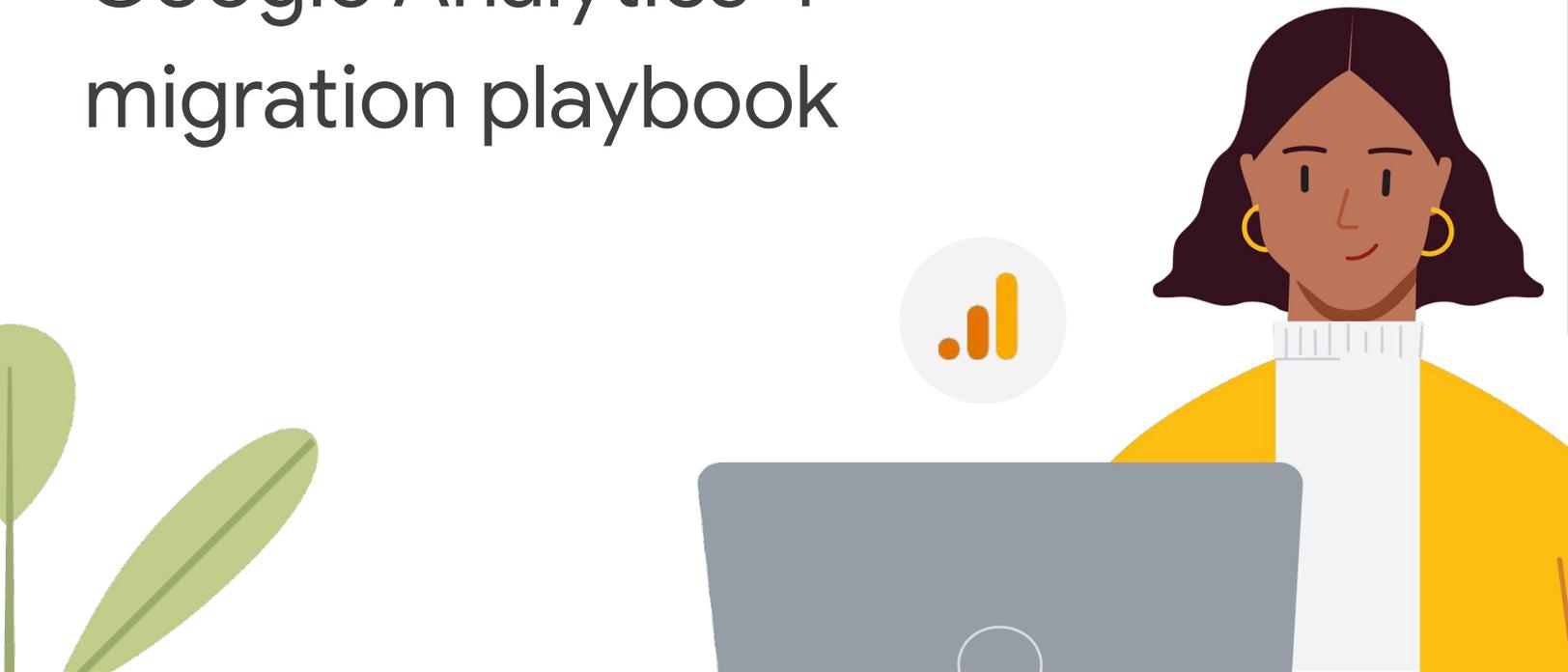


# Google Analytics 4 migration playbook



## Table of contents



Introducing GA4

[LEARN MORE](#)



Get set up on GA4

[LEARN MORE](#)



Migrate core ads features

[LEARN MORE](#)



Advance feature implementation

[LEARN MORE](#)



## Meet your marketing objectives with the new Google Analytics

A year ago, the new Google Analytics was introduced to help you meet the challenges of an evolving measurement landscape and get better ROI from your marketing for the long term. Google Analytics 4 properties offer privacy-safe solutions to measure the customer journey, machine learning to predict outcomes and automate the discovery of insights, and easy activation of those insights in Google advertising platforms to enhance your marketing performance. **With these additional capabilities, you're encouraged to use the new Google Analytics 4 as your primary web and app analytics solution going forward.**



Google Analytics 4 will help you respond to rising consumer expectations, regulatory developments, and changing technology standards for user privacy.



