

# Americans' Use & Views of Social Media

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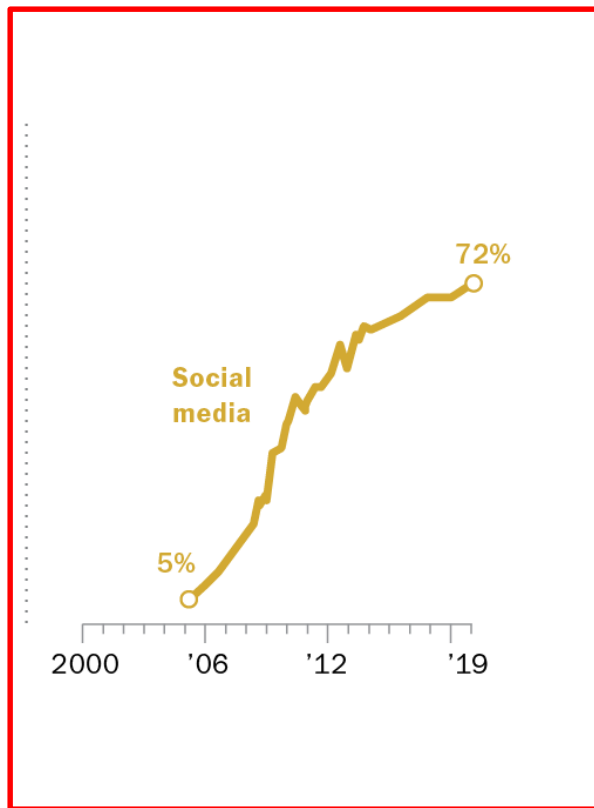
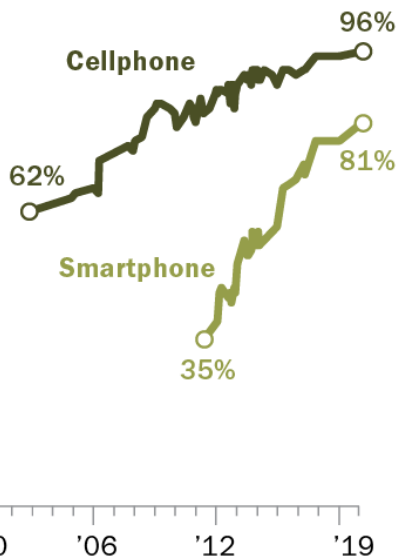
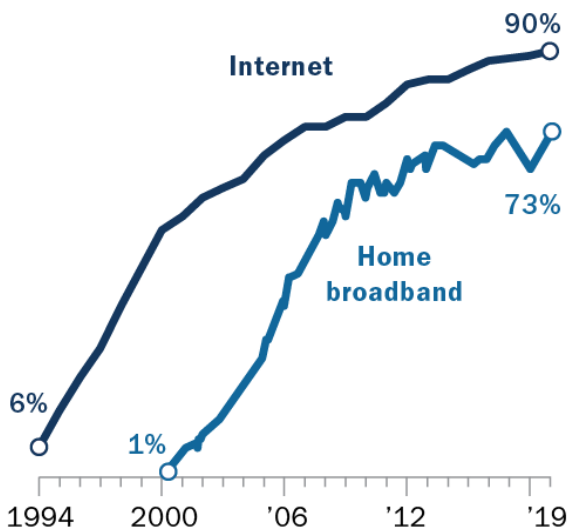
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# **SOCIAL MEDIA TRENDS**

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# Triple tech revolution: Broadband, mobile, social

*% of U.S. adults who use ...*



Source: Surveys conducted 1994-2019.

