Young people differ widely in their media preferences and patterns of use. On their own, the measures for “total media time” or “total screen time” can mask substantial variations in the types of media young people are devoting their time to. Almost all young people spend some time watching TV and listening to music, but beyond that, their media “diets” look very different from one another. The Common Sense Census identifies several distinct patterns of media use among young people, which we call media-use profiles.

The Six Media Use Profiles of Tweens

**Video Gamers.** Enjoy playing video games “a lot” (83%). Average more than two hours a day (2:10) playing video games and almost an hour’s worth (.57) of mobile and computer games. Mostly boys (68%).

**Social Networkers.** Enjoy social networking “a lot” (57%). Average 1:43 a day using social media. Tend to own smartphones (60%). Mostly girls (70%).

**Mobile Gamers.** Enjoy playing mobile games “a lot” (75%). Spend nearly two hours a day (1:44) playing mobile games but hardly play video games at all (.04). More likely to be female than the Video Gamers (46% vs. 32%).

**Readers.** Enjoy reading “a lot” (85%). Average more than an hour and a half a day (1:35) reading and use far less screen media than other kids their age (an average of 1:34 a day, compared with 4:36 among all tweens). Over half are girls (57%), and almost two-thirds have a parent with a college or advanced degree (62%).

**Heavy Viewers.** Enjoy watching TV “a lot” (77%). Most have TVs in their rooms (64%). Many say TV is left on in their homes “most” or “all” of the time (52%). Watch TV and videos for five hours a day (5:08), and average about six hours (5:55) a day with screen media. More likely to be girls (57%).

**Light Users.** Only medium a majority enjoys “a lot” is TV (56%). Spend the least amount of time with media of any group, 2:16 a day, including a total of an hour and a half (1:35) with screen media. Evenly split between boys and girls (49% girls).

---

### Tween Media Profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Light Users</th>
<th>Video Gamers</th>
<th>Social Networkers</th>
<th>Mobile Gamers</th>
<th>Readers</th>
<th>Heavy Viewers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent of all tweens</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total screen media</td>
<td>4:36</td>
<td>1:35</td>
<td>6:42</td>
<td>7:54</td>
<td>4:48</td>
<td>1:34</td>
<td>5:55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average time per day with each media activity:

- Watching TV/DVDs/videos: 2:26, 1:05, 3:00, 3:12, 2:26, 1:00, 5:08
- Playing games: 1:19, .18, 3:06, 1:12, 1:57, .18, .29
- Video: .35, .04, 2:10, .24, .04, .02, .03
- Computer: .11, .08, .16, .10, .09, .09, .20
- Mobile: .33, .06, .41, .39, 1:44, .07, .06
- Listening to music: .51, .33, .45, 1:44, .48, .36, .50
- Reading: .29, .09, .17, .21, .43, 1:35, .31
- Using social media: .16, —, —, 1:43, —, —, —

Note: A dash (“—”) indicates that the mean is zero minutes by definition of the media type. Superscripts are used to denote whether differences between groups are statistically significant (p<.05). Items with different superscripts differ significantly. Items that do not have a superscript, or that share a common superscript, do not differ significantly.
The Five Media Use Profiles of Teens

**Heavy Viewers.** More likely to have TVs in their rooms (73%). Many say TV is left on “most” or “all” of the time (52%). Average more than 13 hours a day (13:20) with screen media, including nearly six and a half hours (6:24) watching TV and videos, two hours (2:09) using social media, over an hour playing mobile/computer games (1:14), and about an hour (1:57) playing video games.

**Gamers/Computer Users.** Spend an average of 2:27 a day playing games, but only watch TV/videos for an hour and a half (1:34). More likely than all groups except Readers to have a parent with a college or advanced degree (41%). Mostly boys (70%).

**Readers.** Spend an average of an hour and a half (1:31) reading and an average of three hours a day with screens. Less likely to have a TV in the bedroom (33% compared to 73% of Heavy Viewers). Half (49%) read “every day,” and 71% say they enjoy reading “a lot.” Mostly girls (62%).

**Social Networkers.** Spend more than three hours a day (3:17) using social media. Most have their own smartphones (84%). Far more likely to say they enjoy using social media “a lot” (70%) than other teens (e.g., 27% of Gamers/Computer Users). Mostly female (66%).

**Light Users.** Spend an average of 3:40 using media, including about two and a half hours (2:26) a day with screen media. Aren’t very passionate about any one type of media, and don’t tend to use any particular medium for very long each day (the one exception is listening to music: 70% say they enjoy listening to music “a lot,” and they average 1:15 a day doing it).

### TEEN MEDIA PROFILES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent of all teens</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Light Users</th>
<th>Heavy Viewers</th>
<th>Gamers/Computer Users</th>
<th>Readers</th>
<th>Social Networkers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total screen media</td>
<td>6:40</td>
<td>2:26*</td>
<td>13:20*</td>
<td>6:57*</td>
<td>3:00*</td>
<td>7:03*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total media</td>
<td>8:56</td>
<td>3:40*</td>
<td>16:24*</td>
<td>9:17*</td>
<td>5:58*</td>
<td>9:34*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Average time per day with each media activity:**

- Playing games: 1:21, .32*, 2:11*, 2:27*, .30*, .44*
- Video: .37, .18*, .57*, 1:12*, .12*, .12*
- Computer: .19, —, .28*, 1:00*, —, —
- Mobile: .25, .14*, .46*, .15*, .18*, .31*
- Using social media: 1:11, .15*, 2:09*, .53*, .20*, 3:17*
- Reading: .28, *4*, .32*, .29*, 1:31*, .22*