

## Pump price drivers

**New York, May 6, 2022**—A Yahoo/Maru Public Opinion survey released today finds that two-thirds (66%) of American vehicle owners/households have made, or will make, significant changes to their driving/vehicle use habits if the price at the gas pumps escalates from the national average of \$4.12 to \$4.35 per gallon. In contrast, the remaining group (34%) will not likely change their driving/vehicle use habits until the price is approximately \$5.00 per gallon.

For example, with the national average of \$4.12 per gallon of gas in the past month, four-in-ten (42%) American drivers admit to already cutting back on vehicle use for just necessities (like grocery shopping/doctor visits), and this would rise to two-thirds (62%) doing so if the price hits \$4.35 per gallon.

In the same manner, while one-in-ten (9%) of American drivers have *already* canceled planned summer holiday travels by car with the price at the same national average of \$4.12 per gallon, this could escalate to three-in-ten (29%) if the price rises to \$4.35 per gallon.

### The key findings

American household vehicle owners were asked what they have done already, if anything, to adjust to the higher price of gas at the pumps over the past month at an average of \$4.12 per gallon—and what they would be prepared to do if the prices rose, on average, to \$4.20 per gallon, \$4.25 per gallon, and \$4.35 per gallon of gas.

The cumulative impact of gas prices rising from \$4.12 to \$4.35 per gallon is the percentage of American household vehicle owners who either already have or would consider doing the following\*:

- Cut back vehicle use for just necessities (like grocery shopping/doctor visits): 62%
- Not fill the gas tank up but just putting in what is affordable: 41%
- Leave car and take public transit more: 35%
- Drive around to different gas stations to find the best price: 34%
- Cancel planned summer holiday travels by car: 29%
- Walk, cycle, or take other non-motorized transit: 25%
- Consider buying an electric/hybrid vehicle: 24%
- Stop driving until it's affordable: 22%
- Start carpooling or do more: 22%
- Consider selling the vehicle: 8%

The research suggests that two-thirds (66%) of US drivers have/will change their driving habits as the price at the pump rises from \$4.12 to \$4.35 per gallon, with the majority of remaining group (34%) staying the course until the price hits approximately \$5.00 per gallon at which time they will likely start to adjust their own driving habits.

\*This is cumulative behaviors over the span of price increases. Different and multiple behaviors can be chosen at each price point, so the results do not tally overall to 100%. Totals have been rounded. Nine in ten (91%) Americans either personally have a motor vehicle that relies on gas or someone in their household does.



## The impact in the past month

Of all the personal/household vehicle owners in America, the impact of the rising gas price per gallon to a national average of \$4.12 per gallon has already caused the following to be undertaken in the past month:

- Cut back vehicle use for just necessities (like grocery shopping/doctor visits): 42%
- Not filling the gas tank up but just putting in what is affordable: 20%
- Driven around to different gas stations to find the best price: 17%
- Leave the car and take public transit more: 16%
- Consider buying an electric/hybrid vehicle: 13%
- Walk, cycle, or take other non-motorized transit: 12%
- Cancel planned summer holiday travels by car: 9%
- Start carpooling or do more: 6%
- Stop driving until it's affordable: 5%
- Selling vehicle: 2%
- I've made other changes in my driving habits because of the rise in gas prices: 15%

## Going forward

Every respondent *who identified any of the specific activities above* in response to the rise in the price of gas at \$4.12 per gallon was then removed from that specific activity for the next round of potential habit-changing options with a higher price point (because they have already admitted to having changed those specific habits.) This methodology is then repeated for the next rounds.

The ranked list that follows each price point represents the percentage of personal and household vehicle owners who would consider changing specific driving habits due to a particular rise in gas prices at the pumps.

### **\$4.20 per gallon:**

- Cut back vehicle use for just necessities (like grocery shopping/doctor visits): 22%
- Leave the car and take public transit more: 13%
- Not filling the gas tank up but just putting in what is affordable: 12%
- Cancel planned summer holiday travels by car: 11%
- Drive around to different gas stations to find the best price: 10%
- Walk, cycle, or take other non-motorized transit: 8%
- Stop driving until it's affordable: 7%
- Consider buying an electric/hybrid vehicle: 7%
- Start carpooling or do more: 7%
- Consider selling the vehicle: 2%
- Make other changes in my driving habits because of the rise in gas prices: 16%



### **\$4.25 per gallon:**

- Take public transit more and leave the car at home: 16%
- Cut back vehicle use for just necessities (like grocery shopping/doctor visits): 11%
- Not filling the gas tank up but just putting in what is affordable: 10%
- Stop driving until it's affordable: 8%
- Cancel planned summer holiday travels by car: 7%
- Drive around to different gas stations to find the best price: 7%
- Start carpooling or do more: 5%
- Walk, cycle, or take other non-motorized transit: 4%
- Consider buying an electric/hybrid vehicle: 3%
- Consider selling the vehicle: 1%
- Make other changes in my driving habits because of the rise in gas prices: 16%

### **\$4.35 per gallon:**

- Leave car and take public transit more: 13%
- Not filling the gas tank up but just putting in what is affordable: 7%
- Cancel planned summer holiday travels by car: 6%
- Cut back vehicle use for just necessities (like grocery shopping/doctor visits): 6%
- Drive around to different gas stations to find the best price: 6%
- Start carpooling or do more: 6%
- Stop driving until it's affordable: 4%
- Walk, cycle, or take other non-motorized transit: 4%
- Consider buying an electric/hybrid vehicle: 3%
- Consider selling the vehicle: 3%
- Make other changes in my driving habits because of the rise in gas prices: 9%

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## **Methodology**

These are some of the findings from a study released by Maru Public Opinion undertaken by its sample and data collection experts at Maru/Blue April 29-May 1, 2022, among a random selection of 1,392 American adults who are Maru Springboard America online panelists and who either have a gas dependent vehicle for driving or there is one in their household. For comparison purposes, a probability sample of this size has an estimated margin of error (which measures sampling variability) of +/- 2.7%, 19 times out of 20. The results have been weighted by education, age, gender, and region to match the population according to Census data which ensures the sample is representative of the entire adult population of the United States. Discrepancies in or between totals when compared to the data tables are due to rounding. Maru Public Opinion is the full-service consumer-citizen public opinion research channel for the Maru Group. Maru Public Opinion does not do any polling for any political party or candidate. Maru/Blue is deeply rooted in the Maru/Hub technology platform and offers on-demand, high quality, highly scalable online community samples of deeply engaged, known respondents.

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