15 Common Google Analytics Filters and Bonus Tips

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Filter #1: Exclude internal IP addresses

- This filter improves your data quality.
- Especially useful for low-traffic websites because of the possible impact of internal website behavior on overall stats.
- Best practice is to remove all *known* IP addresses that pollute your data.
- Think about your office, home address and other directly involved parties.

Example for IP address: 131.45.45.45.
Filter #2: Include own IP address
- Set up a view with only your IP address included to test your Google Analytics implementation and configuration.

Example for IP address: 131.45.45.46.
Filter #3: Include Blog Subdomain

- Use this filter if you only want to measure one subdomain of your website.
- This can be useful especially for larger sites with subdomains for different purposes.
- Example subdomain: blog.mywebsite.com.

![Filter Information](image)

Include blog subdomain

Filter Field: Hostname
Filter Pattern: ^blog\.mywebsite\.com$
Filter #4: Include Own Hostname(s)

- Negates the effect of your GA tracking code being hijacked and included on another site.
- Eliminates (not set) hostname traffic appearing in your reports.

Filter you need to apply (make sure to include one or more hostnames for your Google Analytics view):

![Filter on your hostname](Image)

Note:

- Use a regular expression if you need to add more than one domain.
- Adding two include filters of the same type doesn’t work, results in zero hits being measured.
Filter #5: Lowercase Request URI

- This filter consolidates the pages by making all URIs to be lowercase.
- Request URI = part of URL after domain name.
- www.test.com/testing123/ -> /testing123/ = request URI.
Filter #6: Lowercase Campaign Parameters

- Capital letters used by you or other members of your team might mess up your Google Analytics data.
- You can use lowercase filters to prevent this from happening.
  - utm_medium = campaign Medium
  - utm_source = campaign Source
  - utm_campaign = campaign Name
  - utm_content = campaign Content
  - utm_term = campaign Term

- Add in a similar way:
  - Campaign Source
  - Campaign Name
  - Campaign Content
  - Campaign Term
Filter #7: Lowercase Search Term

- This filter consolidates the search terms by making all search terms to be lowercase.
- An internal search on “Analytics” and “analytics” would normally be registered as two different search terms.
- This filter will solve this issue:
Filter #8: Lowercase Hostname

- Your visitors might visit your website and use different letter casing. In my case: Online-metrics.com and online-metrics.com.
- It’s a best practice to create this filter to avoid any inconsistencies (duplicate hostnames) being registered:
Filter #9: Attach Hostname to Request URI

- Advantageous in a multi-domain implementation.
- Helps you to distinguish pages on multiple domains with the same request URI.
- However, keep in mind that it breaks the all content pages report links.
Filter #10: Exclude All Query Parameters

- You will get rid of many duplicate URLs if you apply this filter.
- Use this filter if you are certain your website contains only technical parameters.
- You don’t want to remove query parameters that add value to your analysis.

**Note:**

- Double check your data and query parameters first.
- Use the “exclude URL query parameter” option in the view settings if you want to keep a few query parameters in your content reports. If that’s the case, don’t use this filter.
Filter #11: Search and Replace www and non-www

- Use this filter if your website is accessible via www and non-www and there are no redirects in place.
- Example domain: mywebsite.com

Note:

- You need to make sure to apply this filter before filter #9 if you use them both.
Filter #12: Rewrite Google Translate URLs

- This is another case where it is smart to use a Search and Replace function.
- The Google translate URLs might have quite a few query parameters and other info that is not important for you.
- You can group all URLs by using this Search and Replace function:

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Remove query parameters from Google translate URLs
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```
Search String: /translate_cl??.+
Replace String: optional
```

- Case-sensitive
Filter #13: Include Specific Traffic Source

- On default Google Analytics measures three (or four) traffic sources.
  - Direct traffic
  - Referrals
  - Organic search
  - (Paid search)
- At certain times you want to set up separate views for your traffic sources.
  - To reduce the effect of sampling.
  - To give someone limited access.

Example for paid search. Paid search is identified as medium = cpc or ppc.

Note:
- If you only want to include Google paid search (Google AdWords), you need to add an additional include filter on Campaign Source = Google.
- Two different include filters go well together.
Filter #14: Include Device Category

- Focus on one device category can be really useful.
- Visitors normally behave in a different way on mobile if compared to desktop.
- You can create an individual view for each of your device categories.
- Or combine two device categories within one view.

Example: you want to only include mobile traffic in one data view.

Note:
- Use an exclude filter on one device category if you want to include two devices categories in one view (include filter currently works on only one device category at a time).
Filter #15: Include Specific Countries

- Including one or more countries can be very useful if you deal with an international website and you have a specific, regional target audience.
- You can better analyze and optimize your “real” conversion rate if you have a separate view for your target audience.
- Use regular expressions if you want to include more than one country in a filter.

Example: include traffic from The Netherlands, Belgium and Germany.
15 Bonus Tips for Using Filters in Google Analytics

1. Use paper, Excel or another application to first map out your account structure: properties and views.

2. Make a first list of filters you might need in your account setup.

3. Keep in mind that filters and views are the building blocks for account and property structures in Google Analytics. (similar role as metrics and dimensions in reports)

4. Always keep an unfiltered data view.

5. Set up a testing view that includes your IP address.

6. Use the copy view function if you need to set up a similar view and want to save time.

7. Never use two include filters of the same type; use regular expressions instead.

8. Use filters for long-term segmentation and segments for ad-hoc analysis. So if you find yourself using a segment over and over again, consider switching to a filter (if possible).

9. Filters cannot be set on numerical parameters.

10. Use filter verification option whenever available.

11. Apply filters to a test view first.

12. Use filters to create different data views for separate stakeholders.

13. Don’t expect filters to work immediately (2 – 4 hours delay is possible).

14. Keep in mind that filter order might influence the outcome.

15. Educate yourself on regular expressions: filters and regular expressions go closely together.