DESCRIBING GRAPHS AND CHARTS

USEFUL LINKS

https://www.academic-englishuk.com/describing-graphs

https://www.ieltsbuddy.com/ielts-academic-writing-task-1.html

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n2YkbdNORp8

Line graphs

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vEaObMGloE4

Describing a graph

https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/skills/writing/intermediate-b1/describing-charts

Tips on how to describe a graph or chart:

1. Start by saying what the charts show. In an exam, change the words in the question to write the first sentence of your answer, e.g. *These charts show = These charts illustrate*.
2. The second paragraph should provide an overview of the key features of the information.
3. The other paragraphs should describe the patterns or trends in more detail. However, only select the most important ones to write about, and don't write about your own ideas.
4. Use linking words and a range of vocabulary to describe what you see in the charts. (You can write % or per cent, but be consistent.)
5. Be careful to use the correct tenses to describe the time periods shown.

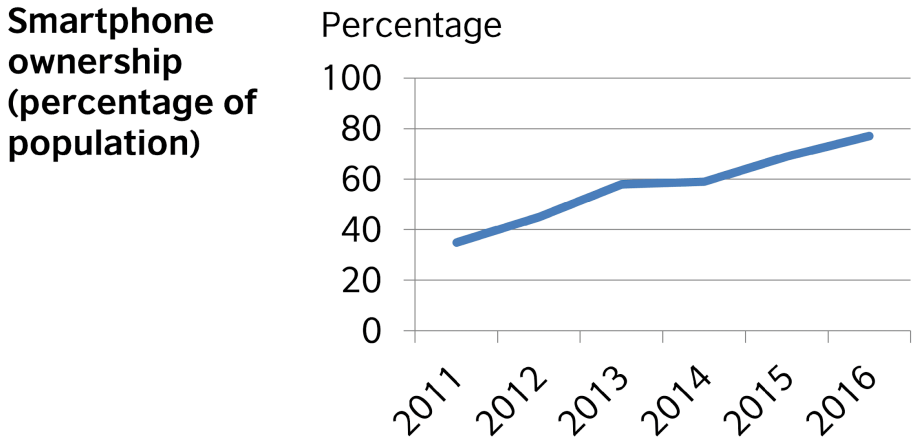
I. The first chart illustrates the percentage of the population who owned a smartphone from 2011 to 2016, and the second breaks the percentages down by age for 2011 and 2016.

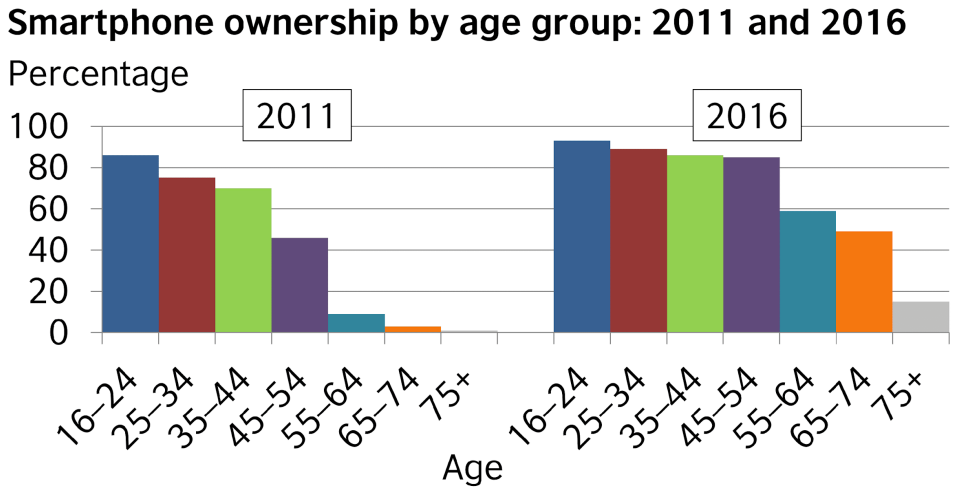
II. Overall, smartphone ownership increased during the six-year period. In general, the younger people were, more likely to own a smartphone. However, the most significant increases in smartphone ownership between 2011 and 2016 came from people aged 45 to 54, from 46% to 84%; from those in the 55 to 64 category, from 9% to 59%; and from those aged 65 to 74, from 5% to 50%.

