



Americans in favor of limiting use of plastic straws

Ipsos/BuzzFeed News poll shows more support for businesses making the choice on straws than government ban

Washington, DC, August 24, 2018 - Controversy over the use of plastic straws has stirred significant debate in recent months. An Ipsos/Buzzfeed poll found that most Americans (59%) would prefer to always receive a plastic drinking straw when they order a beverage at a fast food restaurant, and half (50%) would prefer to always receive one at a sit-down restaurant. Three-quarters (74%) Americans also report that they have used at least one plastic straw in the past week. A vast majority (78%) are familiar with recent efforts to ban plastic straws in places across America.

Despite widespread use of plastic straws, most Americans are open to limiting their circulation. Four in ten (41%) report that they have started using fewer plastic straws due to recent attention on the issue. Nearly half (48%) support local governments banning the use of plastic straws. However, there is a partisan split in this support, as Democrats (56%) are more likely than Republicans (41%) to support local governments banning the use of plastic straws. The majorities of both Republicans (76%) and Democrats (76%) support businesses choosing only to provide plastic straws on request, and 8 in 10 Americans (79%) also support businesses choosing only to provide biodegradable straws.

Similar to the local government ban, there are differing beliefs about the impact of plastic straw-use. Republicans (55%) are more likely than Democrats (33%) to believe that getting rid of straws will not have any major impact. Republicans are also much more inclined to believe that the government should not be involved in if they can use plastic straws (72% vs. 42% of Democrats).

1. When you're dining at a sit-down restaurant and order a beverage, would you prefer...

	Total (n=2009)	Republican (n=730)	Democrat (n=658)	Independent (n=411)
To always receive a plastic drinking straw	50%	51%	47%	48%
To only get a plastic straw when you ask for it	35	37	36	36
To never get a straw because the restaurant does not provide them	10	8	14	10
Don't know	4	5	3	6

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2. When you go to a fast food restaurant and order a beverage, would you prefer...

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent
To always receive a plastic drinking straw	59%	61%	55%	58%
To only get a plastic straw when you ask for it	29	29	30	30
To never get a straw because the restaurant does not provide them	8	6	12	7
Don't know	4	4	3	5

3. To the best of your recollection, have you ever used any of the following...

Total yes

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Plastic drinking straw	96%	94	97	97
Paper drinking straw	59%	64	60	57
Rubber or silicone drinking straw	27%	24	31	24
Metal drinking straw	26%	26	28	27

a. Plastic drinking straw

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Yes	96%	94%	97%	97%
No	3	5	3	3
Don't know	*	1	*	*

b. Metal drinking straw

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Yes	26%	26%	28%	27%
No	71	70	69	72
Don't know	3	4	3	1

c. Paper drinking straw

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Yes	59%	64%	60%	57%
No	36	30	35	37
Don't know	6	5	5	6

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d. Rubber or silicone drinking straw

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Yes	27%	24%	31%	24%
No	61	64	58	65
Don't know	11	12	11	11

4. Approximately how many plastic straws have you used in the past week?

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent
0	26%	25%	26%	29%
1-2	37	36	37	39
3-4	18	20	17	16
5 or more	19	18	21	15
Mean (Including 0)	2.8	2.9	2.7	2.5

5. Approximately how frequently do you use...

a. [IF YES, USED A PLASTIC STRAW] Plastic drinking straws

	Total (n=1928)	Republican (n=691)	Democrat (n=632)	Independent (n=398)
Several times a week	32%	34%	33%	29%
Several times a month	31	32	31	29
Several times a year	22	20	20	28
Only a few times ever	13	12	15	13
Don't know	2	3	1	1

b. [IF YES, USED A METAL STRAW] Metal drinking straws

	Total (n=534)	Republican (n=199)	Democrat (n=188)	Independent (n=105)
Several times a week	20%	21%	24%	14%
Several times a month	13	15	13	13
Several times a year	17	20	18	16
Only a few times ever	46	42	42	52
Don't know	4	2	4	4



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c. **[IF YES, USED A PAPER STRAW]** Paper drinking straws

	Total (n=1218)	Republican (n=461)	Democrat (n=422)	Independent (n=243)
Several times a week	8%	9%	9%	4%
Several times a month	10	10	12	8
Several times a year	18	17	16	22
Only a few times ever	53	52	53	55
Don't know	11	12	9	11

d. **[IF YES, USED A RUBBER OR SILICONE STRAW]** Rubber or silicone drinking straws

	Total (n=570)	Republican (n=199)	Democrat (n=204)	Independent (n=105)
Several times a week	20%	26%	18%	21%
Several times a month	18	17	22	13
Several times a year	14	22	11	11
Only a few times ever	41	30	41	50
Don't know	7	4	8	5