### Regulatory changes

Regulations such as GDPR, CCPA have impacted how data can be collected and used.



### Browser updates

Heightened controls are impacting traditional data collection (e.g. third party cookies and device identifiers).



### User privacy controls

Users are demanding more control and transparency over data collected and used for ads personalization.



Additionally, Google Analytics 4 provides you with smarter insights to improve your marketing decisions and get better ROI.



### Address measurement gaps with Google machine learning

Using Google advanced modeling technology, the new Google Analytics allows you to fill gaps in your understanding of customer behavior when cookies and other identifiers aren't available.



### Meet your marketing objectives

Customers are seeing success using the new Google Analytics to help achieve key marketing objectives like generating leads, acquiring new users, and driving online and offline sales.



### Get more value with data-driven attribution

Google data-driven attribution models give you a better understanding of how all of your marketing activities collectively influence your conversions, so you don't over or undervalue a single channel.



## ↔ How should I approach the migration from Universal Analytics (UA) to GA4



Google Analytics 4 is fully ready for you to adopt and use in place of your existing standard Universal Analytics property. To take advantage of the Google Analytics 4 measurement continuity, automated insights about the customer journey, and easy activation that will help to improve marketing ROI, finish setting up your Google Analytics 4 property today.



Before you start implementing your GA4 property, ensure you know the answer to these questions:

1 What are your goals?

**Examples:**  
Online sales - Generating leads

2 How are you using Google Analytics today?

**Examples:**  
Main measurement platform - website usage

3 How are your Google Analytics properties structured?

**Examples:**  
One property per website language - All websites within a property, dividing by views

4 What is the most important moment to measure?

**Examples:**  
When a customer buys a product. - When a customer provides their information to be contacted / shows interest



## ☰ Get set up on Google Analytics 4

### ☑ STEP 1

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#### Set up a GA4 property

Set up a Google Analytics 4 property alongside your existing Universal Analytics property.

- Enable data collection
- Consider account structure
- Create property
- Activate Google signals

### 📊 STEP 2

[LEARN MORE](#)

#### Configure core ad features

Ensure features you are utilizing in UA are setup in GA4.

- Link to Google Ads
- Map and migrate UA goals and conversions to GA4
- Validate conversions in Google Ads
- Migrate audiences
- Migrate eCommerce measurement (if applicable)

### 🔄 STEP 3

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#### Configure core ad setup advanced features

Setting up advanced features allow you to maximize you Google Analytics 4 setup, allowing you to import data for example.

- User ID
- Data import
- Measurement protocol
- BigQuery



## Step 1 - Set up Google Analytics 4 property



### Setting up account structure

Here are the recommendations on how to structure your accounts based on your size:

**Single setups:** For a business with one website, set up an Analytics account that contains a Google Analytics 4 property with 1 web data stream.

**Larger setups:** A property represents the data for one logical user base (e.g., users of a single cross-platform application), and is the most granular level at which Analytics processes data. A property is also the level of the Analytics account hierarchy at which you create integrations with other products (e.g., Google Ads).

Is the data you collect related to a single logical user base? When you link Analytics to other products, do you want to share that entire body of data with each product?

- ✓ Yes. Create one property.
- ✗ No. Create a separate property for each logical user base.





## Step 1 - Set up Google Analytics 4 property



### [Creating your Google Analytics 4 property through the wizard](#)



To find the Google Analytics 4 Wizard, simply log into your account and go to Admin, and within the Property column click on GA4 setup assistant.

1

Under "I need to create a new Google Analytics 4 property", Click "Get started".

2

If your site uses the gtag.js tag, you'll have the option to enable data collection (connected site tags) using your existing tags.