III. The percentage of people who owned a smartphone rose steadily, starting at around 35% in 2011 and reaching about 77% by 2016. People aged 16 to 24 represented the greatest percentage of smartphone ownership in both 2011 and 2016. 75% of people

aged 25 to 34 and 72% of those aged 35 to 44 owned a smartphone in 2011, rising to 88% and 86% respectively by 2016.

IV. Although almost nobody in the 75+ age category owned a smartphone in 2011, 15% of this group owned smartphones in 2016.





https://preply.com/en/blog/2018/08/17/charts-graphs-and-diagrams-in-the-presentation/#scroll-to-heading-6

How to describe charts, graphs, and diagrams in a presentation

Charts, graphs, and diagrams help you make a presentation more attractive and give evidence as support.

This visual content helps your audience see what you are talking about. That's why it's so important to understand the way it works and know how to describe, charts, tables, and graphs correctly.

Why do you need to use charts, graphs, and diagrams?

A lot of presentations are focused on data and numbers. Apart from essential business presentation phrases, charts, graphs, and diagrams can also help you draw and keep the attention of your listeners. Add them to your presentation, and you will have a profound evidence-based work.

When it comes to presenting and explaining data charts, graphs, and diagrams, you should help people understand and memorize at least the main points from them. As to the use cases, diagrams and other visuals perfectly fit for describing trends, making a comparison or showing relationships between two or more items. In other words, you take your data and give it a visual comprehensible form.

What is better to choose

There are so many different types of charts, diagrams, and graphs that it becomes difficult to choose the right one. The chart options in your spreadsheet program can also greatly puzzle.

When should you use a flow chart? Can you apply a diagram to present a trend? Is a bar chart useful to show sales data? To figure out what to select, you must have a good understanding of the specific features of each type.

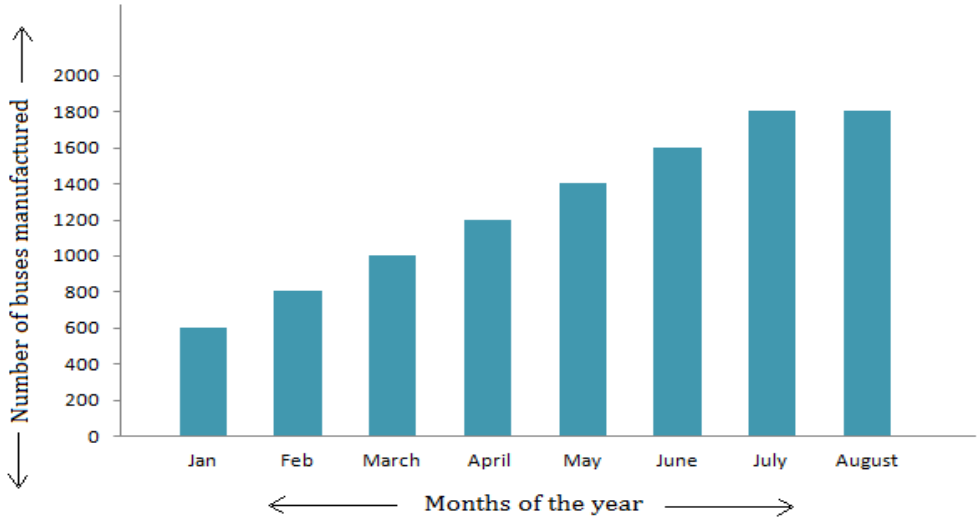
The rest of this article will show examples of different types of presentation visuals and explain in detail how to describe charts and diagrams.

