

# 2014 American Camper Report

PRESENTED BY THE COLEMAN COMPANY, INC.  
AND THE OUTDOOR FOUNDATION









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# Introduction

Camping is often defined as temporarily living outdoors, but to the millions of people that love it, camping amounts to much more — reconnecting with nature, escaping the grind, spending time with family and friends. Indeed, camping is part of the American tradition. It accommodates just about every lifestyle, from a rustic outdoor adventure to a night in the backyard under the stars to a luxurious way of traversing America's landscape.

## **A Look Back at 2013: Overall Trends**

The 2014 *American Camper Report* shows that 40.1 million Americans, or 14 percent of the US population over age six, camped in 2013. That is the same participation rate as 2012 with a 400,000 person drop in actual participants.

Each camping participant, whether staying in a tent, RV, cabin, bivy or yurt, spent an average of 14.9 days camping — down slightly from 15 days in 2012. On average, campers travelled more than 180 miles to get to their desired camping spot, which tended to be a state park campground.

Campers appear to be a choosey bunch. Although participants were inclined to make their decision to go camping a month or more before their day of departure, they tended not to make campsite reservations until the day of their camp, implying that they like to scope out the just right spot.

## **The Year Ahead: Future Opportunities**

Research continues to underscore the importance in reaching Americans at an early age to instill a lifelong love of camping and inspire a healthy, active lifestyle. Among current camping participants, 85 percent took their first trip between birth and age 15. After age 15, the chances of being introduced to camping were slim. Similarly, 57 percent of campers participated in regular outdoor activities as children, while a just one-quarter of non-participants were exposed to the outdoors.

All indications are that camping is here to stay as one of America's favorite past times. Ninety-nine percent of camping participants said they were "likely" or "very likely" to camp next year. In fact, they are planning an average of 4.9 camping trips, with two-thirds planning three or more trips.

To help stakeholders reach campers and non-campers alike, the 2014 *American Camper Report* details camping participation and provides data and analysis on camping trends throughout the United States. Also, for the first time, the report takes an in-depth look at first-time camping participants to understand what motivates non-campers to take their first outing and how to retain them as camping enthusiasts. The research in this report will help the camping industry — and the entire outdoor industry — be better equipped to engage campers and initiate an increase in camping participation.

# Key Findings

## Overview of Camping Participation

- More than 40 million Americans went camping in 2013 for a total of 597.7 million days. The camping participation rate was 14 percent, the same as it was in 2012.
- From 2012 to 2013, the participation rate for most age groups held steady, with the exception of young adults and adults. Young adults, ages 18 to 24, gained one percentage point, while adults, ages 25 to 44, lost one.
- Camping lost a net of 423,955 participants from 2012 to 2013, which is a significant improvement over the 4.2 million participant loss from 2011 to 2012.
- Tents were, by far, the preferred type of shelter.
- The Mountain Region had the highest camping participation rate at 21 percent.
- Sixty-three percent of campers ages 16 and over were married or living with a domestic partner.
- Eighty-seven percent of campers participated in multiple outdoor activities.

## Profile of a Camping Trip

- The average camper went on 5.4 camping trips in 2013.
- Forty-three percent of campers planned their trips at least one month in advance.
- Thirty-four percent of campers did not make advanced camp site reservations.
- Friends were the most popular camping companions for all age groups.

- Hiking was the most popular daytime activity while camping, and hanging out by the campfire was the most popular nighttime activity.

## Buying Behavior

- Seventy-six percent of participants were employed or were students and not yet employed.
- Battery lighting was the most popular purchase among adult campers.
- A majority of participants decided to purchase their camping item at home, prior to their outing.

## First-Time Campers

- To prepare for a first camping trip, 41 percent of those participating in camping for the first time in 2013 bought propane or liquid fuel lighting
- First-time campers were motivated by a love of the outdoors and a desire to escape the grind.

## Future of Camping

- Eighty-five percent of campers took their first trip between birth and age 15.
- Of current campers ages 18 and over, 64 percent participated in outdoor activities when they were between the ages of 13 to 17, compared to just 28 percent of non-campers. Outdoor participation during childhood had nearly the same effect.
- The most cited reason for not camping in the future was a lack of time due to family commitments.
- Campers plan to go on an average of 4.9 trips next year, a decrease from 5.5 trips in 2012.

# CAMPING PARTICIPATION

More than 40 million Americans went camping in 2013. This equates to 14 percent of the US population over the age of six. Although the participation rate remained steady, there was a loss of about 400,000 actual participants.

This decline in participation is minimal compared to past years and can be attributed to the churn of camping participation. While approximately 10.5 million people tried camping or returned to camping in 2013, the activity failed to retain about 11 million of its past participants.

The camping participation rate for most age groups remained the same or only shifted slightly. Young adults, ages 18 to 24, gained one percentage point, while adults, ages 25 to 44, lost one.

Understanding the demographics, motivations, behaviors and barriers of camping participants is critical for increasing participation rates and growing the activity. The following section provides a detailed look at camping participation in the United States.

## 597.7 Million

Americans went camping a total of 597.7 million days in 2013.

## Age 32

The average camper was age 32.

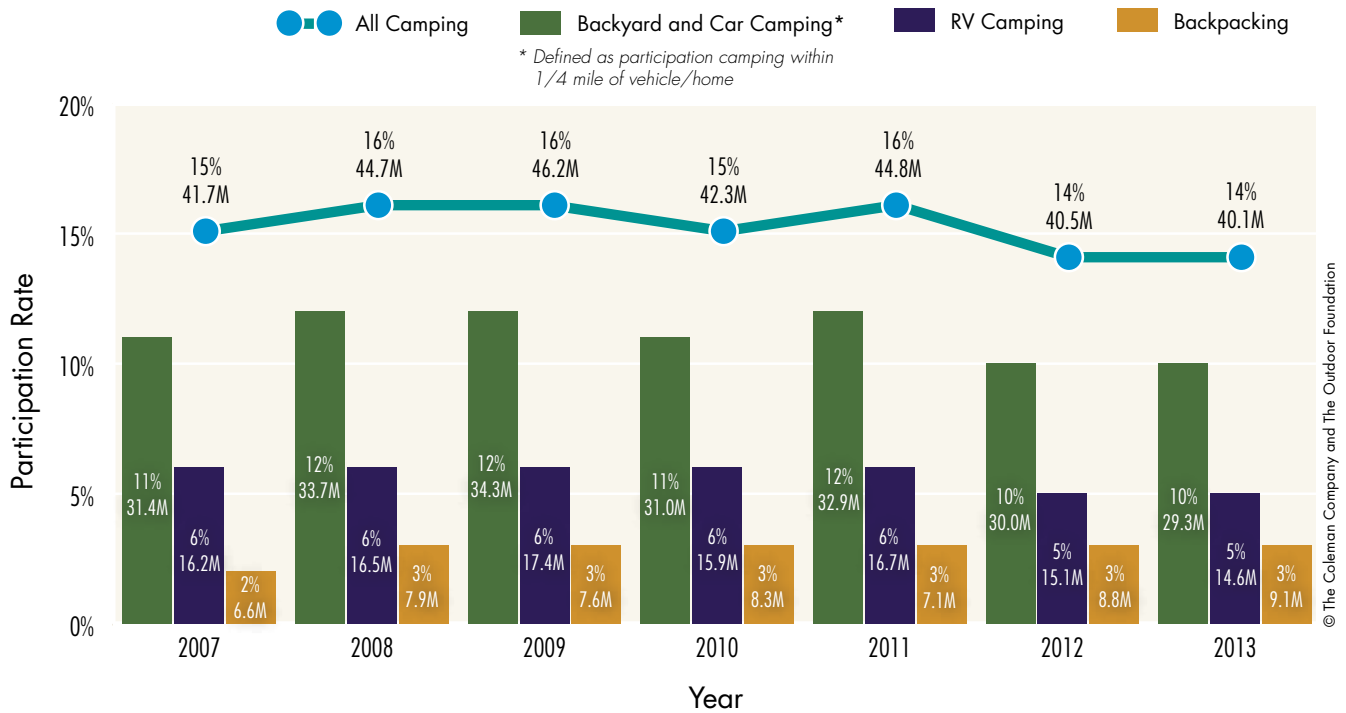
## 40.1 Million

40.1 million Americans, or 14 percent of the population, went camping in 2013.

# Overall Camping Participation

## Participation in Camping by Year

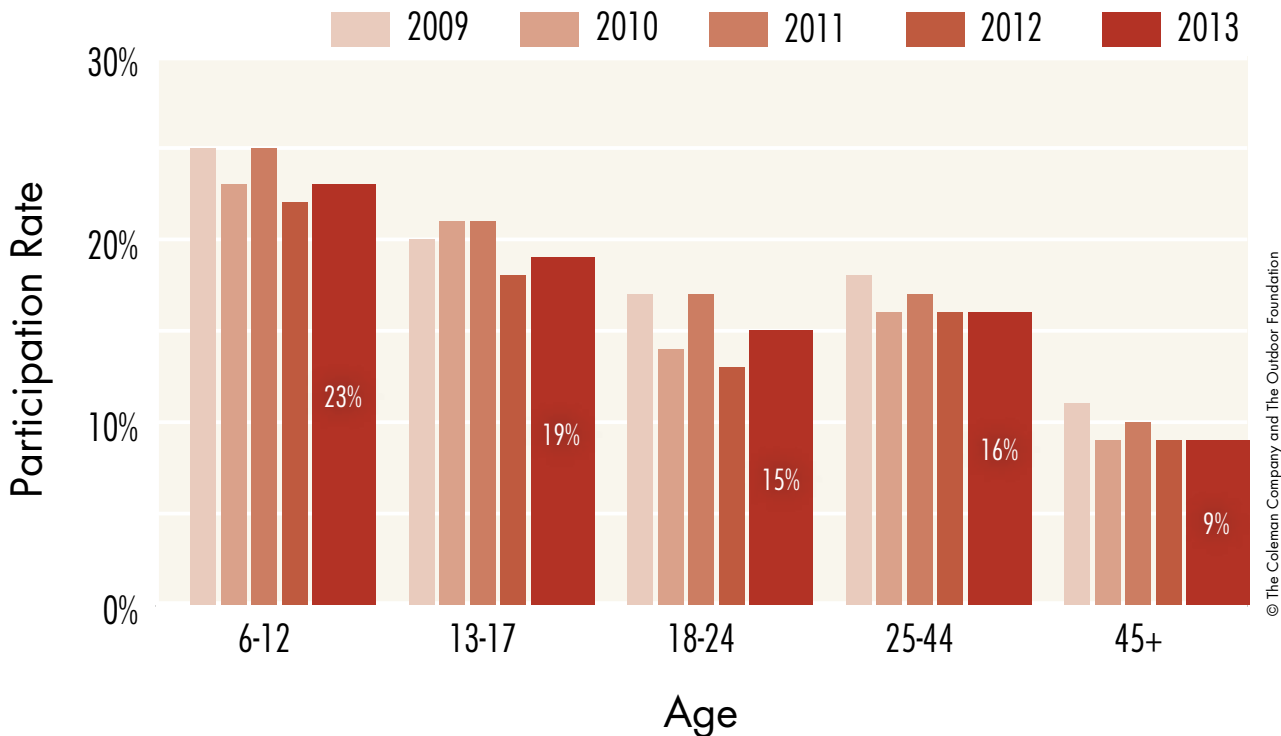
All Americans, Ages 6+



Note: Some campers participated in both backyard/car camping and RV camping.

## Participation in Camping by Age

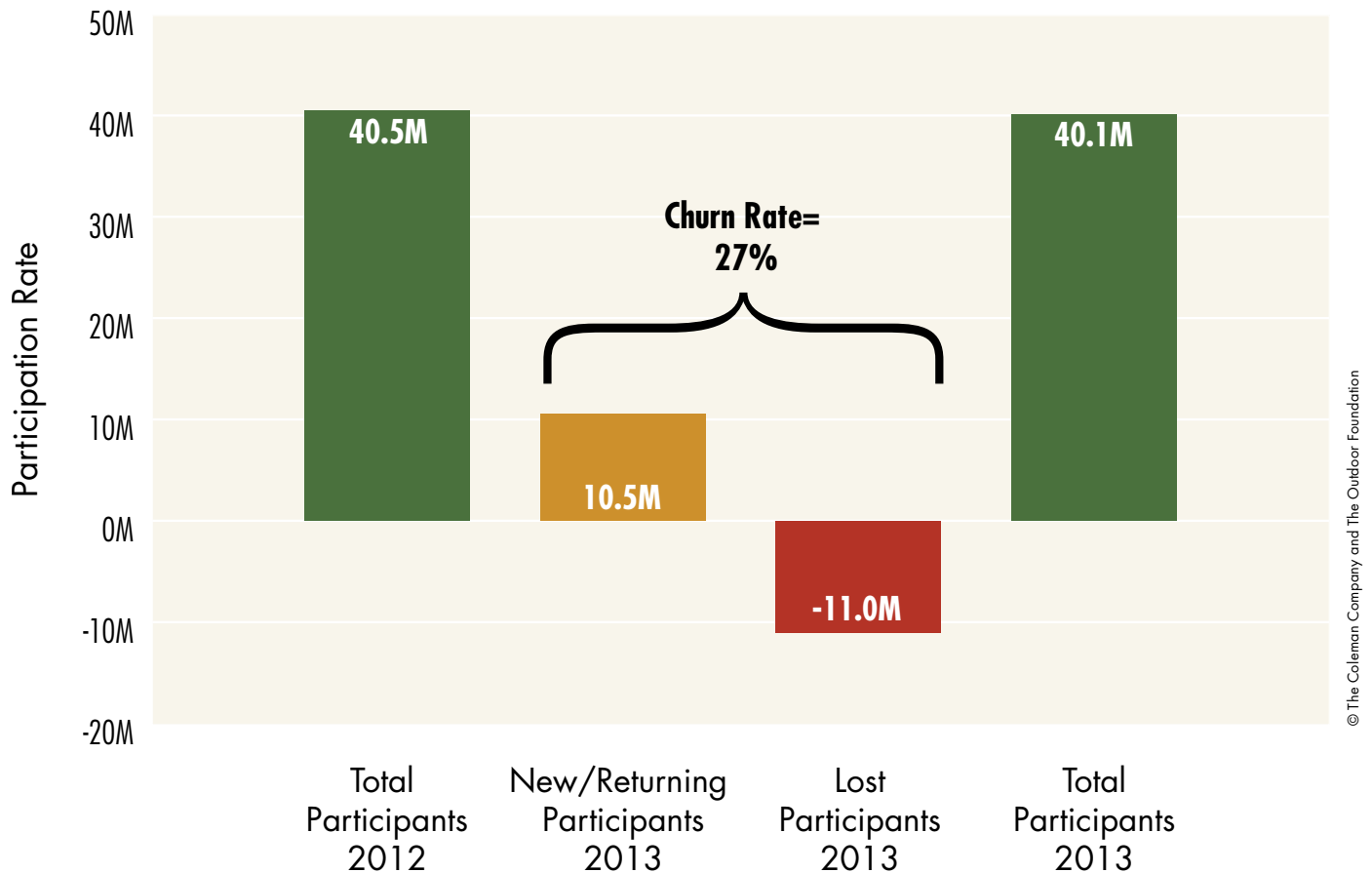
All Americans, Ages 6+



# The Leaky Bucket

Campers, Ages 6+

The Leaky Bucket analysis illustrates where camping lost its participants from 2012 to 2013. While the activity attracted approximately 10.5 million new or returning participants in 2013, it also lost about 11 million campers. This loss of participants was minimal compared to past years, but the churn rate (those leaving and joining the activity) was relatively high.



*Note: The chart shows that 10.5 million participants joined the activity, and 11 million left, but the actual loss in participation is 423,955 people. This is a result of a rounding error. The error does not persist in the unrounded data.*





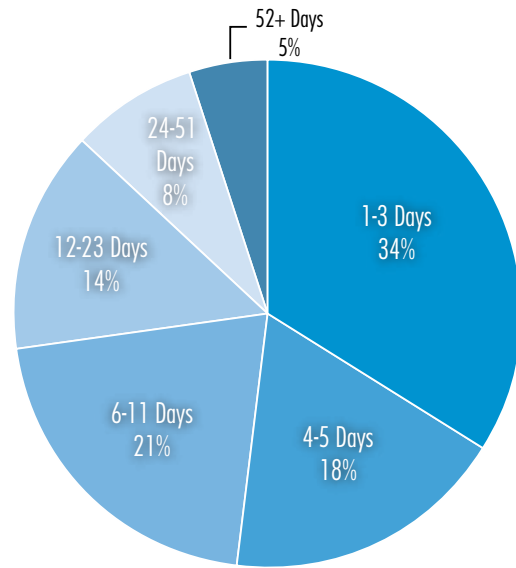
# DEMOGRAPHICS OF CAMPING PARTICIPANTS

## Annual Camping Days

In 2013, participants camped for a total of 597.7 million days. For some of these campers, this meant getting out once a season, and for others, once a month or week.

# 14.9 days

The average camper went camping for a total of 14.9 days in 2013.

