Owl Analytics key concepts

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Definitions and explanations for terms you'll find in Owl Analytics reports.

Action

Owl Analytics tracks the **actions** your visitors take while they're in your knowledge base.

We'll track each time a visitor:

- **Visits a page:** Displayed in the **Pageviews report** and **Page titles report**. Aggregate visit information is displayed in the **Overview report**.
- **Downloads a resource:** Tracked in the **Downloads report**.
- **Opens an external link:** Tracked as **Outlinks** in the **Transitions report**.
- **Searches your knowledge base:** Tracked as **internal searches**. Displayed in the **Logs report**, the **Searches report**, and the **Transitions report**.
- **Exits your knowledge base:** This signals the end of the visit. Tracked as **Exits** in the **Transitions report**. Used to calculate **Exit rate** in various reports.

Actions per visit

The **actions per visit** is the average number of **actions** that were performed during **visits**.

Average page load time

For each visit, Owl Analytics tracks how long a page takes to load.

The **average page load time** (Avg. page load time) is calculated using those page load times and the total number of pageviews. This metric is displayed in seconds.

Longer average page load times can lead to more **bounces** or **exits**.

> **Aim for 3s or less**
> General website best practices suggest you keep page load times at or below three seconds.

To try to reduce average page load times for a given page, consider these factors:

- **Overall page/content length:** Longer pages can increase load times.
- **Images, videos, and other resources:** Larger images, longer videos, and other large files can increase load

times.

- **Third-party plugins or code:** Additional code libraries, plugins, or other integrations can increase load times. These might be specific to a given page or may be loaded in **Customize > Style (HTML & CSS)** in the **Custom <head>** or **Custom HTML** templates.
- **Visit sources:** Page load times are directly impacted by internet bandwidth. If your primary audience has slower internet, you may need to further optimize or shorten your content to improve page load time metrics.

Average time on page

Owl Analytics tracks the time spent on a given page during each visit until the visitor completes an action to navigate to another page. The final page in a visit (the page where a visitor exits or bounces) is logged as 0 seconds.

The **average time on page** (Avg. time on page) is calculated by taking the sum total of logged time on this page and dividing it by the total number of visits. This metric is displayed in hours:minutes:seconds format.

Low or high average time on page is not automatically a good or bad sign. It depends on the length of the page, its purpose, and what visitors are doing afterward. To determine if the average time on page rate is good or bad:

1. Open the Transitions report for the page to explore how visitors are entering and leaving the page. If they're leaving quickly but going to the resources you want them to go to, a low average time on page is a good sign! Conversely, a high average time on page for a complex guide such as single sign-on setup may be a good sign, as it means that readers are sticking with the documentation while they set things up.

2. You may also want to review the Segmented visits log to explore more details about the visitor or their actions. This can help you identify if they're spending more time on more complex resources, if they're just quickly browsing around and maybe this average time made sense, and so on.

3. Compare the average time on page for pages of similar length and type to develop a relative scale of what a "good" or "bad" average time on page is. This can help you set some general baselines for your content so you only spend time reviewing averages outside of those.

Bounce/bounce rate

A **bounce** is when a visitor lands on a page of your knowledge base and leaves without completing any other action.

The **bounce rate** for a page is the percentage of visitors to this page who bounced. It's calculated by dividing the number of bounces by the number of initial entrances to the page.

High bounce rates aren't necessarily a bad thing. It depends on what the purpose of the page is.

For example, if the knowledge base page answers a specific question or provides a set of steps, a high bounce rate may mean that you have "good" bounces: your page did its job and answered the question.

But if the page is a landing page, your homepage, a setup guide with links to additional steps, or a tutorial that should drive people deeper into your knowledge base content, a high bounce may mean you have "bad" bounces. You may be attracting the wrong people or the content or layout is irrelevant, poorly formatted, or otherwise unappealing.

If you're worried about a bounce rate, open the Transitions report for the page to explore how visitors are entering the page, or review the Segmented visits log to explore more details about the visitor or their actions. This can help you identify if the bounces are coming from particular sources (attracting the wrong people).

If neither of those reports helps you identify issues, you may need to review your content itself as well as its presentation and layout to try to improve your bounce rate.

Download

A **download** is tracked whenever a visitor clicks on a link in your knowledge base which prompts a resource to download.

This may include things like:
- URL redirect articles or URL redirect categories pointed to a file
- Document templates or documents you've shared, such as Word or Excel files
- Your knowledge base sitemap xml file
- Code or data files, such as json, xml, js, or csv
- Zipped files, including the 7z and zip extensions
- Right-clicks on images or videos to open in new tab or save as

Complete list of tracked downloads

Owl Analytics will automatically detect a download as a click on a link that ends with one of the following file extensions:
- 7z
- aac
- apk
- arc
- arj
- asf
- asx
- avi
- azw3
- bin
- bz
- bz2
- csv
- deb
- dmg
- doc
- docx

- epub
- exeflv
- gif
- gz
- gzip
- hqx
- ibooks
- jar
- jpg
- jpeg
- js
- mp2
- mp3
- mp4
- mpg
- mpeg
- mobi
- mov
- movie
- msi
- msp
- odb
- odf
- odg
- ods
- odt
- ogg
- ogv
- pdf
- phps
- png
- ppt
- pptx
- qt
- qtm
- ra
- ram
- rar
- rpm
- sea
- sit
- tar
- tbz
- tbz2
- tgz
- torrent

- txt
- wav
- wma
- wmv
- wpd
- xls
- xlsx
- xml
- z
- zip

Entry page

An **entry page** is the first page of a [visit](#).

