

**2026 PEW RESEARCH CENTER'S AMERICAN TRENDS PANEL
Wave 198: Survey on Economic Issues
August 24-30, 2026**

**TOPLINE
N=5,166**

Note: All numbers are percentages unless otherwise noted. 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.

"No answer" includes web respondents who do not answer the question as well as telephone respondents who refuse to answer or who say they don't know how to answer. In cases where "not sure" was offered as an explicit option to web and telephone respondents, the "no answer" category includes only web skips and telephone refusals.

This survey was conducted primarily online, with some interviews conducted by live telephone. This topline shows the programming language for online administration. For details on how questions were slightly modified for phone administration, visit the questionnaire.

American Trends Panel surveys conducted between October 2016 and June 2024 were conducted fully online (with tablets and data plans provided to adults without home internet). American Trends Panel surveys conducted prior to October 2016 were conducted primarily online, with some respondents completing by mail. For additional details, visit the methodology.

PN = Programming note

	Sample size	Margin of error at 95% confidence level
U.S. adults	5,166	+/- 1.6 percentage points

INC through EMERGFUND asked in a prior survey conducted July 20-August 9, 2026

**INC
ASK ALL:**

Do you currently have enough income to lead the kind of life you want?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No answer</u>
Jul 20-Aug 9, 2026	39	60	1
Feb 26-Mar 11, 2018	37	62	*

INCFUTMOD

ASK ALL:

[PN: ROTATE RESPONSE OPTIONS 1-5/5-1, HOLDING 98 AND 99 LAST; INCLUDE ROTATION IN DATA FILE]

How confident are you that you will have enough income in the future to lead the kind of life you want?

INCFUTMOD CONTINUED ...

Jul 20-Aug 9,

2026

6	Extremely confident
16	Very confident
37	Somewhat confident
27	Not too confident
14	Not at all confident
*	No answer

PF_HAPPEN**ASK ALL:****[PN: RANDOMIZE ITEMS ACROSS TWO SCREENS; INCLUDE RANDOMIZATIONS IN DATA FILE]**

In the past year, have any of the following happened to you?

		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No answer</u>
HOU	Had problems paying your rent or mortgage			
	Jul 20-Aug 9, 2026	21	78	1
	Apr 7-13, 2025	21	78	1
	Jul 1-7, 2024	24	75	1
	Mar 27-Apr 2, 2023	24	76	1
	Sep 15-Oct 3, 2014	21	78	1
	<i>Phone trend for comparison</i>			
	Aug 20-24, 2014	20	80	*
	Mar 13-17, 2013	23	76	1
	Jul 16-26, 2012	23	76	*
	Jun 15-19, 2011	26	73	1
	Mar 10-14, 2010	24	76	*
	Feb 4-8, 2009	20	80	*
	Jan 24-Feb 19, 2008	16	83	1
	<i>Trend for comparison</i>			
LOSE	<i>Washington Post/Kaiser/Harvard:</i>			
	<i>August, 1999</i>	13	87	*
	Been laid off or lost your job			
	Jul 20-Aug 9, 2026	11	88	1
	Apr 7-13, 2025	10	89	1
	Jul 1-7, 2024	10	88	2
	Mar 27-Apr 2, 2023	13	86	1
	Sep 15-Oct 3, 2014	11	86	3
	<i>Phone trend for comparison</i>			
	Feb 2-May 8, 2016	12	87	1
	Aug 20-24, 2014	14	85	1
	Mar 13-17, 2013	15	84	1
	Jul 16-26, 2012	15	85	*
	Jun 15-19, 2011	16	84	*

PF_HAPPEN CONTINUED ...

		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No answer</u>
LOSE	<i>Phone trend for comparison</i>			
	Mar 10-14, 2010	21	79	*
	Feb 4-8, 2009	18	82	*
	Jan 24-Feb 19, 2008	14	85	1
RAISE_MOD	Gotten a pay raise at your current job or gotten a higher-paying job			
	Jul 20-Aug 9, 2026	30	69	1
SAVE	Been able to save money for the future			
	Jul 20-Aug 9, 2026	45	54	*
	Apr 7-13, 2025	47	52	1
	Jul 1-7, 2024	42	57	1
	Mar 27-Apr 2, 2023	48	51	1
	<i>Phone trend for comparison</i>			
	Aug 20-24, 2014	44	55	1
	Mar 13-17, 2013	41	58	1
	<i>Trend for comparison</i>			
	<i>Washington Post/Kaiser/Harvard: August, 1999</i>	58	42	*
MED_MOD	Had trouble paying for medical care for yourself or your family			
	Jul 20-Aug 9, 2026	28	72	*
FOOD	Gotten food from a food bank or food pantry			
	Jul 20-Aug 9, 2026	20	80	*
	Apr 7-13, 2025	19	81	*
	Jul 1-7, 2024	17	82	1
	Mar 27-Apr 2, 2023	18	82	1
	Sep 15-Oct 3, 2014	14	84	1
	<i>Phone trend for comparison</i>			
	Feb 29-May 8, 2016	11	89	*
CHILD	Had trouble paying for childcare			
	Jul 20-Aug 9, 2026	7	91	1
	Apr 7-13, 2025	8	91	1
	Jul 1-7, 2024	9	89	2
AUTO	Had problems paying for your daily transportation costs			
	Jul 20-Aug 9, 2026	22	78	*
	Apr 7-13, 2025	20	80	*

