Ipsos Reid Public Affairs




Drive Smart Save Green Survey

Methodology

- These are the findings from the Drive Smart Save Green Survey.
- A total of 1,051 online interviews were completed between January 21 and January 26, 2009.
- The margin of error for a sample size of 1,051 is ±3.02%, 95 times out of 100.
- These data have been weighted to reflect the actual age, gender and regional composition of BC's driving population.
- Please note that some "Totals" in this report may seem off due to rounding error. For example, 35% and 24% might add to 60% (not 59%). With decimals, the component percentages might be 35.4% (rounds down to 35%) and 24.2% (rounds down to 24%), making the total 59.6%, which rounds up to 60%. All percentages shown are correct.

Ipsos Reid Public Affairs

Driving Activities

Highlights: Driving Activities

- Nearly all (93%) BC drivers admit to participating in some sort of distracting behaviour while driving.
- Clearly, the most common activity in which drivers partake is eating and/or drinking at the wheel (73%). A sizable proportion of drivers say that they talk on a cell phone while driving (66%).
- Other activities include smoking (24%), fighting with passengers (20%), texting (20%), reading (16%) and entertaining children (14%).
- Some drivers say they put on make-up while driving (8%) and some wear an iPod while driving (8%).
- Interestingly, 17% say that while driving they multitask and participate in one or more distracting behaviours while driving.

Highlights: Driving Activities

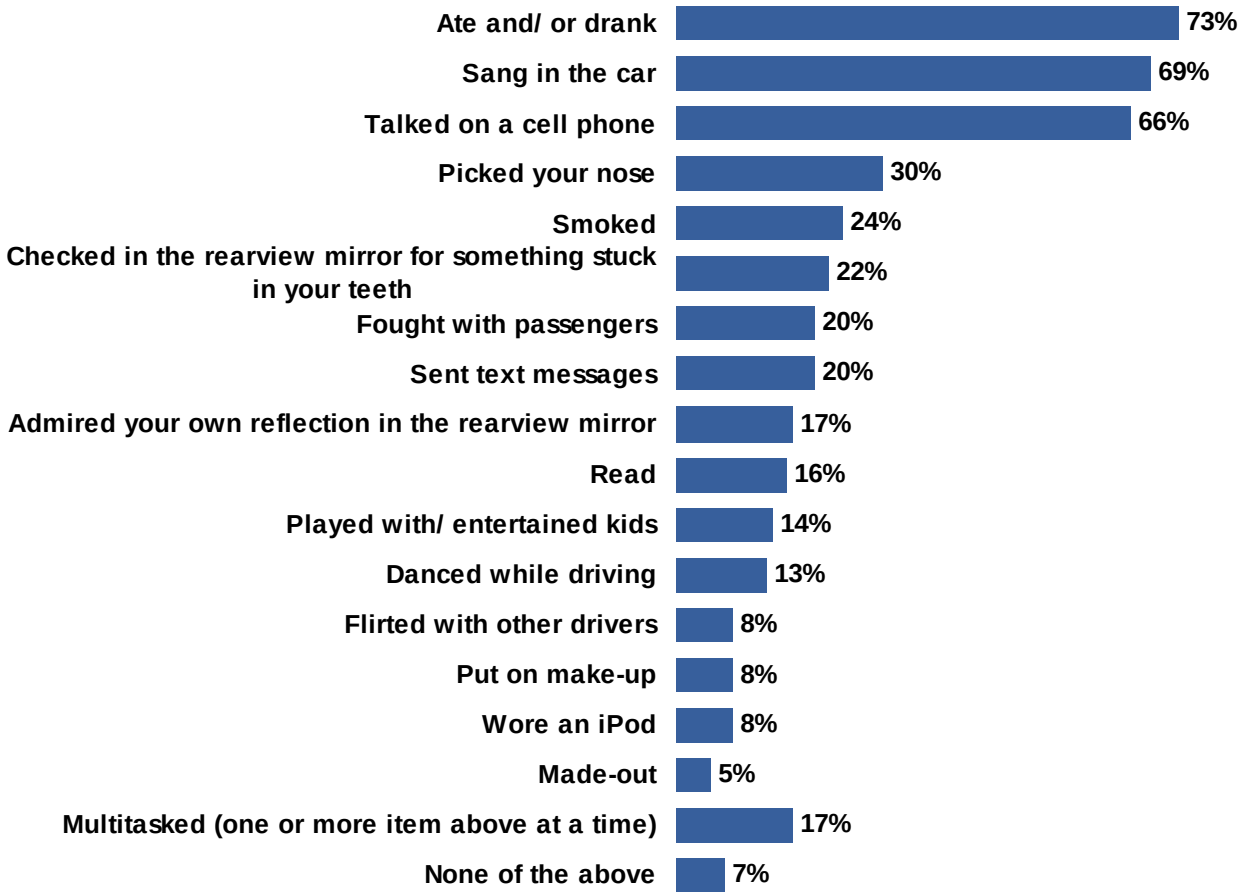
Sub-Group Differences – Driving Activities