In other words, this is the page your visitor used to enter your knowledge base.

Exit/Exit rate

An **exit** is tracked any time someone leaves your knowledge base after completing one or more actions. (If they don't complete any actions, it's tracked as a [bounce](#).)

A page's **exit rate** is the percentage of people who left your knowledge base after visiting that specific page.

A high exit rate isn't necessarily a bad thing. If the page is a final step in a process or provides links to other resources you want to drive readers to, a high exit rate can mean your readers found what they needed.

Comparing exit rates for similar types of pages can help you develop a relative sense of whether a given exit rate is "good" or "bad".

New visitor

A **new visitor** is a visitor who views your knowledge base on a device for the first time.

As with unique visitors, if you turn off tracking cookies, your new visitor numbers may be less accurate. Cookieless tracking typically inflates your new visitor numbers and lowers your returning visitor numbers.

Outlink

An **outlink** is tracked when a visitor clicks a link in your knowledge base that opens to a URL outside of your knowledge base.

Pageview

Pageviews are the number of times a page has been viewed. Every single view Owl Analytics can track is tracked

in this number, including repeat views in the same visit and repeat views by a returning visitor.

When pageviews are displayed in most reports, hovering over the report will also display a Pageview percentage to the left of the pageviews number. This percentage is the views of each page as a percent of all the pageviews displayed in the report.

Referrer

A **referrer** is the source that leads visitors to your knowledge base, which basically tells you how they got to your knowledge base.

Referrers display in the Logs report, visitor profile, and the Transitions Overview (which can be opened from the Pageviews report, Entry Pages report, Exit Pages report, and the Page Titles report).

Owl Analytics tracks several types of referrers:

1. **Search engines**: Visits that began from organic searches on search engines. Owl Analytics captures the search engine, such as Google, Bing, DuckDuckGo, ChatGPT, or Yahoo!.

2. **Social networks**: Visits that began in social media platforms. Owl Analytics captures the name of the social media platform, such as Facebook, X, Instagram, GitHub, or LinkedIn.

3. **Websites**: Visits that began when a visitor clicked a link from another site. Owl Analytics captures the URL of the website.

4. **Direct entry**: All visits where Owl Analytics couldn't capture a referrer. This can include visitors who typed your URL directly into their browser, opened a saved bookmark, opened a link in a desktop app, or opened a link from an untrackable source (like an email client or a PDF).

Returning visitor

If Owl Analytics is able to identify the same visitor on subsequent visits, they're marked as a **returning visitor**.

As with unique visitors and new visitors, if you turn off tracking cookies, your returning visitor numbers may be less accurate. Cookieless tracking typically inflates your new visitor numbers and lowers your returning visitor numbers.

Unique pageviews

Unique pageviews show the number of times a page has been viewed in different unique visits.

So if a visitor views the same page three times in the same visit, Owl Analytics tracks it as a single unique pageview but three separate pageviews.

Whenever **unique pageviews** is displayed, hovering over the report will also display a Unique pageviews percentage to the left of the Unique pageviews number. This percentage is the unique pageviews of each page as a percent of all the unique pageviews displayed in this report. If you hover over the percentage, the tooltip will

also show you the percentage of total visits these unique pageviews represent.

Unique download

The **unique download** is the number of visits that involved a click on this link or resource.

If a visitor clicked the same link multiple times during one visit, their visit only tracks one unique download.

Unique visitor

Owl Analytics uses tracking cookies and other methods to try to track visitors over time, grouping multiple visits from the same visitor together. Our reports therefore try to distinguish **unique visitors**—distinct individuals—so that you can get a feel for whether people return to your knowledge base and what they do when they're there.

> **If uniqueness matters to you**
> For the most accurate unique visitor numbers, keep tracking cookies turned on in **KB settings > Owl Analytics.**

Cookies are specific to a device. If the same person uses different devices to view your knowledge base, they're counted as different unique visitors.

If you turn off tracking cookies, Owl Analytics will try to track unique visitors using a combination of IP address, operating system, and browser type. This cookieless tracking is less reliable, so it may result in some returning visitors being counted as new visitors and inflating your unique visitors numbers.

Visit

A **visit** is a continuous session of activity by anyone viewing your knowledge base.

If a visitor pauses for more than 30 minutes, their next interaction is tracked as a new visit.

Visits are tracked in the visits log. Summary data is shown in a few reports. Detailed data is shown in the Logs report and Segmented visits log.

Visitor

A **visitor** is anyone who views your knowledge base.

If the same person views your knowledge base on a different device, they're tracked as a different visitor.