PF_HAPPEN CONTINUED...

		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No answer</u>
BRRW	Borrowed money from friends and family			
	Jul 20-Aug 9, 2026	27	73	*
	Apr 7-13, 2025	26	74	*
	Sep 15-Oct 3, 2014	33	65	2
	<i>Phone trend for comparison</i>			
	Borrowed money from family or friends			
	Feb 29-May 8, 2016	21	78	*
VACA	Gone on a vacation			
	Jul 20-Aug 9, 2026	44	55	*
	Apr 7-13, 2025	46	54	*
	<i>Trend for comparison</i>			
	Taken a vacation			
	Sep 15-Oct 3, 2014	43	56	1
PYDY	Taken out a payday or other short-term loan			
	Jul 20-Aug 9, 2026	16	83	*
	Apr 7-13, 2025	14	86	*
	Sep 15-Oct 3, 2014	8	90	2
SPND	Cut back spending on extras such as eating out, streaming services or other entertainment			
	Jul 20-Aug 9, 2026	70	30	*

**BILLSTYPICAL
ASK ALL:**

Which best describes your ability to pay all of your bills in full in a typical month?

	I can typically pay all of my <u>bills in full</u>	I cannot pay some bills or can only make a partial <u>payment on some of them</u>	<u>No answer</u>
Jul 20-Aug 9, 2026	72	27	1
Nov 17-30, 2025	72	27	1
Apr 7-13, 2025	74	25	1
Apr 7-12, 2020	75	24	*

BILLSNOW**ASK ALL:**

Which best describes your ability to pay all of your bills in full this month?

	I will be able to pay all of <u>my bills in full</u>	I cannot pay some bills or will only make a partial <u>payment on some of them</u>	<u>No answer</u>
Jul 20-Aug 9, 2026	71	28	1
Apr 7-13, 2025	73	26	1
Apr 7-12, 2020	68	32	1

EMERGFUND**ASK ALL:**

Do you have emergency or rainy day funds that would cover your expenses for 3 months in case of sickness, job loss, economic downturn, or other emergencies?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No answer</u>
Jul 20-Aug 9, 2026	46	53	*
Nov 17-30, 2025	50	49	1
Oct 6-16, 2025	48	51	1
Apr 7-13, 2025	48	51	1
Oct 4-17, 2021	54	45	1
Apr 7-12, 2020	47	53	1

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE OR PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**DISPLAY TO ALL:**

On another topic...

FIN_SIT**ASK ALL:**

[PN: ROTATE RESPONSE OPTIONS 1-4/4-1, HOLDING 98 AND 99 LAST; INCLUDE ROTATION IN DATA FILE]

How would you describe your household's financial situation? Do you...

	<u>Live comfortably</u>	<u>Meet your basic expenses with a little left over for extras</u>	<u>Just meet your basic expenses</u>	<u>Not even have enough to meet basic expenses</u>	<u>No answer</u>
Aug 24-30, 2026	26	36	27	10	1
Nov 17-30, 2025	27	36	27	9	1
April 8-14, 2024 ¹	27	39	25	7	1
Sep 16-29, 2019	29	41	22	7	*

¹ In 2024 and 2019, the last response option was, "Don't even have enough to meet basic expenses". And the question wording was, "How would you describe your household's financial situation?"

FIN_SITMOST**ASK ALL:**

[PN: ROTATE RESPONSE OPTIONS 1-4/4-1 IN SAME ORDER AS FIN_SIT, HOLDING 98 AND 99 LAST; INCLUDE ROTATION IN DATA FILE]

How would you describe the financial situation of most Americans? Do you think they...

