Methodology

The American Trends Panel survey methodology

The American Trends Panel (ATP), created by Pew Research Center, is a nationally representative panel of randomly selected U.S. adults. Panelists participate via self-administered web surveys. Panelists who do not have internet access at home are provided with a tablet and wireless internet connection. The panel is being managed by Ipsos.

Data in this report are drawn from the panel wave conducted June 3 to June 17, 2019. A total of 4,272 panelists responded out of 5,869 who were sampled, for a response rate of 73%. This does not include six panelists who were removed from the data due to extremely high rates of refusal or straightlining. The cumulative response rate accounting for nonresponse to the recruitment surveys and attrition is 5.1%. The break-off rate among panelists who logged onto the survey and completed at least one item is 1.7%. The margin of sampling error for the full sample of 4,272 respondents is plus or minus 1.9 percentage points.

American Trends Panel recruitment surveys

Recruitment dates	Mode	Invited	Joined	Active panelists remaining
Jan. 23 to March 16, 2014	Landline/ cell RDD	9,809	5,338	2,503
Aug. 27 to Oct. 4, 2015	Landline/ cell RDD	6,004	2,976	1,464
April 25 to June 4, 2017	Landline/ cell RDD	3,905	1,628	801
Aug. 8 to Oct. 31, 2018	ABS/web	9,396	8,778	8,691
Total		**29,114**	**18,720**	**13,459**

Note: Approximately once per year, panelists who have not participated in multiple consecutive waves or who did not complete an annual profiling survey are removed from the panel. Panelists also become inactive if they ask to be removed from the panel.

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The subsample from the ATP was selected by grouping panelists into five strata so demographic groups that are underrepresented in the panel had a higher probability of selection than overrepresented groups:

- Stratum A consists of panelists who are non-internet users. They were sampled at a rate of 100%.

- Stratum B consists of panelists with a high school education or less. They were sampled at a rate of 98.9%.

- Stratum C consists of panelists that are Hispanic, unregistered to vote, or non-volunteers. They were sampled at a rate of 44.8%.

- Stratum D consists of panelists that are black or 18-34 years old. They were sampled at a rate of 18.2%.

- Stratum E consists of the remaining panelists. They were sampled at a rate of 13.5%.

The ATP was created in 2014, with the first cohort of panelists invited to join the panel at the end of a large, national, landline and cellphone random-digit-dial survey that was conducted in both English and Spanish. Two additional recruitments were conducted using the same method in 2015 and 2017, respectively. Across these three surveys, a total of 19,718 adults were invited to join the ATP, of which 9,942 agreed to participate.

In August 2018, the ATP switched from telephone to address-based recruitment. Invitations were sent to a random, address-based sample (ABS) of households selected from the U.S. Postal Service's Delivery Sequence File. In each household, the adult with the next birthday was asked to go online to complete a survey, at the end of which they were invited to join the panel. For a random half-sample of invitations, households without internet access were instructed to return a postcard. These households were contacted by telephone and sent a tablet if they agreed to participate. A total of 9,396 were invited to join the panel, and 8,778 agreed to join the panel and completed an initial profile survey. Of the 18,720 individuals who have ever joined the ATP, 13,459 remained active panelists and continued to receive survey invitations at the time this survey was conducted.

The U.S. Postal Service's Delivery Sequence File has been estimated to cover as much as 98% of the population, although some studies suggest that the coverage could be in the low 90% range.[1]

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[1] AAPOR Task Force on Address-based Sampling. 2016. "AAPOR Report: Address-based Sampling."

Weighting dimensions

Variable	Benchmark source
Gender	2017 American Community Survey
Age	
Education	
Race/Hispanic origin	
Hispanic nativity	
Home internet access	
Region x Metropolitan status	2018 CPS March Supplement
Volunteerism	2017 CPS Volunteering and Civic Life Supplement
Voter registration	2016 CPS Voting and Registration Supplement
Party affiliation	Average of the three most recent Pew Research Center telephone surveys.

Note: Estimates from the ACS are based on non-institutionalized adults. Voter registration is calculated using procedures from Hur, Achen (2013) and rescaled to include the total US adult population.

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Weighting

The ATP data were weighted in a multistep process that begins with a base weight incorporating the respondents' original survey selection probability and the fact that in 2014 and 2017 some respondents were subsampled for invitation to the panel. The next step in the weighting uses an iterative technique that aligns the sample to population benchmarks on the dimensions listed in the accompanying table.

