

Longer TikToks Get More Views – Data Shows Best TikTok Video Length

A statement that definitely won't surprise you: TikTok's algorithm seems to prioritize videos that keep users on the platform for longer.

But here's a follow-up that might: That means **videos longer than a minute tend to get more views and watch time** than their shorter counterparts.

When we set out to uncover what TikTok video length performed the best, I certainly didn't expect it to be *longer* videos. Because when you think TikTok success, what's the first thing that comes to mind? Fast-paced, snappy, short and sweet videos, right?

Turns out the TikTok algorithm might be flipping the script a little.

According to our analysis of more than 1 million TikToks (1.1 million, to be precise), shorter videos dominate the platform, but they're generally not the ones with the highest median views and watch time.

Here are some high-level stats to whet your appetite: About **86% of videos posted on TikTok are under a minute**. And yet videos longer than 60 seconds tend to get at least **43.2% more reach and 63.8%** more watch time than shorter videos.

Of course, there's some nuance to consider here. "Engagement on TikTok varies wildly and is dependent on the algorithm for virality," our data scientist Julian Winterheimer says.

"So while it's true that longer videos get more reach on average, many short videos still go viral and get loads of

engagement.”

In other words, video length is unlikely to be a make-or-break factor when it comes to video performance. The quality of your content and the strength of your hook are far more important.

Still, if you’re a creator or marketer who has ~~TikToked~~ (sorry, I had to) *ticked* all the other essential boxes, it could be worth experimenting with video length to give your content a little boost.

Let’s unpack all the data:

Breaking down the spread of video lengths

Before we dig into the performance data, it’s helpful to understand the distribution of video lengths on the platform.

Here’s a breakdown:

- 33.7% of videos were 10 – 30 seconds long
- 27.3% of videos were 30 – 60 seconds long
- 22.2% of videos were 5 – 10 seconds long
- 12.3% of videos were 60 seconds – 10 minutes
- 2.8% of videos were under 5 seconds long

It's fascinating to see this distribution, especially considering TikTok's evolution. Remember when videos were capped at just 15 seconds? The platform has gradually increased limits – first to 60 seconds, then 3 minutes, and now up to 10 minutes.

Despite these changes, most creators are still sticking to shorter formats. I get it: shorter videos are *usually* just much easier to create – they mean less scripting, storyboarding, filming, and (my own personal nemesis) video editing.

But have you ever found yourself whittling away at a longer video in an attempt to get to the 30-second mark? I've entered this weird TikTok editing purgatory many times: deleting content I think is good just to fit into what I assumed to be

the Goldilocks zone of ideal video length.

After this analysis, I'm kicking myself a little bit for that. These numbers explain why:

The longer the video, the higher the reach tends to be

As you'll see from the graph below, TikTok videos' reach (the number of unique views) tends to climb with length.

The most significant jump is when you cross the 60-second mark. Our analysis found that videos longer than one minute tend to get:

- 43.2% more reach than videos in the 30 – 60 second range
- 70.3% more reach than videos in the 10 – 30 second range.
- 95.7% more reach than videos in the 5 – 10 second range.

So, what's happening here? Several factors could be at play.

For one, TikTok's algorithm could reward longer videos by surfacing them to more users. This makes sense from TikTok's perspective – they want to keep users on the platform as long as possible, and longer videos help accomplish that goal.

There's also less competition in the 60+ second category (remember, only 12.3% of videos fall into this range), giving these videos a better chance to stand out in a less crowded field.

All that said, let's not discount the performance of videos between **30 and 60 seconds long**. They also see a pretty big jump in reach, compared to shorter clips.

Videos between 30 and 60 seconds get:

- 18.9% more reach than videos in the 10 – 30-second range
- 36.7% more reach than videos in the 5 – 10-second range

So, if the idea of creating a one-minute+ video thesis sounds like it might be overwhelming, you might get a bit more bang for your buck by nudging your videos beyond the 30-second mark.

The longer the video, the higher the watch time

When it comes to watch time – often touted as the most important signal in the TikTok algorithm– videos longer than a minute come out tops, too.

TikTok videos that are longer than one minute get:

- 63.8% more watch time than videos in the 30-60 second range
- 175.6% more watch time than videos in the 10-30 second range
- 264.5% more watch time than videos in the 5-10 second range

These numbers suggest that viewers are willing to stay engaged much longer than many creators assume – as long as the content is compelling, of course.

