



THE PEW RESEARCH CENTER
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Many Voters Unaware of Basic Facts about GOP Candidates

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Many Voters Unaware of Basic Facts about GOP Candidates

Many voters do not know basic facts about the Republican candidates running for president or the early primary calendar. While a sizable majority (69%) knows that Newt Gingrich served as speaker of the House, only about half (53%) identify Massachusetts as the state where Mitt Romney served as governor.

Fewer than half of registered voters (45%) identify South Carolina as the state with the next primary after Iowa and New Hampshire (the survey was conducted Jan. 4-8, before New Hampshire's Jan. 10 primary). And while Ron Paul fared well in the early GOP contests, just 44% of voters identify Paul as the Republican candidate who opposes U.S. military involvement in Afghanistan.

Narrow Majority Knows that Romney Was Governor of Massachusetts

	All voters %	Rep/ Ln Rep %	Dem/ Ln Dem %
Which GOP candidate served as speaker of the House? (Gingrich)	69	76	65
Mitt Romney was governor of... (Massachusetts)	53	59	50
After Iowa & New Hampshire, next primary is in... (South Carolina)	45	50	43
Which GOP candidate opposes U.S. involvement in Afghanistan? (Paul)	44	51	40
Answered at least 3 correctly	43	48	41

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Jan. 4-8, 2012. Based on registered voters.

The latest national survey by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press conducted Jan. 4-8, 2012 among 1,507 adults and 1,165 registered voters, finds even among Republican voters, many are unable to identify the state where Romney served as governor and are unfamiliar with Paul's stance on Afghanistan.

Among Republican and Republican-leaning voters, 76% know that Gingrich was House speaker, 59% know that Romney was governor of Massachusetts, and about half know that Paul opposes the U.S. military mission in Afghanistan (51%) and that South Carolina is the state where the next primary would be held, following the New Hampshire primary and Iowa caucuses (50%).

Persistent Age and Education Gaps in Knowledge

As in past knowledge surveys, there are substantial differences in knowledge by age, education and gender. In addition, registered voters are much better-informed about the GOP candidates and primary process than are non-voters.

Overall, 43% of voters answered at least three of the four questions correctly; that compares with just 16% of non-voters. Among the general public, 35% answered three of the four questions correctly.

Voters under age 30 are far less likely than older voters to know about Gingrich's and Romney's background, and

that South Carolina is the state for the next GOP primary. But about as many younger voters as older voters know that Ron Paul opposes U.S. involvement in Afghanistan.

College graduates are more likely than those who have not graduated college to correctly answer all four questions. About six-in-ten college graduates (59%) know that South Carolina holds the next primary after Iowa and New Hampshire, compared with 37% of those without a college degree. Overall, 61% of college graduates answered at least three of the four questions correctly, compared with 36% of those with some college education and just 32% of those with a high school degree or less.

Older Voters and College Graduates More Knowledgeable about GOP Candidates

	Gingrich former speaker	Romney former MA gov	SC next primary	Paul opposes Afghan	3 or more correct
	%	%	%	%	%
General public	58	46	39	37	35
Registered voters	69	53	45	44	43
Not registered	33	28	23	20	16
<i>Among registered voters</i>					
Men	76	66	56	56	56
Women	63	42	35	34	32
18-29	40	32	24	38	22
30-49	68	52	40	41	42
50-64	80	58	52	48	49
65+	76	63	60	46	54
College grad+	85	72	59	59	61
Some college	68	48	38	43	36
HS or less	54	39	37	30	32
Republican	76	60	52	49	49
Democrat	66	52	44	39	42
Independent	66	51	43	46	42

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Jan. 4-8, 2012. Q62-Q65.

Men also are more likely than women to know facts about the GOP candidates and primaries. Across all four questions, 56% of men correctly answered at least three, compared with just 32% of women.

Tea Party Republicans Knowledgeable

The age, gender and education gaps present among voters overall also are evident among GOP voters. Just 26% of Republican and Republican-leaning voters under 40 correctly answered at least three of the four questions, compared with 62% of those 65 and older.

Similarly Republican men are more likely than GOP women to correctly answer all four questions. And Republican college graduates know more correct answers than those with less education.

Tea Party Republicans are far more knowledgeable about the candidates and the campaign than GOP voters who disagree or have no opinion of the Tea Party. Fully 73% of Republican and Republican-leaning independent voters who agree with the Tea Party correctly answered at least three questions and 53% correctly answered all four. Among non-Tea Party Republican voters, just 31% know the correct answers to at least three of the questions (18% answered all four correctly).

Similarly, more conservative Republicans than moderate and liberal Republicans know that Gingrich was the former speaker, Romney was governor of Massachusetts and that South Carolina holds the next primary.

