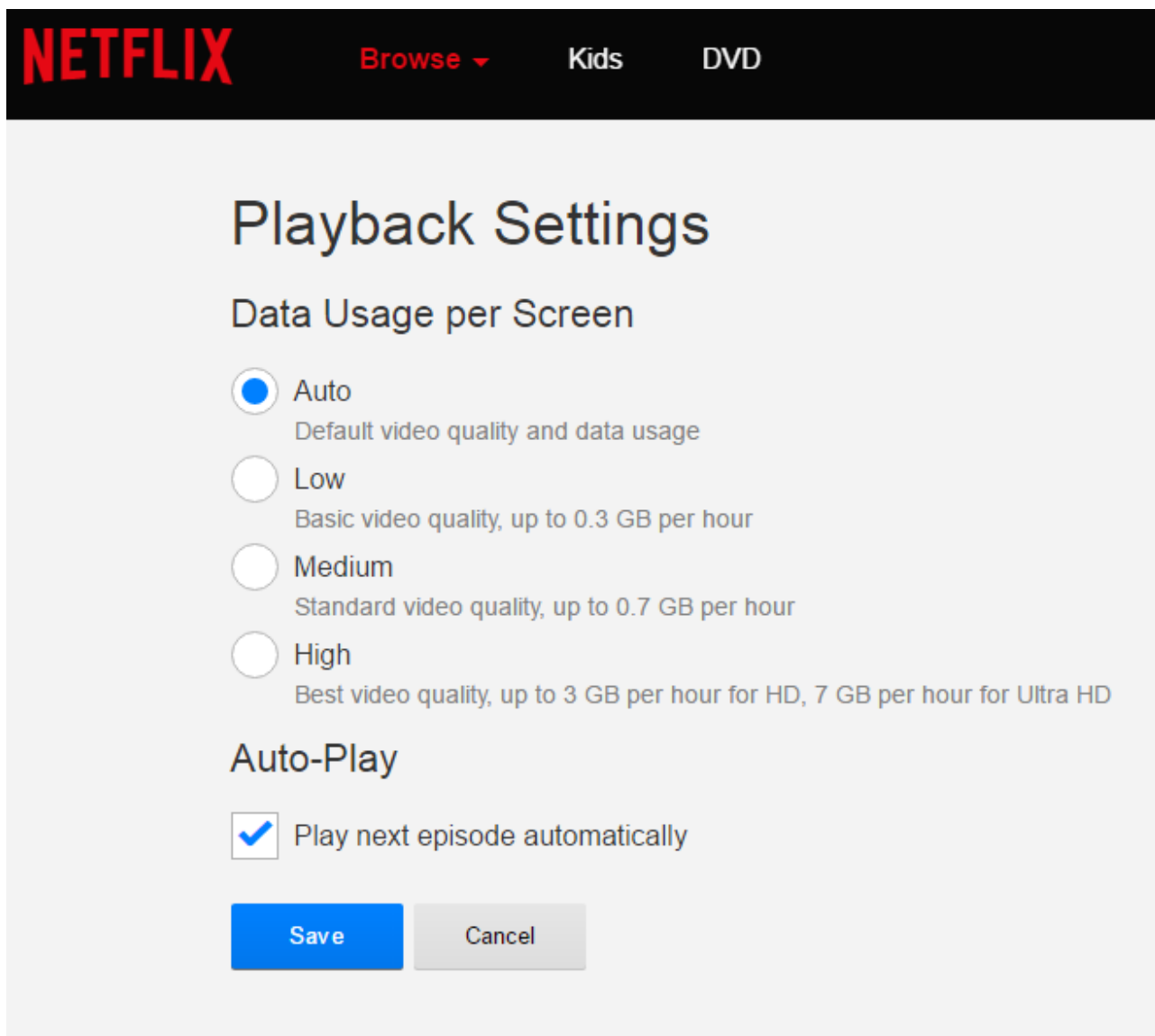
9. Turn off auto-play. Do you fall asleep to TV? You may want to check the auto play feature on your streaming service. I know Netflix, Hulu and Amazon Prime all give you the option to turn off auto play. No use streaming video after you've fallen asleep.