In viewing results by subgroup we see a variety of statistically significant differences, mainly by age.

- Older drivers (age 66+) are less likely to engage in distracting behaviours in general. More specifically, older drivers are less likely than their younger counterparts to eat or drink, talk on a cell phone and/or smoke while driving.
- By age we see that younger drivers (age 18 to 25) are more likely than all other age groups to have sent text messages, wear an iPod, fight with passengers and look at their reflections in the rearview mirror.
- For some other driving activities, drivers age 18 to 25 share the same results as those age 26 to 45, and both age groups show significant differences than those age 46+. The most important difference being cell phone use while driving.
- The only statistically significant difference in driving activities by region is cell phone use while driving. Lower Mainland drivers are more likely to use a cell phone while driving than drivers in other regions of the province.
- By gender, the statistically significant differences we see primarily pertain to some of the 'trivial' activities tested. For instance, nose picking is higher among males than females while women are slightly more likely to sing, dance, apply make-up, inspect their reflections and entertain children.

Driving Activities

Q1. We are curious about what "interesting" things people do while driving. Over the past year, which of the following (if any) have you done while you were the driver of a vehicle? (Not while stopped – while driving).



Note: Only responses of 5% or more are shown.

Base: All respondents (n=1,051)

Highlights: Ways to Save Money on Gas

- When drivers were asked about “unusual” or “interesting” ways they save gas, the responses provided tended to be on the more conventional side rather than unique.
- The most common measure taken to save gas is to check tire pressure (36%) followed by carpooling or using alternate forms of transportation such as walking, biking or transit (31%).
- Some BC residents do forsake some comforts in an effort to save on gas - 23% don’t use air conditioning on hot days, 10% reduce the use of accessories and 5% don’t use the heat on cold days.
- Coasting down hills is a measure taken by 21%, but coasting to stops, slow accelerations, driving at slower speeds and accelerating slowly are mentioned by only 2% or less.
- Staying put is also a common method of saving on gas - 13% work from home, 3% have skipped work or school and 2% simply stay home more.
- On the flipside, 23% of BC drivers have not done anything at all to save money on gas.