Graphs, Charts & Diagrams

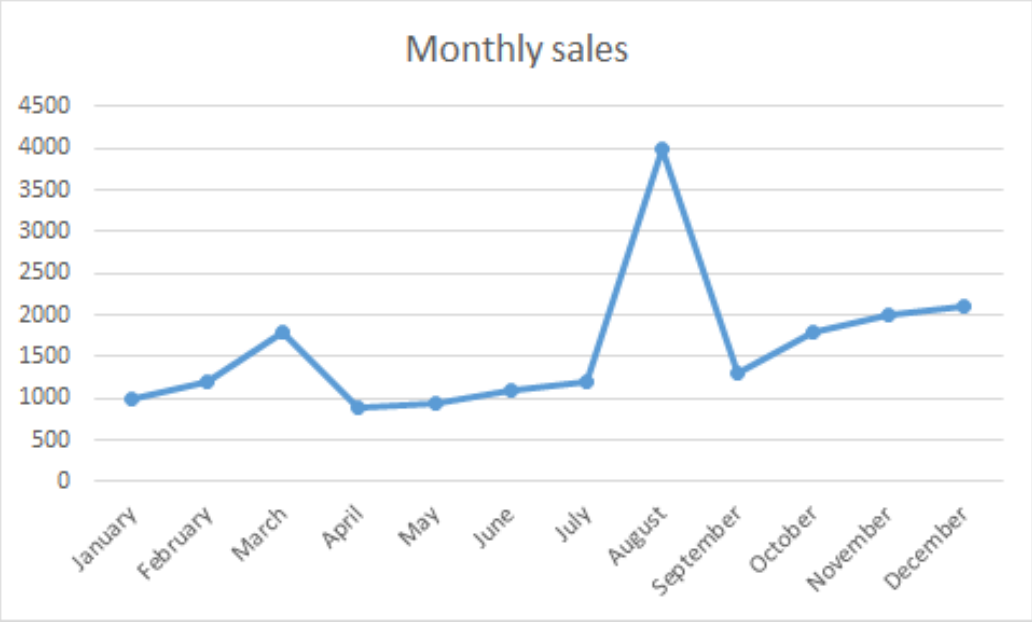
Data can be represented in many ways. The 4 main types of graphs are:

- a bar graph or bar chart
- line graph,
- pie chart
- and diagram.

Bar graphs are used to show relationships between different data series that are independent of each other. In this case, the height or length of the bar indicates the measured value or frequency. Below, you can see the example of a bar graph, which is the most widespread visual for presenting statistical data.



Line graphs represent how data has changed over time. This type of charts is especially useful when you want to demonstrate trends or numbers that are connected. For example, how sales vary within one year. In this case, financial vocabulary will come in handy. Besides, line graphs can show dependencies between two objects during a particular period.



Pie charts are designed to visualize how a whole is divided into various parts. Each segment of the pie is a particular category within the total data set. In this way, it represents a percentage distribution.

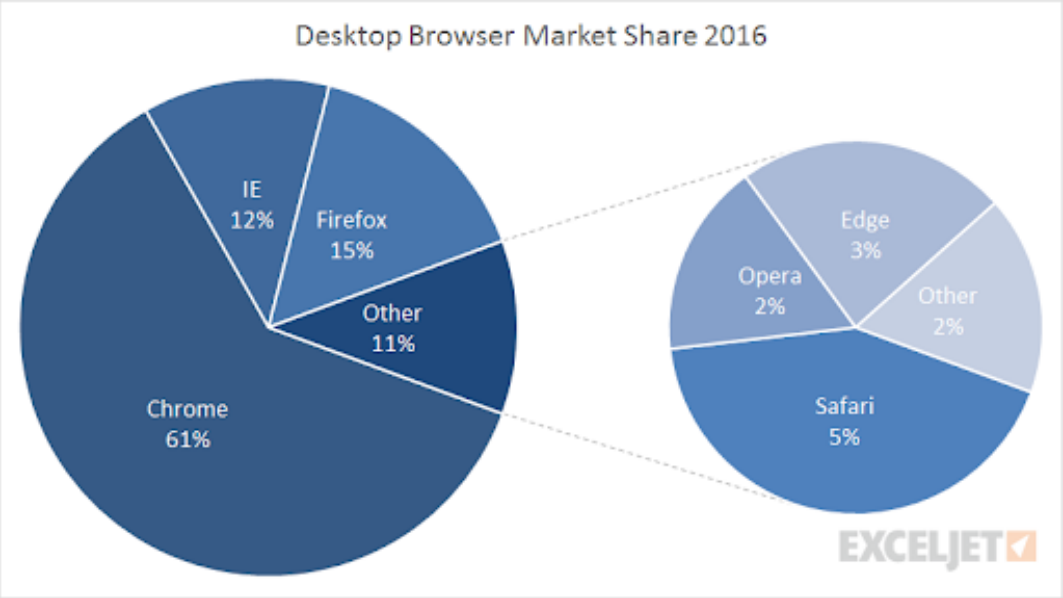
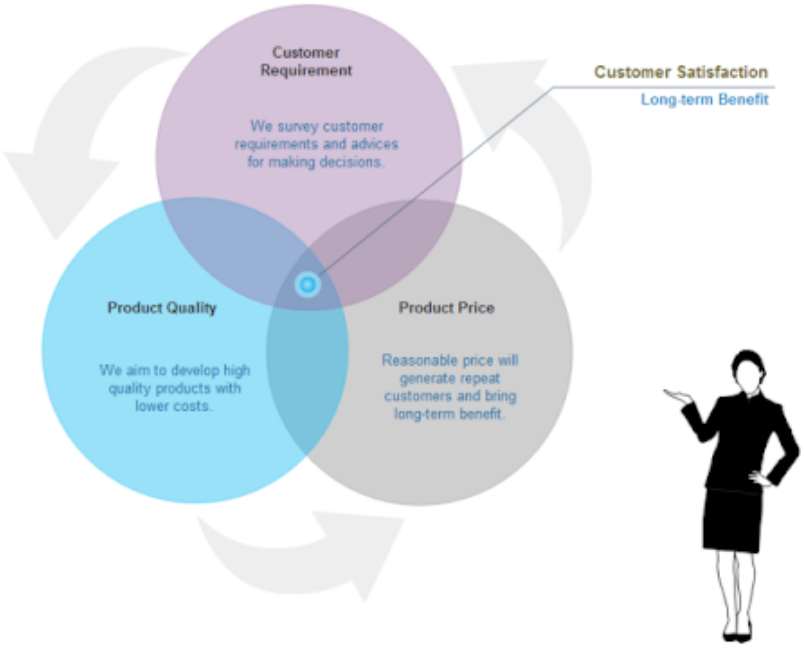