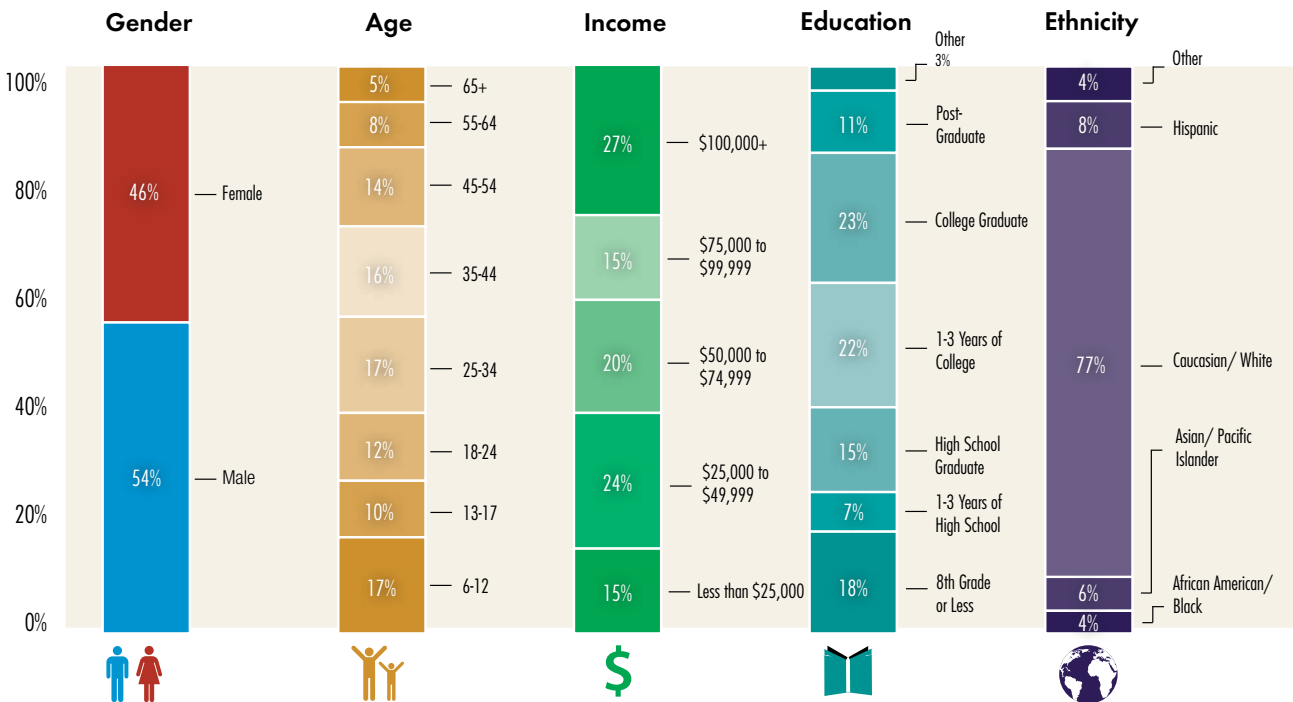


Camper, Ages 6+

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## Demographics

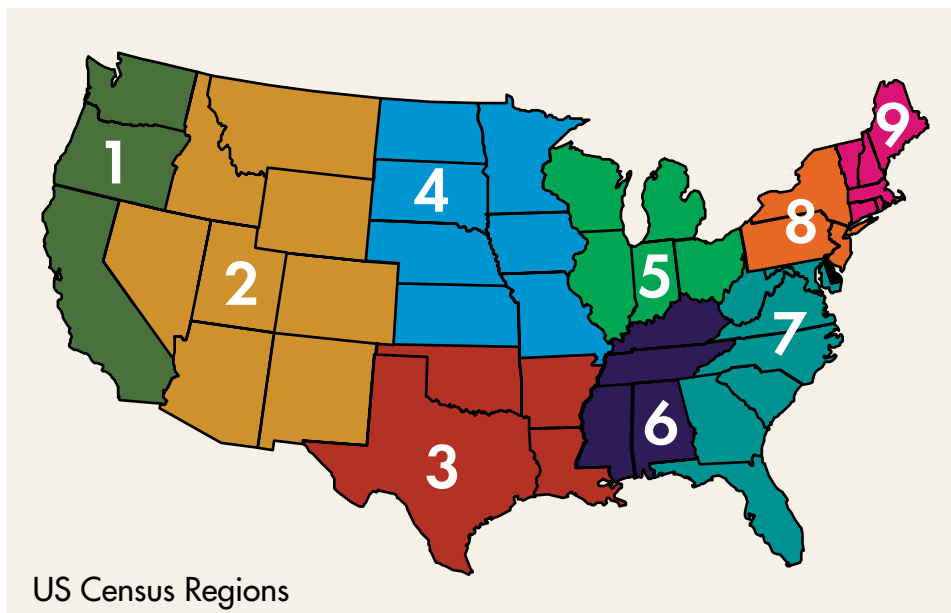
Camper, Ages 6+



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# Geography of Camping Participants

Camper, Ages 6+



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*Participation Rate by Region looks at camping participation within a geographic area. It refers to the what percentage of each region's population participates in camping.*

*Percent of US Participants compares each region's participation to one another. It illustrates which regions have the highest participation rates within the US.*

## 1. Pacific

Participation Rate by Region: 18%  
Percent of US Participants: 21%

## 2. Mountain

Participation Rate by Region: 21%  
Percent of US Participants: 11%

## 3. West South Central

Participation Rate by Region: 11%  
Percent of US Participants: 10%

## 4. West North Central

Participation Rate by Region: 17%  
Percent of US Participants: 8%

## 5. East North Central

Participation Rate by Region: 15%  
Percent of US Participants: 16%

## 6. East South Central

Participation Rate by Region: 12%  
Percent of US Participants: 5%

## 7. South Atlantic

Participation Rate by Region: 10%  
Percent of US Participants: 14%

## 8. Middle Atlantic

Participation Rate by Region: 12%  
Percent of US Participants: 11%

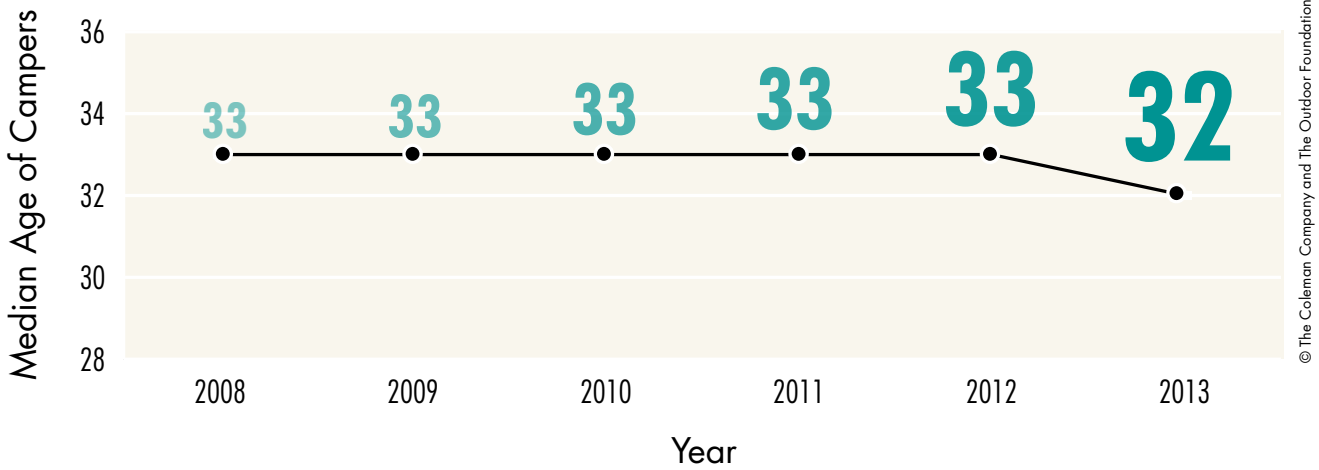
## 9. New England

Participation Rate by Region: 13%  
Percent of US Participants: 4%



# Median Age of Campers

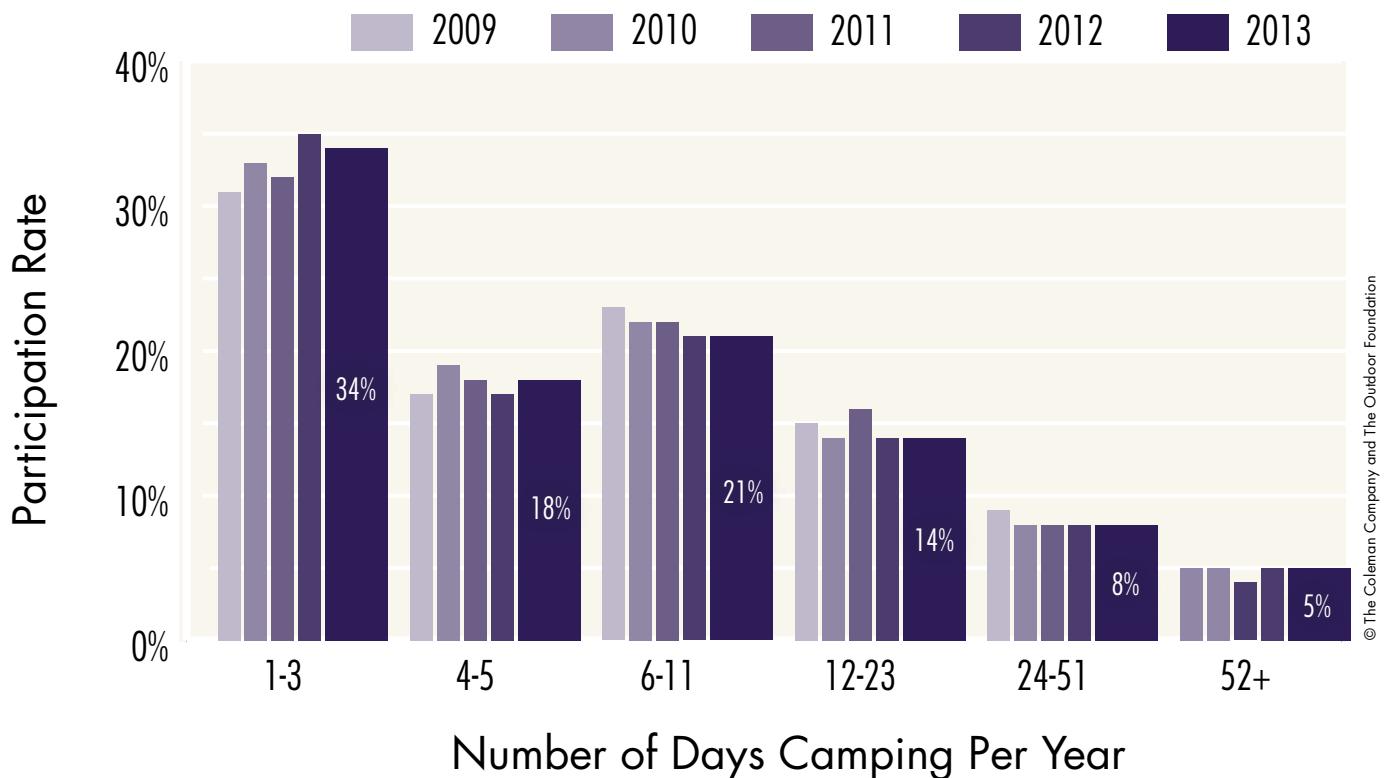
Campers, Ages 6+



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# Number of Days Camping

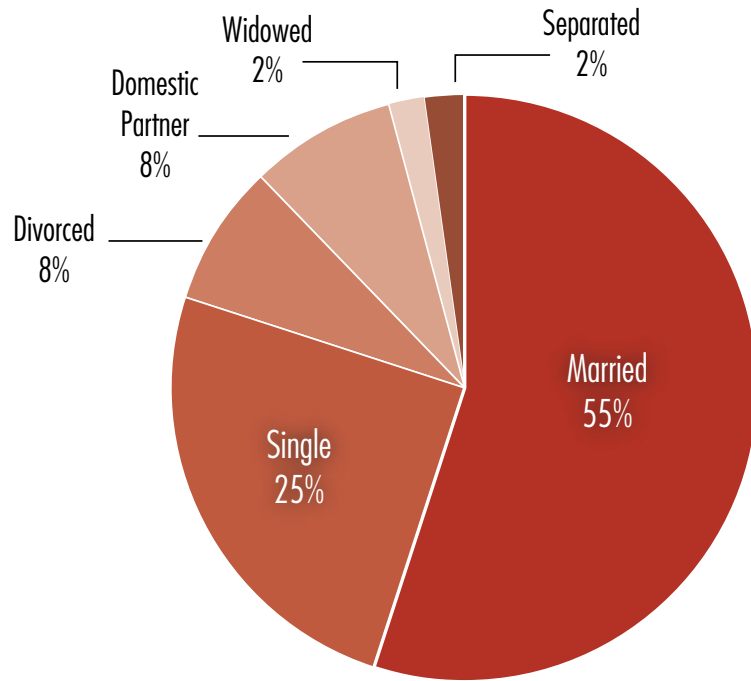
Campers, Ages 6+



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# Participation in Camping by Marital Status

Among camping participants ages 16 and over, 63 percent were married or living with a domestic partner — suggesting that camping is a family-friendly activity.



*Campers, Ages 16+*

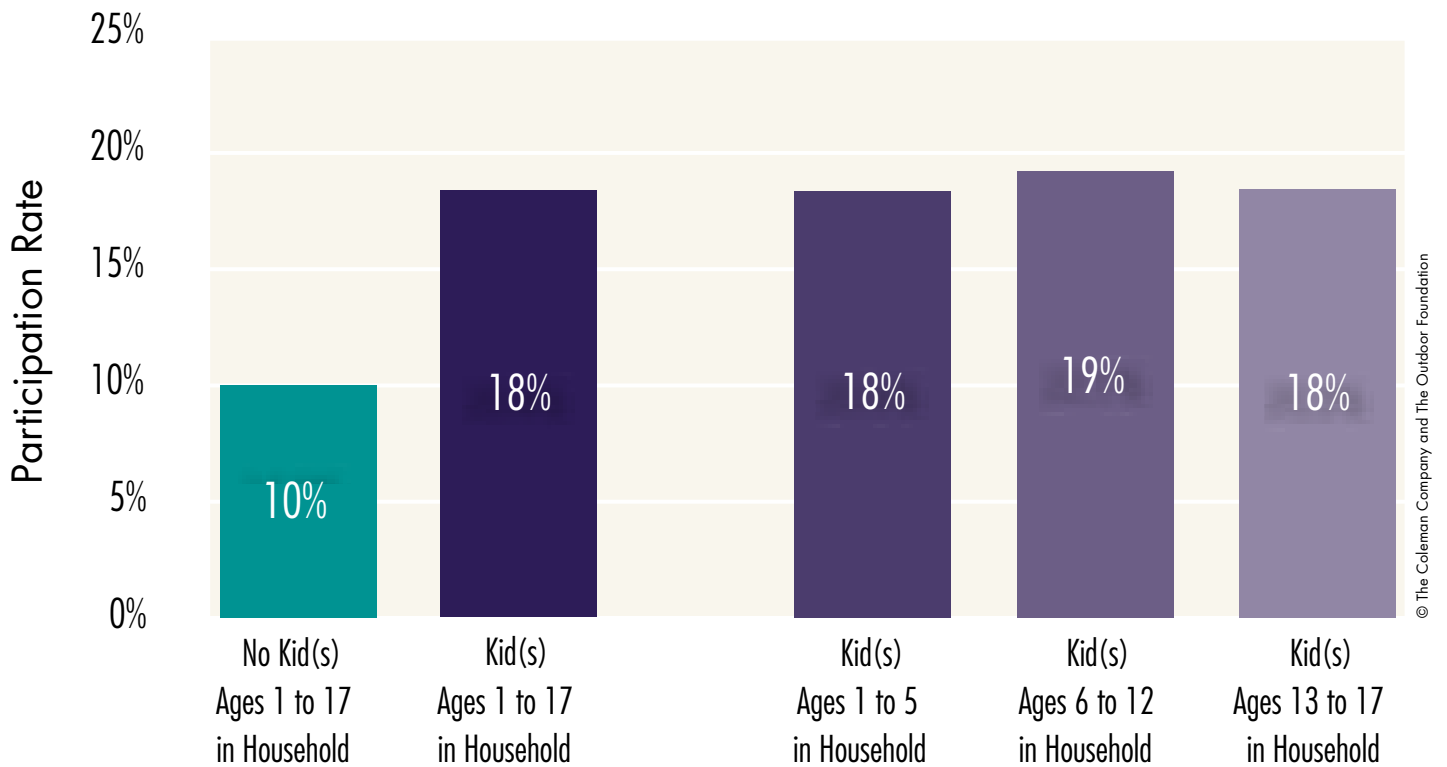
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# Participation in Camping Among Adults with Youth in Their Households

