

## The Insight.

The latest trends from The Harris Poll.

In The Harris Poll COVID-19 Tracker (Week 42) fielded December 18th - 20th, 2020, we look at the future trends through our report with Ford Motor Company, what online dating during a pandemic looks like, how Americans are prioritizing safety in their products and services, support for a nationwide mask mandate, and what remote workers are doing while they work from home.

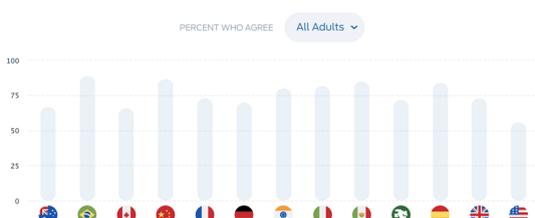
As a public service, our team has curated key insights to help leaders navigate COVID-19. Full survey results, tables, and weekly summaries can be accessed for free at [The Harris Poll COVID-19 Portal](#). We will continue to actively field on a regular cadence to track the shifts in sentiment and behaviors as the news and guidelines evolve.

- [John Gerzema](#) & [Will Johnson](#)

### 1. Further with Ford

Last week, Ford released our 9th annual [Further with Ford Motor Company trends report](#). As expressed by Ford's Chief Futurist, Sheryl Connelly, this edition examines "how society is adapting – how consumers, communities, and businesses alike are rewriting the rules of living, working, buying, traveling, and more." The full report explores 10 key trends that will define the marketplace in 2021, but below we have pulled some highlights:

- **Pressure points:** Despite feeling overwhelmed and stressed under the weight of 2020, Americans have proved resilient, finding innovative ways to cope. In fact, (80%) of adults globally agreed "I should take better care of my emotional well-being" vs. (73%) who said this in 2017.
- **Time to Escape:** Over three quarters (76%) of Millennials and Gen Z agree that "I spend too much time on the internet (surfing the web, social media, apps)."
- **The Company You Keep:** The pandemic has put a spotlight on the need for companionship, and people have been willing to relocate to be closer to family. (40%) of all male adults and (31%) of all female adults say that since the pandemic they have moved in with or closer to their family.
- **Minding the Gap:** (72%) of men and (76%) of women globally agree that companies have a responsibility to address social injustice, and it is also expected globally that brands take a stand on social issues:



**Takeaway:** Not only is the Further with Ford Motor Company trends report digging in on how society has adapted on a global scale due to the pandemic, but it also reflects on past trends as a measure of how far we've come, and where we hope to go as we head into 2021.

### 2. Pandemic Dating: "All Screen, No Scene" Morning Brew-Harris Poll

[A new Morning Brew/The Harris Poll](#) found that many of you are using those thumbs like the Lord intended, and we don't mean hitchhiking:

- Of respondents who had dated online before, (42%) say they're doing so more now compared to before the pandemic.
- **Dating Boom:** Apparently, quarantine can be the perfect time for romance—though not for everyone. Three-fifths (59%) say they will be dating less once the pandemic is over, but (41%) say they will date more.
- We're similarly polarized on the topic of dating FOMO. More than 4 in 10 (44%) say they feel a great deal/some anxiety about losing time to pursue dating during the pandemic.
- So what does a pandemic date look like? Those we polled said the ideal Covid-safe first date would involve meeting at an outdoor location (39%), video chatting virtually (35%), and staying socially distant with masks on (31%).

**Takeaway:** "The dating game in COVID is all screen and no scene," said Harris Poll CEO John Gerzema. "While 40% are using dating apps more, 44% have anxiety over lost time dating in real life. Look for a dating boom when the vaccines reach the singles as almost half plan to date more once the pandemic is over."

### 3. Cars Are a Safe Haven for Americans Amid the COVID Pandemic: Volvo Harris Poll Survey

In the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, Americans are prioritizing safety and reliability more than ever in their products and services, according to a [new study from Volvo Car USA and The Harris Poll](#).