Diagram is a plan, drawing, or outline created to illustrate how separate parts work and overlap at the connecting points.



How to begin a description?

Once you create a fascinating graph for your presentation, it is time to know how to describe graphs, charts, and diagrams. To catch your audience's attention from the very beginning, you can use the following *phrases for introduction*:

- Let me show you this bar graph…
- Let's turn to this diagram…
- I'd like you to look at this map…
- If you look at this graph, you will notice…
- Let's have a look at this pie chart…
- If you look at this line chart, you will understand…
- To illustrate my point, let's look at some charts…

How to describe diagrams and other visuals: naming the parts

To describe diagrams or any other type of graphs as clearly as possible, you should name each visual element. For example:

- The vertical axis shows…
- The horizontal axis represents…
- This curve illustrates…
- The solid line shows…
- The shaded area describes…
- This colored segment is for…
- The red bar…

How to describe bar graphs?

Bar graphs transform the data into separate bars or columns. Generally, this type of visuals have categories on the x-axis and the numbers on the y-axis. So, you can compare statistical data between different groups.

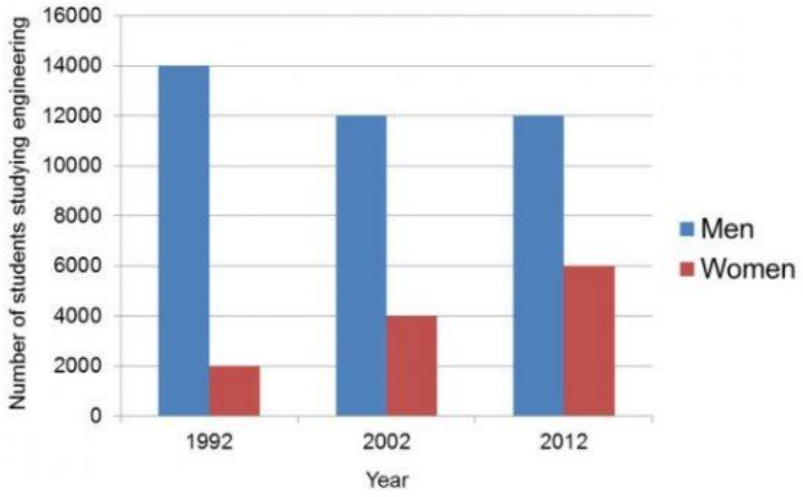
The bar graphs show which category is the largest and which is the smallest. Each group should be independent so that the changes in one do not influence others. The bars or columns can be drawn either vertically or horizontally, as it doesn't make any difference.

The words used to describe bar chart are pretty similar to ones used for the line charts.

Exam question

The bar chart below shows the number of men and women studying engineering at Australian universities.

Summarise the information in the chart by selecting and reporting the main features. Make comparisons where relevant.



And here is an excellent example of writing about bar graphs prepared by the British Council as an answer to an IELTS exam question. You can also use the following vocabulary to talk about bar charts used in your presentation:

The bar chart illustrates the number of men and women studying engineering at Australian universities between the years 1992 and 2012 at 10-year intervals.