Campers, Ages 18+

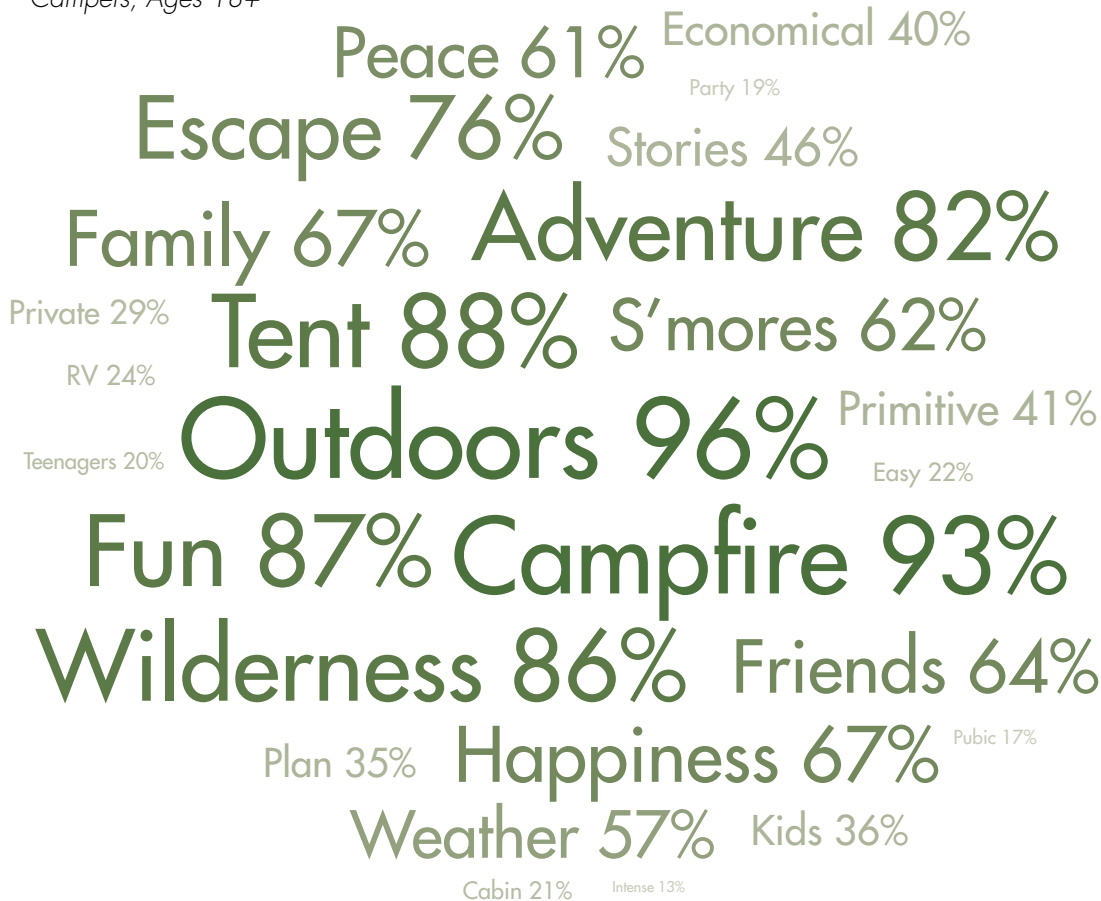
Research again confirmed that camping is a family-oriented activity. Adults with children participated in camping at a rate eight percentage points higher than their peers without children. Among parents, those with children ages six to 12 participated at the highest rate — 19 percent — compared to parents of children ages one to five and 13 to 17. Those parents had a slightly lower participation rate of 18 percent.





# Words Associated with Camping

Campers, Ages 18+



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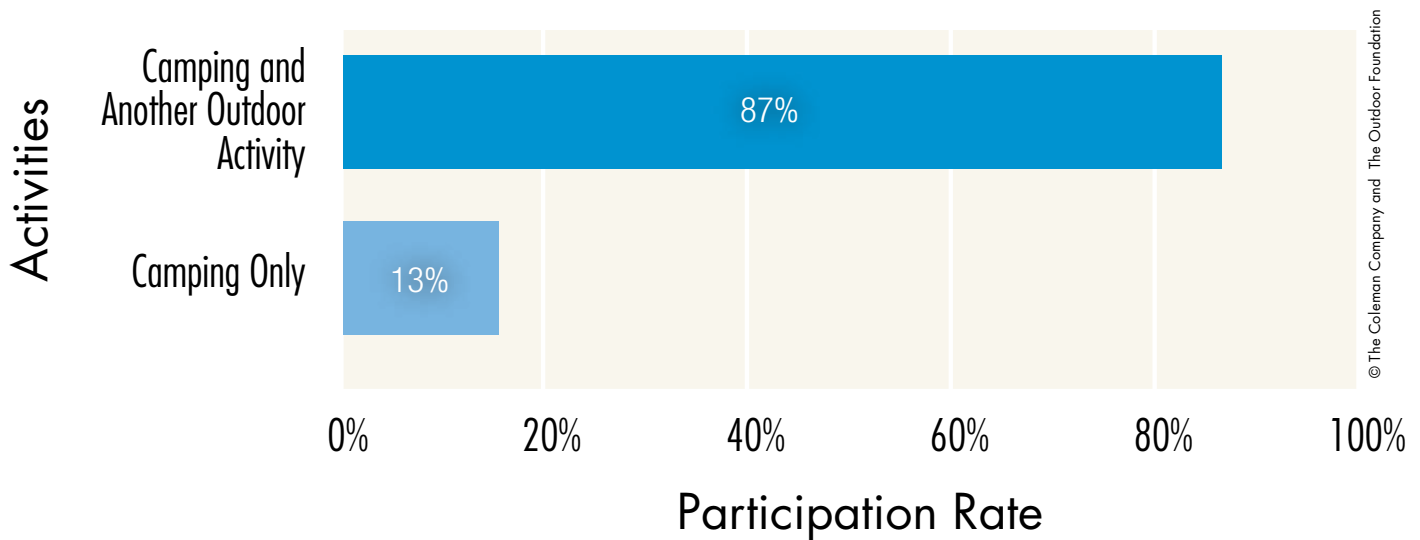
## Words Least Associated

- Electricity 10%
- Expensive 7%
- Discomfort 7%
- Close to home 6%
- Playground 6%
- Difficult 5%
- Swimming pool 5%
- Wireless Internet 5%

# A Gateway to the Outdoors

Campers, Ages 6+

Camping is a gateway activity because it opens participants up to trying other outdoor activities. Eighty-seven percent participated in multiple outdoor activities, while only 13 percent participated in camping only.

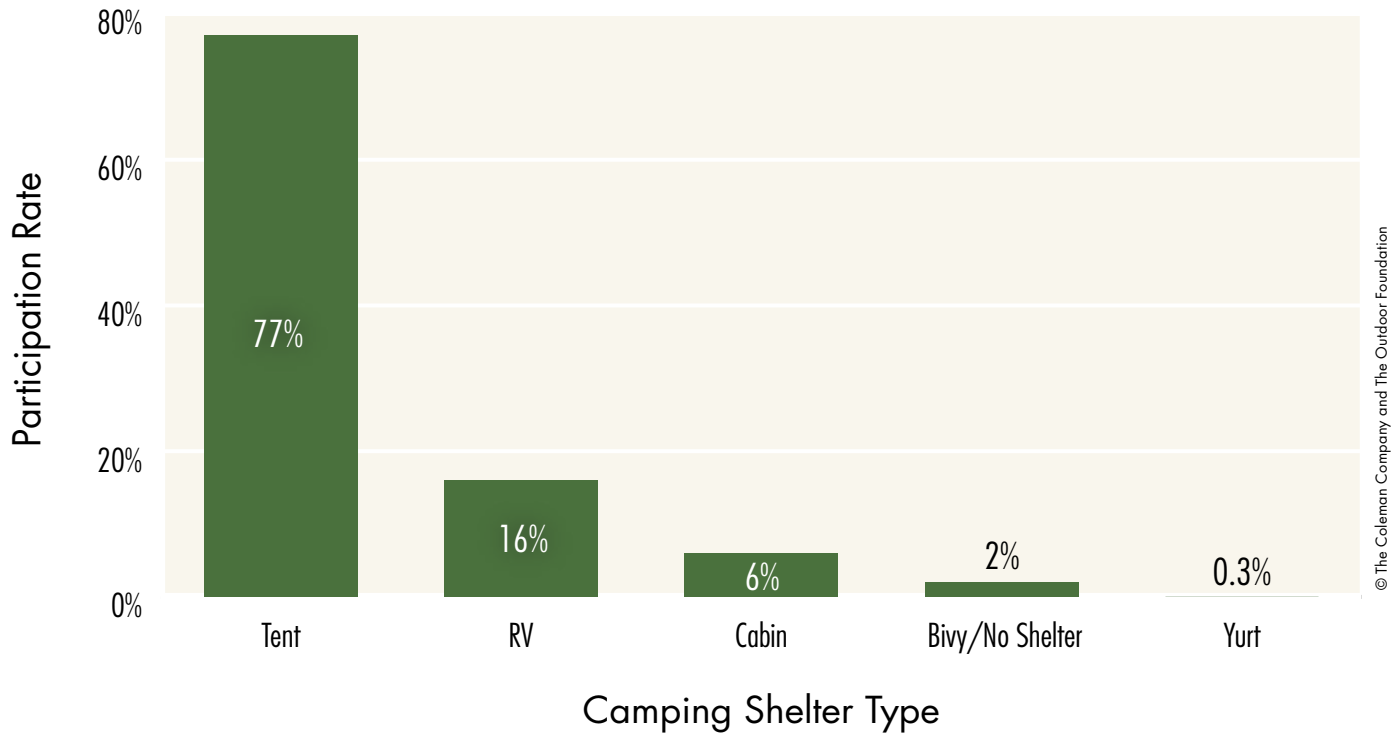


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# Primary Type of Camping Shelter

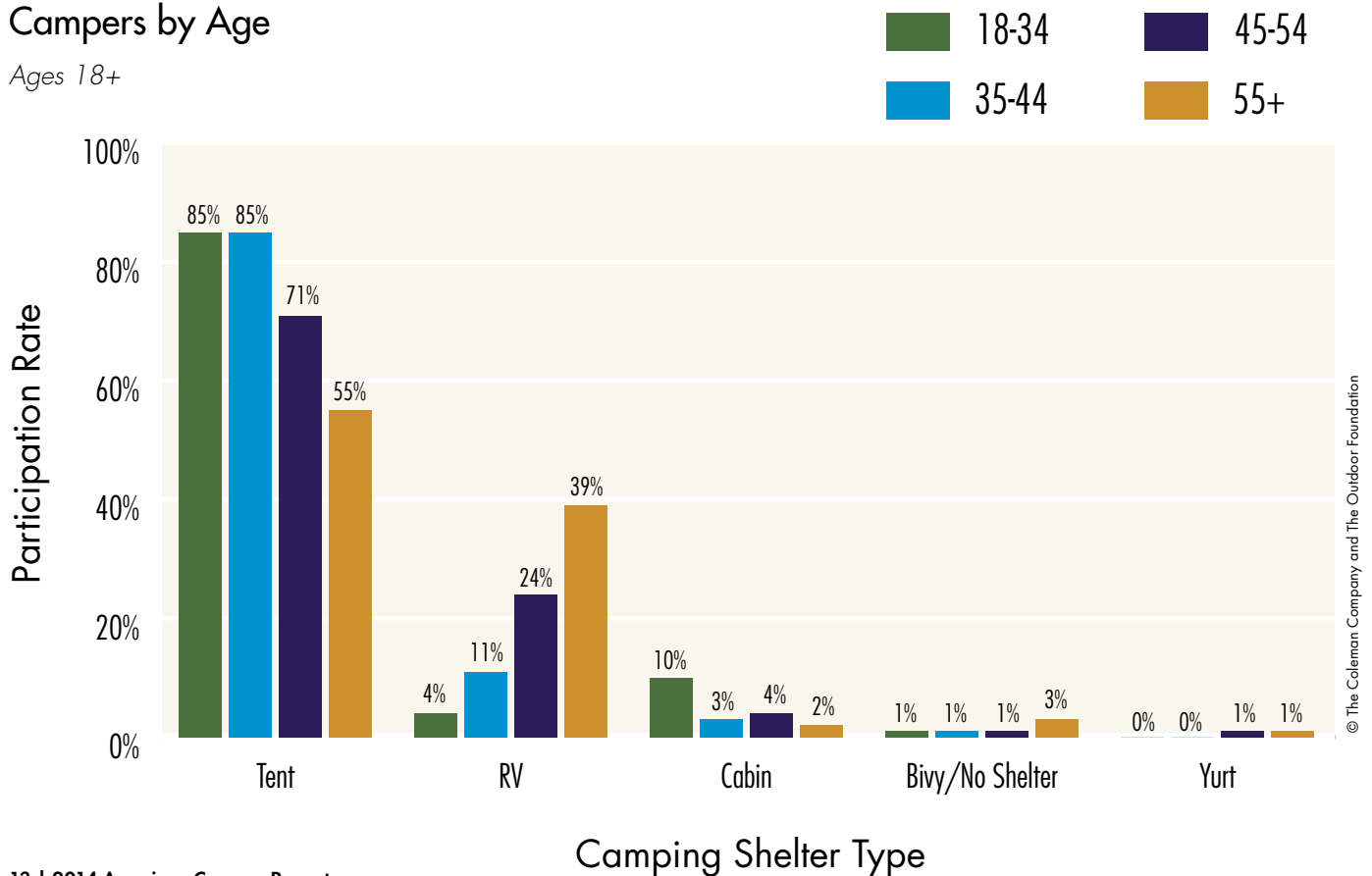
## All Campers

Ages 18+



## Campers by Age

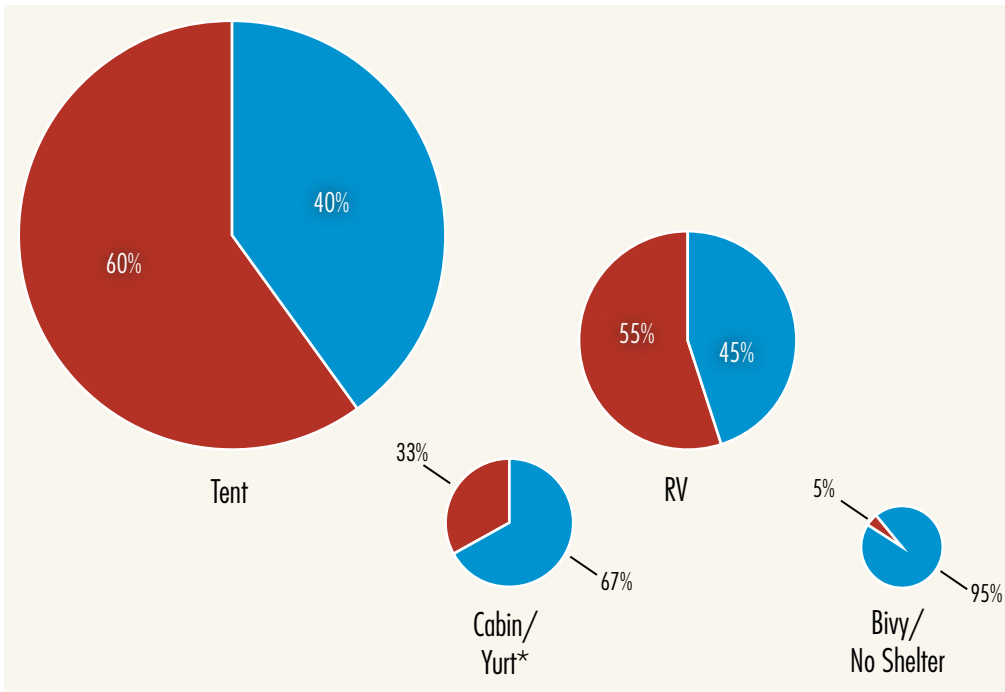
Ages 18+



## Campers by Gender

Ages 18+

Female  
Male



\*Yurt and cabin camping participants have been combined to determine gender breakdowns due to the small number of these types of campers.

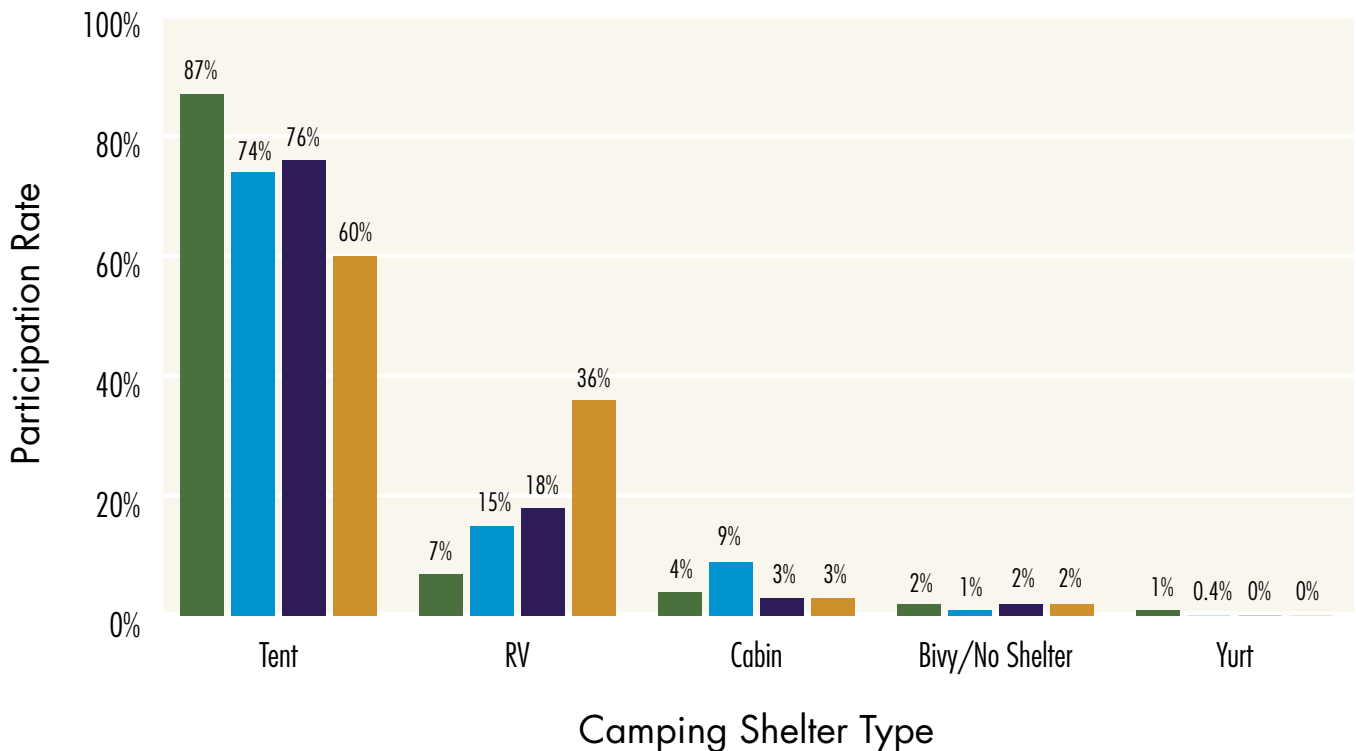
Note: Data on this page only includes adult campers, ages 18+.

