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# Tipping Culture in America: Public Sees a Changed Landscape

*Most U.S. adults say tipping is expected in more places these days, but for many the rules are unclear*

**BY** *Drew DeSilver and Jordan Lippert*

**FOR MEDIA OR OTHER INQUIRIES:**

Drew DeSilver, Senior Writer/Editor

John Gramlich, Associate Director

Julia O'Hanlon, Communications Manager

202.419.4372

[www.pewresearch.org](http://www.pewresearch.org)

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## How we did this

Pew Research Center conducted this study to explore Americans' views of tipping and tipping culture, as well as their tipping practices in a variety of settings. For this analysis, we surveyed 11,945 U.S. adults from Aug. 7 to Aug. 27, 2023.

Everyone who took part in the survey is a member of the Center's American Trends Panel (ATP), an online survey panel that is recruited through national, random sampling of residential addresses. This way, nearly all U.S. adults have a chance of selection. The survey is weighted to be representative of the U.S. adult population by gender, race, ethnicity, partisan affiliation, education and other categories. Read more about the [ATP's methodology](#).

Here are the [questions used for this report](#), along with responses, and [its methodology](#).

# Tipping Culture in America: Public Sees a Changed Landscape

*Most U.S. adults say tipping is expected in more places these days, but for many the rules are unclear*

A broad majority of Americans say they're being asked to tip service workers more frequently than in the past. Around seven-in-ten U.S. adults (72%) say tipping is expected in more places today than it was five years ago, a finding that tracks with [anecdotal reporting](#) and has even been dubbed "[tipflation.](#)"

But even as Americans say they're being asked to tip more often, relatively few have a great deal of confidence about when and how to do so. Only about a third say it's extremely or very easy to know whether (34%) or how much (33%) to tip for different types of services.

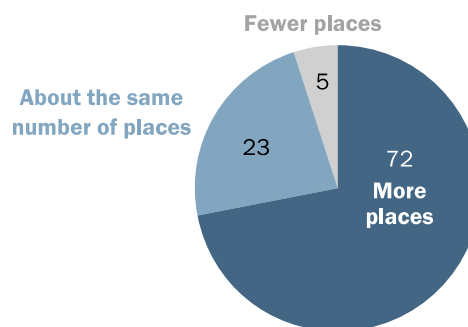
Nor is there consensus on whether tipping – which is built into the pay structures and business models of [many service industries](#) – is more of a choice or an obligation for consumers. Around two-in-ten Americans (21%) say it's more of a choice, while 29% say it's more of an obligation. The largest share (49%) say it depends on the situation, underscoring the lack of a single set of rules or expectations.

We surveyed nearly 12,000 U.S. adults to find out how they feel about the common yet sometimes confusing custom of tipping, including whether they themselves would or wouldn't tip in specific situations. Among our key findings:

- **The public is more likely to oppose than favor suggested tip amounts.** More Americans oppose (40%) than favor (24%) businesses suggesting tip amounts to their customers – for example, on the bill or on a checkout screen. Another 32% neither favor nor oppose the practice.

## Most Americans say expectations of tipping have spread to more places

% of U.S. adults who say that tipping is expected in \_\_\_ compared with five years ago



Note: Those who did not answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

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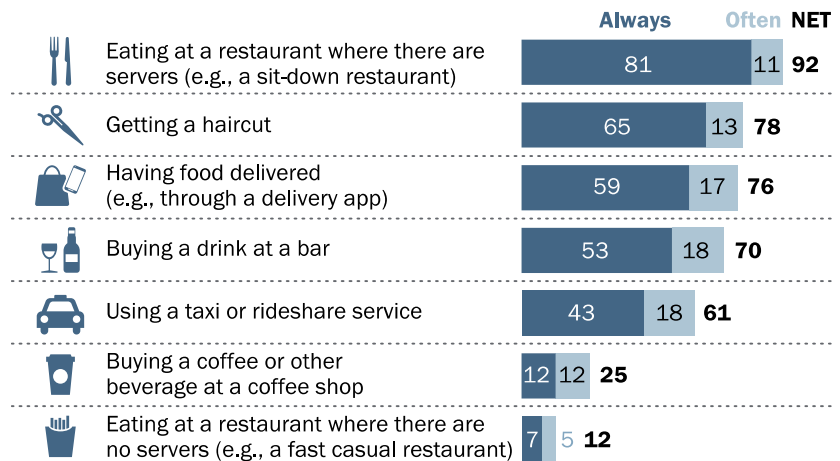
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- **Americans broadly oppose automatic service charges.** About seven-in-ten adults (72%) say they oppose businesses including automatic service charges or tips on customers' bills, regardless of group size – including half who *strongly* oppose the practice. Only 10% favor such charges.

- **Americans' tipping behaviors vary widely by situation.** About nine-in-ten adults who eat at sit-down restaurants (92%) say they always or often leave a tip in this scenario. Among those using other services, smaller majorities tip when getting a haircut (78%), having food delivered (76%), buying a drink at a bar (70%), or using a taxi or rideshare service (61%). Relatively few Americans always or often tip when buying a coffee (25%) or eating at a fast casual restaurant (12%).

### Americans' tipping habits vary across service settings

Among those who use each kind of service, % of U.S. adults who say they \_\_\_ leave a tip when ...



Note: Figures may not sum to NET totals due to rounding.  
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.  
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- **A majority of Americans say they would tip 15% or less for an average meal at a sit-down restaurant.** Nearly six-in-ten (57%) say this, including 2% who say they wouldn't leave *any* tip. Only a quarter of people say they'd tip 20% or more.
- **For most people, tipping is first and foremost about service.** Around three-quarters of adults (77%) say the quality of the service they receive is a major factor in deciding whether and how much to tip. None of the other factors we asked about comes close.

The survey comes at a time when tipping – a practice that Americans [broadly embrace](#) yet have long [felt conflicted about](#) – is undergoing significant structural and technological changes. These changes include the expansion of [digital payment platforms and devices that encourage tipping](#) and the [spread of mandatory service charges](#).

For this report, Pew Research Center surveyed 11,945 U.S. adults from Aug. 7 to Aug. 27, 2023, using the Center's nationally representative [American Trends Panel](#). The following chapters take a closer look at:

- [How Americans feel about the basics of tipping](#)
- [What they think about recent developments in tipping](#)
- [Which services they do and don't tip for \(and how much\)](#)
- [Which factors influence their tipping habits](#)

# 1. How Americans feel about the basics of tipping

In the United States, the practice of leaving gratuities began in the late 1800s and was well established by the Roaring Twenties (read “A brief history of tipping in the United States”). Despite this long history with tipping, Americans express ambivalence or uncertainty on a variety of questions related to it.

## A brief history of tipping in the United States

Social historians don't entirely agree about how the custom of tipping originated, but there's general consensus that it wasn't common at commercial establishments in the United States, especially outside major cities, until [after the Civil War](#). The practice was spread either by European visitors or by wealthy Americans returning from Europe, where tipping was far more common at the time. (Today, tipping is [less common in most of Europe](#) than in North America.)

The practice was reinforced by businesses that employed large numbers of recently freed slaves – most notably, the Pullman railroad sleeping-car company. As tipping critic William R. Scott [noted in 1916](#), nearly all of Pullman's 6,500 porters were Black men from the South, whose base pay in most cases was \$27.50 a month (about \$760 in today's dollars). But the company encouraged passengers to tip, and with tips porters could bring home around \$70 to \$100 a month or more (roughly \$1,900 to \$2,800 in today's dollars).

By the turn of the 20th century, tipping was established enough in the U.S. that some high-end restaurants were actually [charging their waiters for the right to work](#) and earn tips. But tipping remained controversial. Some hotel and restaurant managers [actively discouraged tips](#) – deeming them essentially bribes for more food or better service, according to business scholar Marc S. Mentzer – and several states tried to ban the practice. Others saw the practice as un-American: Scott wrote that “tipping, and the aristocratic idea it exemplifies, is what we left Europe to escape. It is a cancer in the breast of democracy.”