It can be seen that the number of male students fell slightly from 14,000 in 1992 to 12,000 in 2002, and then remained level through the following decade. The number of female students is relatively low, starting at 2,000 in 1992. However, while the number of men decreased, the number of women increased. Female students grew steadily by 2,000 each decade. This led to a rise in the total number of engineering students from 16,000 to 18,000 in this period.

Men continue to make up the majority of students. However, the proportion of female students increased sharply in this period. In 1992 there was one woman to every seven men, but by 2012 this had narrowed to one woman to every two men.

Overall, we can see a clear upward trend in the number of female engineering students in Australian universities, while the number of male students seems to have levelled off.

How to describe line graphs?

Line charts convert information into points on a grid that is connected with a line to represent trends, changes, or relationship between objects, numbers, dates, etc. These lines show movement over time affected by the increase or decrease in the key factors.

To express the movement of the line, you should use appropriate *verbs, adjectives, and adverbs* depending on the kind of action you need to show. For this, you should use the following vocabulary:

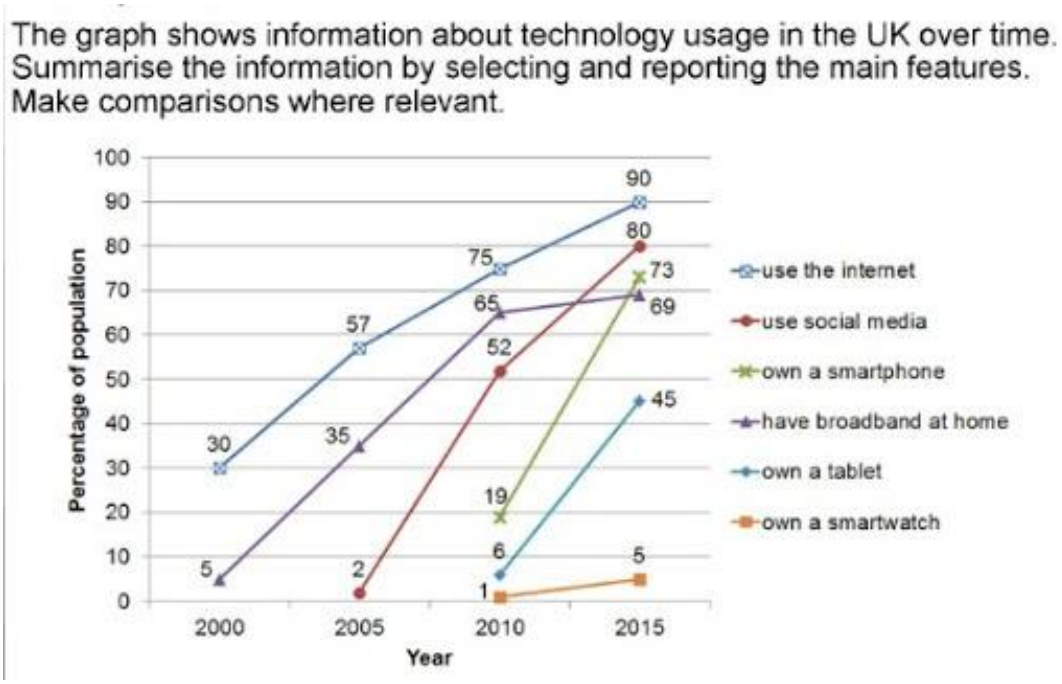
Verbs: rise, increase, grow, go up to, climb, boom, peak, fall, decline, decrease, drop, dip, go down, reduce, level up, remain stable, no change, remain steady, stay constant, stay, maintain the same level, crash, collapse, plunge, plummet.

Adjectives: sharp, rapid, huge, dramatic, substantial, considerable, significant, slight, small, minimal, massive.