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## Campers by Frequency

Ages 18+

1-2 Outings  
3-5 Outings  
6-10 Outings  
11+ Outings



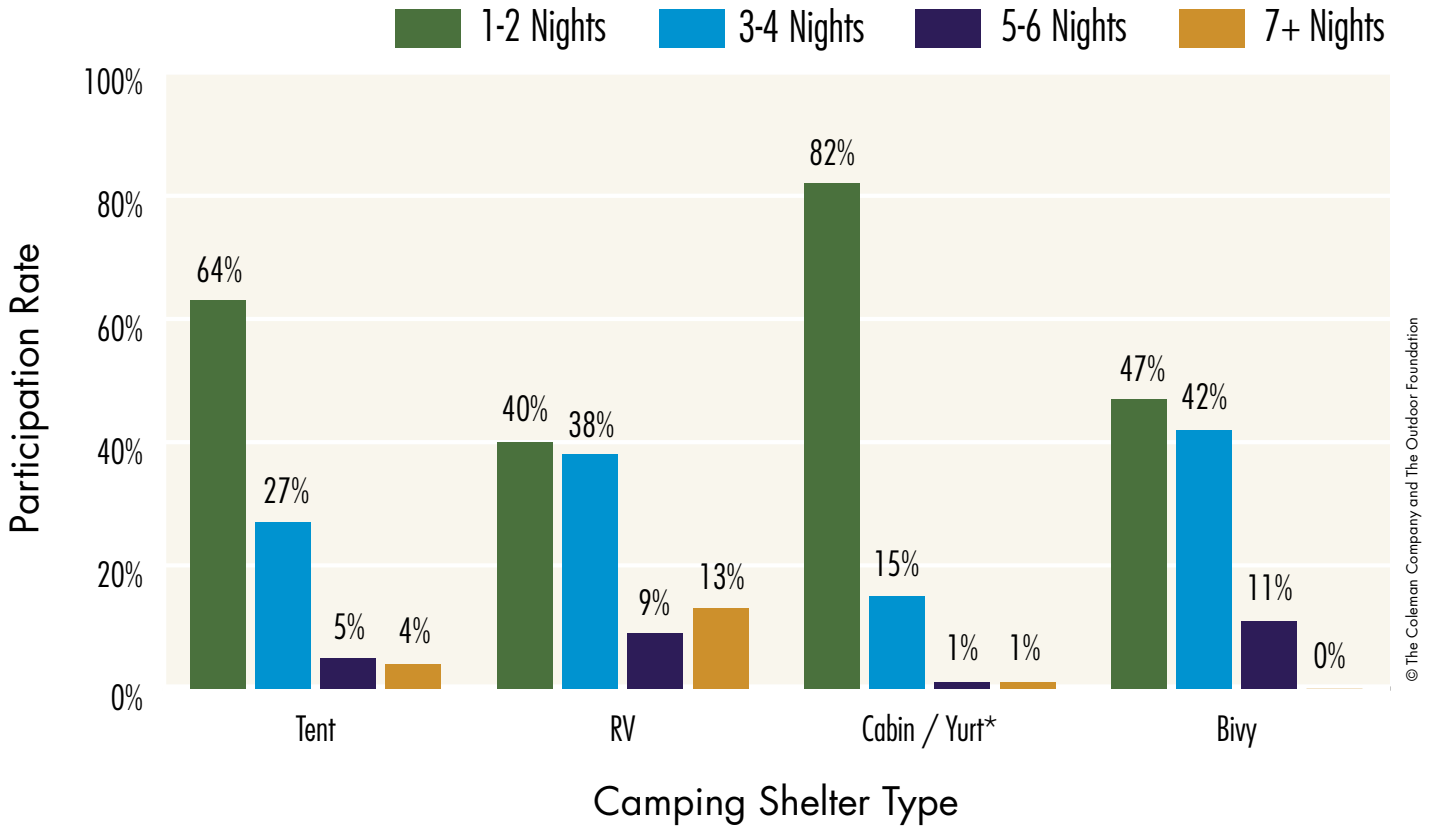
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# Length of Most Recent Trip by Type of Camping Shelter

Campers, Ages 18+

On their most recent trip, most campers, regardless of their chosen camping shelter, spent one to two nights in the outdoors. RV campers stayed the longest, with 13 percent camping for seven or more nights. Cabin/yurt campers stayed for the shortest period of time, with 82 percent spending one to two nights outside.



\*Yurt and cabin camping participants have been combined to determine length of stay due to the small number of these types of campers.



# PROFILE OF A CAMPING TRIP

In 2013, adult campers averaged 5.4 camping trips per year. Typically, trips lasted for one to two nights, with the longest trip occurring during the summer. The camping destination tended to be a state park campground that was more than 180 miles away.

Campers made their plans early, with 43 percent making the decision to go on an outing more than one month in advance. When it came to campsite reservations, however, finding the perfect spot was often spontaneous. Thirty-four percent did not make reservations until the day of their trip.

During the camp, friends were the most popular camping companions, and hiking was the favorite daytime activity. At night, the majority of campers enjoyed hanging out by a campfire.

The following section takes a comprehensive look at what happens before and during camping trips in the United States.

## Hiking

While camping, participants were most likely to enjoy hiking over any other activity.

## 1-2 Nights

Campers were most likely to spend one to two nights on each camping trip.

## 186.7 Miles

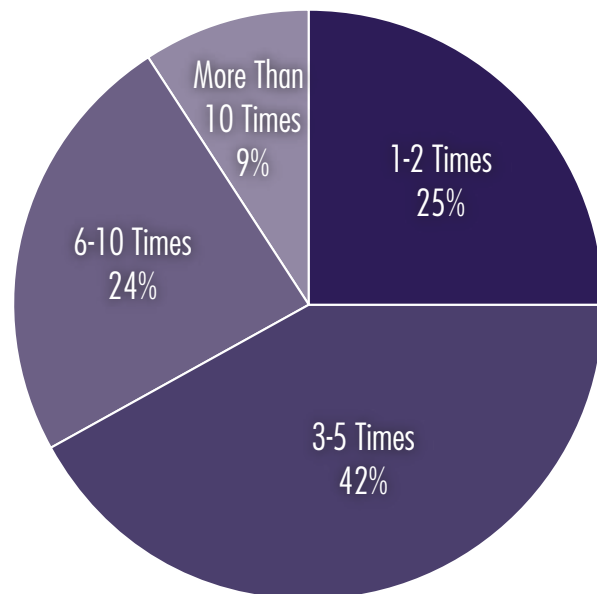
Campers travelled an average distance of 186.7 miles for camping trips.



# Camping in the last 12 months...

## Number of Camping Trips per Year

More than two-thirds of adult participants made camping outings between one and five times per year. A dedicated nine percent made more than ten outings.



Campers, Ages 18+

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## Camping Venue

Campers, Ages 18+

"In which venue did you camp in the last 12 months?"

State Park Campground	43%
National Park Campground	14%
Local Park Campground	10%
Back country/Wilderness	9%
Event	7%
Private Land/Cabin	5%
Backyard	4%
National Forest	4%
Private Campground	2%
Scout Camps	1%
BLM Land	1%
KOA	1%
Other Campsites	1%
Other	2%

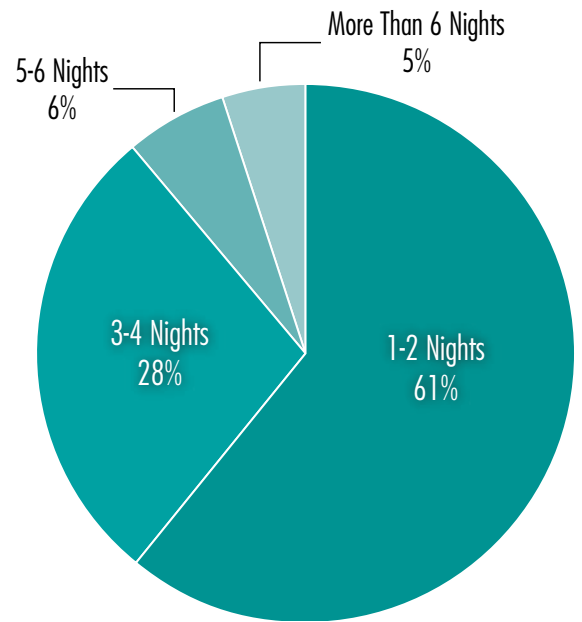
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More than 40 percent of adult participants camped at state park campgrounds, making them the most popular venue. National park campgrounds came in a distant second at 14 percent and local park campgrounds third at 10 percent.

# Most recent camping trip...

## Length of Trip

During their last outing, most adult campers, 61 percent, took camping trips that lasted one or two nights. Only 11 percent took trips that lasted five nights or more.



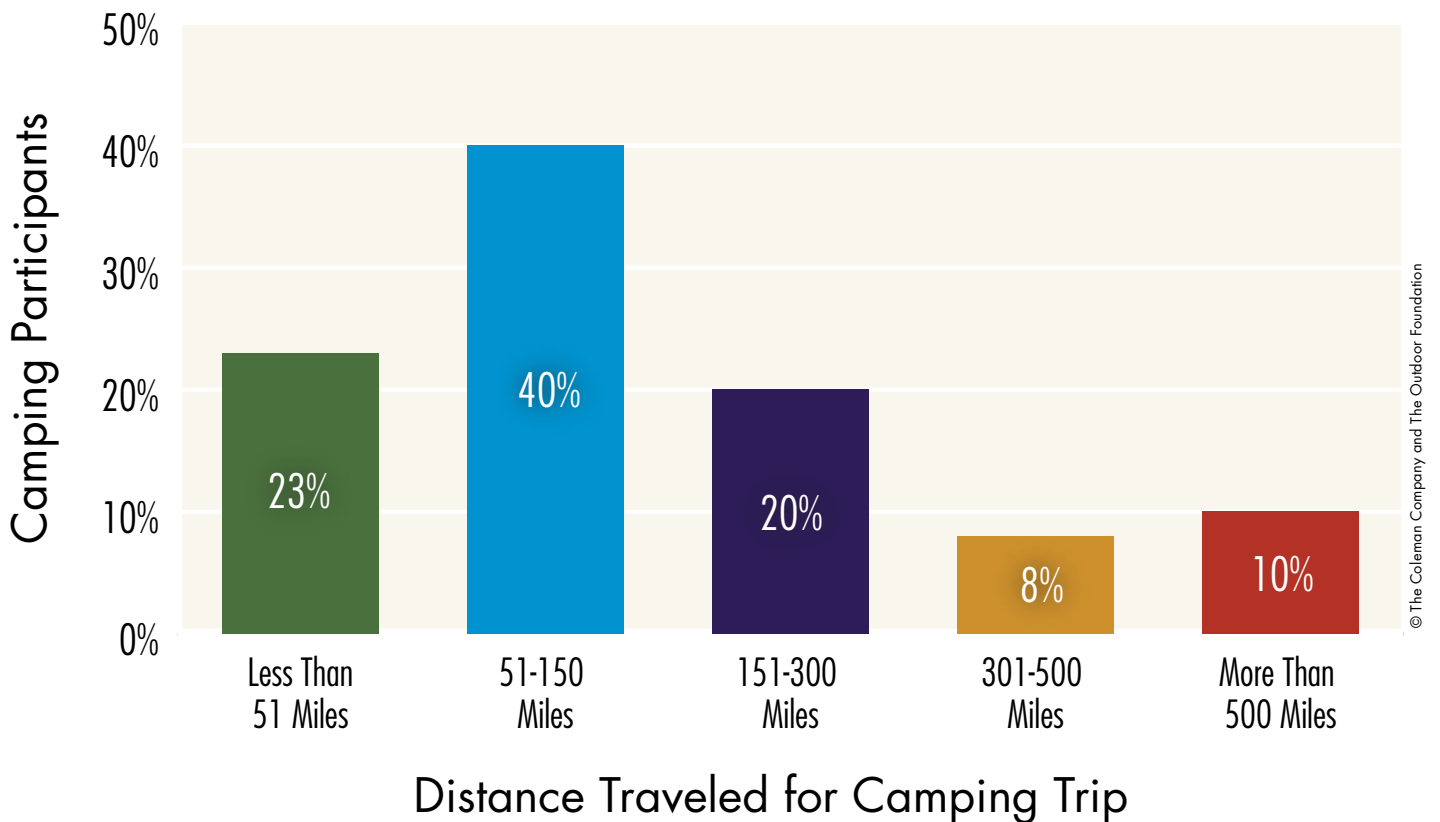
Campers, Ages 18+

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## Distance from Home

Campers, Ages 18+

Adult campers travelled an average of 186.7 miles to reach their camping destination. The majority, 63 percent, stayed within 150 miles of home during their camping trips.



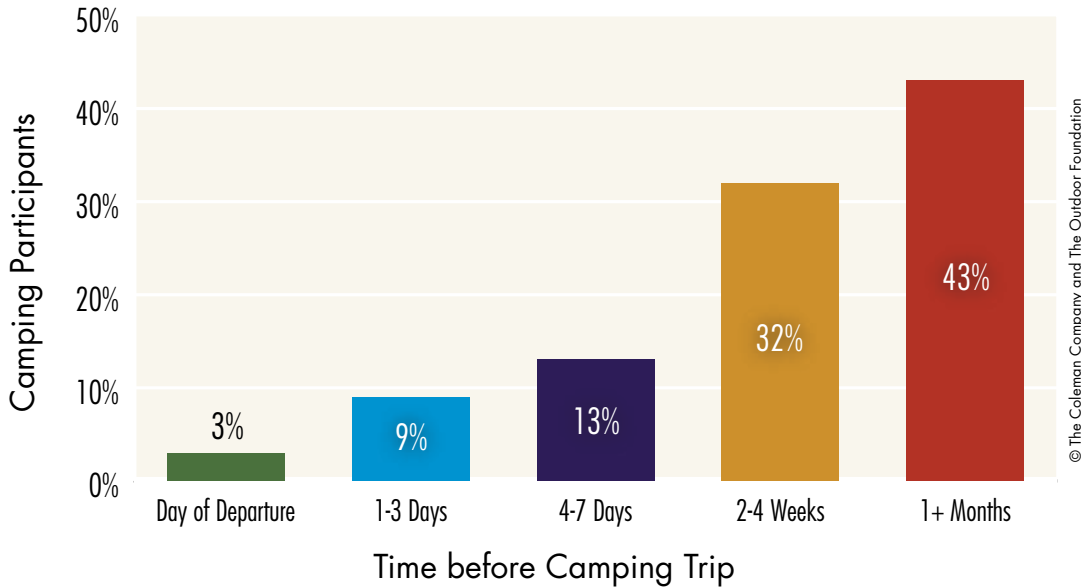
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# Most recent camping trip...

## Trip Planning and Preparation

Campers, Ages 18+

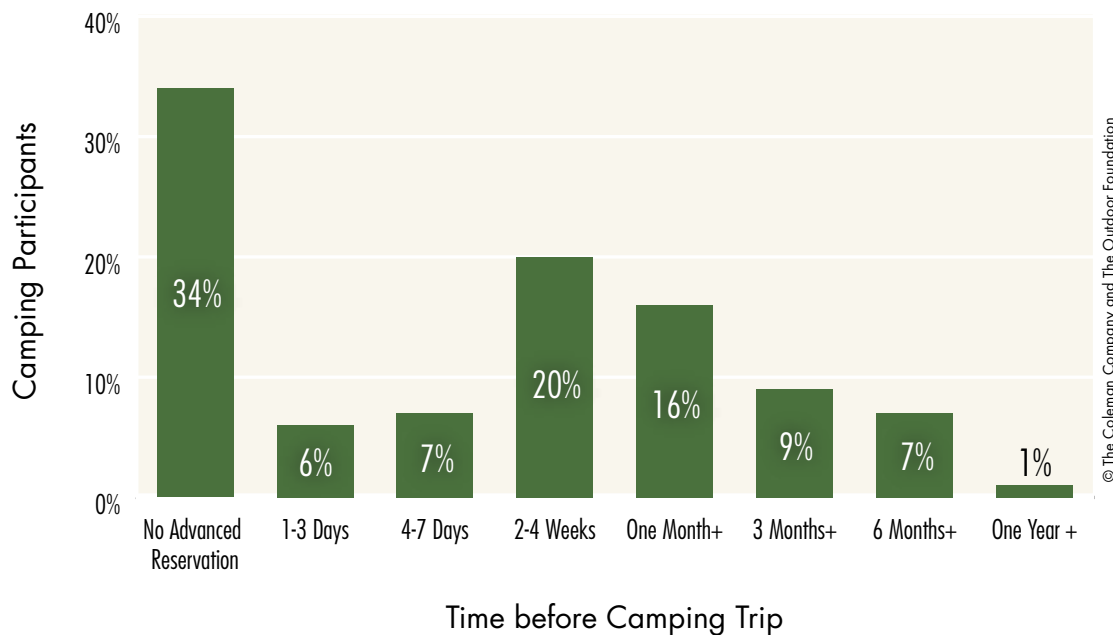
Adult campers tended to plan their trips ahead of time. Forty-three percent planned trips one month in advance, and only three percent waited until the day of departure.



