

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS**  
**DECEMBER 2012 GUN POLICY SURVEY**  
**FINAL TOPLINE**  
**December 17-19, 2012**  
**N=1,219**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.1 All in all, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in this country today?

	Satis- <u>fied</u>	Dis- <u>satisfied</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>		Satis- <u>fied</u>	Dis- <u>satisfied</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Dec 17-19, 2012	25	68	7	Late May, 2008	18	76	6
Dec 5-9, 2012	33	62	5	March, 2008	22	72	6
Oct 18-21, 2012	32	61	8	Early February, 2008	24	70	6
Jun 28-Jul 9, 2012	31	64	5	Late December, 2007	27	66	7
Jun 7-17, 2012	28	68	5	October, 2007	28	66	6
May 9-Jun 3, 2012	29	64	7	February, 2007	30	61	9
Apr 4-15, 2012	24	69	6	Mid-January, 2007	32	61	7
Feb 8-12, 2012	28	66	6	Early January, 2007	30	63	7
Jan 11-16, 2012	21	75	4	December, 2006	28	65	7
Sep 22-Oct 4, 2011	17	78	5	Mid-November, 2006	28	64	8
Aug 17-21, 2011	17	79	4	Early October, 2006	30	63	7
Jul 20-24, 2011	17	79	4	July, 2006	30	65	5
Jun 15-19, 2011	23	73	4	May, 2006*	29	65	6
May 5-8, 2011	30	62	8	March, 2006	32	63	5
May 2, 2011	32	60	8	January, 2006	34	61	5
Mar 8-14, 2011	22	73	5	Late November, 2005	34	59	7
Feb 2-7, 2011	26	68	5	Early October, 2005	29	65	6
Jan 5-9, 2011	23	71	6	July, 2005	35	58	7
Dec 1-5, 2010	21	72	7	Late May, 2005*	39	57	4
Nov 4-7, 2010	23	69	8	February, 2005	38	56	6
Sep 23-26, 2010	30	63	7	January, 2005	40	54	6
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010	25	71	5	December, 2004	39	54	7
Jun 24-27, 2010	27	64	9	Mid-October, 2004	36	58	6
May 13-16, 2010	28	64	7	July, 2004	38	55	7
Apr 21-26, 2010	29	66	5	May, 2004	33	61	6
Apr 1-5, 2010	31	63	6	Late February, 2004*	39	55	6
Mar 11-21, 2010	25	69	5	Early January, 2004	45	48	7
Mar 10-14, 2010	23	71	7	December, 2003	44	47	9
Feb 3-9, 2010	23	71	6	October, 2003	38	56	6
Jan 6-10, 2010	27	69	4	August, 2003	40	53	7
Oct 28-Nov 8, 2009	25	67	7	April 8, 2003	50	41	9
Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	25	67	7	January, 2003	44	50	6
Sep 10-15, 2009 <sup>1</sup>	30	64	7	November, 2002	41	48	11
Aug 20-27, 2009	28	65	7	September, 2002	41	55	4
Aug 11-17, 2009	28	65	7	Late August, 2002	47	44	9
Jul 22-26, 2009	28	66	6	May, 2002	44	44	12
Jun 10-14, 2009	30	64	5	March, 2002	50	40	10
Apr 28-May 12, 2009	34	58	8	Late September, 2001	57	34	9
Apr 14-21, 2009	23	70	7	Early September, 2001	41	53	6
Jan 7-11, 2009	20	73	7	June, 2001	43	52	5
December, 2008	13	83	4	March, 2001	47	45	8
Early October, 2008	11	86	3	February, 2001	46	43	11
Mid-September, 2008	25	69	6	January, 2001	55	41	4
August, 2008	21	74	5	October, 2000 (RVs)	54	39	7
July, 2008	19	74	7	September, 2000	51	41	8
June, 2008	19	76	5	June, 2000	47	45	8
				April, 2000	48	43	9
				August, 1999	56	39	5
				January, 1999	53	41	6
				November, 1998	46	44	10
				Early September, 1998	54	42	4

<sup>1</sup> In September 10-15, 2009 and other surveys noted with an asterisk, the question was worded "Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in our country today?"