Sampling errors and test of statistical-significance take into account the effect of weighting. Interviews are conducted in both English and Spanish, but the American Trends Panel's Hispanic sample is predominantly U.S. born and English speaking.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	4,272	1.9 percentage points
Form 1	2,140	2.6 percentage points
Form 2	2,132	2.6 percentage points
Men	1,875	2.9 percentage points
Women	2,397	2.4 percentage points
White, Non-Hispanic	2,887	2.2 percentage points
Black, Non-Hispanic	445	5.8 percentage points
Hispanic	611	5.5 percentage points
Ages 18-29	671	4.8 percentage points
30-49	1,314	3.3 percentage points
50-64	1,308	3.4 percentage points
65+	977	3.8 percentage points

HS or less	1,483	3.3 percentage points
Some college	1,182	3.4 percentage points
College+	1,600	2.9 percentage points
Less than $30,000	1,107	3.8 percentage points
$30,000-$74,999	1,469	3.2 percentage points
$75,000+	1,496	3.0 percentage points
Rep/Lean Rep	1,823	2.8 percentage points
Dem/Lean Dem	2,296	2.6 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

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Topline questionnaire

2019 PEW RESEARCH CENTER'S AMERICAN TRENDS PANEL
WAVE 49 JUNE 2019
FINAL TOPLINE
JUNE 3-17, 2019
TOTAL N=4,272

THE QUESTIONS PRESENTED BELOW ARE PART OF A LARGER SURVEY CONDUCTED ON THE AMERICAN TRENDS PANEL. OTHER QUESTIONS ON THIS SURVEY HAVE EITHER BEEN PREVIOUSLY RELEASED OR HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE.

ASK ALL:
SECUR1   Compared with five years ago, do you feel your personal information is…
                       [REVERSE ORDER OF OPTIONS 1 AND 2 FOR HALF OF RESPONDENTS]

June 3-17, 2019	
6	More secure
70	Less secure
24	About the same
*	No Answer

ASK FORM 1 [N=2,140]:
PRIVACYOPENa   In your own words, what does "privacy" mean to you?

June 3-17, 2019	
28	Other people and organizations not being able to access their possessions or private life
26	Control over information, possessions, self; deciding what's accessible to others
15	Themselves, their personal information and possessions, the desire to keep things to themselves
4	Having their information sold, third party involvement
3	General security references, i.e. "secure," "guarded," "protective"
2	Tracking, surveillance, monitoring, spying
2	Privacy is a myth/means nothing/doesn't exist
2	Crime, hacking, fraud, any threats of illicit activity
2	Threat from the government regarding themselves, possessions or private life
1	Personal information is only accessible with the person's knowledge or consent
*	Spam, unwanted calls or solicitations
4	Other
17	Did not answer

ASK FORM 2 [N=2,132]:
PRIVACYOPENb   In your own words, what does "digital privacy" mean to you?

June 3-17,
 2019

17	Themselves, their personal information and possessions, the desire to keep things to themselves
14	Control over information, possessions, self; deciding what's accessible to others
13	Other people and organizations not being able to access their possessions or private life
9	Privacy is a myth/means nothing/doesn't exist
6	Having their information sold, third party involvement
5	Crime, hacking, fraud, any threats of illicit activity
4	General security references, i.e. "secure," "guarded," "protective"
3	Tracking, surveillance, monitoring, spying
2	Company measures, how websites/companies should secure data, terms of service, privacy settings
2	Personal information is only accessible with the person's knowledge or consent
1	Threat from the government regarding themselves, possessions or private life
4	Other
31	Did not answer

Threat from the government regarding themselves, possessions or private life
ASK ALL:
PRIVACYNEWS1   How closely, if at all, do you follow news about privacy issues?

June 3-17,
2019

11	Very closely
46	Somewhat closely
33	Not too closely
10	Not at all closely
*	No Answer

ASK FORM 1 [N=2,140]:
[RANDOMIZE ORDER OF TRACKCO1a AND TRACKCO1b]
TRACKCO1a   As far as you know, how much of what you do ONLINE or on your cellphone is being tracked by advertisers, technology firms or other companies?
[RANDOMIZE]

June 3-17,
2019

41	All or almost all of it
31	Most of it
19	Some of it
4	Very little of it
4	None of it
1	No Answer

ASK FORM 1 [N=2,140]:
TRACKCO1b   As far as you know, how much of what you do OFFLINE – like where you are or who you are talking to – is being tracked by advertisers, technology firms or other companies? **[RANDOMIZE]**

June 3-17,
2019

12	All or almost all of it
19	Most of it
38	Some of it
20	Very little of it
11	None of it
*	No Answer

ASK FORM 1 [N=2,140]:
[RANDOMIZE ORDER OF CONCERNCO AND BENEFITCO]
CONCERNCO   How concerned are you, if at all, about how companies are using the data they collect about you?

