

TikTok is the most popular news source for 12 to 15-year-olds, says Ofcom

Publication Date: 2023-07-19

Author: Hibaq Farah

Section: Technology

Tags: Technology, TikTok, Ofcom, Children, news

Article URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2023/jul/20/tiktok-is-the-most-popular-news-source-for-12-to-15-year-olds-says-ofcom>



TikTok has become the most popular news source for 12 to 15-year-olds, according to the UK's communications watchdog. Ofcom's latest report on news consumption in the UK has revealed that the viral video app is now the most used single source of news across all platforms for young teenagers, followed by YouTube and Instagram. TikTok's popularity is driven by a powerful algorithm which curates what people see on their screen, as well as an effective search function that has made the app a captivating platform for young – as well as older – users. The study found that for children aged 12-15, TikTok is now the most used single source of news across all platforms at 28%, followed by YouTube and Instagram at 25% each. However, the BBC still has the highest reach of any news organisation among this age group when all its news outlets – across BBC iPlayer, radio stations, websites and TV channels – are counted, at 39%. Ofcom found that 16 to 24-year-olds are 30% more likely to consume news via social media on their phones than adults and are more likely to consume news online than adults. The study showed that young people in this age group are also less likely to head to traditional news websites (6% v 26%) when compared with adults and are more likely to head to social media. For instance, Instagram is the most used single news source for young people at 44%, though BBC One was tied with Facebook at 33%. The study also showed that TikTok as a news source has become more popular among adults, with one in every 10 adults using it to keep up with news – overtaking BBC Radio 1 and Channel 5 for the first time. For adults, the study revealed that broadcast TV news is the most popular source, used by 70% of UK adults. BBC One remains the most used news single source across all platforms, followed by ITV. Both channels have declined over the past five years, BBC One by 62% and ITV by 41%. Similarly, Facebook has also declined over the same period.