Fewer than Half of Younger Republicans Aware of Romney's State, Paul's Afghanistan Stance

	Gingrich former speaker	Romney former MA gov	SC next primary	Paul opposes Afghan	3 or more correct
	%	%	%	%	%
Rep/Ln Rep RVs	76	59	50	51	48
Men	84	72	59	62	61
Women	68	45	41	40	35
18-39	57	39	27	40	26
40-64	84	64	54	55	55
65+	81	70	74	56	62
College grad+	84	73	64	64	62
Some college	82	54	39	50	41
HS or less	64	49	46	40	41
Conservative	82	65	56	55	55
Moderate/Liberal	67	47	41	46	39
<i>Tea Party</i>					
Agree	90	78	69	74	73
Disagree/No opinion	66	46	37	35	31

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Jan. 4-8, 2012. Q62-Q65. Based on Republican and Republican-leaning registered voters.

About the Survey

The analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted January 4-8, 2012 among a national sample of 1,507 adults, 18 years of age or older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia (902 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 605 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 297 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see <http://people-press.org/methodology/>

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and nativity and region to parameters from the March 2011 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey and population density to parameters from the Decennial Census. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status and relative usage of landline and cell phones (for those with both), based on extrapolations from the 2011 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size within the landline sample. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. The following table shows the 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	Sample Size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	1,507	3.5 percentage points
Registered voters	1,165	3.5 percentage points
Rep/Rep-leaning voters	549	5.5 percentage points

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

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.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
JANUARY 2012 POLITICAL COMMUNICATIONS & METHODS STUDY
FINAL TOPLINE
January 4-8, 2012
N=1,507

QUESTIONS 1-39 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ASK ALL:

REGIST These days, many people are so busy they can't find time to register to vote, or move around so often they don't get a chance to re-register. Are you NOW registered to vote in your precinct or election district or haven't you been able to register so far?

[INSTRUCTION: IF RESPONDENT VOLUNTEERS THAT THEY ARE IN NORTH DAKOTA AND DON'T HAVE TO REGISTER, PUNCH 1 FOR REGIST AND REGICERT]

ASK IF RESPONDENT ANSWERED '1' YES IN REGIST:

REGICERT Are you absolutely certain that you are registered to vote, or is there a chance that your registration has lapsed because you moved or for some other reason?

74	Yes, registered
71	Absolutely certain
3	Chance registration has lapsed
*	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
26	No, not registered
1	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

QUESTIONS 40-43 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED

NO QUESTION 44

QUESTIONS 45-60 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

NO QUESTION 61

READ BEFORE Q.62-Q.65 SET:

And a few questions about some things that have been in the news...

RANDOMIZE ORDER OF Q.62-Q.65

ASK ALL:

Q.62 Was Mitt Romney governor of **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**?

Jan 4-8	
<u>2012</u>	
46	Massachusetts
8	Utah
6	Texas
5	Michigan
36	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

RANDOMIZE ORDER OF Q.62-Q.65

ASK ALL:

Q.63 Which Republican candidate served as Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**?

Jan 4-8	
<u>2012</u>	
58	Newt Gingrich
5	Ron Paul
3	Jon Huntsman
2	Rick Santorum
32	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

RANDOMIZE ORDER OF Q.62-Q.65**ASK ALL:**

Q.64 Which Republican candidate opposes U.S. military involvement in Afghanistan **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**?

Jan 4-8

2012

37 Ron Paul
 7 Rick Perry
 4 Newt Gingrich
 3 Rick Santorum
 49 Don't know/Refused **(VOL.)**

RANDOMIZE ORDER OF Q.62-Q.65**ASK ALL:**

Q.65 After Iowa and New Hampshire, which state holds the next Republican primary **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**?

Jan 4-8

2012

39 South Carolina
 15 Ohio
 5 California
 4 New York
 38 Don't know/Refused **(VOL.)**

ASK ALL:

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

ASK IF INDEP/NO PREF/OTHER/DK/REF (PARTY=3,4,5,9):