6. Has your experience using the following generally been pleasant or unpleasant?

Total summary

	Plastic drinking straws (n=1928)	Metal drinking straws (n=534)	Paper drinking straws (n=1218)	Rubber or silicone drinking straws (n=570)
Pleasant	76%	66%	50%	63%
Unpleasant	4	19	28	15
No opinion	20	15	22	22

a. **[IF YES, USED A PLASTIC STRAW]** Plastic drinking straws

	Total (n=1928)	Republican (n=691)	Democrat (n=632)	Independent (n=398)
Pleasant	76%	79%	76%	73%
Unpleasant	4	5	5	2
No opinion	20	16	19	24

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b. **[IF YES, USED A METAL STRAW]** Metal drinking straws

	Total (n=534)	Republican (n=199)	Democrat (n=188)	Independent (n=105)
Pleasant	66%	65%	65%	70%
Unpleasant	19	21	20	12
No opinion	15	14	15	17

c. **[IF YES, USED A PAPER STRAW]** Paper drinking straws

	Total (n=1218)	Republican (n=461)	Democrat (n=422)	Independent (n=243)
Pleasant	50%	50%	52%	51%
Unpleasant	28	31	23	26
No opinion	22	19	25	24

d. **[IF YES, USED A RUBBER OR SILICONE STRAW]** Rubber or silicone drinking straws

	Total (n=570)	Republican (n=199)	Democrat (n=204)	Independent (n=105)
Pleasant	63%	63%	65%	64%
Unpleasant	15	20	14	11
No opinion	22	17	21	25

7. How familiar, if at all, are you with efforts to ban plastic straws in places across America?

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Very familiar	29%	31%	35%	24%
Somewhat familiar	48	50	46	52
Not very familiar	10	9	9	10
Not at all familiar	10	8	9	12
Don't know	2	1	2	2
<i>Familiar (Net)</i>	<i>78%</i>	<i>82%</i>	<i>80%</i>	<i>76%</i>
<i>Not Familiar (Net)</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>22</i>

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8. Do you support or oppose each of the following?

Total support

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Businesses choosing only to provide biodegradable straws	79%	75	83	80
Businesses choosing only to provide plastic straws on request	75%	76	76	72
Local governments banning the use of plastic straws	48%	41	56	48

a. Local governments banning the use of plastic straws

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Strongly support	20%	16%	28%	19%
Somewhat support	28	26	29	29
Somewhat oppose	20	22	20	19
Strongly oppose	22	30	12	25
Don't know	10	7	12	8
<i>Support (Net)</i>	<i>48%</i>	<i>41%</i>	<i>56%</i>	<i>48%</i>
<i>Oppose (Net)</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>44</i>

b. Businesses choosing only to provide plastic straws on request

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Strongly support	34%	31%	39%	34%
Somewhat support	41	45	38	38
Somewhat oppose	11	11	9	12
Strongly oppose	8	7	8	9
Don't know	7	6	7	6
<i>Support (Net)</i>	<i>75%</i>	<i>76%</i>	<i>76%</i>	<i>72%</i>
<i>Oppose (Net)</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>22</i>

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c. Businesses choosing only to provide biodegradable straws

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Strongly support	46%	35%	56%	48%
Somewhat support	33	41	26	32
Somewhat oppose	7	11	5	7
Strongly oppose	5	7	5	5
Don't know	9	7	8	8
<i>Support (Net)</i>	<i>79%</i>	<i>75%</i>	<i>83%</i>	<i>80%</i>
<i>Oppose (Net)</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>12</i>

9. Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Total agree

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Plastic straws are harmful to wildlife	72%	65	79	70
Plastic straws are an important tool for people with special needs	71%	78	68	67
Plastic straws are major contributors to pollution	63%	55	71	61
The government should not be involved in if you can use plastic straws	57%	72	42	60
Getting rid of plastic straws will not have any major impact	41%	55	33	38
I have started using fewer plastic straws because of the recent attention to the issue	41%	37	49	41

a. Plastic straws are major contributors to pollution

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Strongly agree	29%	23%	35%	31%
Somewhat agree	34	32	36	30
Somewhat disagree	16	20	12	17
Strongly disagree	9	14	5	9
Don't know	12	11	12	13
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>63%</i>	<i>55%</i>	<i>71%</i>	<i>61%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>27</i>

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b. Plastic straws are harmful to wildlife