## Campsite Reservations

Campers, Ages 18+

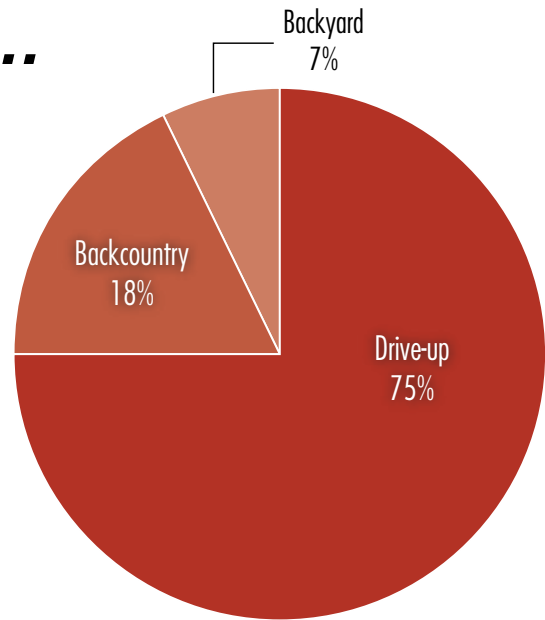
Although adult campers decided to go camping well before their trips, most did not get advance reservations. Of campers who stayed at campsites, 34 percent had no prior reservation.



# Most recent camping trip...

## Type of Trip

During their last trip, most adult campers, 75 percent, drove to their camping destination and parked within one-fourth of a mile of their campsite. Only 18 percent journeyed into the backcountry, and seven percent camped in a backyard.



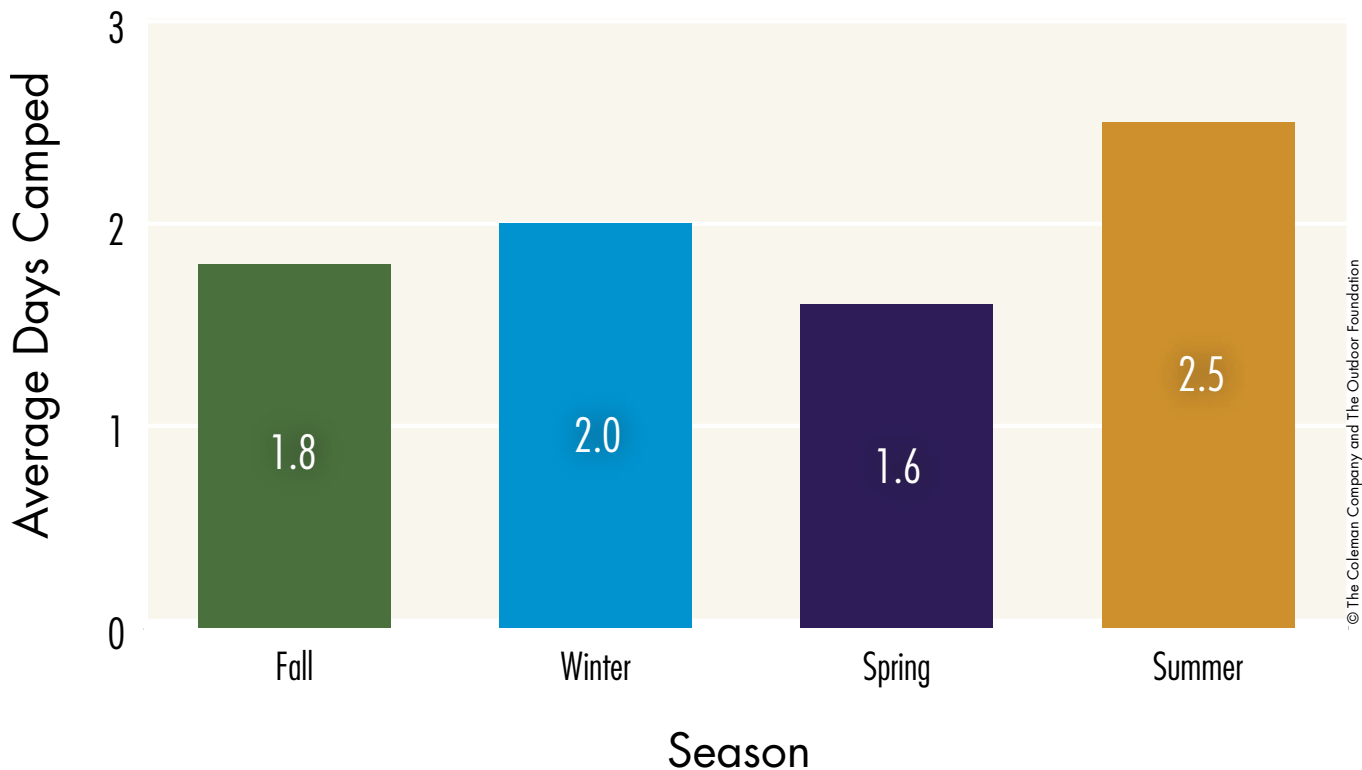
Campers, Ages 18+

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## Camping Days by Season

Campers, Ages 18+

Camping trips during the summer months lasted the longest, an average of 2.5 days. Interestingly, winter trips followed with an average of two days.



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# Camping in the last 12 months...

## Camping Companions

Campers by Age

"With whom have you camped?"	Ages 18-35	Ages 35-44	Ages 45-54	Ages 55+	All Ages
Friend(s)	75%	70%	68%	60%	70%
Spouse/Significant Other Only	51%	64%	63%	65%	59%
Immediate Family	51%	53%	58%	43%	51%
Pets	36%	35%	31%	31%	34%
Extended Family	17%	23%	19%	20%	19%
Kids/Grandkids, Under Age 2	9%	7%	4%	6%	7%
Kids/Grandkids, Ages 2-8	8%	31%	15%	16%	16%
Sports Team	7%	1%	2%	0%	3%
Kids/Grandkids, Ages 9-14	3%	27%	23%	14%	14%
Youth Group	2%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Kids/Grandkids, Ages 15-17	2%	11%	18%	8%	8%
Other Organized Groups	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%
Self	1%	0%	0%	3%	1%
Coworkers	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Scouts	0%	5%	5%	2%	3%
Church	0%	0%	1%	2%	1%
Other	0%	2%	1%	4%	1%

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Friends were the most popular camping companions among every age group. Camping with friends was most popular among young adults, ages 18 to 35. This popularity decreased marginally as campers aged.

## Motivation for Camping

Campers, Ages 18+

"What is the main motivation for camping?"	
Camping itself.	47%
To escape the grind.	16%
Spending time with family and friends.	13%
Equal mix of camping and sports activities.	12%
To teach my kids/the next generation about to outdoors.	5%
To enable participation in other sports or active pursuits.	3%
To stay close to an event without a hotel.	2%
Save money compared to other vacation options.	2%

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The simple act of camping was the biggest motivation for taking a camping trip. Forty-seven percent of adult participants camped just because they enjoyed it, which is good news for the activity.

# Decision Making

Campers by Age

"In general, who brings up the idea to go camping?"	Ages 18-34	Ages 35-44	Ages 45-54	Ages 55+	All Ages
Me	44%	67%	61%	62%	56%
Spouse/Significant Other (Male)	18%	10%	9%	15%	14%
Parents	15%	1%	0%	0%	6%
Friends	12%	5%	8%	8%	9%
Other Family Member	7%	1%	0%	0%	3%
Spouse/Significant Other (Female)	3%	6%	11%	8%	6%
Children	1%	8%	9%	4%	5%
Scout Group/Leader	0%	1%	1%	3%	1%
Joint (Self & Spouse)	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%

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The majority of adult camping participants said they usually made the decision to go camping themselves. Male spouses or significant others also had some influence.

# Camping Arrangements

Campers by Age

"In general, who makes the arrangements to go camping?"	Ages 18-34	Ages 35-44	Ages 45-54	Ages 55+	All Ages
Me	61%	74%	71%	70%	67%
Parents	16%	2%	0%	0%	7%
Spouse/Significant Other (Male)	13%	8%	9%	12%	11%
Friends	7%	5%	5%	6%	6%
Spouse/Significant Other (Female)	3%	9%	13%	9%	7%
Children	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Scout Leader/Group Leader	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Joint (Self & Spouse)	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Family group decision	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%

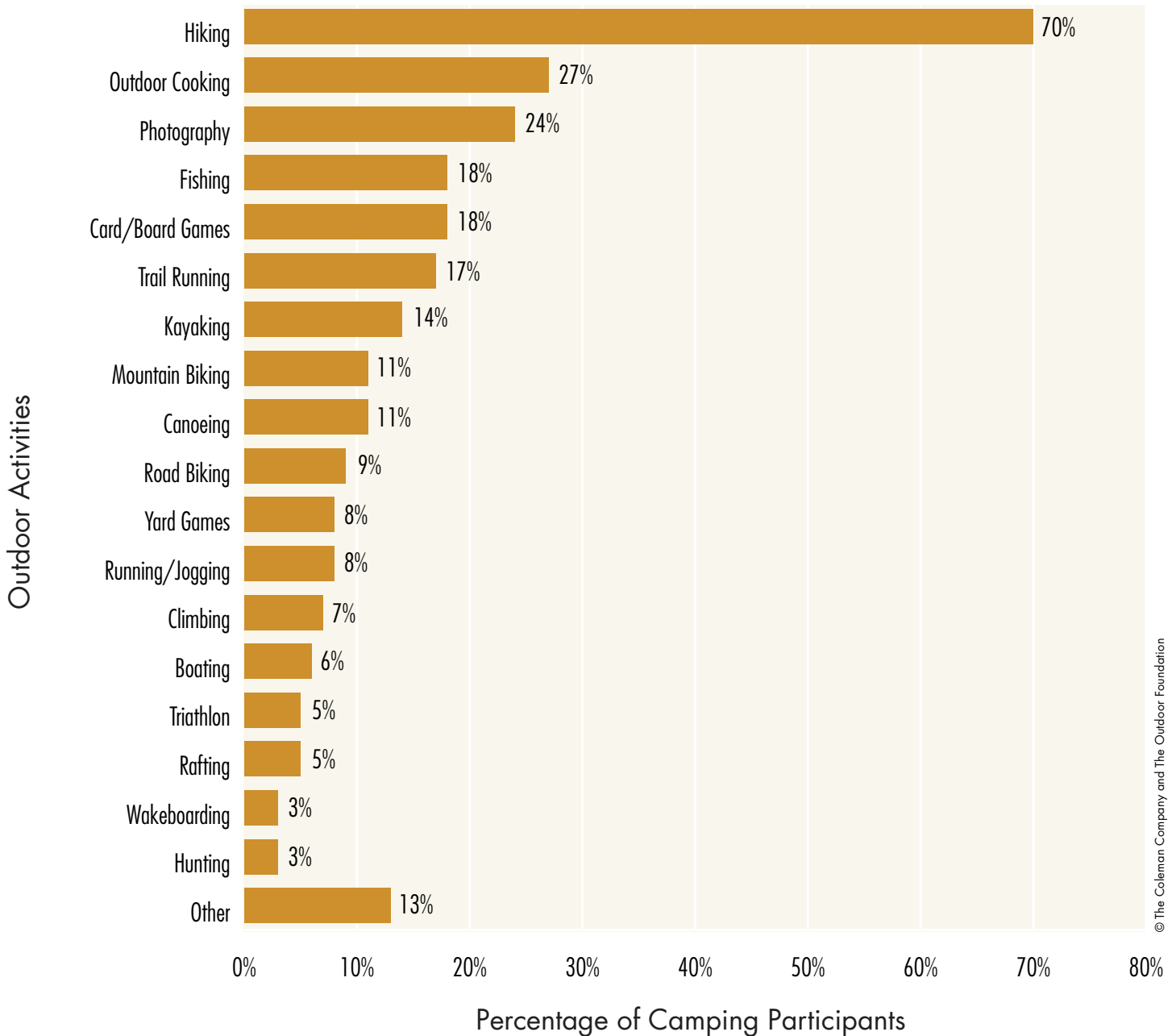
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Like making the decision to go camping, most adult participants said they also made the camping arrangements themselves. Again, male spouses or significant others made the arrangements for some participants.

# Favorite Activities while Camping

Campers, Ages 18+

Hiking was, by far, the most popular sports and leisure activity to participate in while camping. Seventy percent of adult camping participants said they enjoyed hiking while camping. Outdoor cooking was a distant second at 27 percent.

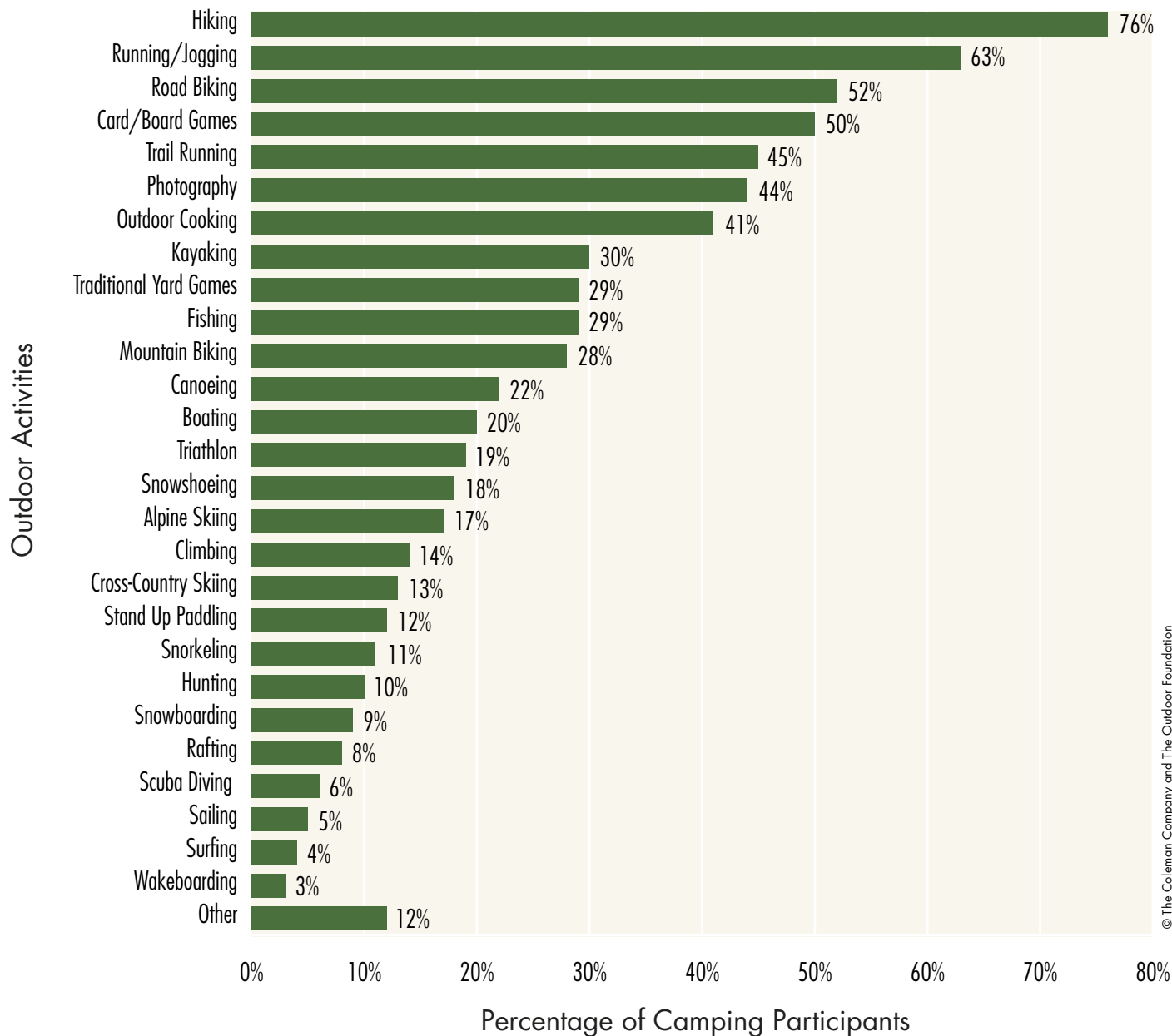


Note: Activities that received less than two percent response were not included.

# General Sports and Leisure Participation

Campers, Ages 18+

Even when adult camping participants were not camping, 76 percent of them still enjoyed hiking. Running came in second at 63 percent. Interestingly, only eight percent of participants enjoyed running or jogging while camping.



