

## **New Firefox Survey: Americans Want More Control, Not Fewer Choices Online**

*Respondents are caught between the desire for greater digital independence and the difficulty of navigating complex privacy options*

**NEW YORK, NY, December 11, 2025** – [Firefox](#), the non-profit backed web browser, today released a new report, conducted with market research firm [YouGov](#), detailing how Americans navigate daily choices, the role of those choices online, and their anxieties about protecting privacy amid the rise of AI. The survey of 2,600 U.S. adults ages 18 and older found that 74% of Americans say they generally appreciate having many options, or at least don't mind them, even when there are a lot of decisions to make in daily life. Only 5% said that many choices and options are a heavy burden.

However, making numerous daily choices may have negative effects on people. According to the survey, 42% of respondents said that making a lot of daily decisions can lead to acting on impulse. Another 42% said these daily choices can lead to feelings of emotional burnout or fear of missing out for making the wrong choice. Feelings of emotional burnout were highest (53%) among ages 18 to 24, suggesting that younger adults are more likely to experience emotional strain when navigating many choices.

### **How people cope: prioritizing decisions and seeking independence online**

Faced with many daily decisions, respondents report that they prioritize where to spend their mental energy and look for ways to reduce “cognitive load”:

- 40% say they focus on the most important choices and let smaller ones go.
- 31% rely on strong routines to minimize trivial decisions.
- 24% plan ahead (for example, planning meals or outfits).

Even as many people report feeling overwhelmed by the number of decisions they face, the survey suggests they still find ways to assert independence. When asked which actions feel like the strongest expressions of independence online (selecting up to three), the top three responses were:

- Choosing not to share their data (45%).
- Choosing what information or news I consume (40%).
- Choosing what online communities or platforms I join (29%).

Only 19% of respondents selected “choosing my internet browser” or “choosing whether to use AI tools or not” as one of their top three expressions of independence online.

These findings highlight that people see control over data and information as central to feeling independent online, while choices about browsers and AI tools are recognized but less frequently named. Mozilla's [previous research](#) has shown that operating systems and platforms often make browser choice harder than it should be – from pre-set defaults to confusing settings – which may help explain why these options don't always surface as top-of-mind expressions of independence. It also underlines that when people do make an active choice about which browser to use, that choice should be respected by operating systems.

“Browser choice is one of the most important decisions people can make about how they experience the web, but it’s rarely presented that way,” said Ajit Varma, Product Vice President at Firefox. “When a device comes with a single browser pre-installed and set as the default, and when the options to make a different choice are buried behind extra clicks and confusing flows, people may think they’re choosing freely. In reality, they’re often choosing what’s been chosen for them. If we want users to have real agency online, operating systems need to make choosing – and keeping – your preferred browser simple and transparent.”

### **AI, data tracking, and diminished user control**

The survey illustrates a tension between desire and reality: people want more control over their data and identity online, but many feel overwhelmed trying to understand what privacy choices to make online. Respondents report widespread frustration with how large tech companies handle people’s data:

- 55% are frustrated that companies like Meta, Microsoft, Apple, and Google track their data without asking.
- 43% are frustrated that their data is being used to train AI without their permission.
- 43% are frustrated by how much Big Tech seems to know about them.

When asked how they feel about protecting their privacy online:

- Only 15% say they feel in control and able to make meaningful choices to protect their privacy.
- 30% say they try to protect their privacy, but it often feels overwhelming.
- 26% say they feel it’s “too late” – that Big Tech already has too much control or knows too much about them.
- 9% say they want to improve their privacy habits but haven’t yet, while only 8% say they don’t think about their privacy or are unsure why it matters.

“At the heart of it, this study showcases why technology should serve humanity first and product design must be built with user agency, choice, and trust at the center,” added Varma. “When companies embrace this path, they can empower users and cultivate healthy competition that ultimately leads to better products for everyone.”

The survey coincides with Firefox’s global “Open What You Want” campaign emphasizing the importance of user choice, from technology to everyday life.

Explore the full report from Firefox and YouGov [here](#). To learn more about how to choose a browser and stay safe online, visit <https://blog.mozilla.org/en/>.

### **Methodology**

This report is based on a survey of 2,610 U.S. adults (ages 18+) conducted online by YouGov on behalf of Mozilla from October 3–9, 2025. The figures have been weighted to be representative of the entire US adult population.

**About Firefox**

Firefox is a non-profit backed browser by Mozilla. Built with choice and user control in mind, it is an independent browser that prioritises user privacy, transparency, and openness.

**About YouGov**

YouGov is an international online research data and analytics technology group. Its purpose is to give the global community a voice by collecting, measuring and analysing their opinions and behaviors and reporting the findings accurately and free from bias. For further information, visit [www.yougov.com](https://www.yougov.com)