



Senior Driver Survey

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Objectives

Conduct a telephone omnibus survey of Senior Drivers (drivers age 65 and older) over the weekends of December 8th and December 15th.

Methodology

This report presents the findings of a telephone survey conducted among a national probability sample of 2,017 adults comprising 1,110 men and 1,007 women 18 years of age and older, living in private households in the continental United States. Interviewing for this CARAVAN® Survey was completed during the period December 8-18, 2011. Of these 2,017 adults, 512 are Senior Drivers (drivers age 65 and older).

Cell phone numbers were excluded from the survey sample. A growing number of Americans rely solely on cell phones for their telephone service; 30% of U.S. adults (2010 CDC data) can be reached only by cell phone. An additional 16% are “cell mostly” and may not be reachable on a landline. The percentage of cell only / cell mostly adults is substantially greater among many subgroups of interest: younger, Hispanics, urban, less affluent, etc. (2010 NCHS data). According to the CDC (“Wireless Substitution: Early Release of Estimates From the National Health Interview Survey, July–December 2010”; June 8, 2011), as of December, 2010, 7.7% of adults 65 or older live in wireless-only households. Given the fact that the focus of this survey is not technology-related, the exclusion of this group from the sample was not considered to present a serious compromise of the validity of the results.

The study results have an average statistical error rate of +/-4.9% for Senior Drivers. That means there is a 95% chance that the results found in this study are within +/-4.9% of the results that would have been found if interviews with all Senior Drivers had been conducted. The statistical error rate for individual survey results depends on the number of respondents to each question and on the observed proportions.

Completed interviews are weighted by five variables: age, sex, geographic region, race, and education to ensure reliable and accurate representation of the total population, 18 years of age and older.

Key Findings


Note: differences between male and female senior drivers are mentioned below where statistically significant.

Nearly one in five (18%) US adults age 65 or older are not currently driving a car, SUV or light truck. This report covers the rest (82%) of the 65+ year-olds who are currently driving.

The majority of senior drivers (80%) are avoiding certain types of driving situations, primarily bad weather (61%), at night (50%), heavy traffic (42%) and unfamiliar roads (37%). Somewhat less commonly avoided are long trips (32%) and highways or high-speed roads (22%). Women are more likely than men to avoid driving in every one of these circumstances (Table 1).

Table 1 - Driving Conditions Avoided by Senior Drivers

Driving condition	Percent of senior drivers who avoid each driving condition		
	All senior drivers	Male senior drivers	Female senior drivers
Any of these (net)	80%	70%	89%
Bad weather	61%	46%	75%
At night	50%	39%	61%
Heavy traffic	42%	34%	49%
Unfamiliar roads	37%	25%	48%
Long trips	32%	20%	44%
Highways or high-speed roads	22%	14%	29%
Other	8%	7%	8%

 Indicates a statistically significant difference between male and female senior drivers

Only one in ten (11%) senior drivers would not be inconvenienced at all if they had to stop driving tomorrow. The great majority (89%) would find the loss of their ability to drive to be a problem of some kind, and 4 in 10 (39%) would have a very serious problem with it.

Detailed Findings

M1 Do you drive a car, SUV or light truck?

Base: All respondents	Senior Drivers (n=512)	Adults 65+ (n=609)
YES	100%	82%
NO	0%	18%

M2 Please indicate under which conditions you currently avoid driving.
[MULTIPLE RESPONSES POSSIBLE]

Base: Excludes "Don't know"	Senior Drivers (n=511)
At night	50%
In bad weather	61%
On highways or high-speed roads	22%
Long trips	32%
Heavy traffic	42%
Unfamiliar roads	37%
Another condition	8%
I DO NOT AVOID ANY TYPES OF DRIVING CONDITIONS	20%

M3 If tomorrow you were to lose your ability to drive, how big of a problem would this be for you?
Would it be...

Base: All respondents	Senior Drivers (n=512)
Not a problem at all	11%
A minor problem	14%
A moderate problem	17%
A somewhat serious problem	18%
A very serious problem	39%
DON'T KNOW	<1%