**Q.1 CONTINUED...**

	Satis- <u>fied</u>	Dis- <u>satisfied</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>		Satis- <u>fied</u>	Dis- <u>satisfied</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Late August, 1998	55	41	4	March, 1994	24	71	5
Early August, 1998	50	44	6	October, 1993	22	73	5
February, 1998	59	37	4	September, 1993	20	75	5
January, 1998	46	50	4	May, 1993	22	71	7
September, 1997	45	49	6	January, 1993	39	50	11
August, 1997	49	46	5	January, 1992	28	68	4
January, 1997	38	58	4	November, 1991	34	61	5
July, 1996	29	67	4	<i>Gallup</i> : Late Feb, 1991	66	31	3
March, 1996	28	70	2	August, 1990	47	48	5
October, 1995	23	73	4	May, 1990	41	54	5
June, 1995	25	73	2	January, 1989	45	50	5
April, 1995	23	74	3	September, 1988 (RVs)	50	45	5
July, 1994	24	73	3				

**Q.2 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****ASK ALL:**

On a different subject,

Q.3 What do you think is more important – to protect the right of Americans to own guns, OR to control gun ownership?

**ASK IF OPINION GIVEN (Q.3=1,2):**

Q.3a Do you feel strongly about that, or not?

	Protect the right of Americans to own guns				Control gun ownership				
	<u>Net</u>	<u>Strongly</u>	<u>Not strongly</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>	<u>Net</u>	<u>Strongly</u>	<u>Not strongly</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Dec 17-19, 2012	42	37	4	*	49	42	6	2	9
July 26-29, 2012	46	--	--	--	47	--	--	--	6
Apr 4-15, 2012	49	--	--	--	45	--	--	--	6
Sep 22-Oct 4, 2011	47	--	--	--	49	--	--	--	5
Feb 22-Mar 1, 2011	48	--	--	--	47	--	--	--	6
Jan 13-16, 2011	49	--	--	--	46	--	--	--	6
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010	46	--	--	--	50	--	--	--	4
Mar 10-14, 2010	46	--	--	--	46	--	--	--	7
Mar 31-Apr 21, 2009	45	--	--	--	49	--	--	--	6
April, 2008	37	--	--	--	58	--	--	--	5
November, 2007	42	--	--	--	55	--	--	--	3
April, 2007	32	--	--	--	60	--	--	--	8
February, 2004	37	31	6	*	58	46	11	1	5
June, 2003	42	--	--	--	54	--	--	--	4
May, 2000	38	--	--	--	57	--	--	--	5
April, 2000	37	--	--	--	55	--	--	--	8
March, 2000	29	--	--	--	66	--	--	--	5
June, 1999	33	--	--	--	62	--	--	--	5
May, 1999	30	--	--	--	65	--	--	--	5
December, 1993	34	--	--	--	57	--	--	--	9

**ASK ALL:**

Q.4 How much, if anything, have you read or heard about a shooting at an elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut? **[READ IN ORDER]**

Dec 17-19

2012

88	A lot
10	A little
1	Nothing at all
1	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>

**ASK ALL:**

Q.5 Do you think this shooting reflects broader problems in American society, or are things like this just the isolated acts of troubled individuals?

Dec 17-19		Dec 14-16	TRENDS FOR COMPARISON		
			Jul 26-29	Jan 13-16	Apr 18-22
<u>2012</u>		<u>2012</u>	<u>2012</u> <sup>2</sup>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2007</u>
44	Broader problems	47	24	31	46
47	Isolated acts	44	67	58	47
8	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>	9	8	12	7

**ASK IF (Q.5=1) [N=589]:**

Q.5a Just in your own view, what broader problems does this shooting reflect? **[OPEN END; ACCEPT UP TO THREE RESPONSES; DO NOT PROBE FOR ADDITIONAL]**

Dec 17-19

2012

**46 SOCIAL CLIMATE/SOCIAL FAILURES (NET)**

16	Family breakdown/Parental failures
11	General lack of/decline in morals or religion/Breakdown of social structure
7	Numbness/Disassociation/Desensitization/Life not valued
7	Violence in media (News, video games, TV, movies)
4	Lack of discipline/personal responsibility
3	School safety/security
2	Violence, generally/Violent society
2	Lack of education/The education system
2	The economy/Jobs
1	Bullying