	<u>Live comfortably</u>	<u>Meet their basic expenses with a little left over for extras</u>	<u>Just meet their basic expenses</u>	<u>Don't even have enough to meet basic expenses</u>	<u>No answer</u>
Aug 24-30, 2026	3	24	49	22	1
Sep 16-29, 2019 ²	5	38	47	9	1

PERSFINFEEL**ASK ALL:**

[PN: RANDOMIZE ITEMS; ROTATE RESPONSE OPTIONS 1-5/5-1 IN SAME ORDER AS ROTATION_GEN, HOLDING 98 AND 99 LAST; INCLUDE RANDOMIZATION AND ROTATION IN DATA FILE]

When thinking about your personal financial situation these days, how often do you feel...

		<u>Extremely often</u>	<u>Very often</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Rarely</u>	<u>Never</u>	<u>No answer</u>
SHAME	Ashamed						
	Aug 24-30, 2026	5	8	21	24	41	1
PROUD	Proud						
	Aug 24-30, 2026	7	19	37	23	13	1
HOPE	Hopeful						
	Aug 24-30, 2026	10	27	40	17	6	1
STUCK	Stuck						
	Aug 24-30, 2026	12	18	32	19	19	1
ANGRY	Angry						
	Aug 24-30, 2026	7	11	30	27	23	1
CONT	Content						
	Aug 24-30, 2026	10	26	36	18	9	1

² In the 2019 survey, the response options were not randomized 1-4/4-1 and the question wording was, "How would you describe the financial situation of MOST AMERICANS?"

WORRY2**ASK ALL:****[PN: RANDOMIZE ITEMS ACROSS TWO SCREENS; INCLUDE RANDOMIZATION IN DATA FILE]**

How often, if ever, do you worry about each of the following?

	<u>Every day</u>	<u>Almost every day</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Rarely</u>	<u>Never</u>	<u>No answer</u>
a. The amount of debt you have						
Aug 24-30, 2026	17	15	28	19	21	1
Mar 10-16, 2025	13	13	27	20	25	*
Jan 19-24, 2021	16	14	28	19	23	*
Apr 7-12, 2020	19	17	28	18	17	*
Sep 16-29, 2019	24	16	26	16	16	1
b. ASK IF EMPLOYED (EMPLSIT=1-2) [n=3,041]: Losing your job						
Aug 24-30, 2026	12	8	31	30	18	*
Mar 10-16, 2025	4	4	18	19	14	*
Jan 19-24, 2021	10	6	29	32	23	*
Apr 7-12, 2020	14	9	32	29	16	*
Sep 16-29, 2019	12	8	29	29	21	1
c. Paying your bills						
Aug 24-30, 2026	17	13	30	21	18	1
Mar 10-16, 2025	13	12	29	24	22	*
Jan 19-24, 2021	15	12	29	23	22	*
Apr 7-12, 2020	21	16	29	21	12	*
Sep 16-29, 2019	25	16	28	18	12	1
d. The cost of health care for you and your family						
Aug 24-30, 2026	17	15	39	16	12	1
Mar 10-16, 2025	14	13	39	19	15	*
Jan 19-24, 2021	14	13	36	19	18	*
Apr 7-12, 2020	18	16	37	18	10	*
Sep 16-29, 2019	22	17	35	15	9	1
e. Being able to save enough for your retirement						
Aug 24-30, 2026	21	16	33	14	15	1
Jan 19-24, 2021	15	14	34	17	19	1
Apr 7-12, 2020	21	17	34	15	12	1
Sep 16-29, 2019	26	19	32	12	10	2
[PN: NO ITEM f]						
g. Paying your rent or mortgage						
Aug 24-30, 2026	13	10	24	20	33	1
Jan 19-24, 2021	11	8	22	22	36	*
h. Being able to buy enough food for you and your family						
Aug 24-30, 2026	13	9	24	23	30	1
Jan 19-24, 2021	10	8	20	23	39	*
i. Losing your housing						
Aug 24-30, 2026	9	6	21	26	37	1
Mar 10-16, 2025	7	5	19	29	40	1

ASK ALL:**PARTY** In politics today, do you consider yourself a...**ASK IF INDEP/SOMETHING ELSE (PARTY=3,4 OR REFUSED) [n=2,123]:****PARTYLN** As of today do you lean more to...³

<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	Something <u>else</u>	No <u>answer</u>	<i>Lean</i> <u>Rep</u>	<i>Lean</i> <u>Dem</u>
27	28	29	14	2	16	20

³ PARTY and PARTYLN asked in a prior survey.