3

Click Create property.



Analytics will now create your new Google Analytics 4 property, copying basic data such as the property name, URL, timezone, and currency from your Universal Analytics Property. Analytics will also automatically enable [enhanced measurement](#) for your Google Analytics 4 property. You'll then be taken to [Setup assistant](#) in your new Google Analytics 4 property. There, you can see the available options for migrating (or setting up from scratch) your configuration settings.



### [Enabling data collection](#)

If you aren't able to reuse a gtag.js site tag, then you'll need to add the Analytics tag to your web pages to begin seeing data in your new Google Analytics 4 property. Choose your desired implementation method:

[Google tag](#)

[Google Tag Manager](#)

[Add to your website builder](#)

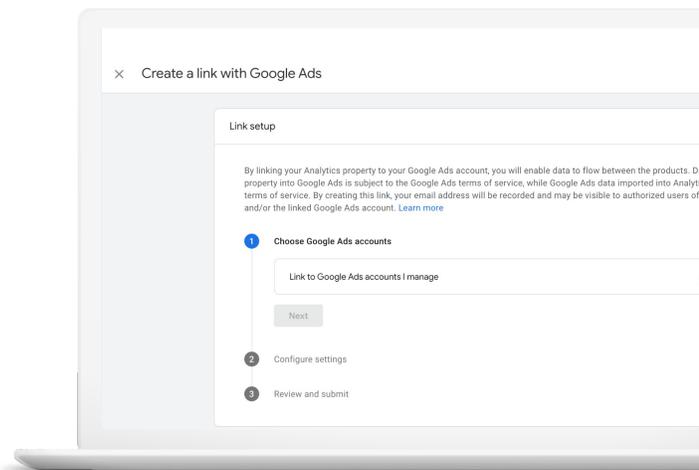


## Step 2 - Configure core ad features



### 2.1. Link to Google Ads

1. In Analytics, click Admin.
2. In the *Property* column, use the menu to select the property you want to link.
3. Under *Product linking*, click Google Ads linking.
4. Click Link.
5. Click Choose Google Ads accounts, then select the Google Ads accounts you want to link.
6. Click Confirm.



### 2.2. Configure GA4 conversions and import to ads



#### 2.2.1. Map Universal Analytics conversions to Google Analytics 4

Before starting to configure new conversions, it is important to understand which goals are key for you and your business and therefore should be replicated in Google Analytics 4.



Once you have a clear understanding of which conversions you want to replicate, go to the next step!



#### 2.2.2 Replicate and migrate Universal Analytics goals a to Google Analytics 4 conversions

The articles in this topic describe how to replicate the most common Universal Analytics goals as conversions in Google Analytics 4 properties.



[Destination goals](#)



[Event goals](#)



[Advanced conversion needs](#)



### 2.2.3. Validate conversions in Google Ads

To confirm that your property is receiving data, check the Realtime report. If you've set up your measurement code correctly, the Users right now card should refresh about every 15 seconds with a new count of users. Once you've replicated Universal Analytics goals in your Google Analytics 4 property (GA4), you can validate the new conversions by:

#### Comparing conversion counts

The most direct and most accurate way to validate replicated conversions in GA4 is to compare counts against the equivalent goal in Universal Analytics. Take into account that it is normal that numbers are not perfectly matched.

#### Verifying event measurement

For a conversion to be counted, the corresponding event needs to be sent to GA4. Therefore look into Reports > Engagement > Events or check real time reports to verify that the events are being triggered correctly.

#### Confirming match type differences

There are differences in the match types available in Universal Analytics versus GA4. If you are creating conversion events via the GA4 user interface, check to make sure that the inclusion or exclusion criteria of the Universal Analytics goals and GA4 conversions are actually matching the same things.

#### Comparing conversions per session differences

There are many possible causes of discrepancies; conversions per session is one of them, and a user can compare UA and GA4 conversion counts, and check their site tagging and GA configuration to ensure the counts match as closely as possible.



