



PRESS RELEASE | Canada and the United States

Methodology:

Results are based on online studies conducted from September 4 to September 6, 2020, among representative samples of 1,000 adults in Canada and 1,200 adults in the United States. The data has been statistically weighted according to Canadian and U.S. census figures for age, gender and region in each country. The margin of error—which measures sample variability—is +/- 3.1 percentage points for Canada and +/- 2.8 percentage points for the United States.

Do you consider yourself a fan of each of the following professional sports leagues? - "Yes" listed

Canada

- National Hockey League (NHL) – 54%
- National Basketball Association (NBA) – 37%
- Major League Baseball (MLB) – 33%
- Canadian Football League (CFL) – 31%
- National Football League (NFL) – 31%
- Major League Soccer (MLS) – 21%

United States

- National Football League (NFL) – 59%
- Major League Baseball (MLB) – 51%
- National Basketball Association (NBA) – 44%
- National Hockey League (NHL) – 36%
- Major League Soccer (MLS) – 26%

Pandemic Curbs Buying Behaviour of Sports Fans in North America

Canadians and Americans are less likely to purchase apparel from teams and watch games at a pub or bar than in 2019.

Vancouver, BC [September 11, 2020] – The COVID-19 pandemic has severely affected the consumer behaviour of sports fans in Canada and the United States, a new two-country Research Co. poll has found.

In the online survey of representative national samples, only 12% of Americans and 8% of Canadians say they have gone to a pub or bar to watch professional sports in the year 2020.

In contrast, 23% of Americans and 18% of Canadians say they watched professional team sports at a pub or a bar in 2019.

While 23% of Americans and 16% of Canadians bought apparel from a professional sports team in 2019, the proportion has dropped to 15% in the United States and 7% in Canada during 2020.

In addition, 10% of Americans and 7% of Canadians have cancelled a subscription to a cable or satellite channel where they watched sports—down from 20% and 15% respectively who had a subscription in 2019.

A similar situation is observed on streaming services that show professional sports, with 8% of Americans and 7% of Canadians cancelling a subscription—down from 20% and 11% respectively who had one last year.

Fewer Americans are participating in sports pools (from 11% in 2019 to 7% in 2020) and placing wagers on sporting events (from 12% to 8%). The drops on these two indicators are not as pronounced in Canada, where fantasy league participation went from 9% to 7%, and placing wagers went from 6% to 5%.

More than half of Canadians (54%) consider themselves fans of the National Hockey League (NHL). Fewer than two-in-five Canadians are fans of the National Basketball Association (NBA) (37%), Major League Baseball (MLB) 33%, the Canadian Football League (CFL) (31%), the National Football League (NFL) (31%) and Major League Soccer (MLS) (21%).

In the United States, 59% of Americans say they are fans of the NFL, and 51% are fans of MLB. Fewer Americans consider themselves fans of the NBA (44%), the NHL (36%) and MLS (26%).



A majority of Canadians think the NHL (59%) and the NBA (52%) did a “good job” in dealing with the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. Fewer Canadians (37%) offer the same positive assessment to the CFL, the NFL, MLB and MLS.

In the United States, 51% of Americans say the NBA did a “good job” in facing the pandemic, followed by the NFL with 49%, MLB with 46%, the NHL with 44% and MLS with 37%.

Almost two thirds of respondents in each country (64% of in Canada and 64% in the United States) think professional athletes should speak their mind if they are concerned about social and political issues.

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About Research Co.

Simply put, we are curious about what people think and the decisions they will make. Some call it public opinion, others call it polling or public affairs. We never compromise facts for profit. Our agenda is the truth.

We have a global network of partners in the qualitative, data collection and data visualization specialities.

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