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

				(VOL.)	(VOL.)	(VOL.)	Lean	Lean
	Republican	Democrat	Independent	No preference	Other party	DK/Ref	Rep	Dem
Jan 4-8, 2012	26	31	35	4	*	4	14	14
Dec 7-11, 2011	23	33	38	3	*	2	12	17
Nov 9-14, 2011	24	33	38	3	1	2	16	15
Sep 22-Oct 4, 2011	23	33	38	2	1	3	18	16
Aug 17-21, 2011	24	30	40	3	*	3	17	18
Jul 20-24, 2011	24	32	38	4	*	2	16	14
Jun 15-19, 2011	26	34	32	4	*	4	13	13
May 25-30, 2011	24	33	38	3	*	2	15	17
Mar 30-Apr 3, 2011	25	32	37	3	*	3	17	16
Mar 8-14, 2011	24	33	38	3	*	2	17	15
Feb 22-Mar 1, 2011	24	33	37	3	*	3	15	16
Feb 2-7, 2011	24	31	39	3	*	2	16	16
Yearly Totals								
2011	24.3	32.3	37.4	3.1	.4	2.5	15.7	15.6
2010	25.2	32.7	35.2	3.6	.4	2.8	14.5	14.1
2009	23.9	34.4	35.1	3.4	.4	2.8	13.1	15.7
2008	25.7	36.0	31.5	3.6	.3	3.0	10.6	15.2
2007	25.3	32.9	34.1	4.3	.4	2.9	10.9	17.0
2006	27.8	33.1	30.9	4.4	.3	3.4	10.5	15.1
2005	29.3	32.8	30.2	4.5	.3	2.8	10.3	14.9
2004	30.0	33.5	29.5	3.8	.4	3.0	11.7	13.4
2003	30.3	31.5	30.5	4.8	.5	2.5	12.0	12.6
2002	30.4	31.4	29.8	5.0	.7	2.7	12.4	11.6
2001	29.0	33.2	29.5	5.2	.6	2.6	11.9	11.6
2001 Post-Sept 11	30.9	31.8	27.9	5.2	.6	3.6	11.7	9.4
2001 Pre-Sept 11	27.3	34.4	30.9	5.1	.6	1.7	12.1	13.5
2000	28.0	33.4	29.1	5.5	.5	3.6	11.6	11.7
1999	26.6	33.5	33.7	3.9	.5	1.9	13.0	14.5

PARTY/PARTYLN CONTINUED...

				(VOL.)	(VOL.)	(VOL.)	Lean	Lean
	Republican	Democrat	Independent	No preference	Other party	DK/Ref	Rep	Dem
1998	27.9	33.7	31.1	4.6	.4	2.3	11.6	13.1
1997	28.0	33.4	32.0	4.0	.4	2.3	12.2	14.1
1996	28.9	33.9	31.8	3.0	.4	2.0	12.1	14.9
1995	31.6	30.0	33.7	2.4	.6	1.3	15.1	13.5
1994	30.1	31.5	33.5	1.3	--	3.6	13.7	12.2
1993	27.4	33.6	34.2	4.4	1.5	2.9	11.5	14.9
1992	27.6	33.7	34.7	1.5	0	2.5	12.6	16.5
1991	30.9	31.4	33.2	0	1.4	3.0	14.7	10.8
1990	30.9	33.2	29.3	1.2	1.9	3.4	12.4	11.3
1989	33	33	34	--	--	--	--	--
1987	26	35	39	--	--	--	--	--

ASK ALL:

TEAPARTY2 From what you know, do you agree or disagree with the Tea Party movement, or don't you have an opinion either way?

	Agree	Disagree	No opinion either way	(VOL.) Haven't heard of	(VOL.) Refused	Not heard of/ DK
Jan 4-8, 2012	18	25	52	2	3	--
Dec 7-11, 2011	19	27	50	2	2	--
Nov 9-14, 2011	20	27	51	1	1	--
Sep 22-Oct 4, 2011	19	27	51	2	1	--
Aug 17-21, 2011	20	27	50	1	1	--
Jul 20-24, 2011	20	24	53	1	1	--
Jun 15-19, 2011	20	26	50	3	2	--
May 25-30, 2011	18	23	54	2	2	--
Mar 30-Apr 3, 2011	22	29	47	1	1	--
Mar 8-14, 2011	19	25	54	1	1	--
Feb 22-Mar 1, 2011	20	25	52	2	2	--
Feb 2-7, 2011 ¹	22	22	53	2	2	--
Jan 5-9, 2011	24	22	50	2	1	--
Dec 1-5, 2010	22	26	49	2	2	--
Nov 4-7, 2010	27	22	49	1	1	--
Oct 27-30, 2010 (RVs)	29	25	32	--	1	13
Oct 13-18, 2010 (RVs)	28	24	30	--	1	16
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010 (RVs)	29	26	32	--	1	13
Jul 21-Aug 5, 2010	22	18	37	--	1	21
Jun 16-20, 2010	24	18	30	--	*	27
May 20-23, 2010	25	18	31	--	1	25
Mar 11-21, 2010	24	14	29	--	1	31

¹ In the February 2-7, 2011 survey and before, question read "...do you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the Tea Party movement..." In October 2010 and earlier, question was asked only of those who had heard or read a lot or a little about the Tea Party. In May through October, it was described as: "the Tea Party movement that has been involved in campaigns and protests in the U.S. over the past year." In March it was described as "the Tea Party protests that have taken place in the U.S. over the past year."