

VOTERS & MEDIA SURVEY

# 2020 FIRST-TIME VOTERS

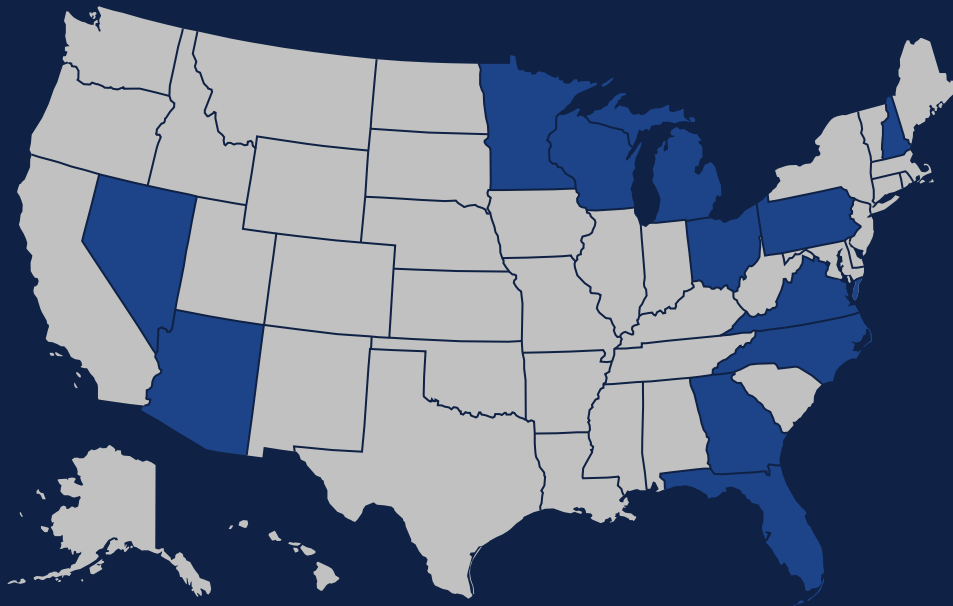
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report by



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First-time voters swung the 2020 election.

## Who are they?



In 2020, a diverse coalition of first-time voters pushed Joe Biden to victory in swing states like Georgia, Wisconsin, Arizona, and Pennsylvania, and reengaging these voters will be critical to Democrats retaining control of both the House and the Senate in 2022. We wanted to know more not just about who these voters are but where they are within the broader media landscape.

As part of our 2021 Voters & Media Survey, we asked first-time voters across 12 swing states where they are watching, reading, and listening to media today, how much time they spend with content, and how their habits have changed over the past year. We interviewed 400 first-time voters on the phone and online to learn more about what content and platforms are getting their attention in 2021.