**Tip: Filter differences** GA4 doesn't have views and doesn't have a similar property-wide filter feature. If your Universal Analytics view is being filtered, it could be missing some traffic that is included in the corresponding GA4 property.

### 2.2.4. Import conversion events to Google Ads



Step 1

#### Import conversion events

Within your Google Ads Account, go to your Conversions, Click the plus button, click Import, select Google Analytics (GA4), Select appropriate web or app button, then click CONTINUE. Then select each conversion event you want to import, then click IMPORT AND CONTINUE. You may consider waiting 24 hours to ensure your imported volume is similar to your original goals.



Step 2

#### Ensure imported goals are set to “Primary goal” and Select “data-driven attribution”:

- Select Mark as “primary goal” when selecting your conversion in Google Ads
- Ensure you select DDA (or another non-last click model) upon GA4 goal import. With new data-driven attribution, you can understand the value of each ad click as customers interact with your ads on their path to conversion.



Step 3

#### Remove UA conversions

To avoid duplicate conversions by removing your existing Universal Analytics conversions from your conversion settings within Google Ads. You can do this by either removing the conversion action or by unchecking the “Primary goal” setting. We recommend doing this immediately after importing your GA4 conversion events.



### 2.3. [Migrate audiences](#)

Simply add your GA4 audience list to campaigns that are targeting UA audiences, there is no need to delete or remove anything on Universal Analytics. To Create Audiences in GA4 first simply:



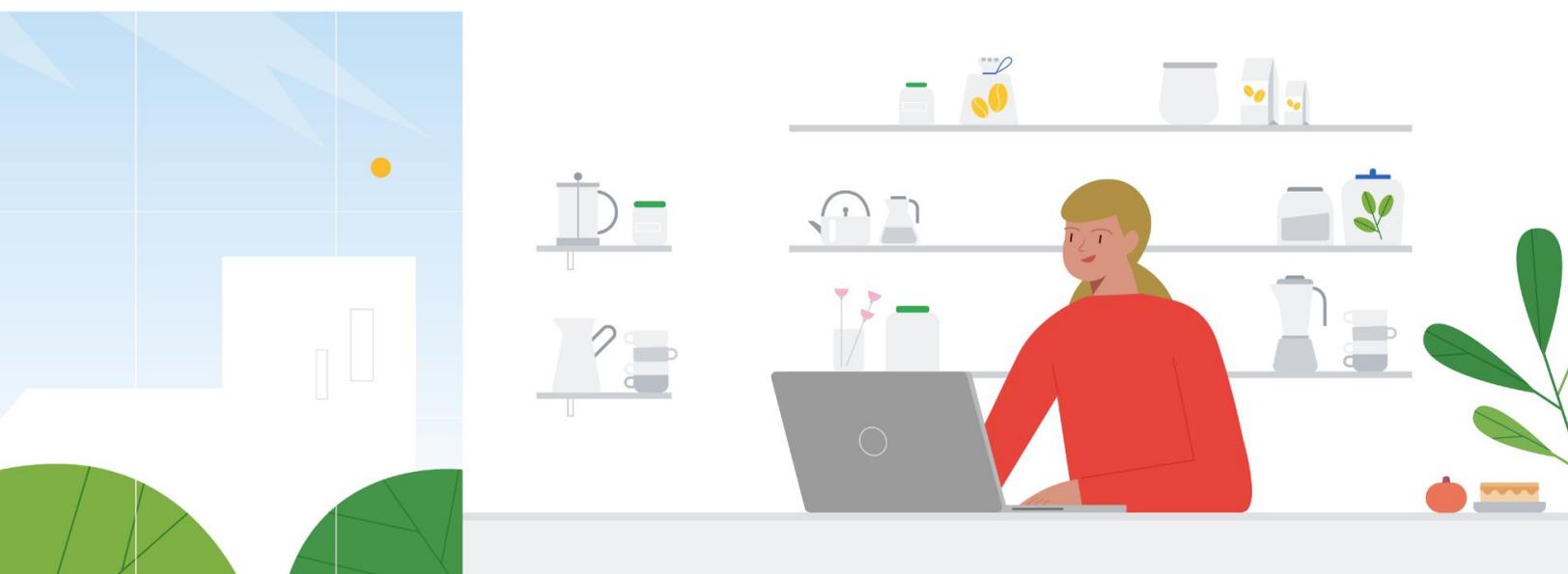
**On the left, click  
Configure > Audiences >  
New audience.**