By the 1920s, financial strains stemming from Prohibition helped solidify tipping's place in the hospitality industry. Hotels, under pressure to make all aspects of their business self-supporting, switched from the [“American Plan,”](#) in which meals are included as part of the room rate, to the “European Plan,” in which meals are paid for separately. Because hotel managers, as Mentzer writes, “were more receptive to their staff receiving tips under [the] European Plan, [their] tendency to respond to Prohibition by switching to the European Plan had the effect of making tipping more common.” They began to view tipping as a way to ease payroll expenses, rather than bribery by customers.

In addition, many hotel bars were turned into “lunch rooms” open to the general public, and a la carte dining grew more common. Tipping became not only tolerated but, before long, widely accepted.



## Is tipping more a choice or an obligation?

Take the fundamental question of whether tipping is more of a choice or an obligation, or whether it depends on the situation. Overall, 21% of U.S. adults say it's more of a choice, 29% say it's more of an obligation and 49% say it depends.

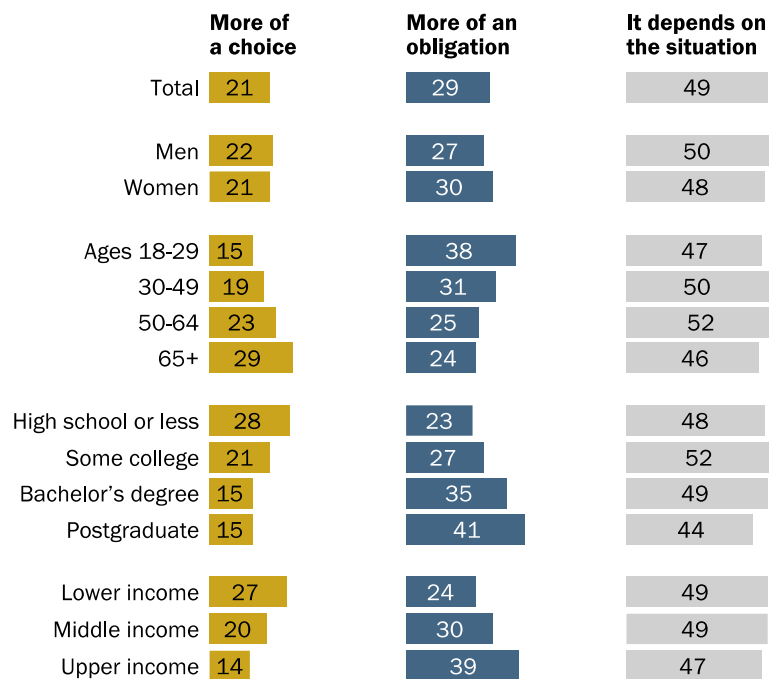
In nearly every demographic group, the largest share of Americans say tipping depends on the situation. But there are still some differences in the public's views:

**Younger people are likelier than older people to see tipping as more of an obligation.** Some 38% of adults under 30 say it's more of an obligation, compared with smaller shares of older Americans.

Conversely, about three-in-ten among those 65 and older (29%) see tipping as more of a choice, while roughly two-in-ten or fewer say this among younger age groups.

### Do you tip because you want to or because you ought to? Americans say it depends on the situation

*% who say they think of tipping as ...*



Note: Those who did not answer are not shown. Income tiers are based on adjusted 2022 earnings.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

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**The sense of tipping as an obligation rises with income and education.** About four-in-ten upper-income adults (39%) say tipping is more of an obligation, compared with 30% of middle-income people and 24% with lower incomes. Similarly, 41% of Americans with postgraduate degrees say it's more of an obligation; smaller shares of people with lower levels of educational attainment say this.

## Uncertainty over whether to tip, and how much

When it comes to knowing whether or how much to tip, relatively few Americans express a great deal of confidence. About a third of U.S. adults (34%) say it's extremely or very easy to know *whether* to tip for different kinds of services these days, and a similar share (33%) say the same about knowing *how much* to tip. Here, too, there are some key demographic differences:

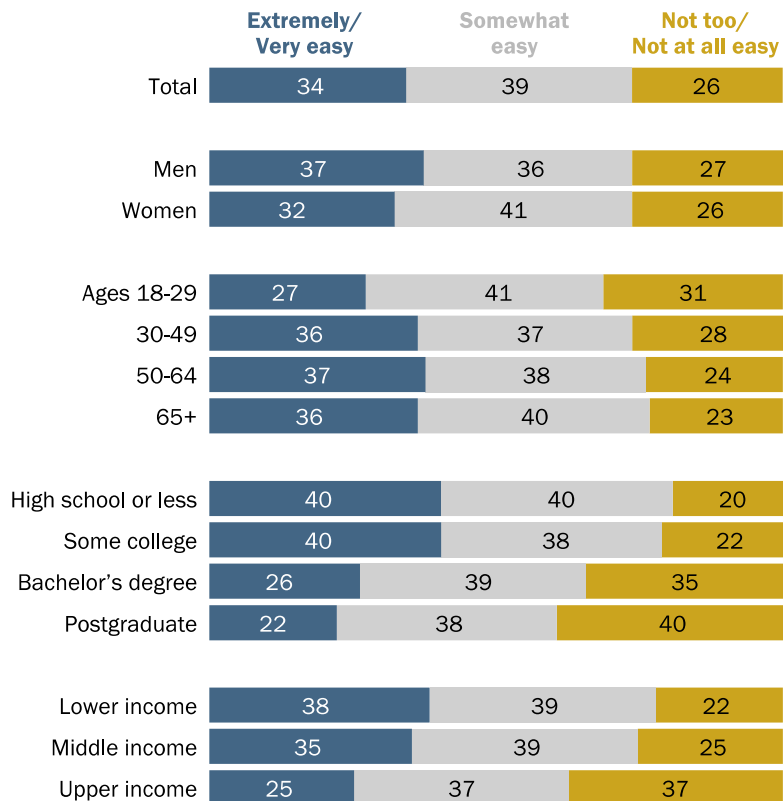
**People with upper incomes and those with more education are less confident about tipping than those with lower incomes or less education.**

For example, only about a quarter of upper-income people (25%) and those with bachelor's degrees (26%) say it's extremely or very easy to know whether to tip in a given situation.

Greater shares of those with upper incomes (37%) and bachelor's degrees (35%) instead say it's not too or not at all easy. The results were similar when we asked how easy it is to know *how much* to tip. (For demographic differences on this and other questions in the survey, read the [Appendix](#).)

### Should I tip? For many Americans, it isn't always clear

*% who say it's \_\_\_ to know whether to tip for different kinds of services these days*



Note: Those who did not answer are not shown. Income tiers are based on adjusted 2022 earnings.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

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**Men express more confidence than women about tipping.** Men are modestly more likely than women to say it's extremely or very easy to know whether to tip (37% vs. 32%) and how much to tip (37% vs. 29%).

## How should tips be distributed?

Then there's the matter of where the tips themselves should go. To assess this, we prompted Americans to think of a restaurant with wait staff who work for tips and asked how those tips should be distributed.

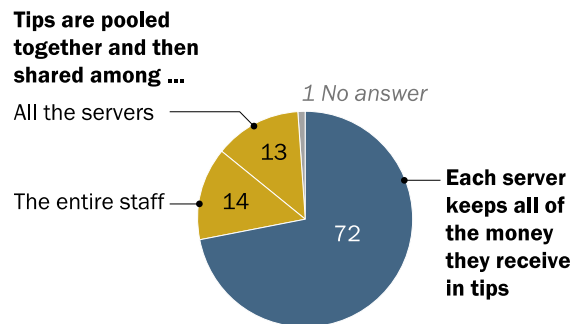
The balance of opinion is clear: A broad majority of Americans (72%) say the fairest way would be for each server to keep all of the money they receive in tips. Far fewer say the fairest way would be for tips to be pooled together and then shared among the entire staff (14%) or among all the servers (13%).

It's not uncommon for restaurants to require servers (who, by the nature of their jobs, collect the most tips) to share tips with bartenders, food runners, table bussers, hosts and other workers. Such "tip pool" or "tipping out" arrangements are extensively regulated by state and federal law. [Certain workers may or may not be eligible to participate](#), depending on how they're paid.