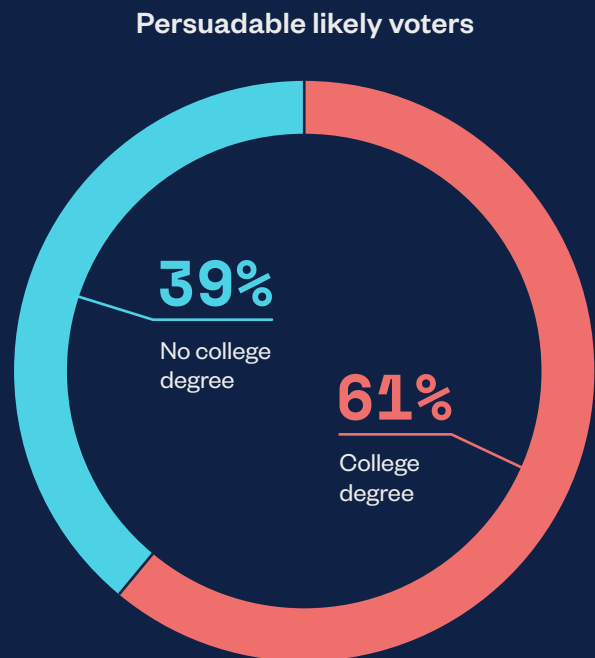
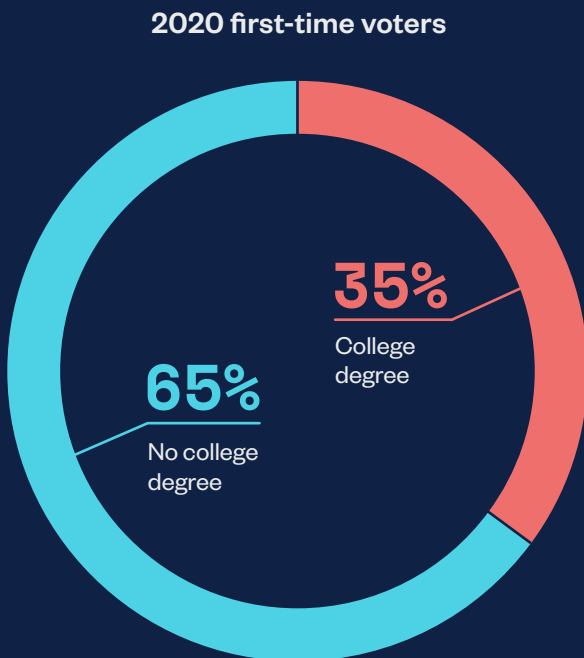
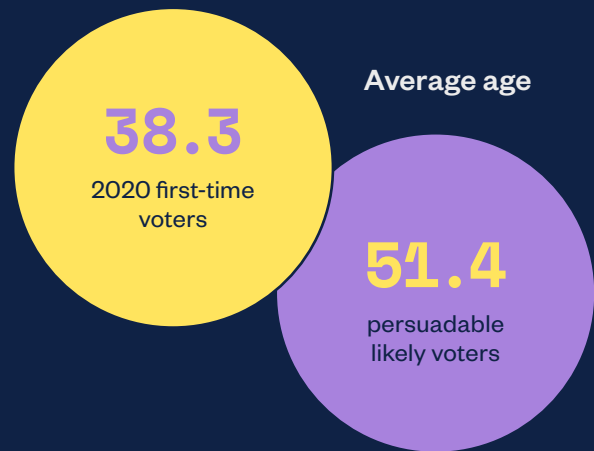
Here's what we found: →

# First-time voters are a distinct electorate

People who voted for the first time in 2020 are **younger, more diverse, and less likely to have a college degree** than persuadable likely voters.

In our study, the **average first-time voter was 38.3 years old, more than a decade younger than the average high-turnout swing voter**, who came in at age 51.4. The first-time voter group is also more diverse, with the average first-time voter being twice as likely to be Hispanic or Latino and three times as likely to be Black as the average high-turnout swing voter.

Just over a **third of first-time voters (35%) hold a college degree**, compared with 61% of persuadable likely voters; however, income is roughly equal between the two groups.