This challenges the common belief that TikTok users have goldfish-level attention spans. When given content worth watching, they'll invest the time.

Key takeaways

So what does this analysis mean for you? Let's dig into the data a little.

1. Very short videos are common, but engagement is limited

✂ **Fast facts:** 22.2% of videos are between **5-10 seconds**, yet their **median watch time is only 3.1 seconds**, and **their median reach is 194**.

This suggests that even ultra-short videos often fail to hold attention for their full duration.

Short videos probably seem like the safe bet, but they might mean fighting an uphill battle to capture and hold attention. With just a few seconds to make an impression, there's almost no room for error.

All that said, this doesn't mean every short video on the platform *will* fail – far from it. As Julian touched on above, there are far more factors at play here. More on this below.

2. Videos between 30-60 seconds balance reach and engagement

✂ **Fast facts:** More than a third (**33.7%**) of videos are between 30 and 60 seconds. These videos achieve **6.9 seconds of median watch time** and **302 median reach** – a significant jump from shorter videos.

The 30-to 60-second sweet spot represents something of a middle ground that many creators find comfortable. You have enough time to develop a thought or demonstrate a concept without requiring the more extensive planning, filming, and editing that longer videos might need.

This length also aligns well with many viewers' expectations for TikTok content – it's long enough to deliver value but short enough to consume during a quick break. If you're just starting out or testing a new content direction, this range could be a great entry point.

3. Longer videos have the highest watch time *and* reach

✂ **Fast facts:** Only **12% of videos analyzed** were between one and 10 minutes long, and yet median **watch time (11.3 seconds)** and **reach (432.5)** are both the highest across all categories.

If you can sustain attention, longer videos seem to benefit from TikTok's algorithm.

The data makes a compelling case for longer videos, but they do require more effort. You'll need to maintain viewer interest across a longer timeline, which means stronger storytelling, more value delivery, or a format that naturally sustains engagement (like storytimes, tutorials, or multi-step processes).

It might be helpful to think of longer videos as an investment. They take more time to create but potentially offer greater returns in terms of algorithm favor, reach, and audience building.

There's more to TikTok success than video length

If your videos aren't already hitting the mark, extending them to 10 minutes long is probably not going to do much to boost your content performance (anecdotally, I'd argue the opposite).

As our data scientist Julian points out, video length is just one factor in a complex algorithm, and it's unlikely to be the make-or-break element for most creators.

Before focusing on video length, make sure you've nailed the essentials:

A strong hook within the first 2 seconds

Your opening moment determines whether viewers stay or scroll, so invest extra time crafting something unexpected or emotionally compelling. Consider starting with a bold statement, a surprising visual, or a question that triggers curiosity rather than a lengthy introduction.

Captions and on-screen text for accessibility and SEO

Not only do these elements make your content accessible to deaf and hard-of-hearing viewers, they also capture attention when users scroll with sound off. Clever text placement can emphasize key points and guide viewers through your narrative, especially during longer segments where attention might naturally wane. Also, captions help TikTok categorize and define your content (search engine optimization), which in turn, helps it recommend your videos to the best possible target audience.

Fast-paced edits to hold attention

Quick cuts between shots can create a sense of momentum that keeps viewers watching, even in longer-form content.

Don't be afraid to include a CTA at the end of your videos. But be specific about exactly what action you want viewers to take, and consider tying it to a benefit or creating a sense of community. Phrases like "Drop your experience in the comments so I can help troubleshoot" or "Share this with the friend who needs to hear this today" perform better than generic "like and follow" requests.

Consistent posting to build audience

trust

The TikTok algorithm rewards regular content creation, but consistency also trains your audience to expect and look forward to your uploads. Bonus: the more videos you create, the better you'll get at creating them. Try to stick to a schedule that works for you, whether that's one video a day, or one a week, to avoid burnout.

These fundamentals are a must, regardless of whether your video is 15 seconds or five minutes long. The quality of your content and how well it resonates with your target audience will always outweigh technical factors like video length, or even the best time to post on TikTok.

That said, once you've got these elements down, experimenting with longer videos could give you an extra edge in TikTok's algorithm. The data suggests there's an opportunity here that many creators are missing.

So, ready to hit record (for a bit longer than usual)? Your TikTok metrics might thank you for it.

<https://buffer.com/resources/longer-tiktoks-get-more-views-data/>