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### Tips should stay with restaurant servers, most Americans say

*% of U.S. adults who say the fairest way to distribute tips received by servers who work for tips in a restaurant is ...*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.  
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## 2. How Americans see recent developments in tipping

The [COVID-19 pandemic](#), subsequent [labor shortages and supply chain problems](#), a [burst of inflation](#) and [new payment technologies](#) have upended large swaths of the service economy – including the tipped sectors. And a large majority of Americans have perceived a shift in the nation’s tipping culture in recent years.

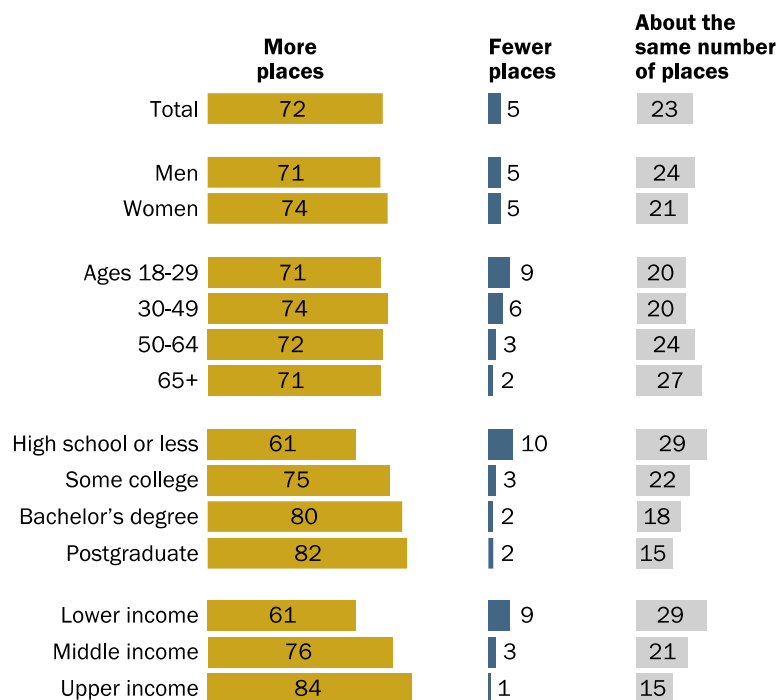
Overall, 72% of U.S. adults say tipping is expected in more places today than it was five years ago. Only 5% say it is expected in fewer places, while 23% say it’s expected in about the same number of places. Across demographic groups, majorities say tipping is expected in more places now compared with five years ago.

Whether Americans actually *are* tipping more frequently is difficult to say. There’s no official data on how many U.S. businesses rely on tips to compensate their workers or what share of workers are regularly tipped.<sup>1</sup>

There is, however, a widely reported perception that [more businesses are at least offering customers the opportunity to tip workers](#). The adoption of point-of-sale tablets, apps and digital kiosks has made it easier for businesses to provide customers with tip prompts and suggestions.

### Across demographic groups, most Americans say tipping expectations have spread to more places

*% who say tipping is expected in \_\_\_ compared with five years ago*



Note: Those who did not answer are not shown. Income tiers are based on adjusted 2022 earnings.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

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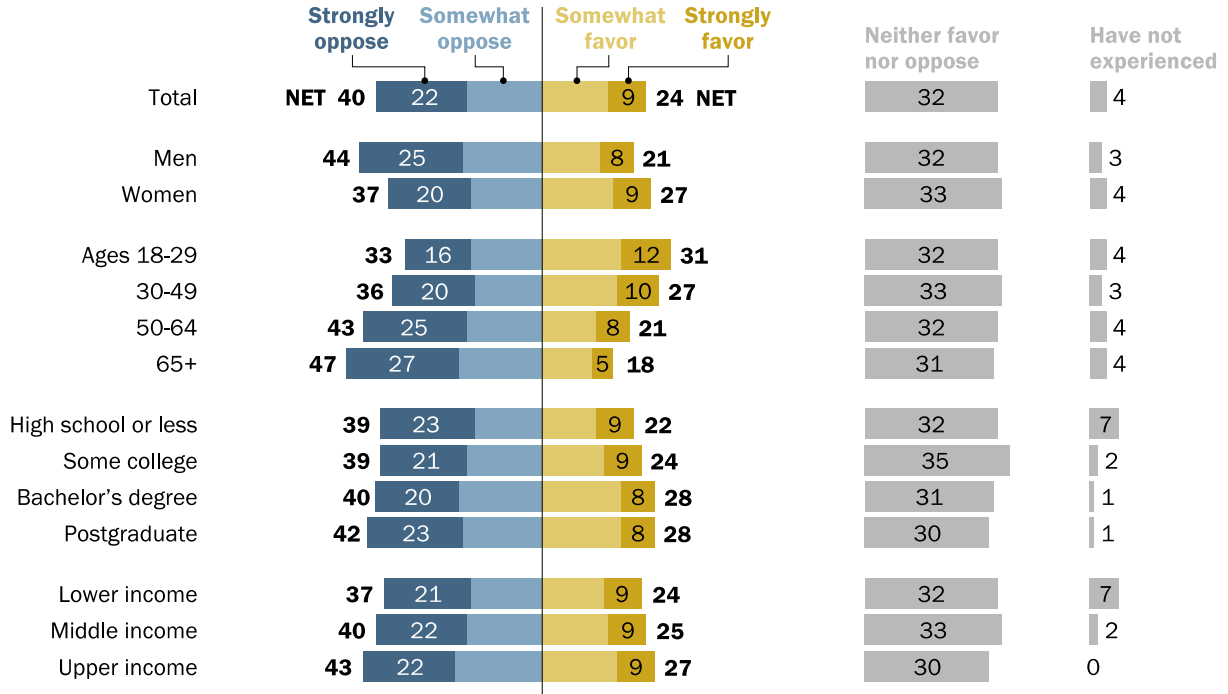
<sup>1</sup> The federal Fair Labor Standards Act defines a “[tipped employee](#)” as “any employee engaged in an occupation in which he customarily and regularly receives more than \$30 a month in tips.”

The public is more negative than positive about such automated tip suggestions, whether listed on a bill or shown on a screen when checking out. Four-in-ten U.S. adults strongly or somewhat oppose suggested tips, while 24% strongly or somewhat favor them and 32% neither oppose nor favor them. Attitudes differ somewhat by age and gender:

- **Older Americans tend to feel most negatively about tip suggestions.** Nearly half of people ages 65 and older (47%) strongly or somewhat oppose them. Adults under 30 are more split in their views: Roughly equal shares say they favor tip suggestions (31%), oppose them (33%), or neither favor nor oppose them (32%).
- **Men are more likely than women to oppose suggested tip amounts:** 44% of men strongly or somewhat oppose them, compared with 37% of women.

## More Americans oppose than favor businesses suggesting how much to tip

% who say they \_\_\_ businesses giving their customers suggestions about how much to tip



Note: Those who did not answer are not shown. Income tiers are based on adjusted 2022 earnings.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

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Feelings are much more negative when it comes to businesses – mostly restaurants – adding fixed-rate service charges to customers' bills. Overall, 72% of U.S. adults strongly or somewhat oppose businesses including an automatic service charge or tip on the bill, while only 10% strongly or somewhat favor this. Another 13% neither oppose nor favor it.

### What service charges are and aren't

Restaurants have imposed automatic service charges for years, but they typically did so only on larger parties. In recent years, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic, more restaurants have begun imposing such charges – which now [can sometimes exceed 20% of the check](#) – on all customers.

[Several reasons have been cited for the proliferating fees](#), including the desire to boost revenue without raising menu prices; slimmer profit margins due to higher costs for ingredients and supplies; and the need to pay higher wages – sometimes because of [laws raising the local minimum wage](#), sometimes just to attract enough workers.

But service charges are [distinct from tips](#), and not just because they're mandatory. Since service charge revenue goes directly to the restaurant, in most cases [the owners can use the money however they see fit](#). Despite the name, there's generally no requirement that any of the money be distributed to workers.

