

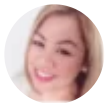
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How to Use Google Analytics



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Google Analytics offers an easy and free way to track and analyze visitors on your website. You could have thousands or even millions of visitors every month, but those visitors are practically meaningless if you don't know anything about them. With its robust web analytics and reporting tools, Google Analytics can help you make the most out of visitors and potentially turn them into customers.

In addition to tracking the number of visitors, Google Analytics provides key insights into how your website is performing and what you can do to meet your goals. You can track everything from how much traffic your website is getting to where that traffic is coming from and how visitors are behaving. You can even monitor social media activities, track mobile app traffic, identify trends and integrate other data sources to help you make well-informed business decisions.

Here's how to use Google Analytics for your website.

Google Analytics Basics

If you want to skip the details and just get started, here's a rundown of how to set up Google Analytics on your website:

- Sign in to Google Analytics with your Google account
- Click the Admin button on the bottom left sidebar of your dashboard
- Select an account or create an account

- Click on the dropdown menu to create a property
- Click on Website and add your site's name and URL
- Choose your industry
- Choose your time zone
- Click on Get Tracking ID
- Install Tracking ID on your website

Here are also a few terms you should know:

Account — where each property lives in your dashboard. You can set up multiple properties in one account or have multiple accounts for different properties

Property — the website or mobile app you want to track

Tracking ID — a unique code added to your site that allows Google Analytics to track it

Conversion — visits that turn into customers or potential customers

Channel/Traffic source — shows where your traffic came from, such as referrals or links from other sites, search engines, social media and emails

Session duration — how long visitors spend on your site

Bounce rate — percentage of visitors that view only a single page and then leave

Event — specific visitor behavior, such as when a visitor clicks on an ad, watches or stops a video, downloads a file and more

Landing page — the first page a visitor sees when visiting your website

Organic search — visitors who visit your site from a link on a search results page

Segment — a way to filter data, such as by category and types of visitors

And the types of reports you shouldn't miss:

Acquisition — shows you where traffic comes from, such as search engines, social media, email marketing campaigns and links from other websites. You'll find this under the Acquisition tab.

Keywords — tells you what search words visitors used to find your website on a search engine. You'll find this report in the Behavior tab, under Site Search.

Conversions — tracks how many visitors are converting into newsletter subscribers, shoppers and actual customers. Click on the Conversions tab and choose a type or category of conversion to view a report.

Lifetime value — currently in beta, Lifetime Value reports track visitors throughout their lifetime, from their first visit to conversions, return visits, future purchases and beyond. This can help you figure out what turned these visitors into customers and what made them keep coming back so you can implement changes. Lifetime value is located under the Audience tab.

Landing page — shows you which pages are the most frequent landing pages so you can track down where those visitors are coming from and what's working on those top pages that's attracting customers. You'll find this across different reports under the landing page column.

Active users — monitors how many visitors are actually active on your site within a specific time period, such as the past week, 14 days or month. This will show you what pages the most active users are visiting so you can figure out what's keeping their attention and apply it to the rest of your website. You can find the active users report in the Audience tab under Active Users.

Now that you have the basics down, here's more on using Google Analytics as a small business.

Sign up for a Google Analytics account

To use Google Analytics, you will need a Google account. Go to google.com/analytics. Click on Sign in or Create an Account on the upper left corner. If you're already signed in, click on Access Google Analytics. Fill in the required information – account name, website name, URL, industry, time zone and data-sharing settings.

Click on Get Tracking ID to finish setting up your account.

Set up Google Analytics on your website

A `<script>` tracking code is required to track your website. You'll be taken directly to the Tracking Code section after setting up your account. The tracking code must

be on every page you wish to track. There are a few ways to do this:

- Copy and paste the code directly into your website template.
- Create a "analyticstracking.php" file with the code and add `<?php include_once("analyticstracking.php") ?>` after your template's `<body>` tag.
- Check your web host, website builder or blog platform for Google Analytics integration. For instance, there are several plug-ins on WordPress that will automatically add the tracking code to every page. Some website builders have a specific page or field where you simply enter your tracking ID. Others — such as Blogger and [Squarespace](#) — require only your Google Analytics web property ID or account number, a string of numbers prefixed with the letters UA that identify your website.

Star tracking

One of the best things about Google Analytics is that it offers a range of metrics that users can customize to fit their needs. All of Google Analytics' features can be accessed and configured from the left sidebar.

Here are three features that matter most to small businesses.

Traffic sources

Find out where your visitors and customers are coming from. Just click on the Acquisitions tab on the left sidebar and you'll be able to view all traffic sources, such as channels, referrals and organic searches.

You'll also be able to find which search terms visitors are using that led them to your website. Google Analytics automatically scans more than 20 major search engines, such as Google, Bing, Yahoo, MSN, AOL and, of course, all of Google's properties. It also includes searches from international search engines like Baidu as well as searches from major websites like CNN.

Custom reports

Custom reports allow you to configure metrics based on your own categories that are not included in the default settings. For instance, if you own an online store, this section allows you to track traffic based on things such as size, color and product SKUs. You can also integrate external data sources, such as your customer relationship management (CRM) software. Just click on the Customization tab and create your metrics.

Social settings


It's not enough to simply run a social media marketing campaign. It's imperative that you track your results, too. Google Analytics can help by integrating social media into your tracking metrics. Although you can't add your Google Analytics tracking code to your social media accounts, what you can do is add them under Social Settings. For instance, if you own a YouTube channel, you can track activities by adding your account using your YouTube URL.

To track social media campaigns, click on Acquisition on the left sidebar. Here you can add campaigns, track landing pages, monitor conversions and more.

4. Add users

Want other members of your team to view your Google Analytics account? All you'll need are their email addresses. Click on the Admin tab in the left sidebar, choose an account and click on User Management. From here you can add new users and set permissions. For instance, you can limit users to reading and analyzing traffic or give them admin-level access to do things like edit your settings. Adding users also makes it easy to present reports and collaborate.

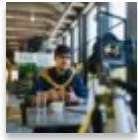
Image Credit: Google Analytics lets you track Web traffic, visitor behavior, social media and more. / Credit: Analytics image via Shutterstock

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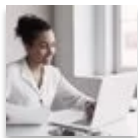
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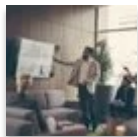
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