

Comparing two charts

Learn how to write about and compare two pie charts.

Before reading

Do the preparation task first. Then read the text and tips and do the exercises.

Preparation task

Match the definitions (a–f) with the vocabulary (1–6).

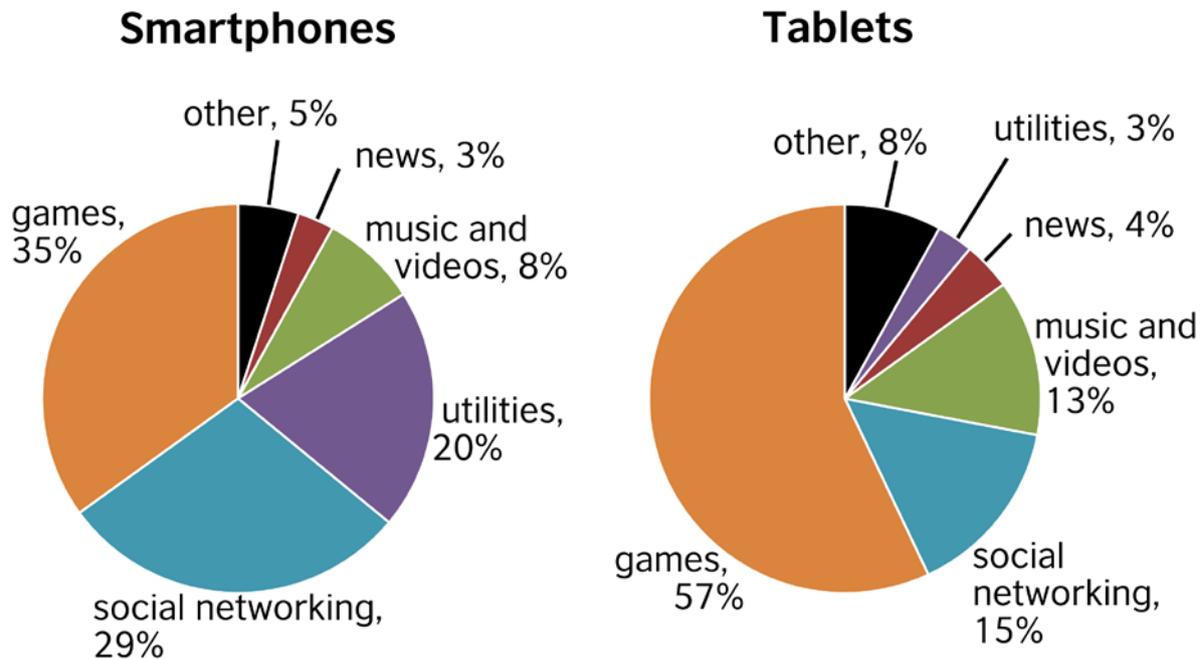
Vocabulary

1. gaming
2. a purpose
3. to illustrate
4. a figure
5. similarly
6. in contrast

Definition

- a. in the same way
- b. to show
- c. playing video games
- d. however
- e. a number
- f. a use

Reading text: Comparing two charts

Time spent on smartphones and tablets, by category


Overall, the two pie charts show that smartphones and tablets are used for the same purposes but to very different extents.

The first pie chart shows how people spend their time on smartphones while the second pie chart illustrates how time is spent on tablets. For both types of device, the top use is for games, but the figures differ greatly. 57% of the time spent on a tablet is given to playing games, while only 35% of the time spent on a smartphone is used for this. In contrast, smartphone users spend 29% of their time on their gadget accessing social networking sites compared with just 15% of tablet time spent on the same activity.

The third most popular use of the tablet is for consuming entertainment, with users spending 13% of their tablet time watching videos and listening to music. Smartphone users, however, dedicate only 8% of their smartphone time to such entertainment, preferring instead to spend 20% of their time on their phone accessing utilities. These can include maps, weather information and calculators.

There is a clear difference in the way people are using their smartphones and tablets. In general, while tablets are being used more for gaming and other forms of entertainment, smartphones seem to be the preferred option for tasks as well as communication with the world around us.

Please note: This page was designed for writing practice only. Information in the charts may not be accurate.

Tips

1. Before writing about the detailed figures, give an overview of what the graphs or charts represent.
2. Say precisely what the data refers to. There is a difference between, for example, a user spending 57% of *their time* on games and a user spending 57% of *their tablet time* on games. (You can write % or per cent, but be consistent.)
3. You don't need to describe all the information in the diagrams. Select the most important things.
4. Don't repeat vocabulary. Use different words and phrases with the same or similar meanings, e.g. *playing games* = *gaming*.
5. Use *similarly*, *in the same way* or *also* to show similarities.
6. Use *however*, *in contrast*, *but*, *while* or *instead* to show differences

Tasks

Task 1

Are the sentences true or false?

	Answer	
1. When describing a chart or graph, start by immediately giving figures and numbers.	True	False
2. When you report data from the chart, there's no need to add too much detail about what it refers to.	True	False
3. You should describe every single figure in the charts.	True	False
4. It's a good idea to repeat useful phrases (e.g. <i>The first chart shows ...</i>) many times.	True	False
5. We should try to compare and contrast the charts, rather than talk about each one separately.	True	False
6. We can use <i>however</i> , <i>in contrast</i> , <i>but</i> , <i>while</i> or <i>instead</i> to show similarities.	True	False

Task 2

Put these words in the correct group.

in the same way	in contrast	instead	but	also
however	as well	in addition	similarly	while

Showing similarities	Showing differences

Task 3

Complete the sentences with words from the box.

Instead	Similarly	contrast
However	while	as well

- Both tablet usage and smartphone usage are growing., they are used in very different ways.
- Fewer people watch television in the evenings now., for entertainment, they use their tablets.
- Over a quarter of time spent on smartphones is on social networking sites. In, only 15% of tablet time is used for social media.
- Younger people like shopping on their tablets, but they often use their smartphones to buy things
- Tablet users spend the majority of their time on the device playing games., gaming is the top use for smartphones.
- People use smartphones more for communication, tablets are preferred for entertainment.

Discussion

Do you own a smartphone and a tablet? What differences do you notice between the way you use them? Are there any similarities?

Answers

Preparation task

1. c
2. f
3. b
4. e
5. a
6. d

Task 1

1. False
2. False
3. False
4. False
5. True
6. False

Task 2

Showing similarities	Showing differences
in the same way	in contrast
also	instead
as well	but
in addition	however
similarly	while

Task 3

1. However
2. Instead
3. contrast
4. as well
5. Similarly
6. while