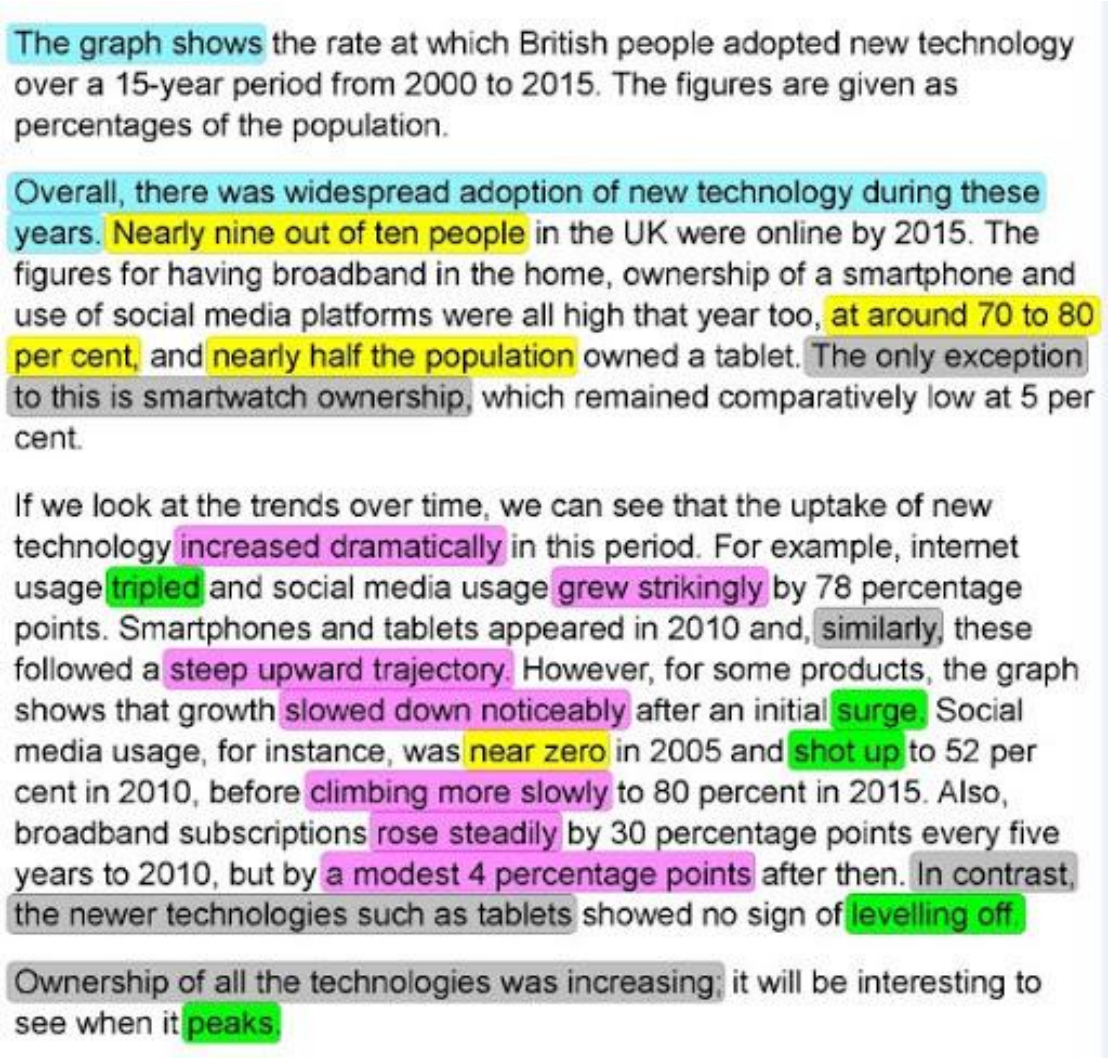
Adverbs: dramatically, rapidly, hugely, massive, sharply, steeply, considerably, substantially, significantly, slightly, minimally, markedly.

There is also a list of **adverbs** to describe the *speed of a change:* rapidly, quickly, swiftly, suddenly, steadily, gradually, slowly.

Here is a sample of a line chart showing how these words are used:



The appropriate vocabulary below will help you understand how to describe such charts:



The graph shows the rate at which British people adopted new technology over a 15-year period from 2000 to 2015. The figures are given as percentages of the population.

Overall, there was widespread adoption of new technology during these years. Nearly nine out of ten people in the UK were online by 2015. The figures for having broadband in the home, ownership of a smartphone and use of social media platforms were all high that year too, at around 70 to 80 per cent, and nearly half the population owned a tablet. The only exception to this is smartwatch ownership, which remained comparatively low at 5 per cent.