**30 MENTAL HEALTH/MENTAL ILLNESS (NET)**

15	Poor safety net/not enough treatment for mental illness
14	Mental health/Mental illness, generally
1	People are angry/frustrated/depressed/sad

**22 GUN-RELATED ISSUES (NET)**

18	Guns, in general/Too easy to access guns/Lack of gun control/Access to assault rifles
2	Gun policy/Politicians failing on policy
2	Guns available to mentally ill people
1	Gun owners need to lock up their weapons

1 Fear of copycats/Fear that attention will give ideas to others

14 Other

6 Don't know/Refused

*Figures add to more than 100% because of multiple responses.*

<sup>2</sup> July 2012 question asked about the shooting in Colorado. January 2011 question asked about the shooting in Tucson, Arizona. April 2007 question was asked after the shooting at Virginia Tech and asked about "this shooting and others like it."

## Q.5a CONTINUED...

**TREND FOR COMPARISON: Arizona/Rep. Giffords Shooting**

Jan 13-16

2011**27 SOCIAL CLIMATE (NET)**

- 8 Breakdown of society (general)
- 6 Poor child rearing/Bad family/Bad kids/Bad education system
- 4 Lack of civility/respect
- 3 Feelings of frustration/discontent/hopelessness (general)
- 2 Lack of religion/God pushed out of society
- 2 Lack of discipline/self control
- 2 Anger
- 2 Lack of morals
- 1 Stupidity

**21 POLITICAL/MEDIA CLIMATE (NET)**

- 11 Partisan hatred/Political divisiveness
- 7 Dissatisfaction/upset with government
- 2 Polarizing rhetoric
- 2 Media coverage of politics/Talk show hosts
- 2 Extremists within the Republican Party/The Republican Party is to blame

- 14 Lack of mental health services/Mental health problems
- 13 Lack of gun control/access to guns
- 9 Dissatisfaction/upset with economy/unemployment
- 6 Violence (general)
- 1 Security issues
- 17 Other
- 8 Don't know/Refused

**[N=307]****TREND FOR COMPARISON: Virginia Tech Shooting**

April 18-22

2007**37 MORALITY/SOCIAL VALUES (NET)**

- 11 Moral breakdown / People don't know right from wrong
- 9 Violence in society/Movies/TV/Music/Video games
- 9 Family breakdown / Children neglected
- 5 Lack of community / No one cares or pays attention
- 5 Youth out of control / Selfish / No discipline
- 3 Lack of religion

**23 SOCIAL/GOVERNMENT SYSTEM FAILURES (NET)**

- 13 Mental health system not helping those in need
- 5 Legal system / Laws don't allow these people to be locked up
- 3 Not enough security
- 3 School system failing

- 14 Gun laws/Too easy to get guns

**12 SOCIAL/PERSONAL PRESSURES (NET)**

- 4 Social alienation / Isolation / Despair
- 3 Young people can't cope / High-pressure/fast-paced society breeds insecurity
- 2 Rich-poor divide breeds anger
- 2 Racial divisions / Minorities face pressures
- 1 Bullying

- 5 Copycat violence / Media coverage glorifies/sensationalizes
- 4 Crazy people in the world / He was crazy
- 2 Immigration
- 7 Other
- 11 Don't know/Refused

**[N=687]**

**NO QUESTION 6****ASK ALL:**

Q.7 Do you think that gun ownership in this country does more to **[INSERT OPTION; RANDOMIZE]** or does more to **[NEXT OPTION]**?

Dec 17-19

2012

48 Protect people from becoming victims of crime [OR]  
 37 Put people's safety at risk  
 16 Don't know/Refused **(VOL.)**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.8 Do you think allowing citizens to own assault weapons makes the country **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]** for citizens?