Highlights: Ways to Save Money on Gas

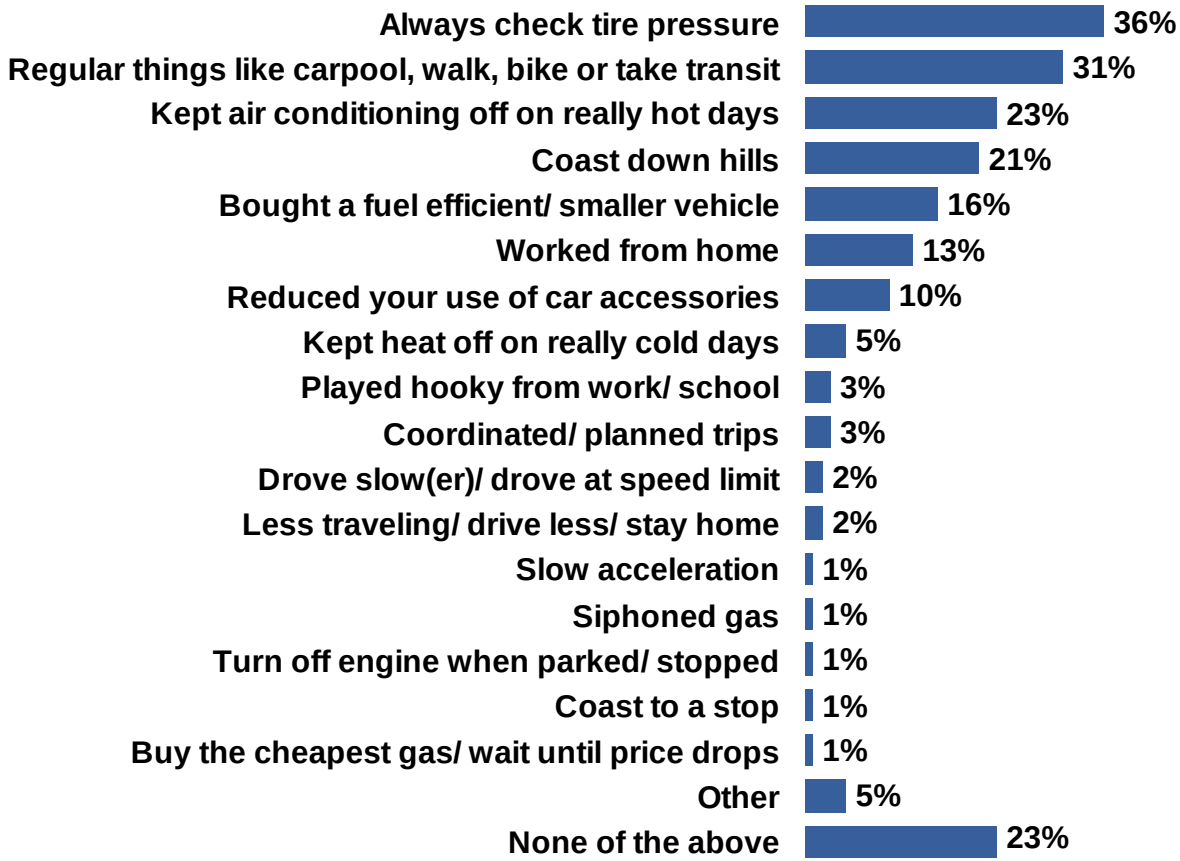
Sub-Group Differences – Saving Money on Gas

In viewing these results by subgroup we see a handful of statistically significant differences.

- Younger drivers (age 18 to 25) are more likely to have taken at least one measure to save money over the past year to save money on gas (94% compared to about 75% of those age 26+).
- Specifically, the 18 to 25 age group is slightly more likely than their older counterparts to have carpooled or taken alternate transportation, to keep heat off on cold days and to play hooky from work or school to save on gas. But generally speaking, the activities that they partake in don't vary too much from those of older drivers.
- By gender we see a couple of slight differences as well. Men are more likely to always check tire pressure. Women are more likely to take measures to save on gas such as carpooling or taking alternate modes of transportation such as walking, biking or taking transit.

Ways to Save Money on Gas

Q2. We are also curious about what "interesting" or "unusual" things people do to save money on gas. Over the past year, which of the following (if any) things have you personally done to save money on gas?



Base: All respondents (n=1,051)

Ipsos Reid Public Affairs

Impacts on Driving Habits

Highlights: Impacts on Driving Habits

Changes in Driving Behaviour Due to the Economy

- Over one-half of BC drivers (58%) have not adjusted their driving behaviours in light of the economic downturn. A sizeable minority (39%) however, have made some changes to how they drive as a result of the economy.

Sub-Group Differences – Changes in Driving Behaviour Due to the Economy.

- The only subgroup difference we see is by age. Older drivers (age 66+) are slightly more likely than their younger counterparts to have changed the driving behaviour due to the economy.

Changes due to Gas Prices

At the time of this survey, gas prices had fallen following a price spike just prior to the survey. Respondents were asked how these changes in gas prices impact their driving behaviour.