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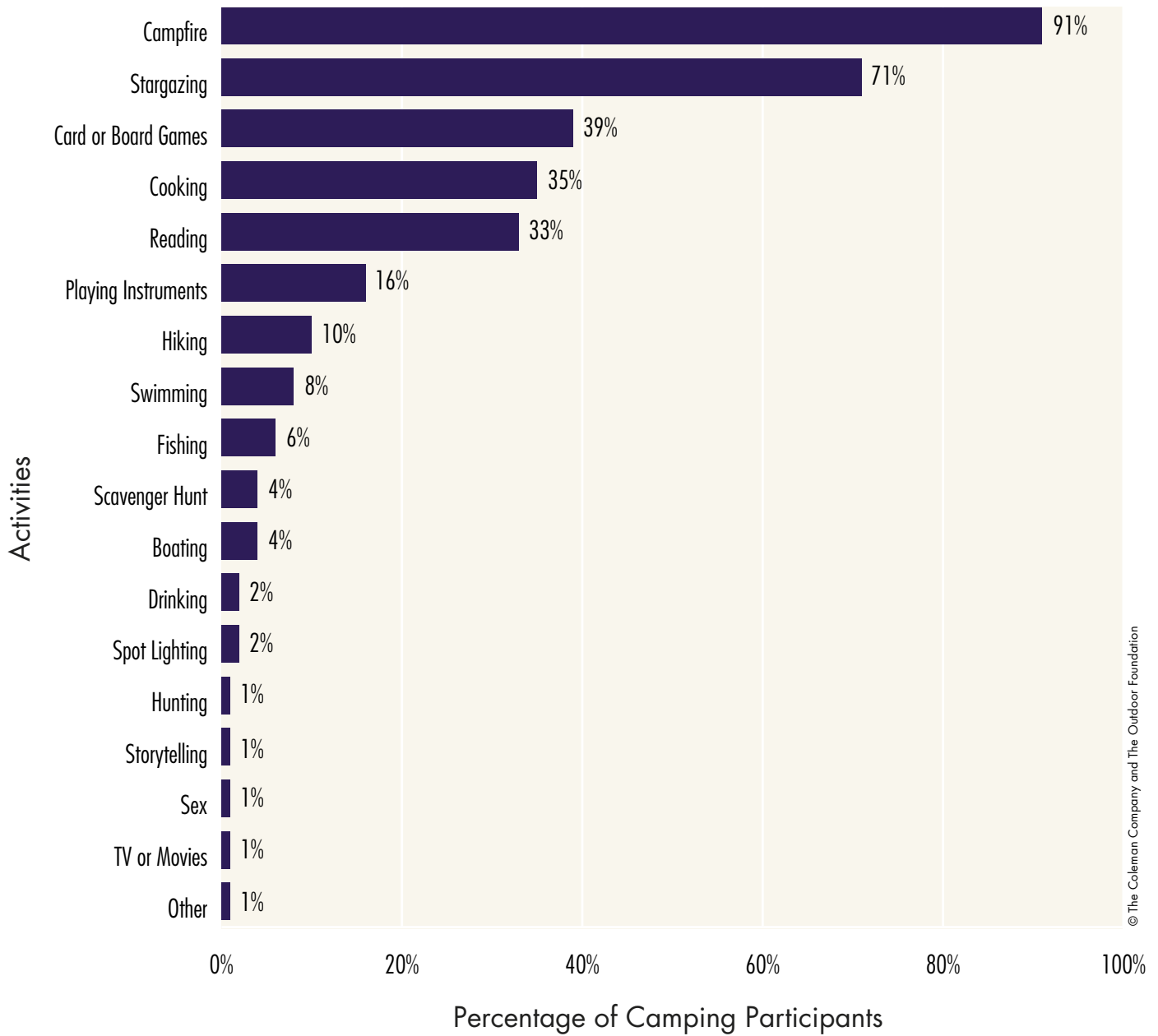
Note: Activities that received less than two percent response were not included.



# Favorite Nighttime Activities while Camping

Campers, Ages 18+

More than 90 percent of adult participants enjoyed hanging out by the campfire at night during their camps. Stargazing came in second at 71 percent and playing cards or board games third at 39 percent.



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# BUYING BEHAVIOR

In 2013, almost half of camping participants were employed, and more than one-quarter were students and not yet employed. This may imply that these individuals feel they can afford camping expenses.

Tents were considered the most essential piece of camping gear, and electricity was voted the preferred luxury item. The most popular camping purchase, however, was more practical — battery lighting.

Campers are pragmatic with other buying decisions too. Sixty-six percent said they most recently replaced a lost or broken camping item, instead of buying something completely new. Participants also tended to make their purchasing decisions at home, prior to camping. And, they often did ample research — reading about the item online, looking at it in the store and then finally making the purchase in the store.

This section explores the buying behaviors of the nation's camping participants. The research gives the camping industry insights into the consumers of camping goods.

## Electricity

Electricity was considered the greatest luxury on a camping trip.

# 49%

Nearly half of campers — 49 percent — were employed, and 27 percent were still students.

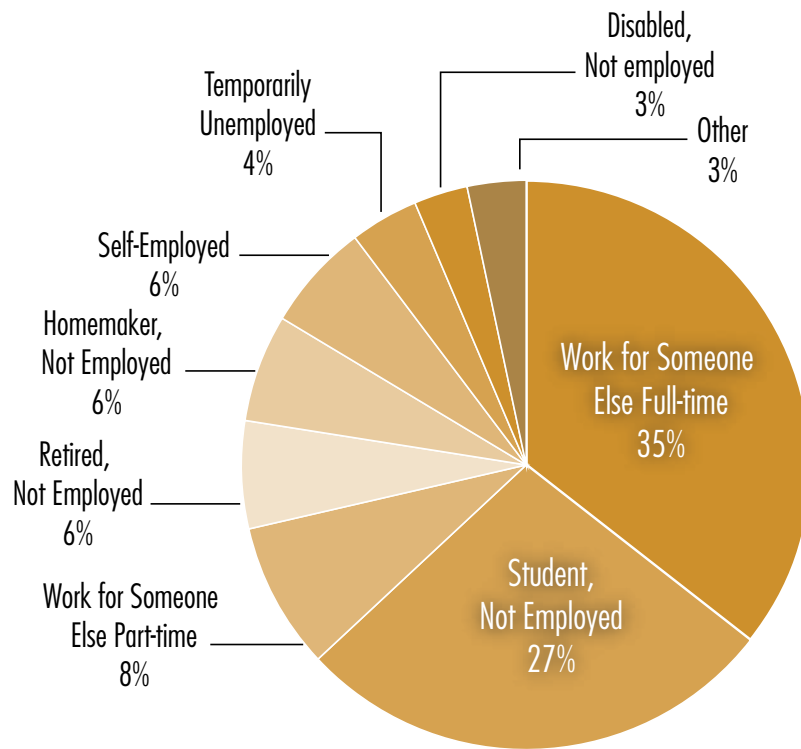
## Battery Lighting

Battery lighting was the most popular camping purchase.



# Camping Participants by Employment Status

In 2013, 76 percent of camping participants were either employed or were students who were not yet employed. Only four percent of campers were temporarily unemployed.



*Campers, Ages 6+*

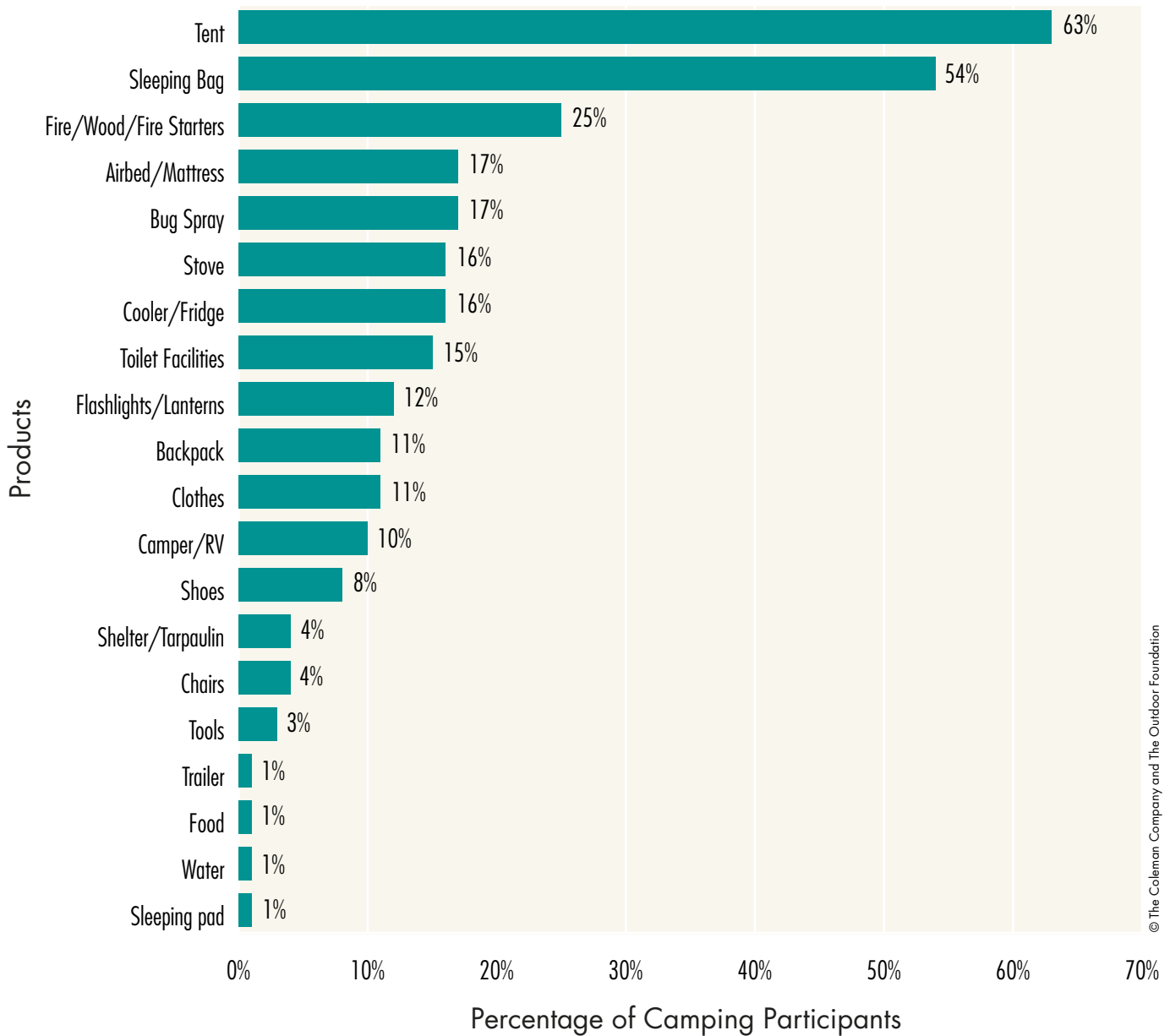
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# Most Essential Camping Items

Campers, Ages 18+

Sixty-three percent of adult campers said that a tent was the most essential piece of camping equipment to take on an outing, and sleeping bags came in second at 54 percent.



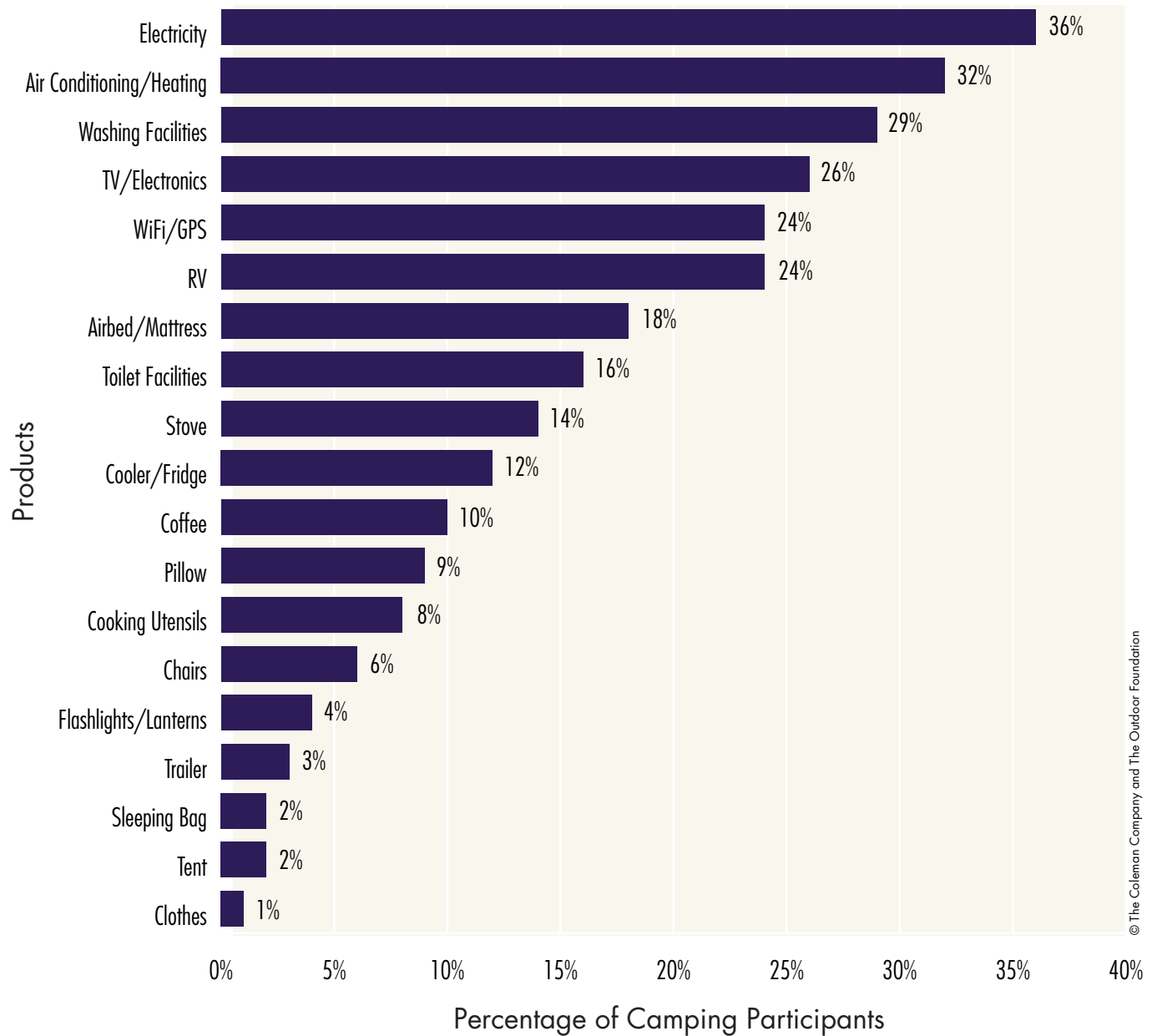
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# Most Luxury Camping Items

Campers, Ages 18+

Thirty-six percent of adult campers thought electricity was the most luxurious item to have on camping trips. Air conditioning and washing facilities were also popular luxury items.

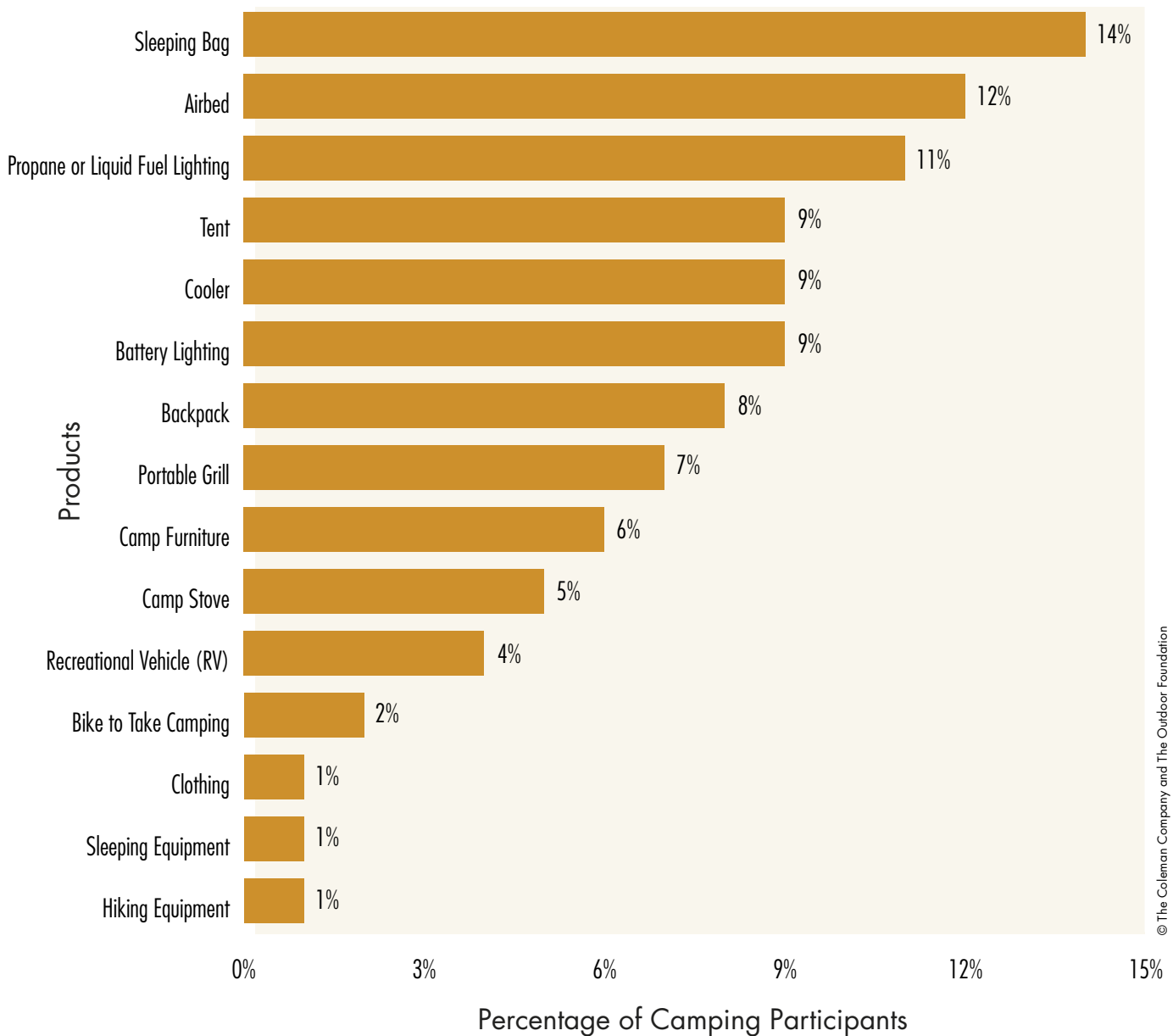


# Most recent purchase...

## Camping Item Last Purchased

Campers, Ages 18+

Sleeping bags, considered one of the most essential items for camping, were also the last purchased items by adult participants. Airbeds and propane or liquid fuel lighting came in second and third.