June 3-17,
2019

36	Very concerned
43	Somewhat concerned
17	Not too concerned
4	Not at all concerned
*	No Answer

ASK FORM 1 [N=2,140]:
BENEFITCO   How much do you feel you personally benefit from the data that companies collect about you?

June 3-17,
2019

5	A great deal
23	Some
49	Very little
23	None
*	No Answer

ASK FORM 1 [N=2,140]:
CONTROLCO   How much control do you think you have over the data that companies collect about you?

June 3-17,
2019

3	A great deal of control
15	Some control
51	Very little control
30	No control
*	No Answer

ASK FORM 1 [N=2,140]:
UNDERSTANDCO   How much do you feel you understand what companies are doing with the data they collect about you?

June 3-17,
2019

6	A great deal
34	Some
48	Very little
11	Nothing
1	No Answer

ASK FORM 1 [N=2,140]:

POSNEGCO   On balance, which would you say most accurately describes how you feel?
[RANDOMIZE]

June 3-17,
2019

17	The benefits I get from companies collecting data about me outweigh the potential risks
81	The potential risks of companies collecting data about me outweigh the benefits I get
2	No Answer

ASK FORM 1 [N=2,140]:

ANONYMOUS1CO   Do you think it is possible to go about daily life today without having companies collect data about you?

June 3-17,
2019

38	Yes, it is possible
62	No, it is not possible
*	No Answer

ASK FORM 2 [N=2,132]:
[RANDOMIZE ORDER OF TRACKGOV1a AND TRACKGOV1b]
TRACKGOV1a   As far as you know, how much of what you do ONLINE or on your cellphone is being tracked by the government?

June 3-17,
2019
24   All or almost all of it
23   Most of it
30   Some of it
14   Very little of it
9   None of it
*   No answer

ASK FORM 2 [N=2,132]:
TRACKGOV1b   As far as you know, how much of what you do OFFLINE – like where you are or who you are talking to – is being tracked by the government?

June 3-17,
2019
11   All or almost all of it
13   Most of it
33   Some of it
27   Very little of it
16   None of it
*   No answer

ASK FORM 2 [N=2,132]:
[RANDOMIZE ORDER OF CONCERNGOV AND BENEFITGOV]
CONCERNGOV   How concerned are you, if at all, about how the government is using the data it collects about you?

June 3-17,
2019
25   Very concerned
39   Somewhat concerned
26   Not too concerned
10   Not at all concerned
*   No Answer

ASK FORM 2 [N=2,132]:
BENEFITGOV   How much do you feel you personally benefit from the data the government collects about you?

June 3-17,
2019
4   A great deal
19   Some
42   Very little
34   None
1   No Answer

ASK FORM 2 [N=2,132]:

CONTROLGOV   How much control do you think you have over the data the government collects about you?

June 3-17,
  2019
   4   A great deal of control
   12   Some control
   41   Very little control
   43   No control
   *   No Answer

ASK FORM 2 [N=2,132]:

UNDERSTANDGOV   How much do you feel you understand what the government is doing with the data they collect about you?

June 3-17,
  2019
   4   A great deal
   17   Some
   53   Very little
   25   Nothing
   *   No Answer

ASK FORM 2 [N=2,132]:

POSNEGGOV   On balance, which would you say most accurately describes how you feel?
                   [RANDOMIZE]

June 3-17,
  2019
              The benefits the government can provide by collecting data about me
   31   and others outweigh the potential risks
              The potential risks of the government collecting data about me and
   66   others outweigh the benefits it can provide
   4   No Answer

ASK FORM 2 [N=2,132]:

ANONYMOUS1GOV   Do you think it is possible to go about daily life today without having the government collect data about you?

June 3-17,
  2019
   36   Yes, it is possible
   63   No, it is not possible
   1   No Answer

ASK ALL:
[RANDOMIZE ORDER OF QUESTIONS A-F]
CONCERNGRP   Now thinking about specific people or groups who might have access to your personal information… How concerned are you, if at all, about how much personal information the following people or groups might know about you?