- [Create a new audience](#) by defining all the parameters yourself.
- [Use a template](#) and modify the existing parameters.
- [Select a suggested audience](#). You can use it as is, or modify it to suit your needs.



### 2.4. [Migrate eCommerce measurement \(if applicable\)](#)

- Leave your UA implementation unchanged.
- Create duplicate events for your GA4 property. Use the new event names and parameters that are required for Google Analytics 4 properties. You will have two independent implementations side by side, each doing slightly different things.





## Step 3 - Set up advanced features (optional)



### [User-ID](#)

With User-ID, you can get a more accurate user count, analyze the signed-in user experience, and understand user behavior across multiple touchpoints.



For example, if you have both a website and an app, and your mobile users visit the app using both phones and tablets, User-ID lets you measure and explore those user journeys in a single unified view of the data.



### [BigQuery](#)

BigQuery is a cloud data warehouse that lets you run highly performant queries of large datasets.

You can export all of your raw events from Google Analytics 4 properties to BigQuery, and then use an SQL-like syntax to query that data. In BigQuery, you can choose to export your data to external storage or import external data for the purposes of combining it with your Analytics data.



### [Measurement protocol](#)

The Measurement protocol lets you send external data to Analytics from your website or app. It's particularly useful when you want to send data to Analytics from a kiosk, a point of sale system, or anything that is not a website or mobile app.



### [Data import](#)

Typically, each body of data exists in its own silo, uninformed by the other data. Data Import lets you join all this data in Analytics on a defined schedule in order to take down these silos, unlock new insights, and democratize your data. e.g. cost data from campaigns you run besides Google campaigns.



## Frequently asked questions



### Common FAQs

#### 1. What are the key differences between UA and GA4?

Google Analytics 4 is a new kind of [property](#), with different reports than what you're used to seeing in [Universal Analytics](#) properties. One advantage of a Google Analytics 4 property is that you can use it for a website, an app, or both a website and app together. Universal Analytics properties only support websites. GA4 includes many other changes and exciting new features. For more information check [here](#).

#### 2. Why do I need to setup and migrate to Google Analytics 4.

The new Google Analytics is now the default experience for all new customers. It's also where you'll see new features being developed, and where we're investing in future improvements for the product. We've also launched some exciting new features such as predictive metrics to improve marketing ROI and a reimagined reporting experience that makes it even easier to find new insights. We recommend that you continue to rely on your existing Universal Analytics properties for business critical insights while also creating a new Google Analytics 4 property.

#### 3. When is the best time to make the shift

Given this is a new implementation and data model, it's important to get started early to familiarize yourself with new Analytics and to generate a history of data in this property to run future analysis from.

#### 4. Will I lose access to UA Data once I switch to GA4

You will continue having access to your UA data once you switch to GA4, but the new Google Analytics version won't include past historical data. It starts tracking only after the moment it's created.

#### 5. Do advertisers need to collect historical data in Google Analytics 4 for their new conversion(s) before importing/bidding towards them in Google Ads?

This is not necessary. Smart Bidding does not train on conversion data until it is included in the set to primary conversion column. .



# Checklist



 Features	 Migrated?
GA linked - Ads only for GA4; Ads/ SA3/ DV3 for UA	
Google signals - enabled	
Audiences - ad spend against one GA4 audience	
Bid to Conversions - ad spend against one GA4 conversion	
Data import - sending at least one data import event	
Measurement protocol - sending at least one MP event	
UserID - event with at least one UserID	





## Conversion migration in depth



### How to remove Universal Analytics Goals from Google Ads

You can remove duplicate Universal Analytics conversions by either removing the conversion action or by no longer including the action in your "Set to Primary" column.