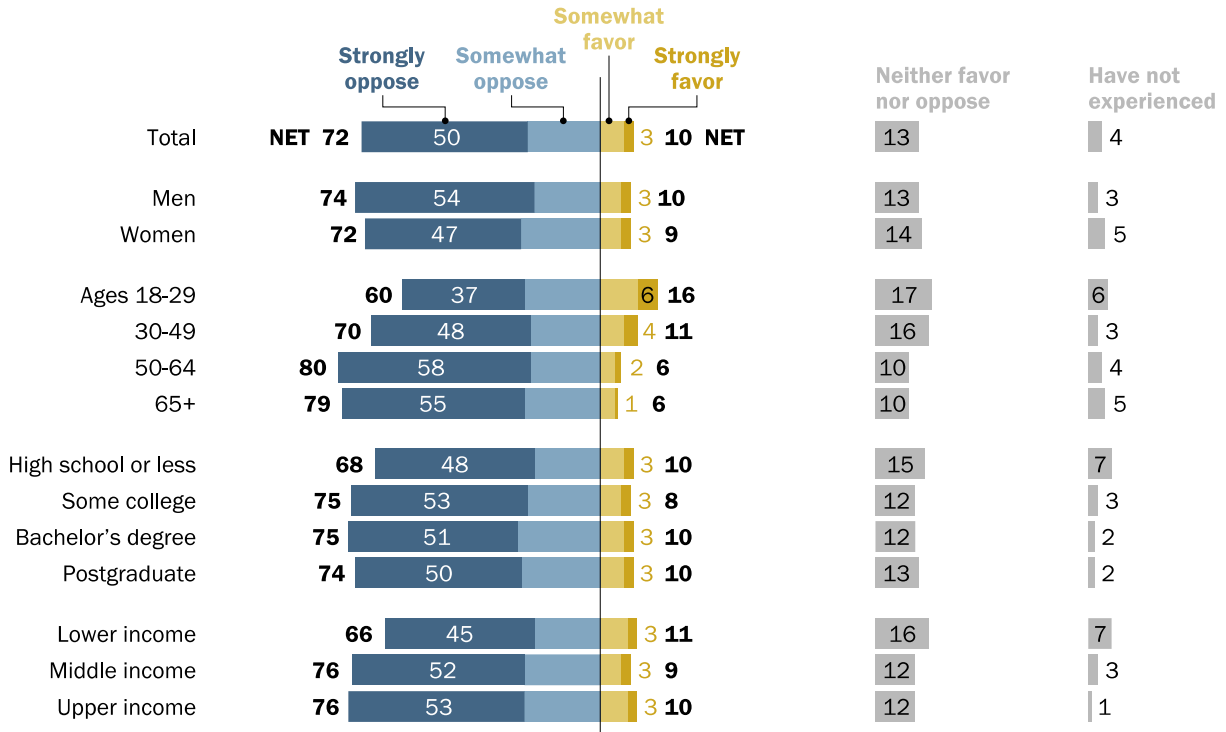
Tips, on the other hand, are voluntary on the part of customers, who can determine whether and how much to give. Whether shared or not, tips must stay with the employees. By law, [owners or managers cannot keep any tips](#). This is why some restaurants that impose service charges also include a tip option on the bill.

Across demographic groups, majorities of Americans say they oppose automatic service charges or tips on customers' bills. But there are again some differences by age and income:

- **Older adults are more likely than younger Americans to oppose automatic service charges or tips.** About eight-in-ten (79%) of those ages 65 and older oppose such charges, compared with six-in-ten adults under 30.
- **People with lower incomes are somewhat less likely than those with higher incomes to oppose automatic service charges or tips.** Still, 66% of lower-income adults oppose such charges.

## About 7 in 10 Americans oppose businesses including an automatic service charge or tip on the bill

% who say they \_\_\_ businesses including an automatic service charge or tip on the bill, regardless of party size



Note: Those who did not answer are not shown. Income tiers are based on adjusted 2022 earnings.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

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### 3. Services Americans do and don't tip for – and how much

The [largest share of Americans \(49%\)](#) say the decision about whether to tip or not depends on the situation. To explore this sentiment further, we asked Americans whether they'd leave a tip in seven specific scenarios that are common in daily life.

Americans report tipping at sit-down restaurants more regularly than in any other scenario we asked about. Some 92% of U.S. adults who dine at sit-down restaurants – that is, one where a server takes their order – say they always or often tip in this situation. That includes 81% who say they *always* tip in this situation.

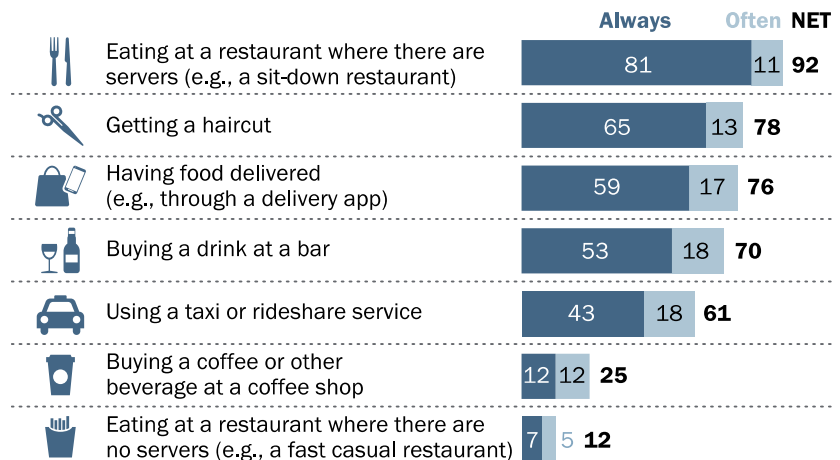
Roughly eight-in-ten Americans who get haircuts (78%) say they always or often tip when doing so. A similar share of Americans who have food delivered (76%) report always or often tipping in this situation.

Seven-in-ten U.S. adults who buy drinks at bars say they always or often leave a tip when doing so. And about six-in-ten adults who use taxi or rideshare services (61%) always or often leave a tip.

Tipping is much less common in two other scenarios we asked about. Only a quarter of Americans who buy coffee or other beverages at a coffee shop say they always or often tip in this situation. And just 12% of those who dine at fast casual restaurants – that is, restaurants where there are no servers – always or often leave a tip.

#### Americans' tipping habits vary across service settings

Among those who use each kind of service, % of U.S. adults who say they \_\_\_ leave a tip when ...



Note: Figures may not sum to NET totals due to rounding.  
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The public's tipping habits, among those who use each service, vary somewhat by demographic group:

- **In most scenarios, upper-income Americans are more likely than those with middle or lower incomes to tip always or often.** An exception: Respondents with lower incomes are most likely to report tipping at fast casual restaurants. Even so, only 16% say they always or often do this.
- **Americans with at least a bachelor's degree are more likely to say they always or often tip in nearly all scenarios asked about.** But similar shares of those with and without college degrees say they usually tip at coffee shops and fast casual restaurants.

### Tipping rates over time

What constitutes an acceptable tip has risen over time, much like the prices of goods and services generally. According to the [first \(1922\) edition of Emily Post's etiquette book](#), the rule was 10% for a meal in a "first class hotel," with a 25-cent minimum. "Tipping is undoubtedly a bad system, but it happens to be in force," Post wrote, "and that being the case, travelers have to pay their share of it – if they like the way made smooth and comfortable."

By the latter part of the 20th century, a typical restaurant tip in the U.S. was 15%, according to a [historical sketch by economist Ofer Azar](#). The 1997 edition of Post's book, cited by Azar, stated, "It wasn't long ago that 15 percent of the bill, excluding tax, was considered a generous tip in elegant restaurants. Now the figure is moving toward 20 percent for excellent service. In ordinary family-style restaurants 15 percent is still the norm."

We consulted more than three dozen tipping guides – from food and travel publications to etiquette experts, personal-finance sites and other sources – to get a sense of the current guidance. While specific recommendations vary, [15% is widely deemed the minimum acceptable tip](#) for restaurant service, and 18% to 20% or beyond is frequently advised. One guide, for example, says a tip of [15% to 20% is the norm in sit-down restaurants](#), but isn't required at fast-food eateries. Another says [the "standard expectation" is 20%](#) at sit-down restaurants and that "10% is now the norm" for quick-service restaurants.

A guide on tipping in the U.S. from the [Australian airline Qantas](#) advises 20% to 25% in restaurants and 10% for quick-service, except fast-food chains. The airline adds: "In Australia, where workers are paid a fair minimum wage, a tip is just that – a bonus for great service. Paying extra on top of the bill at a restaurant may seem unnecessary to us but ... [t]aking a seat at a restaurant in the US means you're entering a social contract with your waiter – you can't apply Australian standards here."