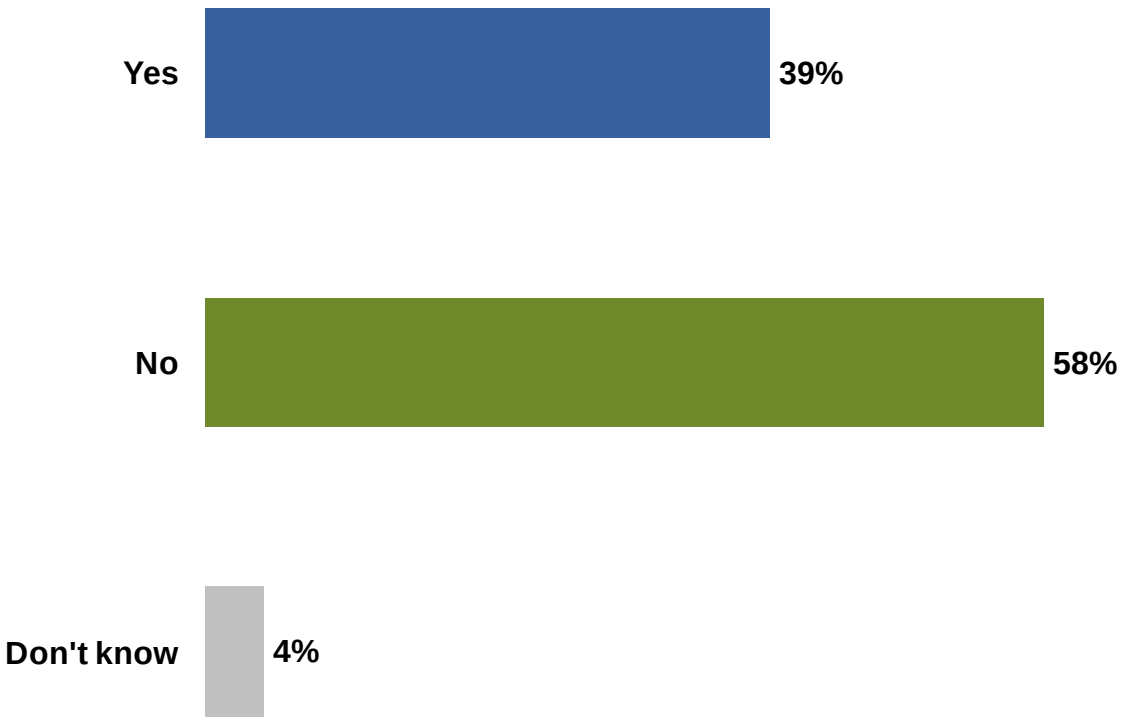
- Approximately 60% of BC drivers modified their driving behaviour when gas prices were higher.
- Today, half of those drivers still maintain those gas-saving driving habits, while the remainder have reverted back to old driving habits.

Sub-Group Differences – Changes in Driving Behaviour Due to the Economy.

- The only subgroup difference we see is by age. Younger drivers (age 18 – 25) are more likely than other age groups to have maintained their gas-saving habits since gas prices have lowered.

Economic Impact on Driving Habits

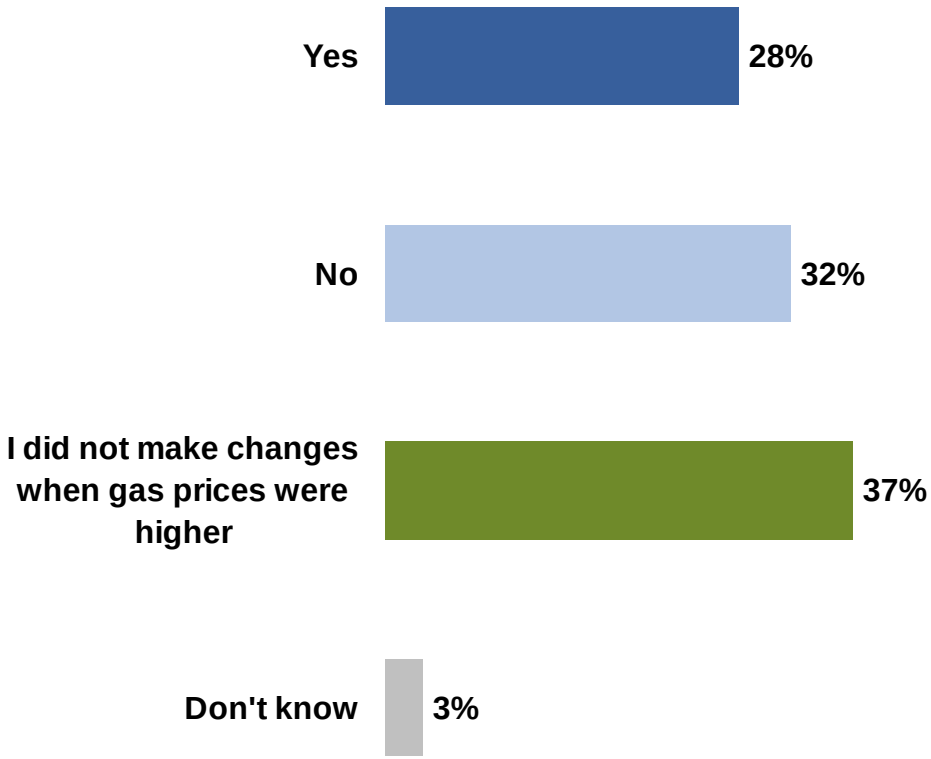
Q3. In the last few months, have you changed your driving habits in any way as a result of the economic downturn facing Canada and the rest of the world?