#### Option #1: Remove the conversion action

This will stop collecting data for this conversion action.

1. In the top right, select Tools & Settings , then select Conversions (it may be under Measurement).
2. Check the checkboxes for the conversion actions you want to remove.
3. Remove desired Universal Analytics Conversions



#### Option #2: Stop including the "Set to Primary" Column

This will still allow for the conversion action to collect data, but smart bidding will no longer optimize towards this conversion.

1. Sign in to your Google Ads account.
2. In the top right, select Tools & Settings , then select Conversions (it may be under Measurement).
3. Click the name of an individual conversion action you want to change.
4. In the lower right of the Settings screen, click Edit settings.
5. Click Mark as ""Primary Goal"".
6. Click Save, and then click Done.



### Import conversion events

1. In the top right, select Tools & Settings, then select Conversions (it may be under Measurement)
2. In the top left, click Conversion.
3. Click Import, select Google Analytics (GA4), select Web if web conversions, then click CONTINUE.
4. Select each conversion event you want to import, then click IMPORT AND CONTINUE.
5. Click DONE.

Google Ads conversion tracking starts importing the data from your Analytics account starting from the day you clicked Import. Historical data from before this date is not added to conversion tracking.

Google Ads uses your chosen conversion window(s) (7-90 days, default: 30 days) to determine which conversion events to import from Analytics. For example, if you use the 30-day default window for a conversion event named Registrations, Google Ads only imports conversions that occurred within 30 days of the click.

**Pro-tip:** Ensure you select data-driven attribution upon GA4 goal import. With new data-driven attribution, you can understand the value of each ad click as customers interact with your ads on their path to conversion.



#### Please note

After you make a change to your conversion settings or tracking, there may be minor performance fluctuations as Google Ads optimizes your bids. To indicate this, a 'learning' status may be shown



## Frequently asked questions



### Migration FAQs

#### **Do advertisers need to collect historical data in Google Analytics 4 for their new conversion(s) before importing/bidding towards them in Google Ads?**

This is not necessary. Smart Bidding does not train on conversion data until it is included in the “Set to primary” column. There is no point of uploading the data (from a bidding perspective) but not including it in the conversions column, other than checking if the data is accurate and uploading on a regular basis.

#### **Does Smart Bidding know the new GA4 conversion is similar to the equivalent Universal Analytics conversion? Will this lower the learning period?**

Smart Bidding retains the historical conversion data even when a conversion action is switched and gradually adjusts to the new data. If the conversion you are tracking in GA4 is the same as the UA conversion, and the differences in conversion counts remain low (<10%) you can expect low volatility and faster learning period.

#### **What should I do, if they experience volatility during the transition? Should they go back to Manual CPC?**

No. Advertisers should use the daily budget, and target CPA or ROAS (where applicable) to adjust their campaigns behavior. Changes made to these levers are rapidly reflected in the bidding behavior and will help you better achieve your performance objectives. [Learn more about how to adjust targets with Smart Bidding.](#)

#### **An advertiser is about to enter a high seasonal period (e.g. Holidays). Should the advertiser proceed with a conversion migration from UA to GA4 during this time?**

It's recommended that customers wait to migrate conversions until after high seasonal periods where performance is expected to fluctuate.

#### **An advertiser prefers to migrate conversions at the campaign level by using selective optimization. Are there any issues with this?**

There are no issues with this. We recommend advertisers continue to follow the best practices outlined in this document (including conversion validation and not counting duplicate conversions).

#### **While going through the transition, can I switch from MCC to child-level tracking (or vice versa)?**

Yes. Performance should not be significantly impacted.

#### **What happens if a advertiser doesn't migrate their conversions?**

The conversions will deprecate in tandem with the UA deprecation.