

Methodology

Pew Research Center analyzed the use of the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag on Twitter using automated coding software developed by Crimson Hexagon, now part of the company [Brandwatch](#). To supplement the Center's earlier analysis of the hashtag that covered Jan. 1, 2013, through May 1, 2018, researchers performed a new analysis of the period from that date through June 7, 2020. Thus, the data come from two separate searches, one performed in 2018 and capturing Jan. 1, 2013, through May 1, 2018; and the other, performed in 2020, capturing May 1, 2018, through June 7, 2020. The more recent data collection phase was used for May 1, 2018, in this analysis.

Since these searches were performed at different points in time, there may be methodological or other differences that make them not perfectly comparable. However, the volume of the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag in June 2020 is so much greater than the volumes observed in prior periods that it is highly unlikely the most recent spike results from methodological or other changes in the data analytics.

Crimson Hexagon is a software platform that identifies statistical patterns in words used in online texts. Researchers entered the term "blacklivesmatter" (which would capture the hashtag #blacklivesmatter) and the software identified the relevant tweets. Pew Research Center drew its analysis sample from all public Twitter posts. This analysis included all public tweets that included the term "blacklivesmatter" during the time range examined.

For a more in-depth explanation on how Crimson Hexagon's technology works, click [here](#).