

Top 3 digital activities of South Africans: Play, watch & stream

By [Juliet Gillies](#)

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Despite the country's young population and the relatively low GDP per capita, the percentage of South Africans who are internet users now stands at 66%, above the worldwide average of 62.5%.



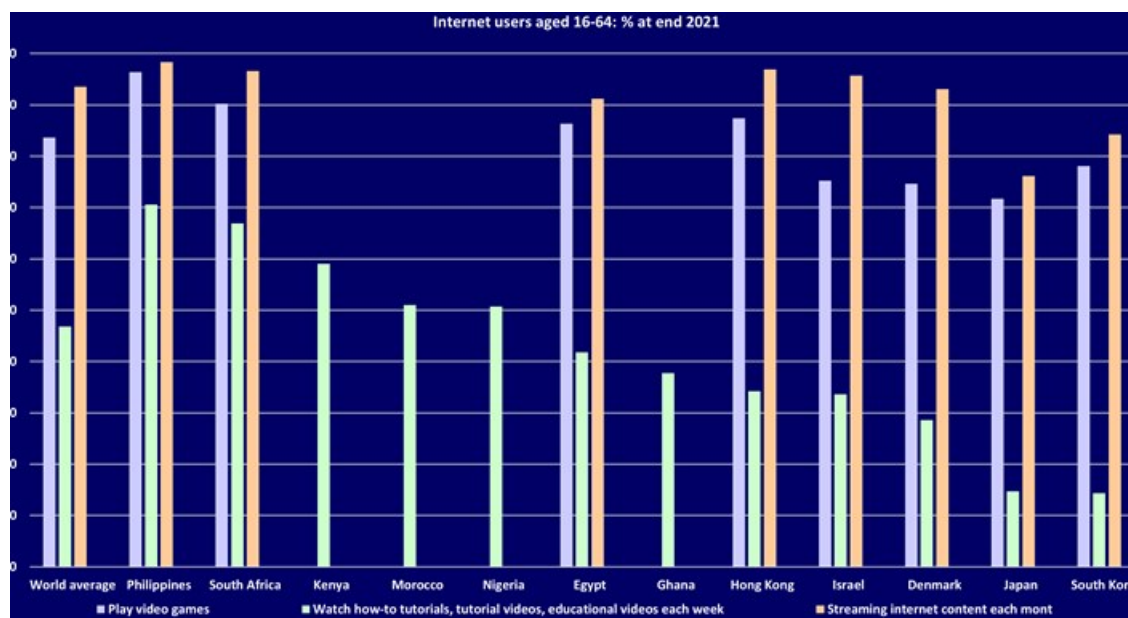
Source: © JESHOOOTS.com [pexels](#)

The median age is 28.1, while the worldwide average is 31.4. The worldwide average GDP per capita is \$17,062, while South Africa's is \$12,096. We already know that South Africans spend more time per day (10h46m) on the internet than any other country in the world (worldwide average is 6h58m). So, what are they doing on the internet?

South Africans on the internet

The graph shows what South Africans are doing on the internet compared to what is being done in other countries in Africa and around the world.

While the detailed country datasets included in the report show only a few selected countries each time, all the data on the African countries were extracted, together with data for a few other countries around the world, to draw a good comparison on a few selected metrics, where South Africa is ahead of the worldwide average.



Top activities on the internet for South Africans

- Play video games – any device: South Africans love playing video games. The country is at number 2 in the dataset (90.2%), just behind Philippines (96.4%), while the worldwide average is 83.6%. Egypt shows 86.3% and Hong Kong 87.4%. Much lower down the list are South Korea (78.1%), Israel (75.2%), Denmark (74.6%) and Japan (71.7%).
- Watch how-to-tutorials, tutorial videos, educational videos each week: South Africans are also doing a lot of learning online (66.9%). Philippines leads, with 70.6%, and is far ahead of the worldwide average of 46.8%. The other Africans countries also show strongly in terms of this reason for using the internet. Kenya is at 59%, followed by Morocco (51%), Nigeria (50.7%) Egypt (41.8%) Ghana and (37.7%). Lower down the list are Hong Kong, Israel, Denmark, Japan, and South Korea.
- Streaming internet content each month: South Africans love streaming (96.6%) and are again second in the list behind Philippines (98.3%). The worldwide average is 93.5%. Egypt is at 91.2%. The other countries in the dataset also reflect high use, include Hong Kong (96.9%). Israel (95.7%), Denmark (93.1%), South Korea (84.2%). In terms of this metric, it might be interesting to compare this data with audience data on SABC.



South Africans prolific internet users says study

Juliet Gillies 8 Feb 2022



Global internet users

The year-on-year growth is in two areas: social media and gaming, both up 1.4%. Watching TV and reading press media are both down year-on-year, 2% and 1.6%, respectively.

Global internet users (aged 16-64) are using the internet to:
Watch TV for 3h20m: -2% year-on-year (YoY)
Use social media for 2h27m: +1.4% YoY
Read press media for 2h00m: -1.6% YoY
Listen to radio for 1h01m: unchanged YoY
Game for 1h12m - +1.4% YoY

Main reasons for using the internet*

This is the global data (average 6h58m per day), but of course there are wide variations per country in terms of what people are doing on the internet, because there are wide variations in terms of time spent on the internet every day, for example Philippines is at 10h27m, while Japan is at 4h26m.

Main reasons for using the internet:
Find information - 61%
Stay in touch with friends/family - 55.2%
Keep up-to-date with news/events - 53.1%
Watch videos/TV shows/movies – 51.5%
Research how to do things - 51.3%
Finding new ideas or inspiration – 47.5%
Accessing and listening to music – 45.8%
Researching products and brands - 45.8%
Filling up spare time and general browsing – 42.7%
Researching places, vacations, and travel – 37.6%
Researching health issues and healthcare products – 35.8%
Managing finances and savings – 34.6%
Gaming – 31.8%
Business-related research – 30.8
Meeting new people – 30.5

Top types of websites visited, and apps used*

The top websites visited, and apps used, are chat and messaging, social networks, and search engines or web portal. These three are a long way in front of the others.

Top website and apps
Chat and messaging – 95.6%
Social networks – 95.2%
Search engines or web portal – 83.6%
Shopping, auctions or classifieds - 58.1%
Maps, parking or location-based services – 56.9%
Email - 50.4%
Music - 46.9%
News – 42.3%
Weather – 41.9%
Entertainment – 40.5%
Games - 34.8%
Food, recipes, restaurants or takeaways - 32.6%
Taxi, ride sharing, bike or scooter hire - 29.5%
Banking, investing or insurance - 28.3%
Sports – 27.3%

*% of internet users aged 16-64

(Source: All data was extracted from the annual data reports published by Hootsuite / WeAreSocial / DataReportal on the data as at end 2021 (<https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2020-global-digital-overview>)).

ABOUT JULIET GILLIES

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