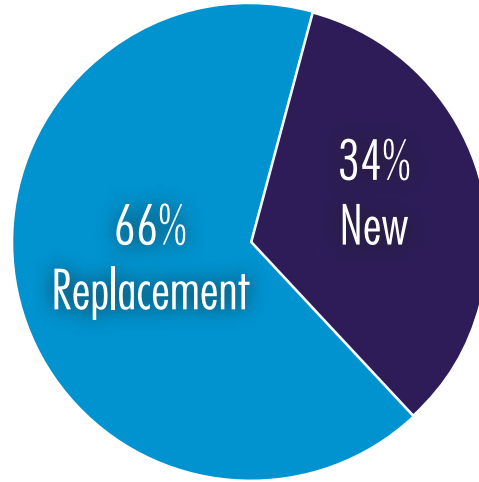


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# Most recent purchase...

## Kind of Purchase

The majority of adult campers bought replacement camping equipment for lost or broken goods over new camping equipment.



Campers, Ages 18+

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## Purchasing Decision

Campers by Age

Sixty-two percent of adult campers planned their most recent purchase before setting off on a camping trip. Very few camping purchases were made spontaneously.

"When was the purchase decision made?"	Age 18-34	Age 35-44	Age 45-54	Age 55+	All Ages
At home, prior to the camping trip.	64%	61%	62%	59%	62%
While in a camping equipment store.	18%	9%	13%	6%	12%
Reviewing camping equipment online.	8%	9%	9%	11%	9%
While camping.	6%	14%	10%	16%	11%
At store/when seen.	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Looking through a print catalog.	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%
On special.	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Friends.	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Gift.	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
After previous trip.	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%
On another non-camping trip.	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%
Other.	0%	2%	2%	1%	1%

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# Most recent purchase...

## Preparation and Purchase

Campers by Age

Most adult participants did their research before purchasing camping-related items. As a matter of fact, 42 percent of participants — and 52 percent of those ages 18 to 34 — did online research, checked out the item in a store then made the purchase in the store.

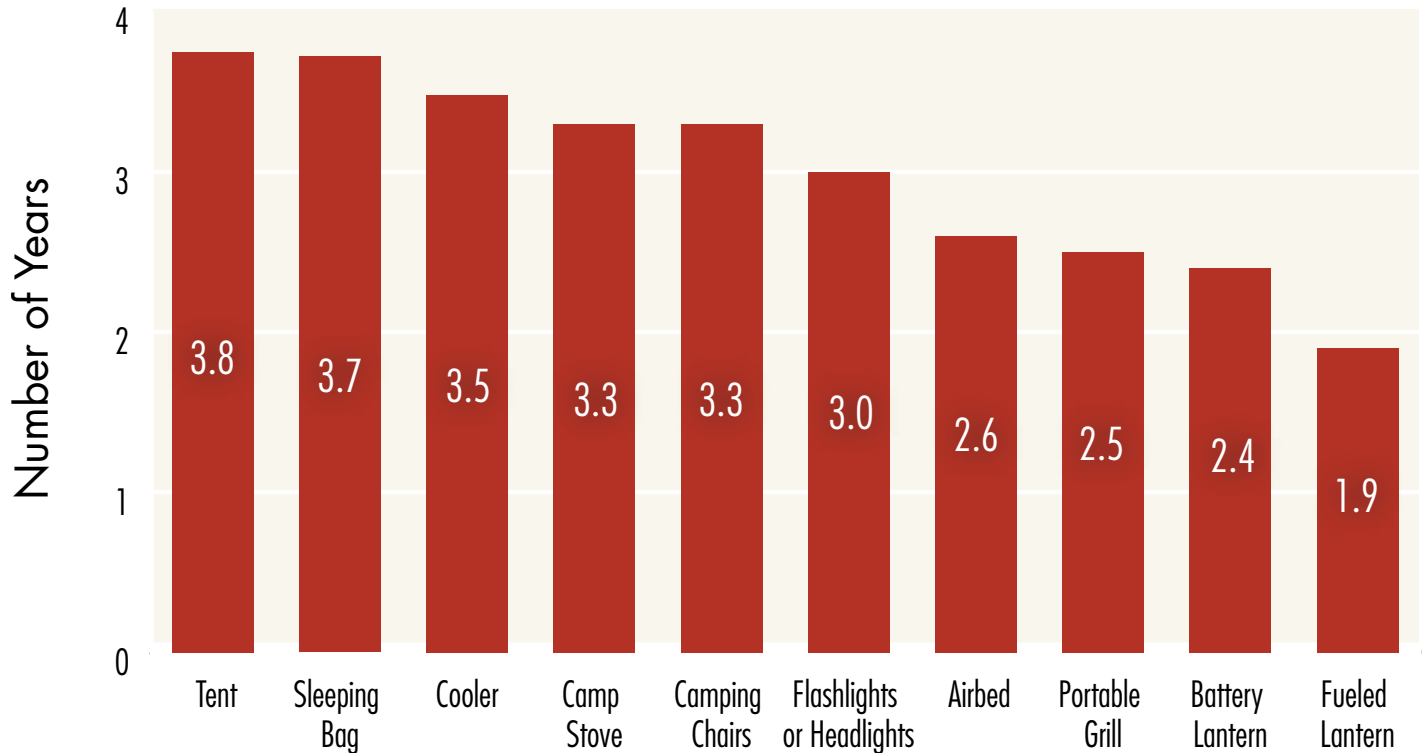
"Which best describes how you made your purchase?"	Age 18-34	Age 35-44	Age 45-54	Age 55+	All Ages
Did online research, checked out the item in a store(s) and then made purchase in the store.	52%	35%	32%	39%	42%
Checked out the items in a store(s), then made purchase online.	20%	8%	8%	11%	13%
Purchased the item in a store(s) without doing any online research.	15%	39%	39%	29%	28%
Purchased online without checking out item in a store(s).	9%	17%	16%	16%	14%
Made impulse buy.	2%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Bought at yard sale or Craigslist.	1%	0%	0%	2%	1%
Bought from friend or family member.	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Was a gift.	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Did general research.	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%
Researched and bought online.	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Other	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%

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# Frequency of Purchasing Items

Campers, Ages 18+

Adult camping participants replaced or purchased fueled lanterns the most frequently — an average of about once every two years. Tents were replaced the least frequently at once every 3.8 years.





# In the last year...

## Camping Purchases

Camper by Age

In 2013, one-quarter of adult participants bought battery lighting, making it the most popular camping-related purchase. Thirty percent, however, did not buy any camping equipment.

"What did you purchase in the last 12 months?"	Age 18-34	Age 35-44	Age 45-54	Age 55+	All Ages
Battery Lighting	24%	32%	25%	18%	25%
Sleeping Bag	20%	18%	18%	13%	18%
Propane or Liquid Fuel Lighting	16%	28%	25%	24%	22%
Backpack	15%	19%	17%	12%	15%
Cooler	14%	19%	15%	10%	15%
Portable Grill	11%	8%	8%	6%	9%
Airbed	9%	22%	24%	11%	15%
Tent	9%	20%	15%	12%	13%
Camp Furniture	8%	20%	14%	19%	14%
Camp Stove	6%	14%	6%	11%	9%
RV	2%	4%	5%	7%	4%
Bicycle to Take Camping	2%	7%	3%	7%	4%
Cookware/Utensils	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%
Hiking Equipment	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Sleeping Equipment (Pillows and Pads)	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Clothing	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%
Other Accessories	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Shelter/Netting	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Other	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%
None	33%	23%	27%	32%	30%

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# Spending on Sports and Recreation in 2013

Campers, Ages 6+

	More Than In 2012	Less Than In 2012
Sports and Recreation Footwear	15%	6%
Sports and Recreation Clothing	14%	8%
Outdoor Recreation Activities	12%	6%
Sports and Recreation Equipment	10%	9%
Travel to Take Part in Sports and Recreation	10%	6%
Team Sports Outside of School	8%	4%
Gym Membership	8%	5%
Team Sports at School	8%	3%
Lessons, Instruction and Sports Camps	7%	5%
Golf Membership and Fees	6%	4%
Winter Sports	6%	5%
Individual Sporting Events	5%	4%
Tennis Membership and Fees	2%	4%

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# Planned Spending on Sports and Recreation in 2014

Campers, Ages 6+

	More Than In 2013	Less Than In 2013
Sports and Recreation Clothing	16%	9%
Sports and Recreation Footwear	16%	7%
Outdoor Recreation Activities	15%	5%
Sports and Recreation Equipment	14%	9%
Travel to Take Part in Sports and Recreation	11%	5%
Team Sports Outside of School	10%	5%
Individual Sporting Events	10%	3%
Gym Membership	9%	5%
Team Sports at School	9%	2%
Lessons, Instruction and Sports Camps	8%	5%
Winter Sports	8%	4%
Golf Membership and Fees	7%	5%
Tennis Membership and Fees	3%	3%

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# FIRST-TIME CAMPERS

The majority of first-time campers were motivated to camp by a desire to enjoy the outdoors and to escape the grind. Like experienced campers, they tended to camp with friends.

In preparation for their trips, 41 percent of first-timers bought propane or other liquid fuel lighting, and nearly the same percentage rented or borrowed a bike. Few were disappointed with the gear they brought. In fact, 76 percent said there was no helpful equipment that they did not bring but wished they had.

For the first time, the *American Camper Report* examines first-time campers to better understand what motivates them to take a first outing and how to retain them as lifelong camping participants. The following section includes answers to questions asked only of adults who participated in camping for the first time in 2013.

## Bicycle

Forty percent of first-time campers borrowed or rented a bike for their first outing.

# 52%

Fifty-two percent of first-time campers were motivated to camp by a love for the outdoors and the same percentage by a desire to escape the grind.

## Nothing

A majority of adult first-time campers, 76 percent, did not feel they left behind any helpful camping equipment on their first trip.

# First-Time Camping Companions

First-Time Campers, Ages 18+

“With whom did you camp with on your first camping trip?”

Friends	28%
Spouse/Significant Other	21%
Kids/Grandkids, Ages 9-14	15%
Immediate Family	12%
Pets	8%
Sports Team	4%
Kids/Grandkids, Ages 15-17	4%
Other	9%

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Like all adult camping participants, first-time campers tended to pick friends as their companions, followed by spouses or significant others.

# Motivation for First Camping Trip

First-Time Campers, Ages 18+

“Which was an influence in you taking your first camping trip?”

I love being outdoors.	52%
To escape the grind.	52%
To spend time with family and/or friends.	48%
It was an affordable getaway.	33%
I thought it would be fun.	32%
I wanted to give my family a new outdoor experience.	27%
A friend and/or relative took me.	25%
I wanted to try a new experience outdoors.	25%
To enable participation or competition in other sports or active pursuits.	12%
I've always wanted to go camping.	12%
My children asked me to take them camping.	8%
Great base for activities.	4%
Other	9%

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Adult first-time campers were evenly split on their motivation to go camping. Fifty-two percent camped because they love to be outside and the same percentage camped to escape the daily grind.

# Equipment Bought for First Camping Trip

First-Time Campers, Ages 18+

“What equipment did you purchase in preparation for your first camping trip?”

Propane or Liquid Fuel Lighting	41%
Battery Lighting	36%
Sleeping Bag	36%
Portable Grill	25%
Airbed	21%
Camp Stove	21%
Cooler	20%
Backpack	20%
Camp Furniture	20%
Tent	17%
RV	8%
Bicycle to Take Camping	4%
None	17%

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To prepare for a first camping trip, 41 percent of adult first-time participants bought propane or liquid fuel lighting. A significant amount of first-timers, 17 percent, did not buy anything.

# Equipment Rented or Borrowed for First Camping Trip

First-Time Campers, Ages 18+

“Did you rent or borrow any camping equipment in preparation for your first camping trip?”

Bicycle to Take Camping	40%
Camp Stove	30%
Camp Furniture	16%
Sleeping Bag	16%
Battery Lighting	14%

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Forty percent of adult first-time campers borrowed or rented a bicycle for their first camping outing. Lower ticket items, including camp stoves, camp furniture and sleeping bags, followed.



# Helpful Equipment Not Taken on First Trip

First-Time Campers, Ages 18+

"After taking your first camping trip, was there equipment you didn't bring but wished you had?"

Beer	9%
More Camp Furniture	4%
Better Shoes	4%
Lighter Cookware	4%
Better Lighting	4%
None	76%
Other	4%

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A majority of adult first-time campers, 76 percent, were satisfied with the equipment they brought. Of those that wished they had brought something, nine percent said they wanted beer on their camping trip.

# Words Associated with First Camping Trip

First-Time Campers, Ages 18+



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# THE FUTURE OF CAMPING

Of the total camping population ages six and up, 11 percent were either new to camping or tried one of the three types of camping (backyard/car camping, RV camping or backpacking) for the first time in 2013. A significant 85 percent of current participants went on their first camping outing between birth and age 15. After age 15, the chances of being introduced to camping were slim.

Among adult campers, 57 percent participated in regular outdoor activities when they were between the ages of six and 12. That compares to a mere 25 percent of non-campers. Outdoor recreation during adolescence had an even greater impact on future lifestyle choices.

Time was the biggest barrier keeping participants from camping more often. Nearly 80 percent of participants blamed a lack of time due to school and work for not going on more camping trips.

Ninety-nine percent of campers said it is “likely” or “very likely” that they will participate in camping next year, with 66 percent planning three or more trips.

## Outdoors

Sixty-four percent of current adult campers were exposed to outdoor activities as adolescents.

## Time

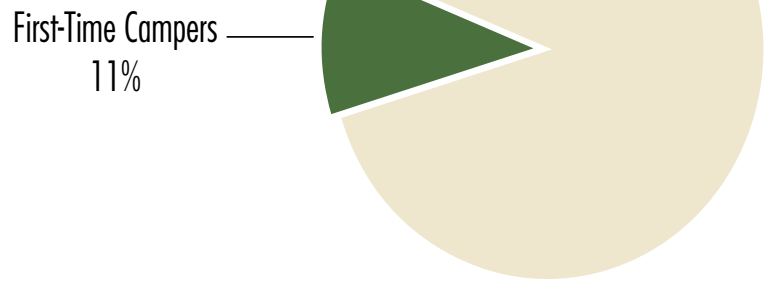
Almost 80 percent of campers cited a lack of time due to family and work for taking fewer trips.

## 4.9 Trips

Campers plan to take an average of 4.9 trips next year.

# Number of First-Time Participants

In 2013, 11 percent of camping participants were either new to camping or tried a different type of camping (backyard/car camping, RV camping or backpacking) for the first time.



