GA4 Simplified: The 25 Analytics Terms and Ideas You Need for 2025

Number	Term	What to Know	Pro Tip
1	event	An interaction that a user does on your website (or app) during a session. All key interactions (page views or clicks or purchases or etc) are tracked as events. (See entry 25 for more)	GA4 has different types of events. Some are automatically collected. Some must be custom created. The "enhanced measurement" category (below) can be turned on or off with a toggle.
2	enhanced measurement events	These are all great events to turn on: 'click' event tracks external link clicks (Outbound clicks), 'file_download' event tracks downloaded files (File downloads), view_search_results tracks site search activity (Site Search)	The form_submission enhanced measurement event (Form Interactions) rarely works as expected. Create a custom event if you have a form submission event to track as part of your measurement goals
3	custom event	You can set up your own events (custom events) to track important actions like form submissions, phone calls, and more. See the two links at right for two options for phone call tracking.	Use GTM to create a custom event for phone calls: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bPdXBoS9bo4 Track phone clicks as custom events without GTM: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DpN4Hxe9IoE
4	conversion (key event)	Tell GA4 which of your events are most important by identifying them as "key events" (GA4's lanuage for conversions). This drives your session key event rate.	You can change your counting method from once per event to once per session" for relevant events (Admin -> data display -> key events -> 3 dot icon -> change counting method), if you only want to record a key event a max of 1 time per visit
5	metric	A quantitative measurement in your GA4 data.	Session count (sessions) is a metric. So are all the numbers you see in your GA4 reports. But metrics are rarely helpful on their own. You need dimensions to investigate them properly.
6	dimension	A qualitative measurement in your GA4 data	If you're analyzing your sessions based on something like geography or traffic source, those are dimensions. They are the qualitative data components that break down your quantitative metric.
7	user	A unique person who comes to your website one or more times	A user is a **new user** on their first visit. They are a **returning user** on a subsequent visit. (Although if they clear their cookies or block cookies, they'll be identified as a new user again.)
8	active users	The default users metric in GA4. Active users include all new users (coming to the site for the first time) and all users who had some kind of engagement during their visit.	Don't be confused if you see a difference between total users and active users. Total users will be a slightly higher number because it will include return users who did not engage at all with the site.
9	session	A visit to your website. A single user can account for more than one session. You can find it in the sessions metric in your reports.	Focus your traffic acqusition analysis by beginning with the traffic channels or sources that drive the most sessions to your website. It doesn't mean they will always be the most important, but it's a good place to start.
10	session key event rate	The % of sessions where a key event took place. Once you've set up key events, you can see this metric in reports like Traffic acquisition	Only set your macro conversion(s) as your key event in order to make the best use of this metric
11	engaged session	A session where your visitor sees multiple pages, completes a key event, and / or engages with the page for at least 10 seconds*	You can customize the 10 second engaged session timer in Admin → Data Streams → Configure Tag Settings → Show More → Adjust Session Timeout → Adjust timer for engaged sessions
12	engagement rate	The percentage of your sessions that qualify as engaged. Use this to benchmark and improve your content	Analyze your pages based on "type" of pages. For example, there might be differences between your service pages and your blog pages. Focus your analysis to find clearer insights by only comparing blog pages to other blog pages and so on.
13	page path and screen class	Page path is a dimension that is used for analyzing individual apges. It shows the section of the URL that comes after the domain name (the "hostname")	Don't be confused by that "screen class" part of the name. A "screen class" is what a page view is called in an app, so this dimension name simply covers the name for both web sites and apps.

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14	Search term (search_term) parameter	The search_term event parameter tells you what specifically was searched on your site when the view_search_results enhanced measurement event fires. You can see this automatically in your Explorations report, but you need to set a "custom dimension" to see it in Standard reports (see entry 25 for more)	If you need a reminder for how to register the search_term event parameter as a custom dimension, you can find it here: https://www.analyticsmania.com/post/find-search-terms-in-google-analytics-4/#configure
15	standard reports	The easily accessible reports from the left-hand navigation within the GA4 interface. We focused on the **Acquisition** report, the **Events** report, and the **Landing Page** report	if you don't have the Life Cycle reports available in your view, go to the 'Library' to quickly add them (or ask an admin to add them if you don't have access)
16	explorations	A set of advanced reporting options where you can select your own **dimensions** and **metrics** to build your own reports.	When building a report based on top **events**, use the filtering option to limit your report to only the events you want to see. If you wanted to report on the generate_lead event and an event called contact_page_view, use a "matches regex" filter and type *generate_lead|contact_page_view*
17	views	A metric that shows you the number of times a specific page was viewed. It is tied to the page_view event.	When analyzing pages for **engagement rate** or **session key event rate**, it's often helpful to start by sorting your pages so you're focusing first on the pages with the most views.
18	traffic	the visits (sessions) to your website are collectively known as traffic	The "Traffic Acquisition" report is sorted based on sessions. The "User Aquisition" report is sorted based on the Active Users metric
19	acquisition	Analyzing the traffic channels and sources that visitors use to arrive on your site is **acquisition** analysis. This is one of the best features of GA4 relative to other tools.	You have options for how GA4 will aggregate your acquisition data based on what traffic *dimension* (#10) you choose. The most important ones to know are channel, source, and medium
20	traffic source	Traffic source shows the specific place that sends visitors to your site. This is automatically assigned by GA4 in almost all cases (paid ads and email marketing are exceptions).	For example, Google Organic Search has a source of 'google' and Facebook Organic Social has a source of 'facebook'
21	traffic medium	Traffic medium shows the type of traffic. This is automatically assigned by GA4 in almost all cases (paid ads and email marketing are exceptions).	For example, Google Organic Search has a medium of 'organic' and Facebook Organic Social has a source of 'referral'
22	traffic source / medium	Source / medium combines the source and the medium into a single, more detailed traffic dimension. Personally, my favorite	Google Organic Search = google / organic Facebook Organic = facebook / referral
23	traffic channel	Traffic channel shows a rules based roll-up of the "channel" of your traffic. It is often considered the broadest level view, although it can be similar to traffic medium.	For example, Google Organic Search has a channel of 'Organic Search' and Facebook Organic Social has a source of 'Organic Sociall'
24	campaign traffic (UTM parameters)	Visits to your website that arrive with UTM parameters appended to the URL are known as campaign traffic (short for marketing campaign)	Use a browser extension like Google Analytics UTM Builder to quickly and consistently set up URLs with UTM parameters for your campaigns. Check this guide for more on how to use UTMs in GA4: https://www.rootandbranchgroup.com/utm-parameters-google-analytics/
25	event parameter	Parameters provide additional information about the events that take place on your website. For example, the **search_term** event parameter shows the specific search terms associated with the **view_search_results** event.	You'll need to use event parameters to get value from most of your event data. You can see the event parameters associated with each of the enhanced measurement events at this linked Google resource