

Bloomberg Download Limitations

Bloomberg has 3 kinds of data limits:

1 All Bloomberg terminals have a monthly downloading limit. This is strictly enforced by Bloomberg. If you have reached the monthly downloading limit, you will see the following error message when trying to download: #N/A Limit.

This limit is based on unique securities and depends on the type of data being downloaded. For example some data, such as intra-day, is valued a little bit higher than historical end-of-day for any given list of securities. It is not transparent how much of the monthly quota is already taken. Therefore, Bloomberg only does recommend “not to use more than 4000 to 5000 unique identifiers per month”. Once a security is used once in a month, if it is used again it will not count again towards the monthly limit.

Once the monthly downloading limit is reached, you have to wait until the beginning of the next month before it resets. There is no way of knowing whether the monthly data limit has been reached, until it has been exceeded. And then, there’s no way to circumvent this hard-coded download cap.

2 Bloomberg terminals also have a daily downloading limit. The Daily API limit is 500,000 hits/per day. A “hit” is defined as one request for a single security/field pairing. Therefore, if you request static data for 5 fields and 10 securities, that will translate into a total of 50 hits. The best thing to do is to try to refresh just the portion of the spreadsheet that really needs to be refreshed and avoid refreshing it all or reopen it many times a day.

If you are running into daily limit problems, it is best to contact the Bloomberg Help Desk, while on Bloomberg. Bloomberg will get back to you within 24 hours/1 business day via your Bloomberg mail. The Help Desk may advise you on how to create more efficient data queries, which will minimize the number of hits.

3 The third limit consists of open fields. You can have no more than 3500 real time fields open at the same time. If you exceed this limit you will see “NA Limit” as an error message and you just need to delete some securities/ fields in order for the error message to disappear and to see the values.

If you should encounter limitation 1 or 2, please contact bloomberg-support@unisg.ch. We may have additional terminals available. Once all terminals have been depleted, you will have to wait until the beginning of the next month.

What can be done to avoid this situation?

Only download the amount of data you really need.

Disable automatic updates/refreshes – look out for background sheets.