## How much do people tip for a sit-down meal?

Since a large majority of Americans say they usually tip when eating at a sit-down restaurant, we also wanted to know *how much* of a tip they'd leave. So, we gave our respondents a hypothetical scenario in which they went to a restaurant and had average – but not exceptional – food and service.

In this situation, a majority of Americans (57%) say they would tip 15% or less, including 2% who wouldn't leave a tip at all. Another 12% of adults say they would leave a tip of 18%, while a quarter say they would tip 20% or more.

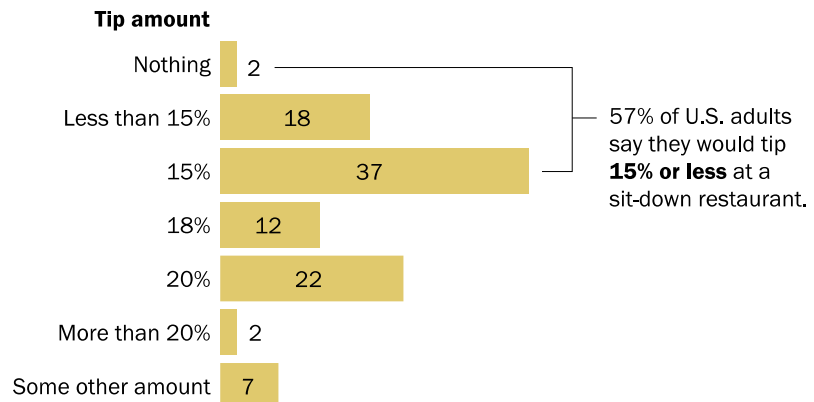
Tip amounts vary by income, age and other factors:

- Americans with upper incomes tend to tip more.** Upper-income adults are more likely than middle- and lower-income adults to tip 18% or 20% for an average dining experience at a sit-down restaurant. Conversely, those with middle or lower incomes are more likely than upper-income adults to tip 15% or less in this situation.

- Older Americans are slightly more likely than younger adults to tip 15% or less.** Among those 65 and older, 61% would leave a tip of 15% or less. That compares with 54% of adults under 30.

### For a majority of Americans, a standard tip when dining at a sit-down restaurant is 15% or less

*% of U.S. adults who say they would leave \_\_\_ as a tip for an average meal at a sit-down restaurant*



Note: The full question wording asked about a dining experience where the food and service are “both average, but not exceptional.” Those who did not answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

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## 4. Factors affecting whether and how much Americans tip

Above all, tipping is a question of service for most Americans. Around three-quarters of adults (77%) say the quality of the service is a major factor when deciding whether and how much to tip, while 18% say it is a minor factor. Only 5% don't consider it a factor at all.

Far smaller shares point to other potential factors. For example, only about three-in-ten adults say a service worker's pre-tip wages are a major factor when deciding whether and how much to tip.

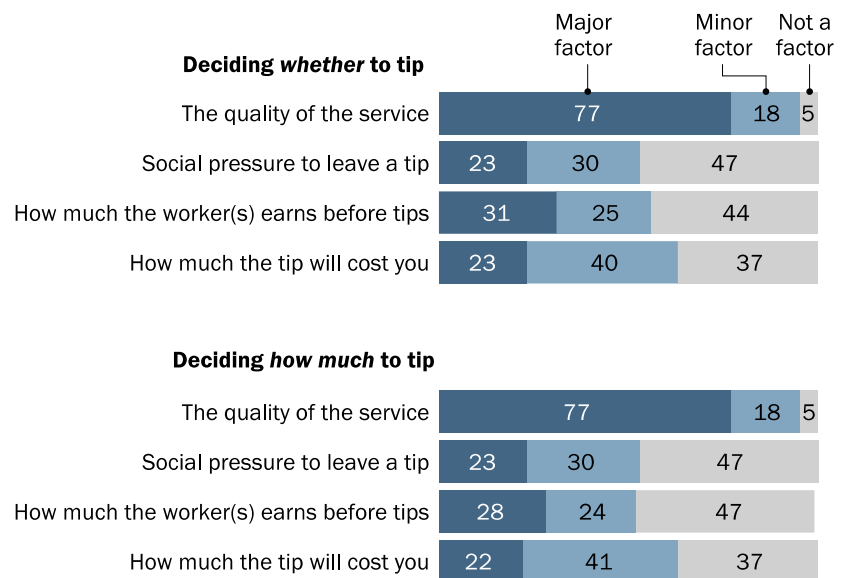
About a quarter of Americans say social pressure to leave a tip is a major factor in deciding whether and how much to tip. And similar shares say a major factor in these decisions is how much the tip will cost them as the customer.

In every demographic and partisan group examined, Americans are more likely to point to the quality of the service than to any other factor when deciding *whether* to leave a tip or not. But there are still some demographic and partisan differences over this and other factors:

- **Service quality is by far the most cited factor across all age groups, but younger Americans are more likely than older people to consider certain other factors.** For example, adults under 30 are more likely than those 65 and older to point to workers' pre-tip wages, social pressure and cost as major factors when deciding whether to leave a tip.

### For most Americans, tipping decisions are based on quality of service above other factors

% of U.S. adults who say each is a \_\_\_ in deciding *whether to leave a tip* and *how much to tip* for a service



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.  
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- **Upper-income Americans are more likely than those with middle and lower incomes to say social pressure is a major factor in deciding whether to tip.** Conversely, the cost of the tip is more likely to be a major factor in this decision for middle- and lower-income Americans than for upper-income adults.
  
- **Republicans and Republican-leaning independents are more likely than Democrats and Democratic leaners to see quality of service as a major factor.** Democrats, in turn, are more likely than Republicans to cite some other factors. For example, 35% of Democrats – compared with 27% of Republicans – say a worker’s pre-tip wages are a major factor when deciding whether to leave a tip or not. Liberal Democrats are especially likely to see this as a major factor (41% do so).

These demographic patterns are broadly similar when Americans are asked about the factors they take into account when deciding *how much* to tip.

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### Primary research team

Drew DeSilver, *Senior Writer/Editor*  
Jordan Lippert, *Research Assistant*  
John Gramlich, *Associate Director*  
Rebecca Leppert, *Copy Editor*  
Anna Jackson, *Editorial Assistant*  
Katherine Schaeffer, *Research Analyst*  
Jenn Hatfield, *Writer/Editor*

### Editorial and graphic design

David Kent, *Senior Copy Editor*  
Alissa Scheller, *Senior Information Graphics Designer*

### Communications and web publishing

Julia O'Hanlon, *Communications Manager*  
Jayme Link, *Communications Assistant*  
Beshay Sakla, *Digital Producer*

In addition, the project benefited greatly from the guidance of the Pew Research Center methodology team: Courtney Kennedy, Andrew Mercer, Ashley Amaya, Dorene Asare-Marfo, Dana Popky, Anna Brown and Arnold Lau. We also received valuable input from Senior Survey Advisor Scott Keeter, Associate Director of Research Jocelyn Kiley, Senior Writer/Editor Dalia Fahmy, Research Analyst Ted Van Green and Research Associate Luis Noe-Bustamante.

## Methodology

### The American Trends Panel survey methodology

#### Overview

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. Interviews are conducted in both English and Spanish. The panel is being managed by Ipsos.

Data in this report is drawn from ATP Wave 133, conducted from Aug. 7 to Aug 27, 2023. A total of 11,945 panelists responded out of 12,925 who were sampled, for a response rate of 92%. The cumulative response rate accounting for nonresponse to the recruitment surveys and attrition is 4%. The break-off rate among panelists who logged on to the survey and completed at least one item is less than 1%. The margin of sampling error for the full sample of 11,945 respondents is plus or minus 1.4 percentage points.

#### Panel recruitment

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 whom 9,942 (50%) agreed to participate.