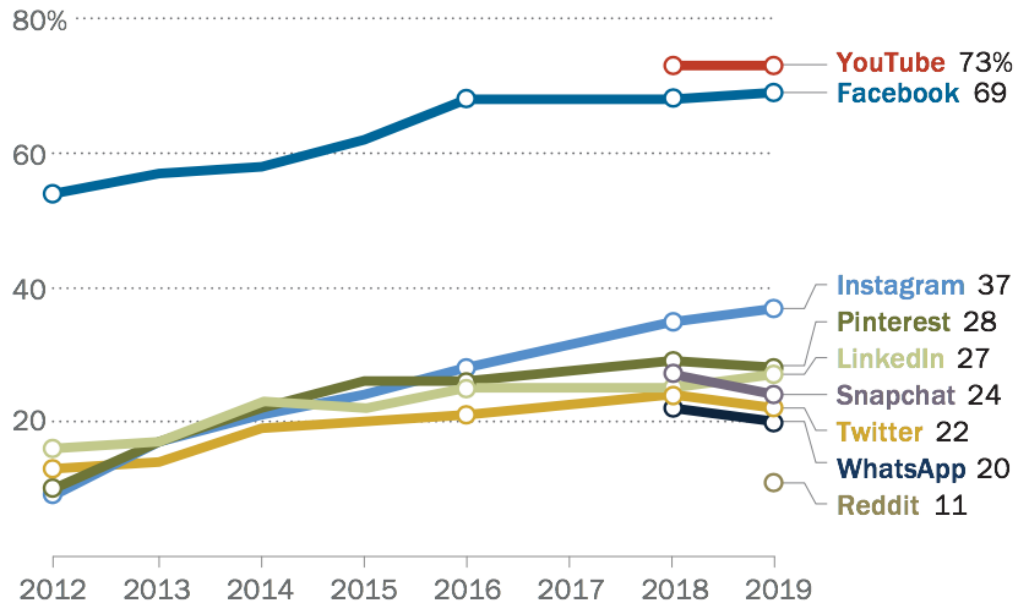
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<https://www.pewinternet.org/fact-sheet/>

# Facebook – along with YouTube – are used by more Americans than any other platform, app measured

## Facebook, YouTube continue to be the most widely used online platforms among U.S. adults

*% of U.S. adults who say they ever use the following online platforms or messaging apps online or on their cellphone*



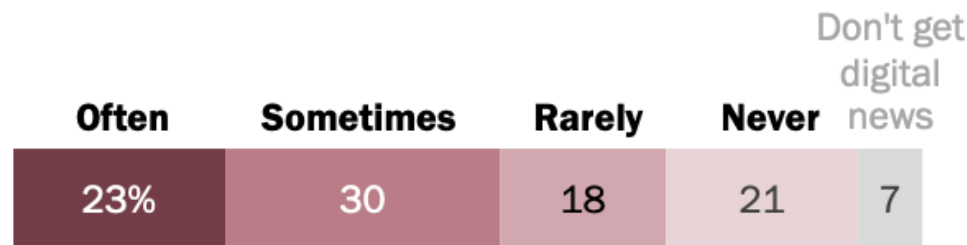
<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/04/10/share-of-u-s-adults-using-social-media-including-facebook-is-mostly-unchanged-since-2018/>

# Roughly half of Americans get news on social media at least sometimes

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## About half of Americans get news on social media at least sometimes

*% of U.S. adults who get news from social media ...*



Note: This chart is not comparable to similar questions asked in the past due to question wording changes; see Appendix for more details.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 31-Sept. 7, 2020.  
“News Use Across Social Media Platforms in 2020”

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**AMERICANS – IN THEIR OWN WORDS – DESCRIBE  
SOCIAL MEDIA’S IMPACT ON THE COUNTRY**

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# 64% say social media has a negative impact on the U.S.: Misinformation, harassment, extremism most common responses

MOST COMMON RESPONSES AMONG THOSE WHO SAID **MOSTLY NEGATIVE**

<b>Misinformation/made-up news</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>Hate/harassment/extremism</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>People believe everything they see</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Censorship/bias</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Negativity</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Partisanship/polarization</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Echo chambers</b>	<b>5</b>