	Concerned a lot	Concerned a little	Not concerned	No Answer
a. **[FORM 1 [N=2,140]]** Law enforcement agencies June 3-17, 2019	26	36	39	*
b. **[FORM 1 [N=2,140]]** Advertisers June 3-17, 2019	39	44	16	*
c. **[FORM 1 AND EMPLOYED [N=1,313]]** Your employer June 3-17, 2019	19	39	42	1
d. **[FORM 2 [N=2,132]]** The companies you buy things from June 3-17, 2019	30	50	20	*
e. **[FORM 2 [N=2,132]]** Your friends and family June 3-17, 2019	9	34	57	*
f. **[FORM 2 AND SOCIAL MEDIA USER [N=1,778]]** The social media sites you use June 3-17, 2019	40	46	14	*

ASK ALL:
[RANDOMIZE ORDER OF QUESTIONS A-F]
CONTROLGRP   Now thinking about specific types of information that different entities might want to know about you… How much control, if any, do you think you have over who can access the following types of information about you?

	A lot of control	A little control	No control	No Answer
a. **[FORM 1 AND SOCIAL MEDIA USER [N=1,800]]** Your posts and activities on social media June 3-17, 2019	16	50	35	*
b. **[FORM 1[N=2,140]]** The search terms you use online June 3-17, 2019	9	39	48	*
c. **[FORM 1 [N=2,140]]** The purchases you've made, either online or in person June 3-17, 2019	12	43	45	*

d. **[FORM 2 [N=2,132]]** Your
    physical location
June 3-17, 2019	18	54	28	1

e. **[FORM 2 [N=2,132]]** The
    websites you visit
June 3-17, 2019	10	44	41	*

f. **[FORM 2 [N=2,132]]** The private
    conversations you've had online or
    using text messaging
June 3-17, 2019	13	49	37	*

ASK ALL:

PP1   How often are you asked to agree to the terms and conditions of a company's
                privacy policy?

June 3-17,
  2019
25	Almost daily
32	About once a week
24	About once a month
15	Less frequently
3	Never
*	No answer

ASK IF EVER ASKED TO AGREE TO PRIVACY POLICY (PP1=1-4) [N=4,170]:

PP2   When you are asked to agree to a company's privacy policy, how often do you
                read it before agreeing to it?

June 3-17,
  2019
9	Always
14	Often
39	Sometimes
37	Never
1	No answer

ASK IF READ PRIVACY POLICIES BEFORE AGREEING (PP2=1,2,3) [N=2,571]:

PP3   When you read a privacy policy, what do you typically do? **[REVERSE ORDER
                OF RESPONSE OPTIONS FOR ½ OF RESPONDENTS]**

June 3-17,
  2019
22	Read it all the way through
35	Read it part of the way through
43	Glance over it without reading it closely
*	No answer

ASK IF EVER READS PRIVACY POLICIES (PP2=1,2,3) [N=2,571]:

PP4   How much do you typically understand the privacy policies you read?

June 3-17, 2019	
13	A great deal
55	Some
29	Very little
3	Not at all
*	No Answer

ASK ALL:
[RANDOMIZE ORDER OF QUESTION A-E]
PP5   How confident are you, if at all, that companies will do the following things?

	Very confident	Somewhat confident	Not too confident	Not confident at all	No Answer
a. Follow what their privacy policies say they will do with your personal information					
June 3-17, 2019	5	37	40	17	1
b. Promptly notify you if your personal data has been misused or compromised					
June 3-17, 2019	5	30	41	24	1
c. Publicly admit mistakes and take responsibility when they misuse or compromise their users' personal data					
June 3-17, 2019	3	18	46	32	*
d. Use your personal information in ways you will feel comfortable with					
June 3-17, 2019	4	27	47	22	1
e. Be held accountable by the government if they misuse or compromise your data					
June 3-17, 2019	4	21	43	32	*

ASK ALL:
[RANDOMIZE ORDER OF QUESTIONS A-C]
PP6   How comfortable are you, if at all, with companies using your personal data in the following ways?

	Very comfortable	Somewhat comfortable	Not too comfortable	Not comfortable at all	No Answer

a.	To help improve their fraud prevention systems				
	June 3-17, 2019	10	47	29	13	1
b.	Sharing it with outside groups doing research that might help improve society				
	June 3-17, 2019	6	30	37	27	*
c.	To help them develop new products				
	June 3-17, 2019	8	42	31	18	*

ASK ALL:
PRIVACYREG   How much do you feel you understand the laws and regulations that are currently in place to protect your data privacy?