In August 2018, the ATP switched from telephone to

#### 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	1,493
Aug. 27 to Oct. 4, 2015	Landline/ cell RDD	6,004	2,976	875
April 25 to June 4, 2017	Landline/ cell RDD	3,905	1,628	431
Aug. 8 to Oct. 31, 2018	ABS	9,396	8,778	4,096
Aug. 19 to Nov. 30, 2019	ABS	5,900	4,720	1,460
June 1 to July 19, 2020; Feb. 10 to March 31, 2021	ABS	3,197	2,812	1,535
May 29 to July 7, 2021; Sept. 16 to Nov. 1, 2021	ABS	1,329	1,162	783
May 24 to Sept. 29, 2022	ABS	3,354	2,869	1,684
April 17 to May 30, 2023	ABS	686	576	568
	<b>Total</b>	<b>43,580</b>	<b>30,859</b>	<b>12,925</b>

Note: RDD is random-digit dial; ABS is address-based sampling. 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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address-based sampling (ABS) recruitment. A study cover letter and a pre-incentive are mailed to a stratified, random sample of households selected from the U.S. Postal Service's Delivery Sequence File. This Postal Service 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.<sup>2</sup> Within each sampled household, the adult with the next birthday is asked to participate. Other details of the ABS recruitment protocol have changed over time but are available upon request.<sup>3</sup>

We have recruited a national sample of U.S. adults to the ATP approximately once per year since 2014. In some years, the recruitment has included additional effort (known as an "oversample") to boost sample size with under-represented groups. For example, Hispanic adults, Black adults and Asian adults were oversampled in 2019, 2022 and 2023, respectively.

Across the six address-based recruitments, a total of 23,862 adults were invited to join the ATP, of whom 20,917 agreed to join the panel and completed an initial profile survey. Of the 30,859 individuals who have ever joined the ATP, 12,925 remained active panelists and continued to receive survey invitations at the time this survey was conducted.

The American Trends Panel never uses breakout routers or chains that direct respondents to additional surveys.

### **Sample design**

The overall target population for this survey was noninstitutionalized persons ages 18 and older living in the U.S., including Alaska and Hawaii. All active panel members were invited to participate in this wave.

### **Questionnaire development and testing**

The questionnaire was developed by Pew Research Center in consultation with Ipsos. The web program was rigorously tested on both PC and mobile devices by the Ipsos project management team and Pew Research Center researchers. The Ipsos project management team also populated test data that was analyzed in SPSS to ensure the logic and randomizations were working as intended before launching the survey.

### **Incentives**

All respondents were offered a post-paid incentive for their participation. Respondents could choose to receive the post-paid incentive in the form of a check or a gift code to Amazon.com or

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<sup>2</sup> AAPOR Task Force on Address-based Sampling. 2016. "[AAPOR Report: Address-based Sampling.](#)"

<sup>3</sup> Email [pewsurveys@pewresearch.org](mailto:pewsurveys@pewresearch.org).



could choose to decline the incentive. Incentive amounts ranged from \$5 to \$20 depending on whether the respondent belongs to a part of the population that is harder or easier to reach. Differential incentive amounts were designed to increase panel survey participation among groups that traditionally have low survey response propensities.

### **Data collection protocol**

The data collection field period for this survey was Aug. 7 to Aug. 27, 2023. Postcard notifications were mailed to all ATP panelists with a known residential address on Aug. 7.

Invitations were sent out in two separate launches: soft launch and full launch. Ninety panelists were included in the soft launch, which began with an initial invitation sent on Aug. 7. The ATP panelists chosen for the initial soft launch were known responders who had completed previous ATP surveys within one day of receiving their invitation. All remaining English- and Spanish-speaking sampled panelists were included in the full launch and were sent an invitation on Aug. 8.

All panelists with an email address received an email invitation and up to five email reminders if they did not respond to the survey. All ATP panelists who consented to SMS messages received an SMS invitation and up to five SMS reminders. On Aug. 25, interactive voice recording reminder calls were made to 39 tablet households that previously provided consent to receive these reminders.

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### **Invitation and reminder dates, ATP Wave 133**

	<b>Soft launch</b>	<b>Full launch</b>
Initial invitation	August 7, 2023	August 8, 2023
First reminder	August 11, 2023	August 11, 2023
Second reminder	August 15, 2023	August 15, 2023
Third reminder	August 18, 2023	August 18, 2023
Fourth reminder	August 22, 2023	August 22, 2023
Fifth reminder	August 25, 2023	August 25, 2023
Interactive voice recording reminder	August 25, 2023	August 25, 2023

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## Data quality checks

To ensure high-quality data, the Center’s researchers performed data quality checks to identify any respondents showing clear patterns of satisficing. This includes checking for very high rates of leaving questions blank, as well as always selecting the first or last answer presented. As a result of this checking, two ATP respondents were removed from the survey dataset prior to weighting and analysis.

## Weighting

The ATP data is weighted in a multistep process that accounts for multiple stages of sampling and nonresponse that occur at different points in the survey process. First, each panelist begins with a base weight that reflects their probability of selection for their initial recruitment survey. These weights are then rescaled and adjusted to account for changes in the design of ATP recruitment surveys from year to year. Finally, the weights are calibrated to align with the population benchmarks in the accompanying table to correct for nonresponse to recruitment surveys and panel attrition. If only a subsample of panelists was invited to participate in the wave, this weight is adjusted to account for any differential probabilities of selection.

### American Trends Panel weighting dimensions

Variable	Benchmark source
Age (detailed)	2021 American Community Survey (ACS)
Age x Gender	
Education x Gender	
Education x Age	
Race/Ethnicity x Education	
Born inside vs. outside the U.S. among Hispanics and Asian Americans	
Years lived in the U.S.	
Census region x Metro/Non-metro	2021 CPS March Supplement
Volunteerism	2021 CPS Volunteering & Civic Life Supplement
Voter registration	2018 CPS Voting and Registration Supplement
Party affiliation	2022 National Public Opinion Reference Survey (NPORS)
Frequency of internet use	
Religious affiliation	
<i>Additional weighting dimensions applied within Black adults</i>	
Age	2021 American Community Survey (ACS)
Gender	
Education	
Hispanic ethnicity	
Voter registration	2018 CPS Voting and Registration Supplement
Party affiliation	2022 National Public Opinion Reference Survey (NPORS)
Religious affiliation	

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

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Among the panelists who completed the survey, this weight is then calibrated again to align with the population benchmarks identified in the accompanying table and trimmed at the 1st and

99.5th percentiles to reduce the loss in precision stemming from variance in the weights. Sampling errors and tests of statistical significance take into account the effect of weighting.

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

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**Sample size and margin of error, ATP Wave 133**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Unweighted sample size</b>	<b>Plus or minus ...</b>
Total sample	11,945	1.4 percentage points
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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.

## Dispositions and response rates

### Final dispositions, ATP Wave 133

	AAPOR code	Total
Completed interview	1.1	11,945
Logged on to survey; broke off	2.12	46
Logged on to survey; did not complete any items	2.1121	42
Never logged on (implicit refusal)	2.11	889
Survey completed after close of the field period	2.27	1
Completed interview but was removed for data quality		2
Screened out		0
<b>Total panelists sampled for the survey</b>		<b>12,925</b>
Completed interviews	I	11,945
Partial interviews	P	0
Refusals	R	977
Non-contact	NC	1
Other	O	2
Unknown household	UH	0
Unknown other	UO	0
Not eligible	NE	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>12,925</b>
AAPOR RR1 = I / (I+P+R+NC+O+UH+UO)		92%

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### Cumulative response rate as of ATP Wave 133

	Total
Weighted response rate to recruitment surveys	11%
% of recruitment survey respondents who agreed to join the panel, among those invited	71%
% of those agreeing to join who were active panelists at start of Wave 133	49%
Response rate to Wave 133 survey	92%
<b>Cumulative response rate</b>	<b>4%</b>

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## How family income tiers are calculated

Family income data reported in this study is adjusted for household size and cost-of-living differences by geography. Panelists then are assigned to income tiers that are based on the median adjusted family income of all American Trends Panel members. The process uses the following steps:

1. First, panelists are assigned to the midpoint of the income range they selected in a family income question that was measured on either the most recent annual profile survey or, for newly recruited panelists, their recruitment survey. This provides an approximate income value that can be used in calculations for the adjustment.
2. Next, these income values are adjusted for the cost of living in the geographic area where the panelist lives. This is calculated using price indexes published by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. These indexes, known as [Regional Price Parities](#) (RPP), compare the prices of goods and services across all U.S. metropolitan statistical areas as well as non-metro areas with the national average prices for the same goods and services. The most recent available data at the time of the annual profile survey is from 2021. Those who fall outside of metropolitan statistical areas are assigned the overall RPP for their state's non-metropolitan area.
3. Family incomes are further adjusted for the number of people in a household using the methodology from the Center's previous work on [the American middle class](#). This is done because a four-person household with an income of say, \$50,000, faces a tighter budget constraint than a two-person household with the same income.
4. Panelists are then assigned an income tier. "Middle-income" adults are in families with adjusted family incomes that are between two-thirds and double the median adjusted family income for the full ATP at the time of the most recent annual profile survey. The median adjusted family income for the panel is roughly \$71,700. Using this median income, the middle-income range is about \$47,800 to \$143,400. Lower-income families have adjusted incomes less than \$47,800 and upper-income families have adjusted incomes greater than \$143,400 (all figures expressed in 2022 dollars and scaled to a household size of three). If a panelist did not provide their income and/or their household size, they are assigned "no answer" in the income tier variable.