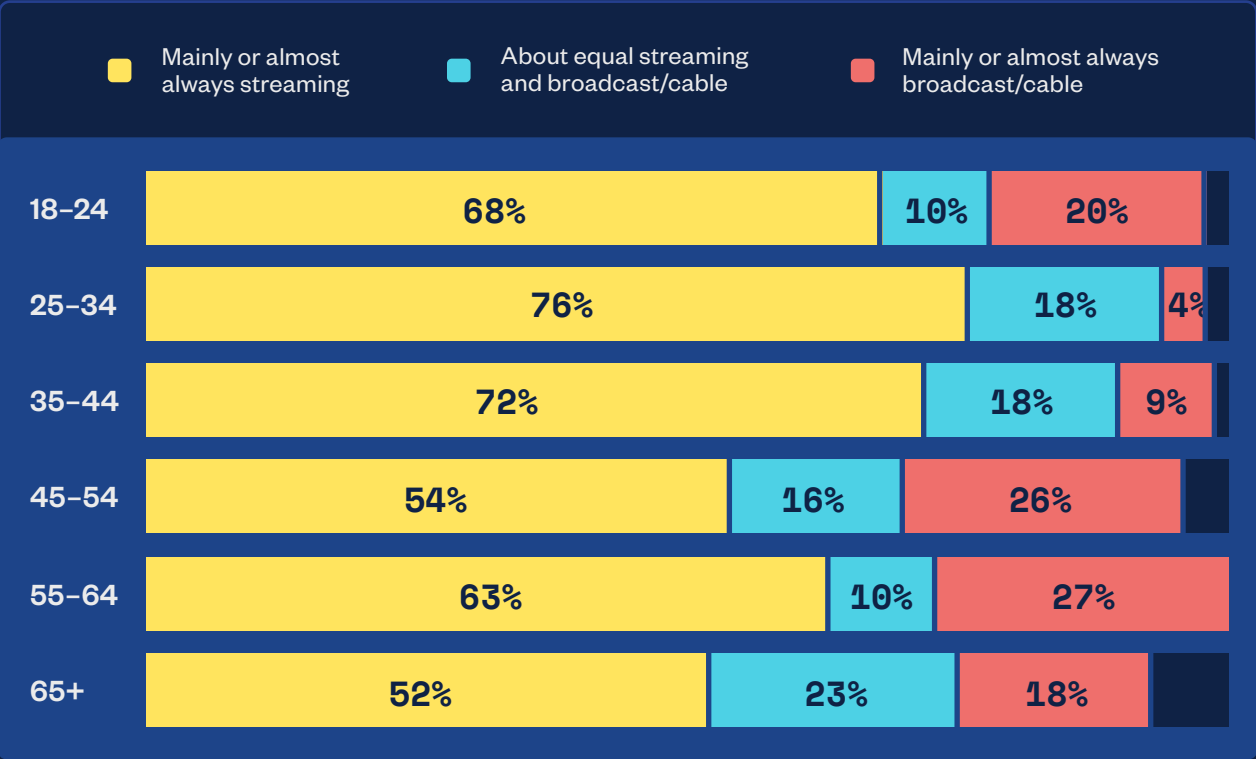
# First-time voters are a heavily digital-first audience

These voters are heavy consumers of **CTV, online video, and social media** across age, gender, ethnicity, education, and income.



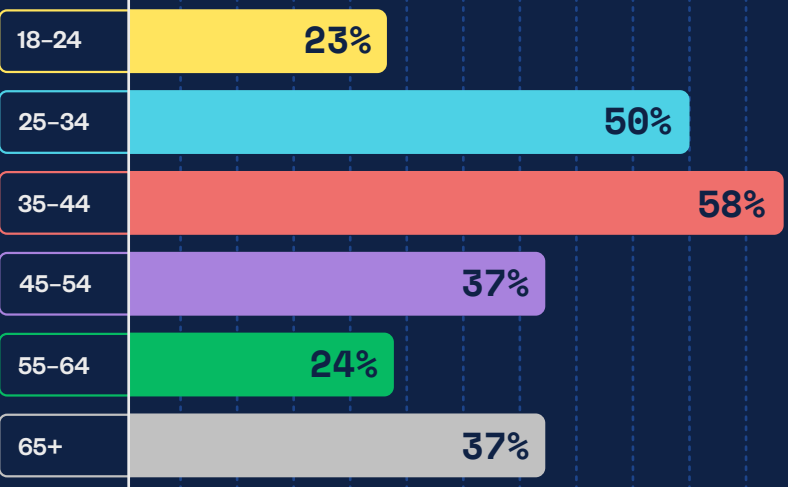
## How do you usually watch TV?

Americans who voted for the first time in 2020 report a strong preference for streaming platforms over broadcast and cable across age groups.



These voters often use DVR to skip over the commercials, and 42% report simultaneously using another device like a smartphone or tablet at least half of the time while watching TV.