If we look at the trends over time, we can see that the uptake of new technology increased dramatically in this period. For example, internet usage tripled and social media usage grew strikingly by 78 percentage points. Smartphones and tablets appeared in 2010 and, similarly, these followed a steep upward trajectory. However, for some products, the graph shows that growth slowed down noticeably after an initial surge. Social media usage, for instance, was near zero in 2005 and shot up to 52 per cent in 2010, before climbing more slowly to 80 percent in 2015. Also, broadband subscriptions rose steadily by 30 percentage points every five years to 2010, but by a modest 4 percentage points after then. In contrast, the newer technologies such as tablets showed no sign of levelling off.

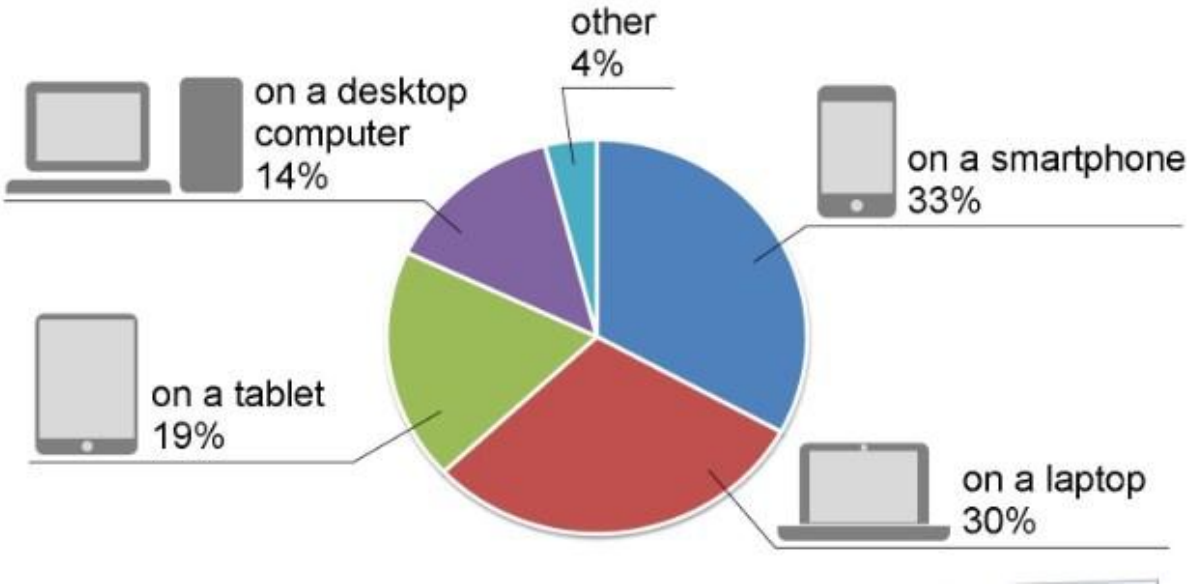
Ownership of all the technologies was increasing; it will be interesting to see when it peaks.

How to describe pie charts?

The pie chart is primarily used to illustrate how different parts make up a whole. The best way to present your data in a pie chart is to compare the categories with each other. The following comparison words can be used interchangeably: (Think of a pizza, when you think of pie charts)

- to compare
- compared to
- as opposed to
- versus
- more than
- the majority of
- only a small monitory
- greater than less than

Here is an example of a pie chart that represents how internet users aged 16+ prefer to browse the web:



This example demonstrates the best way to summarize data by selecting and reporting the main features:

This graph shows the results of a survey in which people aged 16 and over were asked about their preferred devices for accessing the internet. The question referred to going online at home and in other places. Participants mentioned four main devices in their answers: a smartphone, a laptop, a tablet and a desktop computer.

From the pie chart it is clear that the majority of participants prefer to use smartphones and laptops, with just three per cent difference between the two. Nearly a third of participants prefer to go online with a smartphone. Thirty per cent like to use a laptop. A desktop computer accounts for fourteen per cent of users' preferred devices. Only a small minority prefer a device other than these main four.

In conclusion, since mobile and portable devices are the most popular choices, it is clear that many participants are accessing the internet outside their homes. The desktop computer is the least popular of the four main devices. In future, we can probably expect to see more and more people accessing the internet with smartphones as their preferred choice.

Conclusion:

Before creating charts for your presentations, determine what data you're going to show and design the visuals tailored to your audience. Keep them as simple as possible. Charts, graphs, and diagrams should explain themselves. Use the words and their multiple synonyms mentioned in this article to describe your graphs and help your listeners understand the importance of your data. **And don't forget to add an inspiring quote to make your speech even more impressive.**

https://www.englishhints.com/charts-and-graphs.html