June 3-17, 2019	
3	A great deal
33	Some
49	Very little
14	Not at all
*	No Answer

ASK FORM 1 [N=2,140]:
GOVREGV1   How much government regulation of what companies can do with their customers' personal information do you think there should be? **[RANDOMIZE]**

June 3-17, 2019	
75	More regulation
8	Less regulation
16	About the same amount
1	No Answer

ASK FORM 2 [N=2,132]:
GOVREGV2   Which of the following do you think would be a more effective way to safeguard people's personal information? **[RANDOMIZE]**

June 3-17, 2019	
55	Better tools for allowing people to control their personal information themselves
44	Stronger laws governing what companies can and cannot do with people's personal information
1	No Answer

ASK ALL:
PROFILE1   Today it is possible to take personal data about people from many different sources – such as their purchasing and credit histories, their online browsing or search behaviors, or their public voting records – and combine them together to create detailed profiles of people's potential interests and characteristics. Companies and other organizations use these profiles to offer targeted advertisements or special deals, or to assess how risky people might be as customers.

Prior to today, how much had you heard or read about this concept?

June 3-17, 2019	
27	A lot
50	A little
22	Nothing at all
1	No Answer

ASK IF HAVE HEARD OF DATA PROFILES (PROFILE1=1-2) [N=3,361]:
PROFILE2   How many companies do you think use these types of profiles to help understand their customers?

June 3-17, 2019	
17	All of them
57	Most of them
18	Some of them
2	Only a few of them
4	Not sure
*	No Answer

ASK IF HAVE HEARD OF DATA PROFILES (PROFILE1=1-2) [N=3,361]:
PROFILE3   Do you ever see advertisements or solicitations that appear to be based on a profile that has been made of you using your personal data?

June 3-17, 2019	
49	Yes, frequently
34	Yes, on occasion
9	No
7	Not sure
*	No Answer

ASK IF EVER SEE ADS BASED ON PERSONAL DATA (PROFILE3=1,2) [N=2,816]:
PROFILE4   How much, if at all, do you understand what data about you is being used to create these advertisements?

June 3-17, 2019	
14	A great deal
50	Somewhat
31	Not too much
4	Not at all
*	No Answer

ASK IF EVER SEE ADS BASED ON PERSONAL DATA (PROFILE3=1,2) [N=2,816]:
PROFILE5   In general, how well do these advertisements accurately reflect your actual interests and characteristics?

June 3-17, 2019	
7	Very well
54	Somewhat well
33	Not too well
5	Not well at all
*	No Answer

ASK ALL:
[RANDOMIZE ORDER OF QUESTIONS A-F]
DATAUSE   Now thinking about other ways that private companies and government agencies might use data or information they collect about people…

In your opinion, do you think the following uses of data or information are acceptable or unacceptable?

	Acceptable	Unacceptable	Not sure	No Answer
a. **[FORM 1 [N=2,140]** The government collecting data about all Americans to assess who might be a potential terrorist threat				
June 3-17, 2019	49	31	19	*
b. **[FORM 1 [N=2,140]]** Poorly performing schools sharing data about their students with a nonprofit group seeking to help improve educational outcomes				
June 3-17, 2019	49	27	24	*
c. **[FORM 1 [N=2,140]]** DNA testing companies sharing their customers' genetic data with law enforcement agencies in order to help solve crimes				
June 3-17, 2019	48	33	18	1
d. **[FORM 2 [N=2,132]]** Makers of a fitness tracking app sharing their users' data with medical researchers seeking to better understand the link between exercise and heart disease				
June 3-17, 2019	41	35	22	1

e. **[FORM 2 [N=2,132]]** A social
media company monitoring its
users' posts for signs of
depression, so they can identify
people who are at risk of self-harm
and connect them to counseling
services
　June 3-17, 2019　　　　27　　　　45　　　　27　　　　1

f. **[FORM 2 [N=2,132]]** Makers of
smart speakers sharing audio
recordings of their customers with
law enforcement to help with
criminal investigations
　June 3-17, 2019　　　　25　　　　49　　　　25　　　　1

ASK ALL:
[RANDOMIZE ORDER OF QUESTIONS A-C]
DB1　　　　　　　In the last 12 months, have you had someone… **[RANDOMIZE]**

	Yes	No	No Answer
a. Put fraudulent charges on your debit or credit card			
June 3-17, 2019	21	78	1
b. Take over your social media or email account without your permission			
June 3-17, 2019	8	91	1
c. Attempt to open a line of credit or apply for a loan using your name			
June 3-17, 2019	6	93	1