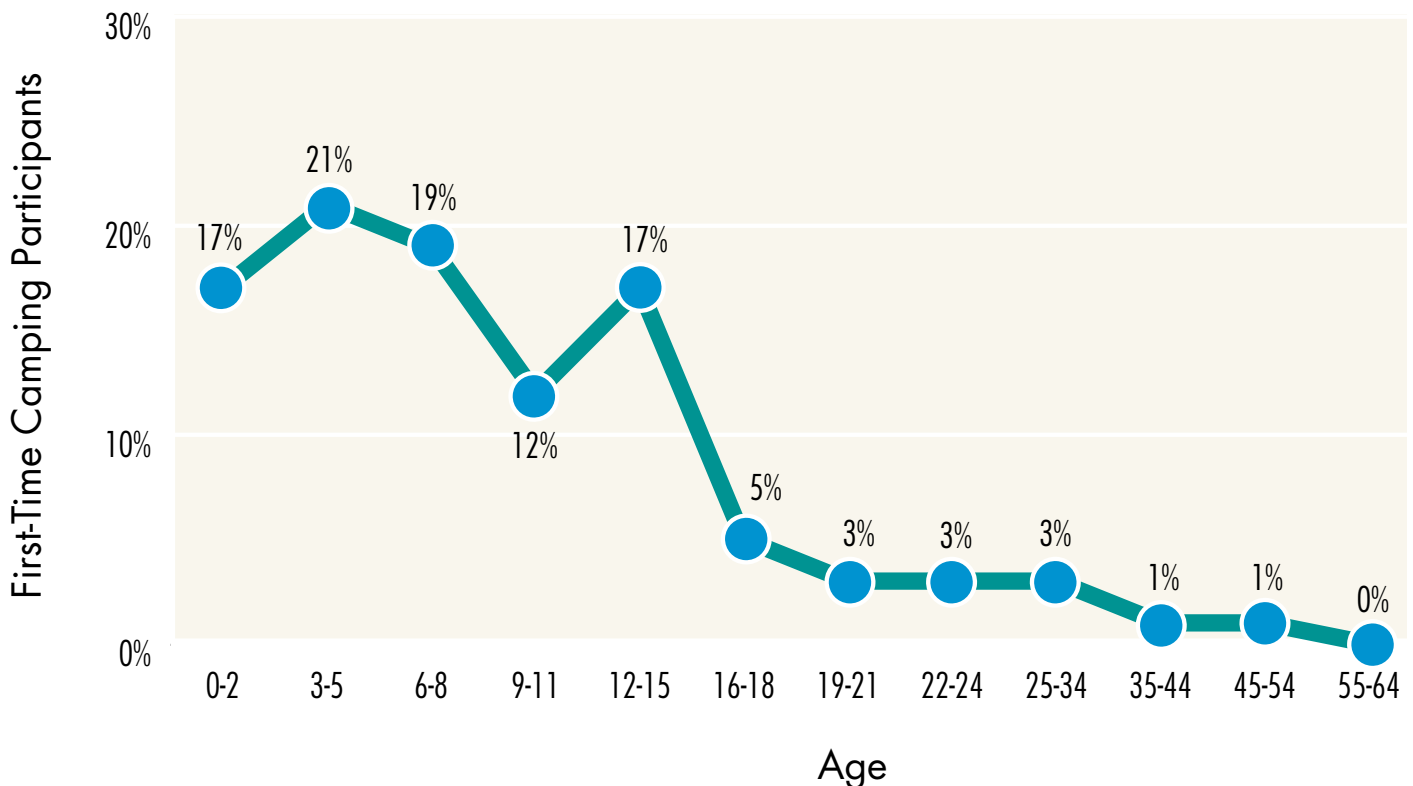
Campers, Ages 6+

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# Introducing Camping for the First Time

Campers, Ages 18+

Among current adult campers, 85 percent of them took their first camping trip between birth and age 15. The percentage of people going on a first camping trip after age 15 drastically dropped, and the likelihood of being introduced to camping continued to fall as the population aged.



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# Youth Participation in Sports and Recreation Among Current Adult Campers

Americans, Ages 6+

Among adult campers, 57 percent participated in regular outdoor activities between the ages of six and 12. That compared to a mere 25 percent of non-campers. Outdoor recreation during adolescence had an even greater impact on future lifestyle choices.

"Which activities did you regularly participate in?"	Campers Ages 6-12	Non-Campers Ages 6-12	Campers Ages 13-17	Non-Campers Ages 13-17
PE at School	77%	66%	73%	64%
Outdoor Activities	57%	25%	64%	28%
Team Sports	44%	30%	48%	34%
Cycling	40%	29%	42%	27%
Running and Jogging	27%	18%	41%	27%
Swimming for Fitness	27%	17%	32%	17%
Water Sports	23%	12%	26%	13%
Winter Sports	16%	8%	23%	11%
Racquet Sports	9%	5%	16%	11%
Fitness and Health Club-based Activities	7%	3%	15%	7%
Golf	7%	3%	13%	7%
None	8%	22%	8%	22%

## Number of Trips Taken

Campers by Age

In the last three years, 35 percent of camping participants have not changed the amount or length of their camping trips. Adults ages 35 to 54 were more likely to report fewer trips that are shorter.

"In the last three years (including this year), how would you characterize your camping activity?"	Age 18-34	Age 35-44	Age 45-54	Age 55+	All Ages
No significant change in activity.	35%	36%	35%	36%	35%
More trips now, but they are shorter.	19%	10%	12%	6%	13%
Fewer trips now, and they are shorter.	17%	24%	29%	18%	21%
More trips now, and they are longer.	10%	14%	8%	15%	11%
About the same number of trips, but they are longer.	8%	4%	2%	9%	6%
About the same number of trips, but they are shorter.	7%	8%	8%	9%	8%
Fewer trips now, but they are longer.	4%	5%	6%	8%	6%

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# Reasons for Taking Fewer Trips

Campers by Age

Of those taking fewer trips, 59 percent blamed work or school commitments. The younger the participant, the more likely they were to say that work and school kept them from enjoying camping.

"What keeps you from participating in camping more often?"	Age 18-34	Age 35-44	Age 45-54	Age 55+	All Ages
Lack of Time Due to Work or School	69%	62%	54%	45%	59%
Lack of Vacation Time	46%	26%	17%	25%	30%
Lack of Time Due to Family Commitments	33%	42%	61%	27%	41%
No One to Go With	26%	10%	13%	17%	17%
Couldn't Get a Reservation	10%	10%	7%	10%	9%
Price of Fuel	8%	10%	16%	26%	14%
Poor Weather	8%	10%	6%	2%	7%
Too Expensive	3%	10%	9%	2%	6%
Need Better or Different Equipment	3%	5%	10%	5%	6%
Prefer Hotel or Lodge	3%	0%	3%	14%	4%
Children Grown Up	0%	3%	2%	2%	2%
Ill Health	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Lack of Suitable Sites	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Park Closed	0%	1%	0%	2%	1%
Travel Elsewhere	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%
Aging	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%

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# Most Time-Consuming Aspect of Camping

Campers by Age

The majority of campers, 54 percent, agreed that finding the time to get away was the most time-consuming aspect of camping.

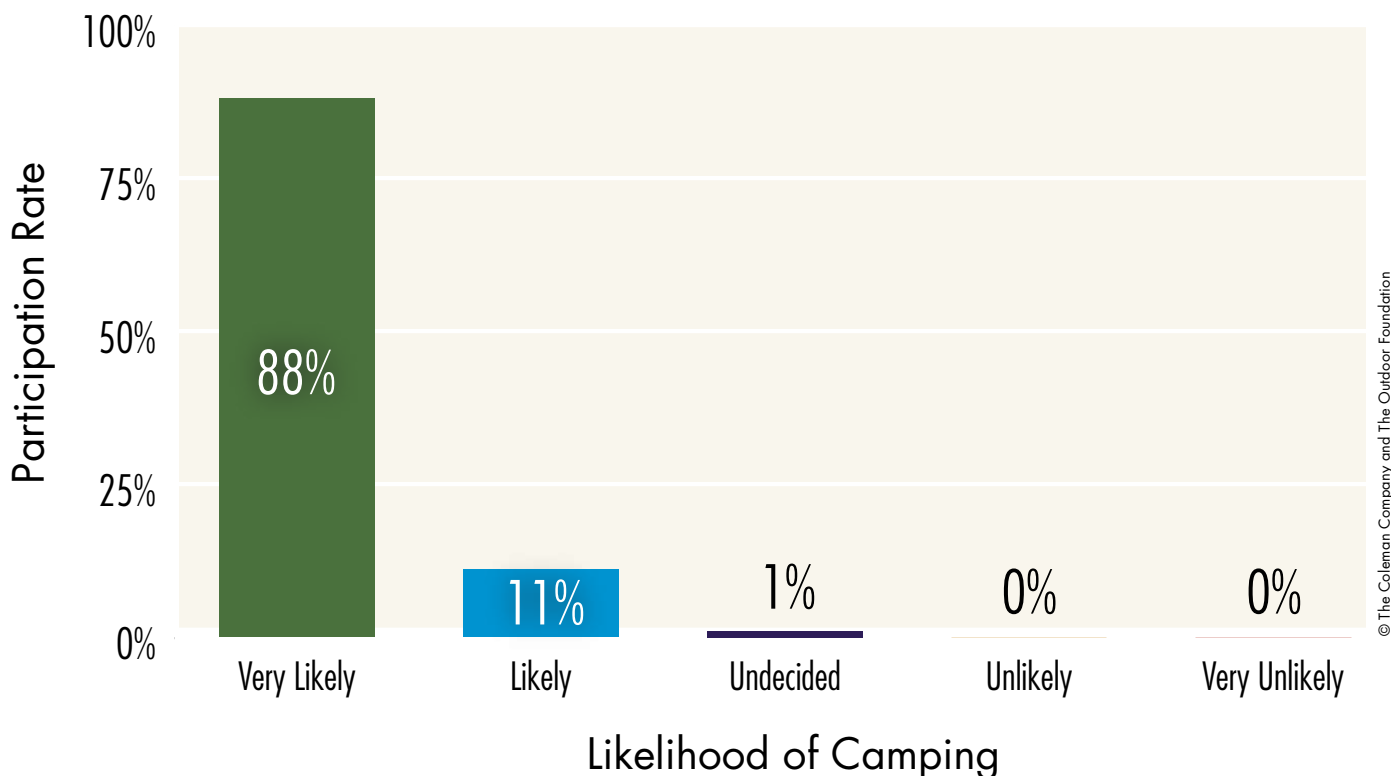
"What is the most time-consuming aspect that you lack the time to complete?"	Age 18-34	Age 35-44	Age 45-54	Age 55+	All Ages
Finding Time	52%	58%	57%	50%	54%
Planning	16%	12%	13%	10%	13%
Clean-up/Maintenance of Gear	15%	12%	11%	14%	13%
Traveling	12%	8%	4%	5%	8%
Packing/Unpacking	4%	10%	13%	15%	9%
Scheduling	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Other Commitments	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
None	0%	0%	1%	4%	1%

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# Camping in the next 12 months...

## Likelihood of Camping Next Year

Campers, Ages 18+



## Reason for Not Camping Next Year

Campers, Ages 18+

"Why are you unlikely or undecided in your decision to continue camping next year?"

Lack of Time Due to Family Commitments	43%
Lack of Time Due to Work or School	36%
Need Better or Different Equipment	27%
Illness	15%
Didn't Enjoy First Experience	7%
Prefer Hotel or Lodge	7%
No One to Go With	7%

Of those adult campers unlikely or undecided about camping next year, 43 percent said a lack of time due to family commitments was the reason. Work or school commitments also ranked highly.

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# Motivation for Camping in the Future

Campers, Ages 18+

“What would encourage you to continue camping in the future?”

More Free Time or Vacation Time	71%
Good Weather	54%
Encouragement from Spouse or Significant Other	47%
Encouragement from Family	44%
Encouragement from Friends	44%
Better Equipment	25%
Campgrounds with Luxuries	16%
Resources to Help me Get Prepared	11%
Campgrounds with Activities or Support for People with Children	11%
Online resources to Help Connect People who Like Camping	5%
More Options Available	1%
Friends and Family to Go With	1%

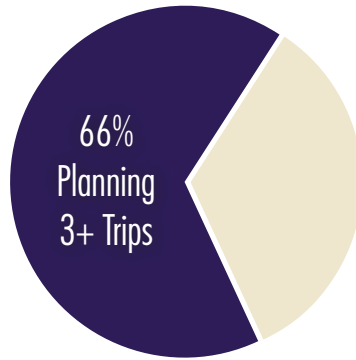
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Finding time was the biggest hurdle to going on a camping trip. More than 70 percent of adult campers said that more free time or vacation time would motivate them to camp in the future.

# Camping in the next 12 months...

## Camping Plans

Sixty-six percent of camping participants plan to go on three or more camping trips in the next year.



Campers, Ages 18+

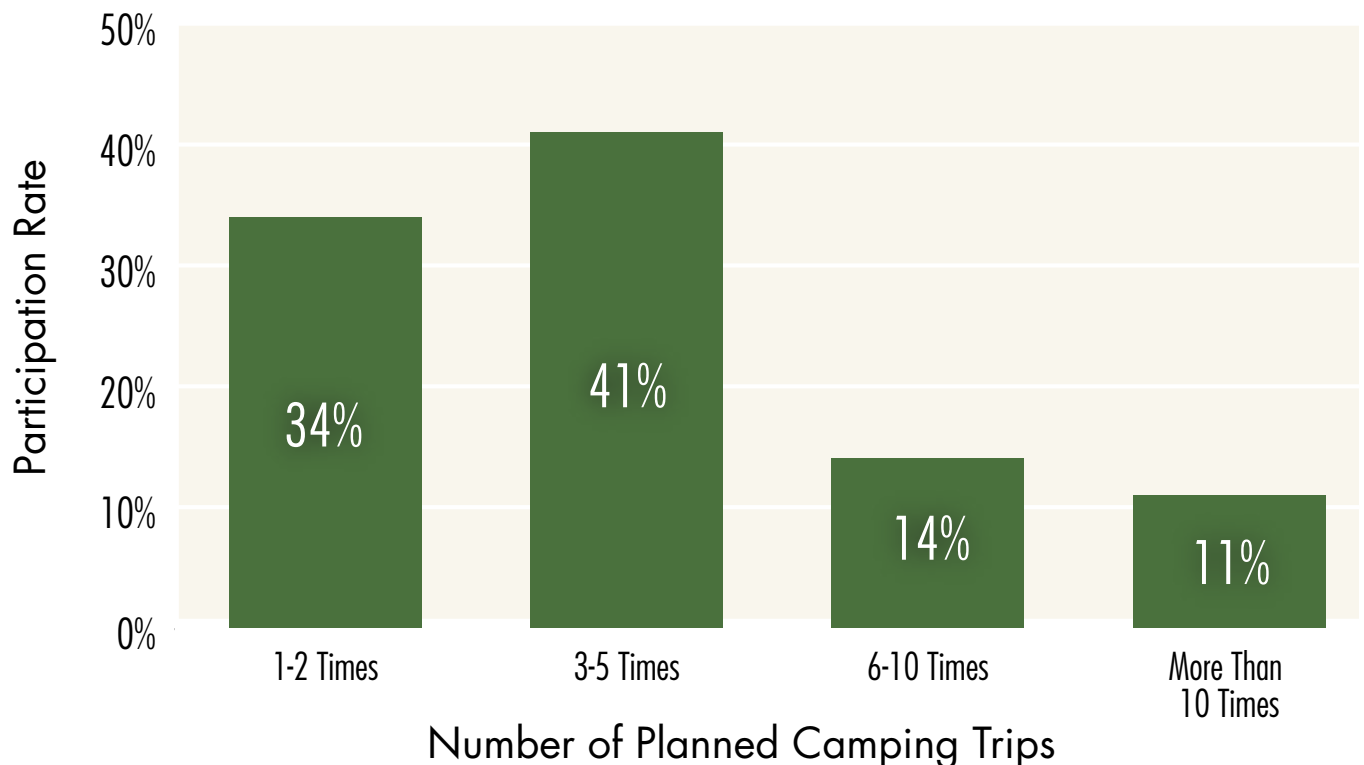
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# 4.9 trips

Adult camping participants are planning on taking an average of 4.9 camping trips next year, down from last year's 5.5 planned trips.

## Number of Trips Planned

Campers, Ages 18+



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# Method

During January and early February of 2014, a total of 19,240 online interviews were carried out with a nationwide sample of individuals and households from the US Online Panel operated by Synovate/IPSOS. A total of 7,528 individual and 11,712 household surveys were completed. The total panel has over one million members and is maintained to be representative of the US population. Oversampling of ethnic groups took place to boost response from typically under responding groups.

A weighting technique was used to balance the data to reflect the total US population aged six and above. The following variables were used: gender, age, income, household size, region, population density and panel join date. The total population figure used was 290,001,000 people aged 6 and above. The 2013 participation survey sample size of 19,240 completed interviews provides a high degree of statistical accuracy. All surveys are subject to some level of standard error—that is, the degree to which the results might differ from those obtained by a complete census of every person in the US. A sport with a participation rate of five percent has a confidence interval of plus or minus 0.31 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level. This translates to plus or minus four percent of participants.

The survey methodology changed slightly in 2007 to include household interviews in addition to individual interviews. The two methodologies are comparable and all results are indicative of the state of sports and leisure participation. Caution is recommended, however, in placing undo emphasis on trends extending back to 2006.

Unless otherwise noted, the data in this report was collected during the latest 2014 participation survey, which focused on American participation in the 2013 calendar year. 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 data noted in the report was collected in previous surveys.

Charts in this report may not always add up to 100 percent exactly. This is a result of rounding errors and the errors do not persist in the unrounded data.

## Supplemental Survey

Profile and projection data representing ages six and over are from the national represented survey. An additional survey was completed recontacting 800 respondents, ages 18 and over, who camped in 2013 to collect data on more specific camping experiences. The collection method in both surveys was the same.

## Youth Interviews

All interviews of children under 13 were carried out following the guidelines set out in the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998 (COPPA). No children were contacted directly. The panel is a balanced sample of households with children in each age group, but contact is always made through designated adult panelists. The adult panelist receives the survey invitation on behalf of a specified child, age 6 to 12, and they are asked to complete the survey together. Respondents ages 13 to 17 are contacted in a manner similar to respondents ages 6 to 12, but they are asked to complete the survey themselves.

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