Valve will delay some Steam auto-updates to preserve bandwidth

Valve announced today that it won’t automatically update games in customers’ libraries as regularly as before to help preserve bandwidth during the novel coronavirus pandemic.

Starting this week, Valve says Steam will only immediately auto-update games you’ve played in the last three days. Otherwise, Valve says Steam will be spreading out updates over several days. Steam had already been scheduling game updates for “the next off-peak local time period,” according to Valve, though if you want to update a game manually, you can still initiate that yourself. Valve already lets you schedule auto-update windows and even self-throttle your connection to Steam if you want to additionally optimize how much of your bandwidth Steam uses at any given time.

Valve joins Sony and Microsoft in adjusting video game downloads to help reduce internet traffic while many people are self-quarantining at home. Sony announced it would slow down PlayStation game downloads in Europe on March 24th, and the company extended that policy to the US on March 27th. Microsoft said on March 28th that it’s working to “deliver higher-bandwidth activities like game updates during off-peak hours” in partnership with Xbox game publishers. Streaming video providers, including Amazon, Apple, Disney, Netflix, YouTube, have also reduced streaming quality in an attempt to lower network traffic.

Steam has broken its own concurrent user records multiple times this month, most recently having more than 23 million

concurrent players over the weekend.

https://www.theverge.com/2020/3/30/21200235/valve-delay-steam-auto-updates-preserve-bandwidth-coronavirus