Other Responses Not Shown

# In their own words: Reasons Americans say social media has had a mostly negative effect on the way things are going in the country

*False information is spread at lightning speed – and false information never seems to go away.*

- WOMAN, 71

*People say incendiary, stupid and thoughtless things online with the perception of anonymity that they would never say to someone else in person.*

- MAN, 53

*[People cannot distinguish fact from opinion, nor can they critically evaluate sources. They tend to believe everything they read, and when they see contradictory information, they shut down and don't appear to trust an information. - MAN, 49*

*Social media is censoring views that are different from theirs. There is no longer freedom of speech.*

- WOMAN, 42



# **10% say social media has had a positive impact on the U.S.: Staying informed, community, activism most cited reasons why**

MOST COMMON RESPONSES AMONG THOSE WHO SAID **MOSTLY POSITIVE**

<b>Helping people stay informed &amp; aware</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Easily community/build online communities</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Visibility for marginalized groups</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Activism/social movements</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Exposure to different viewpoints/opinions</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Holding people or institutions accountable</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Access to news</b>	<b>4</b>

Other Responses Not Shown

## In their own words: Reasons Americans say social media has had a mostly positive effect on the way things are going in the country

*We are now aware of what's happening around the world due to social media.*

- WOMAN, 28

*Spreading activism and information and inspiring participating in the Black Lives Matter movement.*

- WOMAN, 31

*It keeps people connected who might feel lonely or alone .* - MAN, 65

*It brings awareness to important issues that impact all Americans.*

- MAN, 60

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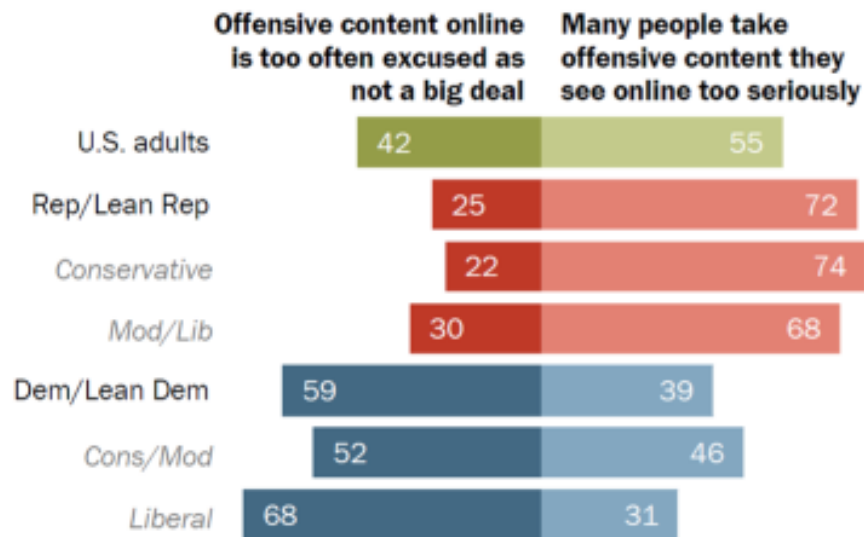
# **ONLINE HARASSMENT + FREE SPEECH VS. SAFE SPACES**

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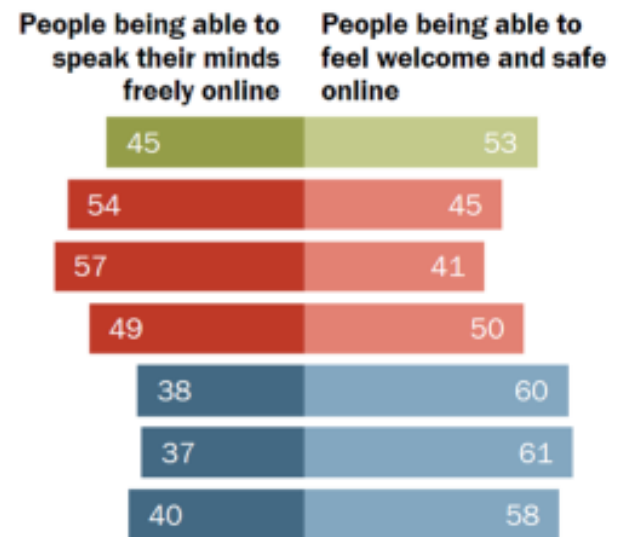
# Partisanship present in views about free speech vs. safe online spaces