10. Make sure your security is set on your router. Is your wifi not secured with a password? Your neighbors may be using your data without you even knowing. Secure, secure, secure!

What other ways are we missing? Let us know in the comments!

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📁 FRUGAL LIVING, HOME

🏷 DATA, HOME INTERNET USAGE, INTERNET DATA, REDUCE DATA USAGE IN YOUR HOME, STREAMING DATA, WAYS TO REDUCE DATA

COMMENTS

Neil says

November 27, 2018 at 11:33 pm

You mentioned using a light version of our native browser. Curious where to find this. Trying to set it up on my parents mac with a safari light (I already put chrome on there but they still want to use safari.

Reply

Devon says

October 9, 2018 at 2:44 pm

set your home network to be 'metered' in windows 10 and only get updates for your laptop when you're outside of your home network, this will also put onedrive in limited bandwidth state and not sync changes till you're outside your home network :P

Reply

Camille Devaux says

September 6, 2018 at 5:46 pm

It makes a lot of sense that you would want to create a secure space on your route. Having this assurance would be a wonderful way to feel safe with your internet. My sister would love knowing this as she looks at the internet without data caps.

Reply

Amethyst Boheur says

August 6, 2018 at 9:29 pm

Of the things that you said, what got me was the part about downloading the music instead of streaming because it consumes a lot of data. Surely my sister is guilty of this sin because she is the avid music fan of the household. I will be sure to remind her of this because I have plans of getting an internet

jean says

May 27, 2018 at 8:37 am

I cannot seem to find an answer to this, and thought maybe the "former cable guy" could give me some insight. I have been trying very hard to limit my use of data aside from the bonus time. I turn the wifi off on my pc when I am not using it. Why, if the wifi is off, do I wake my computer up and find messages to my email and from microsoft telling me about an update? If the wifi is off there is no internet connection, correct?

Reply

Laurie says

January 25, 2018 at 7:36 pm

My only source of internet is satellite and while I try to be careful, I do a fair amount of downloading, and watch 40 minutes of streaming five days a week, and almost always go over and have to buy more bandwidth. However, I found two Chrome extensions that help: one is Data Saver which, as I understand it, compresses even more than Chrome ordinarily does, and The Great Suspender, which suspends activity on tabs you aren't using. That's especially nice on news sites which are always trying to run something in the background. I also use AdBlock partly because so many ads are offensive, but more because 1) they slow down the page loading, thus increasing bandwidth use, and they are constantly trying to load gifs and videos. Last but not least, there is a place somewhere in Chrome settings where you can

started using other news sites that don't force videos. I hope some of this helps someone :)

Reply

FastVern says
September 18, 2017 at 4:59 pm

I have noticed you don't monetize your site, don't waste your traffic, you can earn extra bucks every month because you've got high quality content. If you want to know how to make extra money, search for: best adsense alternative Dracko's tricks

Reply

Katharine says
February 28, 2017 at 3:41 pm

We live extremely rural. We can only get the type of Internet that uses a data card, purchased at a store. It costs us $100/mo. JUST for one laptop, no gaming, and we do turn of the router. (Our phones have a similar problem in that they also cost, and must be renewed at a store with a card.) We are paying $10/gig. What can we do? Thanks!

Reply

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WELCOME!

Hi! I'm Ashlea, the Kansas mom, and wife, that runs this crochet, food, and heart (CHD) blog. I am a frugal, yarn loving crochet addict that enjoys good food and fine wine – or an occasional whiskey. 😉 *Read more about me here* *and see my* *favorite Amazon products* *here*.

LET'S CONNECT!

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SEARCH

I was asked recently if there was an easy way to support the Heart Hook Home blog without spending an extra dime. The answer is a resounding YES! See the list here.

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