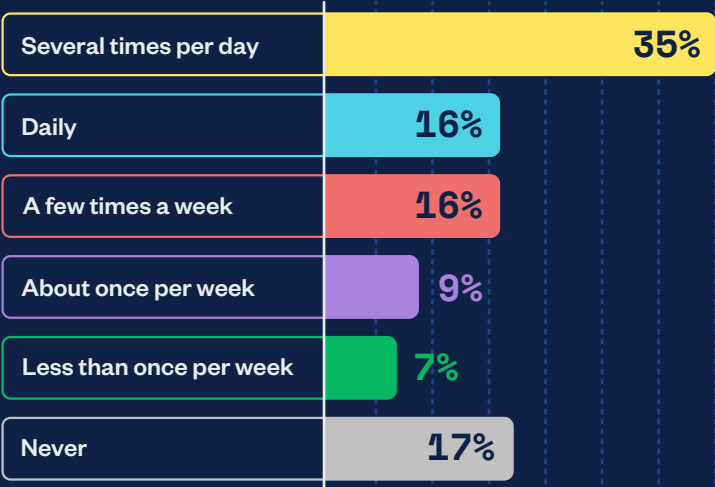
**% who report using DVR to skip commercials most or all of the time:**



**42%**  
are multitasking with another device while watching TV at least half of the time

Beyond streaming, these voters are heavy users of online video platforms like YouTube, and 74% report seeing online video ads they could not skip on digital gaming content in the past month.