Base: All respondents (n=1,051)

Impact of Gas Prices on Driving Habits

Q4. Still thinking about the economy and saving money on gas… Gas prices a few months ago were almost double what they are today. When gas prices were higher did you do more to conserve gas than what you are doing today? (That is, now that prices are lower, are you back to your old driving habits?)



Base: All respondents (n=1,051)

Ipsos Reid Public Affairs

Next Vehicle Purchase

Highlights: Next Vehicle Purchase

Fuel Efficiency as Part of Purchase Decision

- Nearly all BC drivers (92%) say that fuel efficiency will be an important factor if/when they purchase their next vehicle. Specifically, 52% say fuel efficiency will be a 'very important' factor, while 40% say it will be a 'somewhat important' factor. Just 6% of BC drivers do not consider fuel efficiency an important factor in the purchase decision.

Sub-Group Differences – Fuel Efficiency as Part of Purchase Decision

- The only subgroup difference is a slight variance by gender. Women differ from men in the degree to which they feel that fuel efficiency is an important part of their purchase decision. Women are more inclined to consider this 'very important' compared to men. This in turn impacts the overall 'important' scores.

Next Likely Vehicle Purchase

- In thinking of the next vehicle they are likely to purchase, 27% say they might purchase a small car, while 18% say that they might buy a hybrid. An additional 3% say they are likely to buy a really small or electric car next. Meanwhile, SUVs (15%), full or mid-size cars (13%), trucks (11%) and vans (10%) are all likely purchases as well.

Sub-Group Differences – Next Likely Vehicle Purchase

- By region, the likelihood of purchasing a truck next is higher in North/Central BC.
- Women are more likely than men to consider a small car next. Men are more likely than women to consider a truck.

Highlights: Next Vehicle Purchase

Relative Gas Use of Next Vehicle

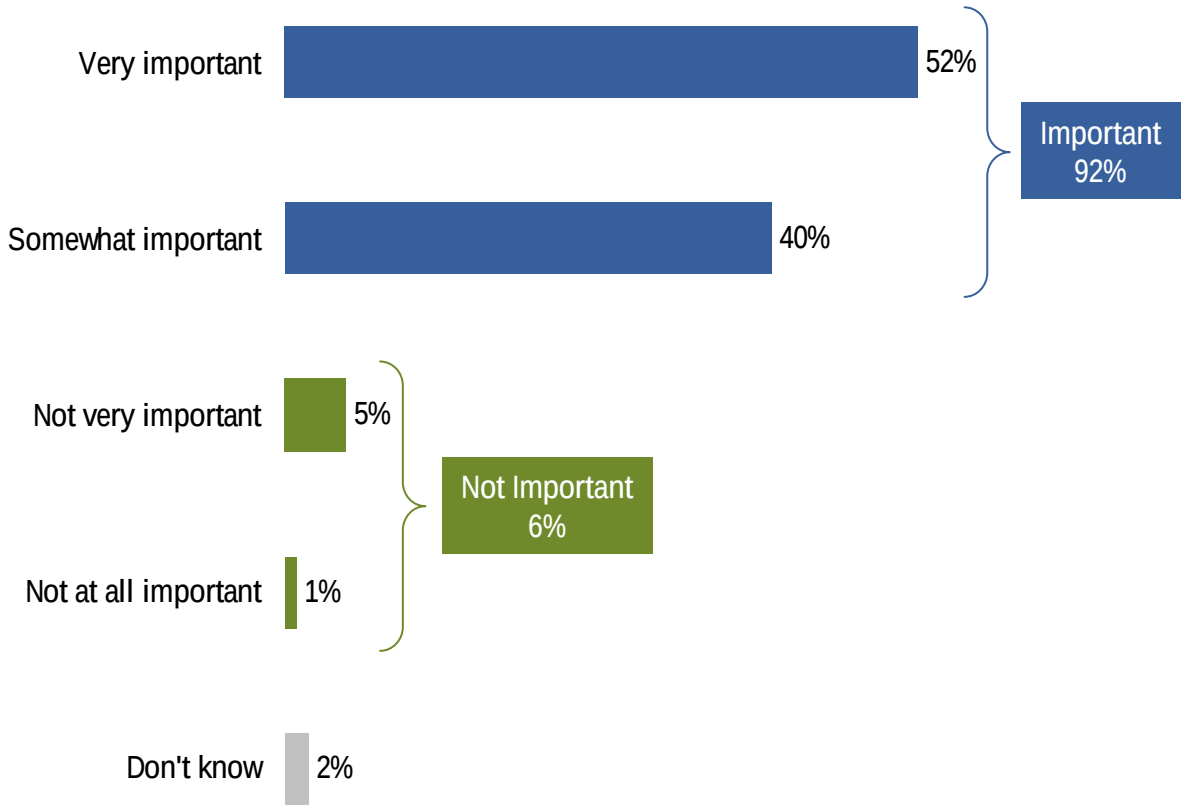
- To put the next vehicle purchase into context, we asked respondents how this next vehicle compares to the one they currently drive. Exactly one-half of BC drivers say that their next vehicle will likely use less gas than the vehicle they drive now. Four-in-ten say that their next vehicle will use about the same amount of gas as what they drive now. Only 10% of BC drivers say they are likely to buy a vehicle that will add to their current gas consumption.