Two examples of how a given area's cost-of-living adjustment was calculated are as follows: The Anniston-Oxford metropolitan area in Alabama is a relatively inexpensive area, with a price level that is 16.2% less than the national average. The San Francisco-Oakland-Berkeley metropolitan area in California is one of the most expensive areas, with a price level that is 19.8% higher than

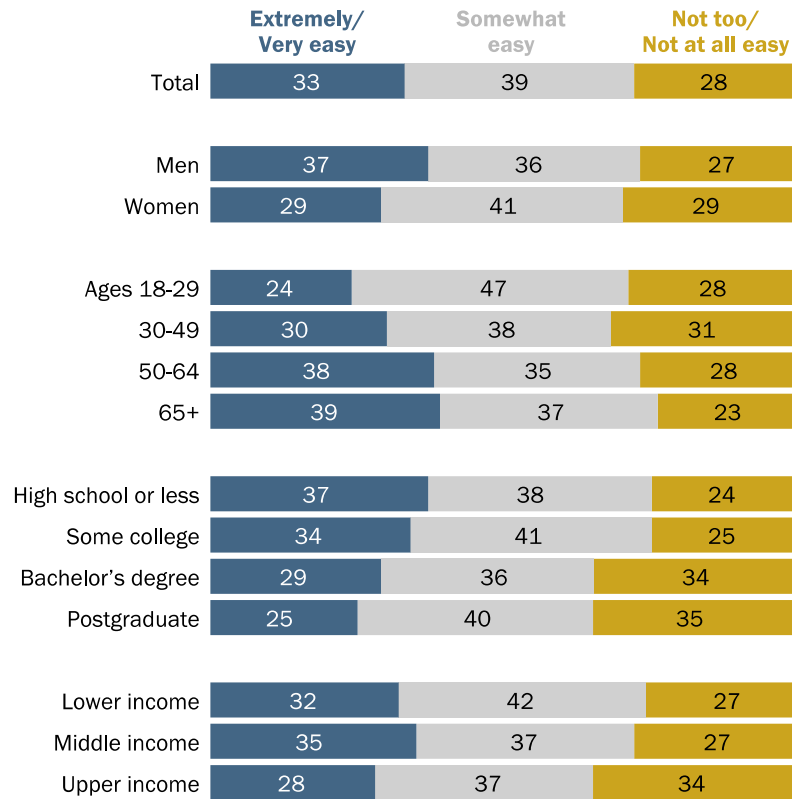
the national average. Income in the sample is adjusted to make up for this difference. As a result, a family with an income of \$41,900 in the Anniston-Oxford area is as well off financially as a family of the same size with an income of \$59,900 in San Francisco.

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## Appendix: Detailed tables

### Americans with more education express less confidence about knowing how much to tip

% who say it is \_\_\_ to know how much to tip for different kinds of services these days



Note: Those who did not answer are not shown. Income tiers are based on adjusted 2022 earnings.

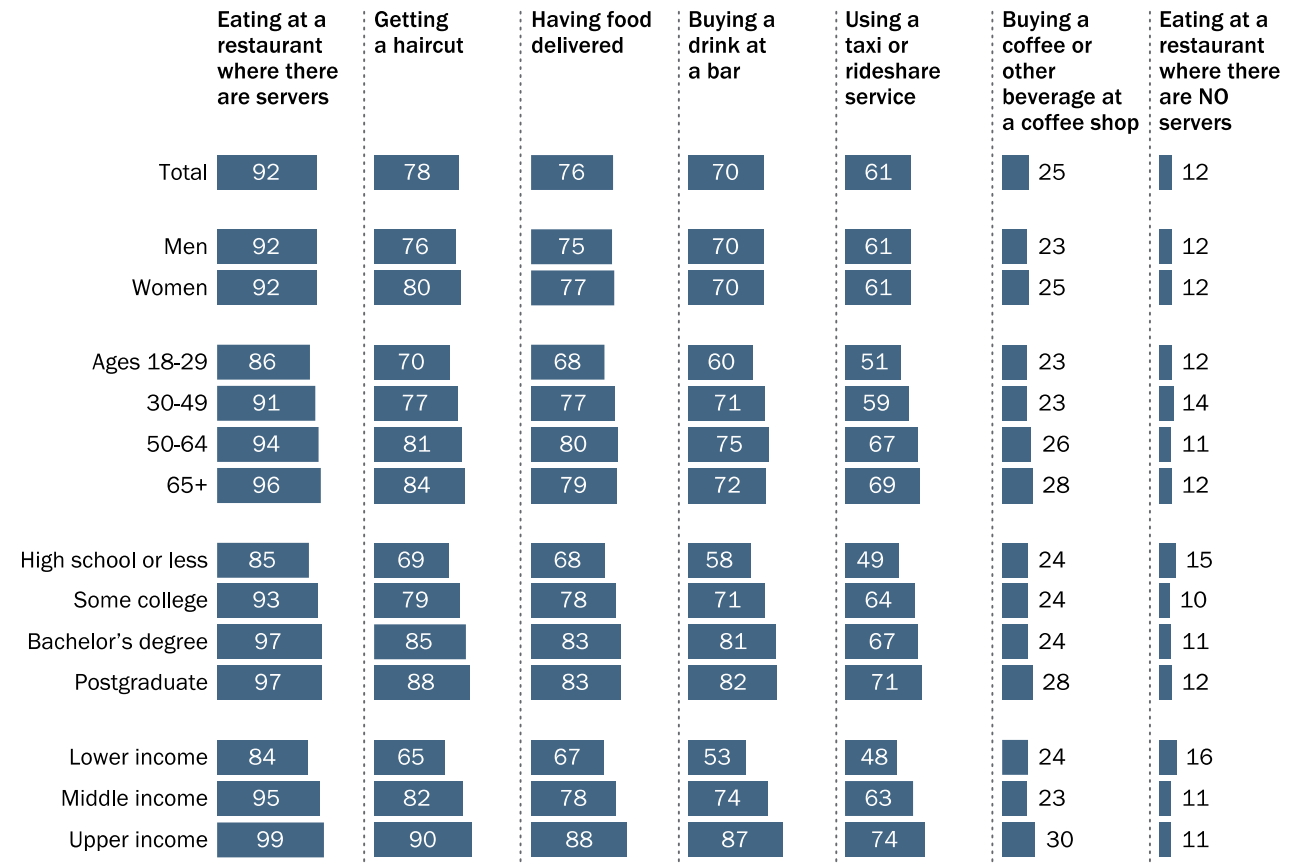
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

"Tipping Culture in America: Public Sees a Changed Landscape"

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## Americans' likelihood of tipping varies by demographic group and situation

Among those who use each kind of service, % who say they would **always or often** leave a tip for each service



Note: Based on those who use each service. Those who did not answer are not shown. Income tiers are based on adjusted 2022 earnings.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