**About three-quarters of conservative Republicans say offensive content online is taken too seriously; about seven-in-ten liberal Democrats say it is too often excused**

*% of U.S. adults who say ...*



*% of U.S. adults who say \_\_\_ is more important*



Note: Those who did not give an answer are not shown.

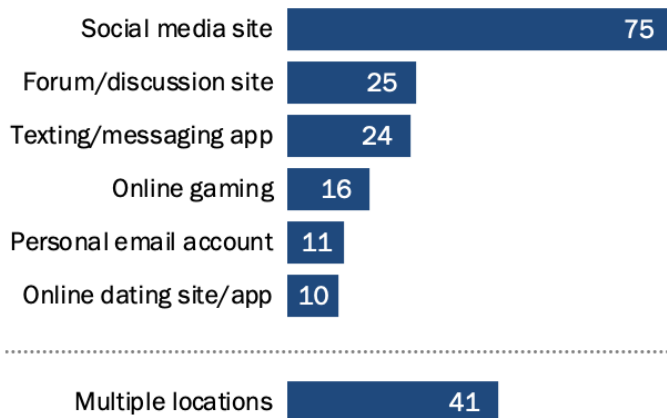
Source: For data on offensive content, survey of U.S. adults conducted Sept. 8-13, 2020. For data on the appropriate balance of free speech and feeling safe online, survey of U.S. adults conducted July 13-19, 2020.

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# Most targets of online harassment say it occurred on social media; more Americans today who've been harassed online say it was due to their politics

## Vast majority of people who've been harassed online say it occurred on social media

Among the 41% of U.S. adults who have personally experienced online harassment, % who say their most recent experience occurred in the following online environments

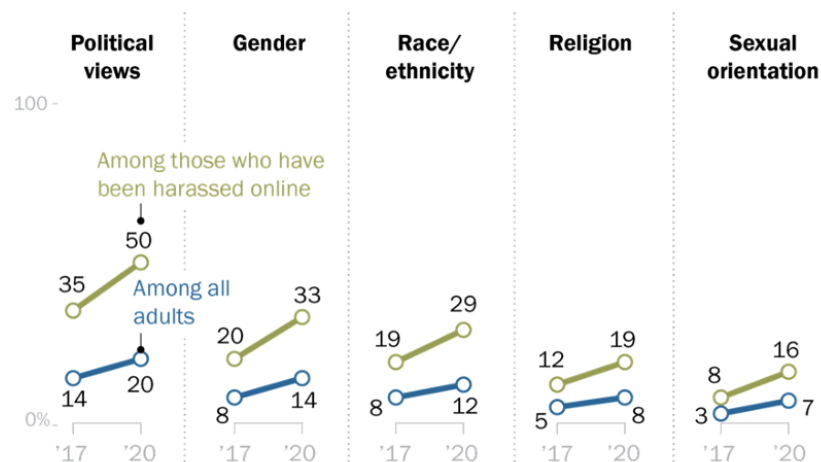


Note: Total may not add to 100% because respondents could select multiple options. Those who did not give an answer are not shown.  
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Sept. 8-13, 2020. "The State of Online Harassment"

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## Growing share of Americans who've been harassed online cite their political views as a reason why they think they were targeted

% who say they have experienced online harassment because of their ...



Note: Total may not add to 100% because respondents could select multiple options. Those who did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Sept. 8-13, 2020.

"The State of Online Harassment"

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# Thank You!

## Questions & Comments?

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