**How often do you watch videos on YouTube?**

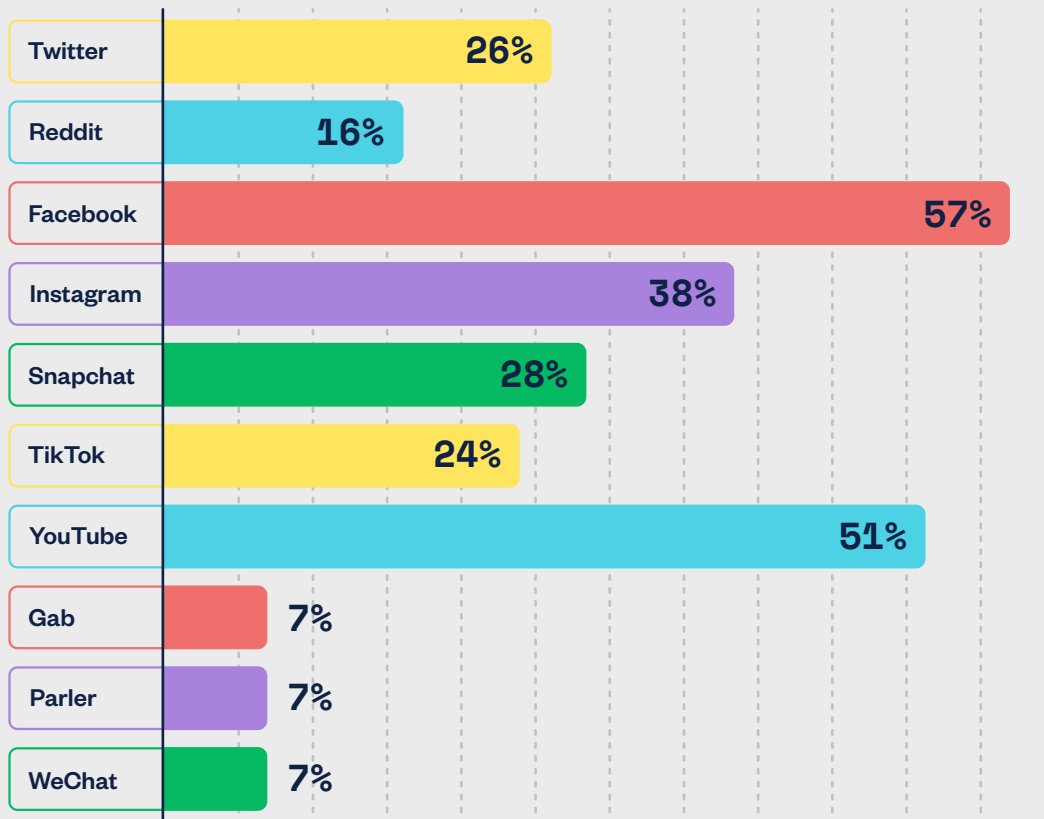


**74%**  
report seeing online video ads they could not skip on digital gaming content in the past month

# First-time voters use more social networks—and use them more frequently—than persuadable likely voters.

This group is heavily engaged in social media. They're twice as likely to say they get their news from social media almost all of the time, more than twice as likely to use Instagram several times per day, and five times more likely to use Snapchat several times per day than persuadable likely voters.

## 2020 first-time voters: Which social media networks do you use every day?

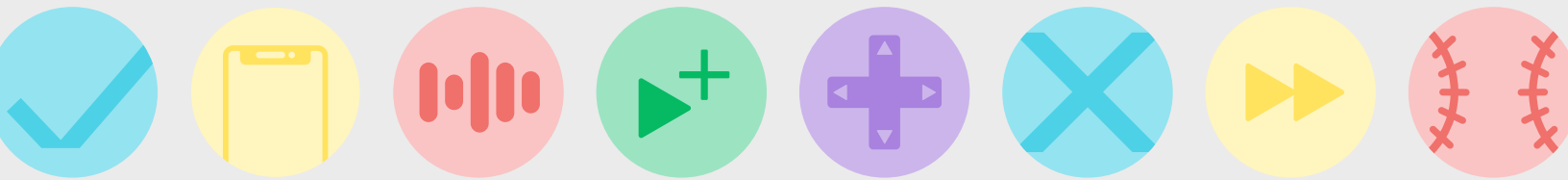


# What's next:

2020 was a once-in-a-lifetime election, but to be successful long term, **Democratic campaigns will need to continue to engage these first-time voters where they're at: streaming services, online video, and social media.** Particularly as disinformation proliferates and voting restrictions tighten, building consistent electoral participation among this group of voters will require

sustained investment to deliver political messaging in a way that resonates with an inherently non-political audience.

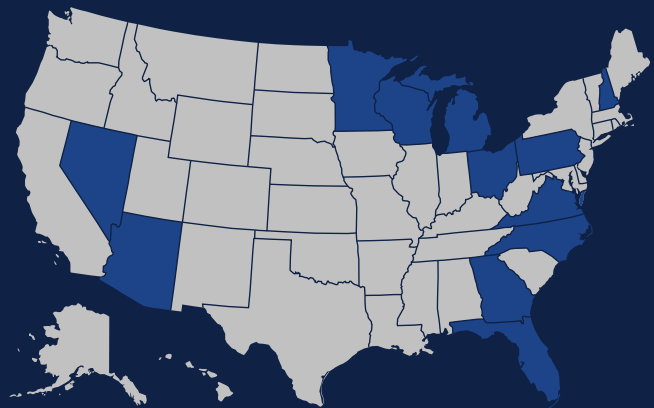
There is no one-size-fits-all solution; instead, savvy media planners will need to develop a tailored digital-first strategy to reach this critical segment of the electorate.




## Methodology

These findings are from a proprietary survey conducted by HIT Strategies on behalf of Rising Tide Interactive. This survey consisted of 400 individuals who voted for the first time in 2020 in 12 battleground states (AZ, FL, GA, MI, MN, NV, NH, NC, OH, PA, VA, WI), excluding strong Republican partisans (Catalist partisanship 0-15). The survey was conducted via live phone dialing (landline and cell phones) and an online sample panel, matched to the voter file.

The survey was fielded from April 19th–May 2nd, 2021, and the margin of error is +/- 4.0%, with a confidence level of 95%.





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