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Strongly agree	38%	29%	45%	39%
Somewhat agree	34	36	34	31
Somewhat disagree	10	15	6	11
Strongly disagree	6	7	5	6
Don't know	13	13	11	13
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>72%</i>	<i>65%</i>	<i>79%</i>	<i>70%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>17</i>

c. Plastic straws are an important tool for people with special needs

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Strongly agree	35%	43%	33%	29%
Somewhat agree	35	35	36	38
Somewhat disagree	10	8	12	10
Strongly disagree	5	3	6	6
Don't know	14	11	15	16
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>71%</i>	<i>78%</i>	<i>68%</i>	<i>67%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>16</i>

d. Getting rid of plastic straws will not have any major impact

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Strongly agree	18%	28%	13%	13%
Somewhat agree	24	28	20	25
Somewhat disagree	28	21	32	32
Strongly disagree	21	16	26	20
Don't know	10	7	9	10
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>41%</i>	<i>55%</i>	<i>33%</i>	<i>38%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>49</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>53</i>

e. The government should not be involved in if you can use plastic straws

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Strongly agree	29%	40%	20%	33%
Somewhat agree	27	32	22	27
Somewhat disagree	21	14	31	20
Strongly disagree	13	9	17	13
Don't know	9	6	10	6
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>57%</i>	<i>72%</i>	<i>42%</i>	<i>60%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>48</i>	<i>34</i>

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f. I have started using fewer plastic straws because of the recent attention to the issue

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Strongly agree	19%	15%	28%	12%
Somewhat agree	23	22	21	28
Somewhat disagree	26	24	27	25
Strongly disagree	26	32	19	26
Don't know	7	7	5	8
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>41%</i>	<i>37%</i>	<i>49%</i>	<i>41%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>56</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>51</i>

10. To the best of your knowledge, has your community banned plastic straws?

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Yes	8%	11%	9%	4%
No	81	80	81	83
Don't know	11	9	10	13

11. Do you consider yourself to be a person with disabilities, and is anyone in your household a person with disabilities?

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Yes, self	12%	16%	12%	7%
Yes, someone in household	7	10	7	6
No	79	74	79	84
Prefer not to answer	2	1	1	2

12. How would you describe the area in which you live?

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Rural	22%	26%	16%	24%
Suburban	48	48	45	52
Urban	30	26	38	24

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13. Thinking about politics and government, do you consider yourself...?

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Very conservative	13%	29%	4%	8%
Moderately conservative	21	39	8	21
Lean conservative	12	19	6	17
Lean liberal	12	4	19	16
Moderately liberal	17	3	36	10
Very liberal	11	5	21	5
Don't know/Refuse	14	1	5	23
<i>Conservative (Net)</i>	46%	87%	19%	45%
<i>Liberal (Net)</i>	39	12	77	31

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About the Study

These are findings from an Ipsos poll conducted August 14-16, 2018, on behalf of BuzzFeed News. For the survey, a sample of roughly 2,009 adults 18+ from the continental U.S., Alaska and Hawaii were interviewed online in English. The sample includes 730 Republicans, 658 Democrats, and 411 Independents.

The sample for this study was randomly drawn from Ipsos' online panel (see link below for more info on "Access Panels and Recruitment"), partner online panel sources, and "river" sampling (see link below for more info on the Ipsos "Ampario Overview" sample method) and does not rely on a population frame in the traditional sense. Ipsos uses fixed sample targets, unique to each study, in drawing a sample. After a sample has been obtained from the Ipsos panel, Ipsos calibrates respondent characteristics to be representative of the U.S. Population using standard procedures such as raking-ratio adjustments. The source of these population targets is U.S. Census 2013 American Community Survey data. The sample drawn for this study reflects fixed sample targets on demographics. Post-hoc weights were made to the population characteristics on gender, age, race/ethnicity, region, and education.

Statistical margins of error are not applicable to online polls. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error and measurement error. Where figures do not sum to 100, this is due to the effects of rounding. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 2.5 percentage points for all respondents. Ipsos calculates a design effect (DEFF) for each study based on the variation of the weights, following the formula of Kish (1965). This study had a credibility interval adjusted for design effect of the following (n=2,009, DEFF=1.5, adjusted Confidence Interval=+/-4 percentage points).

The poll also has a credibility interval plus or minus 4.1 percentage points for Republicans, 4.4 percentage points for Democrats, and 5.5 for Independents.

For more information about conducting research intended for public release or Ipsos' online polling methodology, please visit our [Public Opinion Polling and Communication](#) page where you can download our brochure, see our public release protocol, or contact us.

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With offices in 88 countries, Ipsos delivers insightful expertise across five research specializations: brand, advertising and media; customer loyalty; marketing; public affairs research; and survey management.

Ipsos researchers assess market potential and interpret market trends. They develop and build brands. They help clients build long-term relationships with their customers. They test advertising and study audience responses to various media and they measure public opinion around the globe.

Ipsos has been listed on the Paris Stock Exchange since 1999 and generated global revenues of €1,782.7 million in 2016.

GAME CHANGERS

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