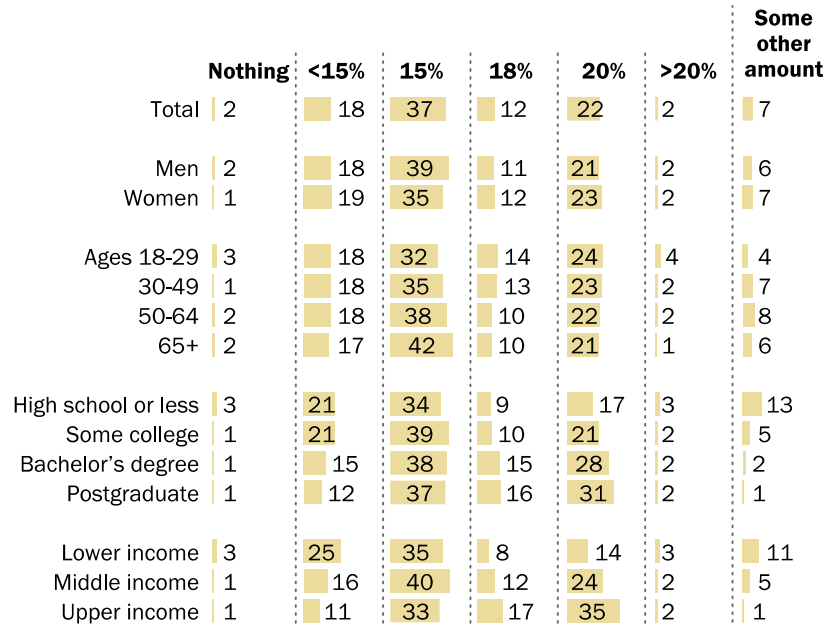
"Tipping Culture in America: Public Sees a Changed Landscape"

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## How much Americans tip at a sit-down restaurant varies by demographic group

% who say they would leave \_\_\_ as a tip for an average meal at a sit-down restaurant



Note: The full question wording asked about a dining experience where the food and service are “both average, but not exceptional.” Those who did not answer are not shown. Income tiers are based on adjusted 2022 earnings.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

“Tipping Culture in America: Public Sees a Changed Landscape”

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## 2023 PEW RESEARCH CENTER'S AMERICAN TRENDS PANEL

WAVE 133  
 FINAL TOPLINE  
 AUGUST 7-27, 2023  
 N=11,945

**NOTE: ALL NUMBERS ARE PERCENTAGES UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED. THE PERCENTAGES LESS THAN 0.5% ARE REPLACED BY AN ASTERISK (\*). ROWS/COLUMNS MAY NOT TOTAL 100% DUE TO ROUNDING. THE QUESTIONS PRESENTED BELOW ARE PART OF A LARGER SURVEY CONDUCTED ON THE AMERICAN TRENDS PANEL. THE OTHER QUESTIONS ON THIS SURVEY ARE HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE OR HAVE BEEN PREVIOUSLY RELEASED.**

	Sample size	Margin of error at 95% confidence level
U.S. adults	11,945	+/- 1.4 percentage points

**ASK ALL:**

TIPVIEW

Overall, do you think of tipping as more of a choice, more of an obligation or does it depend on the situation?

Aug 7-27,  
2023

21	More of a choice
29	More of an obligation
49	It depends on the situation
1	Refused

**ASK ALL:**

TIP1

How easy is it for you to know whether to tip for different kinds of services these days? [**RANDOMIZE RESPONSE OPTIONS 1-5 AND 5-1**]

Aug 7-27,  
2023

13	Extremely easy
22	Very easy
39	Somewhat easy
20	Not too easy
6	Not at all easy
*	Refused

**ASK ALL:**

TIP2

How easy is it for you to know how much to tip for different kinds of services these days? **[RANDOMIZE RESPONSE OPTIONS 1-5 AND 5-1]**

Aug 7-27,  
2023

11	Extremely easy
22	Very easy
39	Somewhat easy
21	Not too easy
7	Not at all easy
*	Refused

**ASK ALL:**

TIPFREQ For each of the following kinds of services, how often do you leave a tip? **[RANDOMIZE ITEMS ACROSS TWO SCREENS; RANDOMIZE RESPONSE OPTIONS 1-5 AND 5-1 WITH 6 ALWAYS LAST]**

**BASED ON ADULTS WHO SAY THEY USE EACH SERVICE (TIPFREQ=1-5):**

	<u>Always</u>	<u>Often</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Rarely</u>	<u>Never</u>
a. Eating at a restaurant where there are servers (e.g., a sit-down restaurant) Aug 7-27, 2023	81	11	6	1	1
b. Eating at a restaurant where there are no servers (e.g., a fast casual restaurant) Aug 7-27, 2023	7	5	17	25	45
c. Having food delivered (e.g., through a delivery app) Aug 7-27, 2023	59	17	14	5	4
d. Buying a coffee or other beverage at a coffee shop Aug 7-27, 2023	12	12	27	23	25
e. Buying a drink at a bar Aug 7-27, 2023	53	18	16	7	7
f. Using a taxi or rideshare service Aug 7-27, 2023	43	18	21	9	10
g. Getting a haircut Aug 7-27, 2023	65	13	12	5	5

**ASK ALL:**

TIPFACTOR1 How much of a factor is each of the following when you're deciding whether to leave a tip for a service? **[RANDOMIZE ITEMS]**

	<u>Major factor</u>	<u>Minor factor</u>	<u>Not a factor</u>	<u>Refused</u>
a. The quality of the service Aug 7-27, 2023	77	18	5	*
b. Social pressure to leave a tip Aug 7-27, 2023	23	30	47	*
c. How much the worker(s) earns before tips Aug 7-27, 2023	31	25	44	*
d. How much the tip will cost you Aug 7-27, 2023	23	40	37	*

**ASK ALL:**

TIPFACTOR2 How much of a factor is each of the following when you're deciding how much to tip for a service? **[RANDOMIZE ITEMS]**

	<u>Major factor</u>	<u>Minor factor</u>	<u>Not a factor</u>	<u>Refused</u>
e. The quality of the service Aug 7-27, 2023	77	18	5	*
f. Social pressure to leave a tip Aug 7-27, 2023	23	30	47	*
g. How much the worker(s) earns before tips Aug 7-27, 2023	28	24	47	1
h. How much the tip will cost you Aug 7-27, 2023	22	41	37	*

**ASK ALL:**  
TIPAMOUNT

Imagine you are paying the bill at a restaurant where a server took your order. The food and the service were both average, but not exceptional. How much of a tip would you leave?

Aug 7-27,  
2023

18	Less than 15%
37	15%
12	18%
22	20%
2	More than 20%
7	Some other amount
2	I would not leave a tip
*	Refused

**ASK ALL:**  
TIPSHARE

Thinking about a restaurant where there are servers who work for tips, which of the following do you think is the fairest way to distribute those tips? **[RANDOMIZE RESPONSE OPTIONS 1-3 OR 3-1]**

Aug 7-27,  
2023

72	Each server keeps all of the money they receive in tips
13	Tips are pooled together and then shared among all the servers
14	Tips are pooled together and then shared among the entire staff
1	Refused

**ASK ALL:**  
TIPSUGG

Many businesses these days give their customers suggestions about how much to tip – for example, on the bill or on a screen at the cash register. Do you favor or oppose businesses giving their customers suggestions about how much to tip? **[RANDOMIZE RESPONSE OPTIONS 1-5 OR 5-1 WITH 6 ALWAYS LAST]**

Aug 7-27,  
2023

9	Strongly favor
16	Somewhat favor
32	Neither favor nor oppose
18	Somewhat oppose
22	Strongly oppose
4	I have not experienced this
*	Refused

**ASK ALL:**  
TIPAUTO

Some businesses these days include an automatic service charge or tip on the bill, regardless of party size. Do you favor or oppose businesses including an automatic service charge or tip on the bill? **[RANDOMIZE RESPONSE OPTIONS 1-5 OR 5-1 WITH 6 ALWAYS LAST IN SAME ORDER AS TIPSUGG]**

Aug 7-27,  
2023

3	Strongly favor
7	Somewhat favor
13	Neither favor nor oppose
22	Somewhat oppose
50	Strongly oppose
4	I have not experienced this
*	Refused

**ASK ALL:**  
TIPEXPECT

Compared with 5 years ago, do you think tipping is expected in more places, fewer places, or about the same number of places?

Aug 7-27,  
2023

72	More places
5	Fewer places
23	About the same
*	Refused

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE.**