Dec 17-19

2012

21 Safer [OR]  
 65 More dangerous  
 13 Don't know/Refused **(VOL.)**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.9 Please tell me if you would favor or oppose the following proposals. First, **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE]**? What about **[NEXT ITEM]**? **[IF NECESSARY: Would you favor or oppose [ITEM]?**

		<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>(VOL.)</u> <u>DK/Ref</u>
a.	Banning semi-automatic guns, which automatically reload when the trigger is pulled Dec 17-19, 2012	44	49	7
b.	Banning the possession of handguns except by law enforcement officers Dec 17-19, 2012	28	67	5
c.	Banning high-capacity ammunition clips that can hold more than 10 bullets Dec 17-19, 2012	53	42	5
d.	Banning bullets that explode or are designed to penetrate bullet-proof vests Dec 17-19, 2012	56	36	7

**NO QUESTION 10****ASK ALL:**

Q.11 Please tell me if you think the Republican Party or the Democratic Party could do a better job reflecting your views about gun control?

	<u>Republican</u> <u>Party</u>	<u>Democratic</u> <u>Party</u>	<u>(VOL.)</u> <u>Both</u> <u>equally</u>	<u>(VOL.)</u> <u>Neither</u>	<u>(VOL.)</u> <u>DK/Ref</u>
Dec 17-19, 2012	27	28	12	15	18
July, 2004	34	36	3	6	21
Late October, 2002 (RV)	36	38	5	5	16
April, 2000	30	36	4	7	23
June, 1999	34	42	4	8	12
December, 1993	32	42	0	8	18

**ASK ALL:**

Q.12 Do you think the National Rifle Association has too much influence, too little influence or, the right amount of influence over gun control laws in this country?

		<i>Time/CNN</i>		
Dec 17-19 <u>2012</u>		Apr <u>2000</u>	Dec <u>1993</u>	Aug <u>1993</u>
36	Too much	42	45	39
19	Too little	17	15	15
28	Right amount	28	27	33
17	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>	13	13	13

**ASK ALL:**

Q.13 Do you happen to have any guns, rifles or pistols in your home?<sup>3</sup>

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
Dec 17-19, 2012	35	61	4
Feb 22-Mar 1, 2011	37	60	4
Mar 11-21, 2010	33	62	5
Mar 31-Apr 21, 2009	33	63	4
April, 2007	37	61	2
January, 2007	33	64	3
December, 2004	37	60	3
Mid-October, 2004	39	59	2
Mid-July, 2003	34	63	3
August, 2002	35	62	3
April, 2000	35	62	3
June, 1997	40	57	3
December, 1993	45	53	2

**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?

	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	<u>(VOL.) No preference</u>	<u>(VOL.) Other party</u>	<u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u>	<u>Lean Rep</u>	<u>Lean Dem</u>
Dec 17-19, 2012	21	32	38	4	*	4	15	14
Dec 5-9, 2012	23	33	38	3	1	2	14	19
Oct 31-Nov 3, 2012	26	34	34	3	1	3	13	16
Oct 24-28, 2012	28	33	33	4	*	2	12	16
Oct 4-7, 2012	27	31	36	3	1	3	15	15
Sep 12-16, 2012	24	35	36	2	*	2	14	16
Jul 16-26, 2012	22	33	38	4	*	3	14	15
Jun 28-Jul 9, 2012	24	33	37	3	*	3	15	17
Jun 7-17, 2012	24	33	39	2	*	2	17	17
May 9-Jun 3, 2012	24	32	36	4	*	4	13	14
Apr 4-15, 2012	24	31	39	3	*	2	15	15
Mar 7-11, 2012	24	34	36	3	1	2	16	17
Feb 8-12, 2012	26	32	36	4	1	2	13	17
Jan 11-16, 2012	22	31	42	3	*	2	17	16
Jan 4-8, 2012	26	31	35	4	*	4	14	14
<b>Yearly Totals</b>								
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

<sup>3</sup> The question was part of a list in March 2011, April 2009, January 2007, December 2004, Mid-October 2004, Mid-July 2003 and August 2002. From 1997 to 2003, the question asked about "guns or revolvers in your home." In 1993, the question asked: "Do you have any guns in this household?"

## PARTY/PARTYLN CONTINUED...

				(VOL.)	(VOL.)	(VOL.)	Lean	Lean
	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	No	Other	DK/Ref	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>
				preference	party			
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
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	--	--	--	--	--