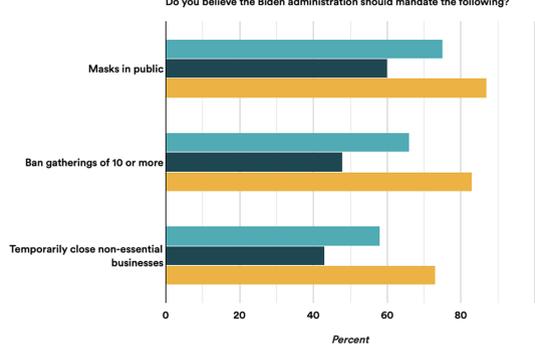
- **Safety takes on a new meaning:** Americans are re-evaluating their relationships with the outside world, and many are looking at their cars to provide secure protection; 82% believe "safety" has a broader definition now than it did just six months ago. Drivers are more likely to seek vehicle brands that are trustworthy (84%) and known for safety (81%) during this time, while transitioning away from buying "flashy" cars, as 67% cite it is not tasteful in the current economic climate.
- **Our cars are now a lifeline for many:** nearly 8 in 10 even calling them a "lifeline" during the pandemic (78%). Nearly two-thirds (63%) report that driving helps them relieve stress – including 3 in 4 millennials (75%). More than half of new parents (55%) have used their car as an "alone zone."
- Even after the pandemic ends, most expect to continue using personal vehicles more, and two-thirds (65%) of those under 40-years-old either have bought or are considering buying a car due to COVID-19. And nearly two-thirds (63%) say they would pay more of a premium for vehicle safety today than they would a year ago.

**Takeaway:** Safety will continue to sell long after COVID; Americans have expressed an appetite for new built-in safety features that address health and safety post-pandemic such as an air conditioner with built-in germ filtering (53%) and sanitization procedures incorporated within the standard maintenance package (52%).

### 4. Most Americans Would Support Biden Issuing a Mask Mandate: STAT-Harris Poll

[In partnership with STAT](#), we asked Americans how they feel about President-Elect Biden's plans to issue a 100-day mask mandate as well as other policies the new administration plans to enact or could enact. We found most Americans support a mandate for several policies to thwart the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **Three-quarters (75%) of the public supports the idea of mandating a mask** and (73%) believe people should be required to get tested if they feel sick. At the same time, two-thirds (66%) think President-elect Biden should ban gatherings involving more than 10 people. Nearly as many said the administration should temporarily close nonessential businesses such as restaurants and gyms (58%), and mandate vaccination (56%).
- However, while Democrats were overwhelmingly in favor of each of those mandates, a majority of Republicans registered their support only for mandatory mask wearing and testing.
- And in a rebuke of President Trump, who withdrew from the World Health Organization over its response to the pandemic, (64%) of Americans said they agree with Biden's decision to reengage with — and fund — the global health agency.
- At the same time, nearly three-quarters (72%) said they agreed with Biden's decision to ask Anthony Fauci to serve as chief medical adviser in his administration. The idea was also favored by an overwhelming majority of Democrats — (88%) said they supported the idea, compared to only (50%) of Republicans.



**Takeaway:** After President Trump's laissez-faire approach to handling the pandemic, President-Elect Biden will need to win over the trust of the public to comply with policies such as mask mandates and encouraging those with hesitations to receive the vaccine in order to stabilize the fragile economy.

### 5. More Than Half of Workers Have Binge-Watched TV During Work Hours - Fast Company-Harris Poll

In a recent [Harris Poll for Fast Company](#), we surveyed Americans to see how those who are working from home are managing their time. Over half (52%) percent of employed Americans are working from home today at least at least one day a week, and 7 in 10 (71%) of them as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Here's what they revealed:

- **Netflix and Excel:** Three-fifths (57%) have binge-watched a TV show during work hours since the start of the pandemic.
- **Zoom Fashion:** Among the 7 in 10 (70%) remote workers who say they dress differently while working from home, (42%) say they wear casual everyday clothes, (13%) wear athletic clothes. Only one-third dress in either business casual (21%) or business formal (11%). And (7%) say they dress in "mullet fashion" - where the top is office-appropriate while the bottom is not.
- **Missing Work Travel:** Nearly all (88%) of those who traveled for work before the pandemic miss it in some way. One-quarter (26%) miss face time with clients, (23%) miss visiting new locations, (15%) miss travel time, (14%) miss a break from their family, and (10%) miss expense account purchases.
- **Other COVID confessions...** in addition, our weekly tracker found nearly a third (27%) of Gen Z/Millennials have online shopped while in a meeting and nearly a quart (23%) have faked technical issues to get out of turning on camera for virtual meeting

**► Camaraderie**  
In general, how have your feelings about your coworkers changed since the pandemic began?

**► Your Boss**  
How has your relationship with your manager changed since the pandemic began?

**► Heat Index**  
Has intimacy with your significant other increased due to quarantine/stay-at-home orders?

**► Wardrobe**  
Is the way you dress when working from home different from what you wear in your workplace?

Which one of the following best describes your typical outfit when working from home?

**► Tuning In**  
**46%** have replaced at least some of their commuting time with watching TV.

**Takeaway:** "We've changed the way we work," says Will Johnson, CEO of The Harris Poll. "Once it's safe for us to go back to the office, many of us are going to have re-entry issues." Still, he says, "When we finally return, there'll be reasons to be happy. We'll be able to see our coworkers in-person again, which is what Americans miss the most."

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