Sub-Group Differences – Relative Gas Use of Next Vehicle

- The only notable subgroup difference is by age. It is drivers age 46+ who are more likely than their younger counterparts to say that their next vehicle will probably use less gas than their current vehicle. In turn, younger drivers are more likely to next purchase vehicles that consume more gas than their current vehicle, which makes sense when considering there is likely a shift from regular use of alternate methods of transport such as transit within the 18 to 25 year old group and the use of larger vehicles as families grow for the age 26 to 45 year old group.

Importance of Fuel Efficiency in Next Vehicle Purchase

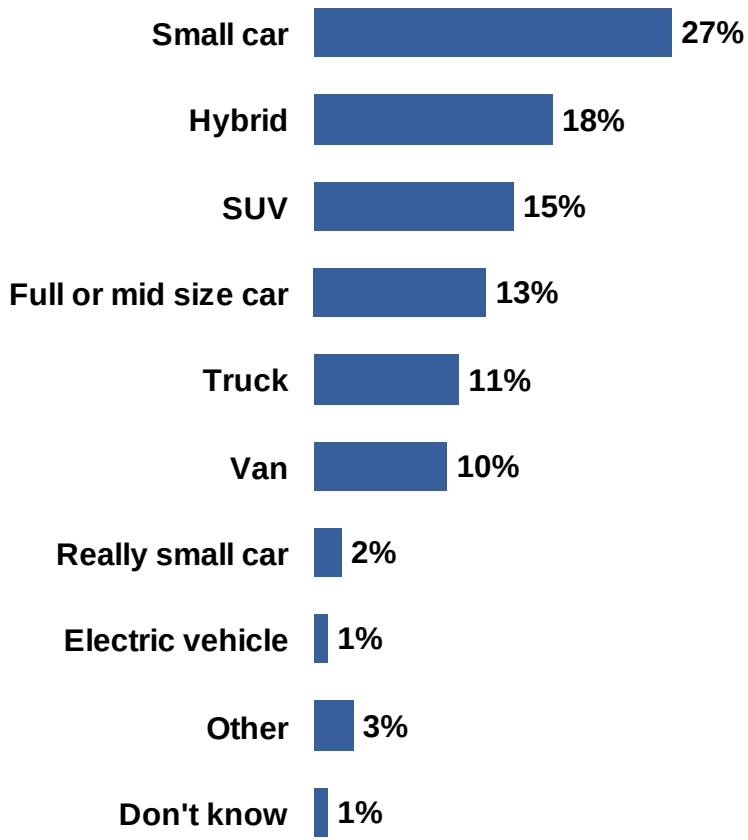
Q5. How important will fuel efficiency be in your choice of the next vehicle you purchase?



Base: All respondents (n=1,051)

Type of Vehicle Most Likely to Purchase Next

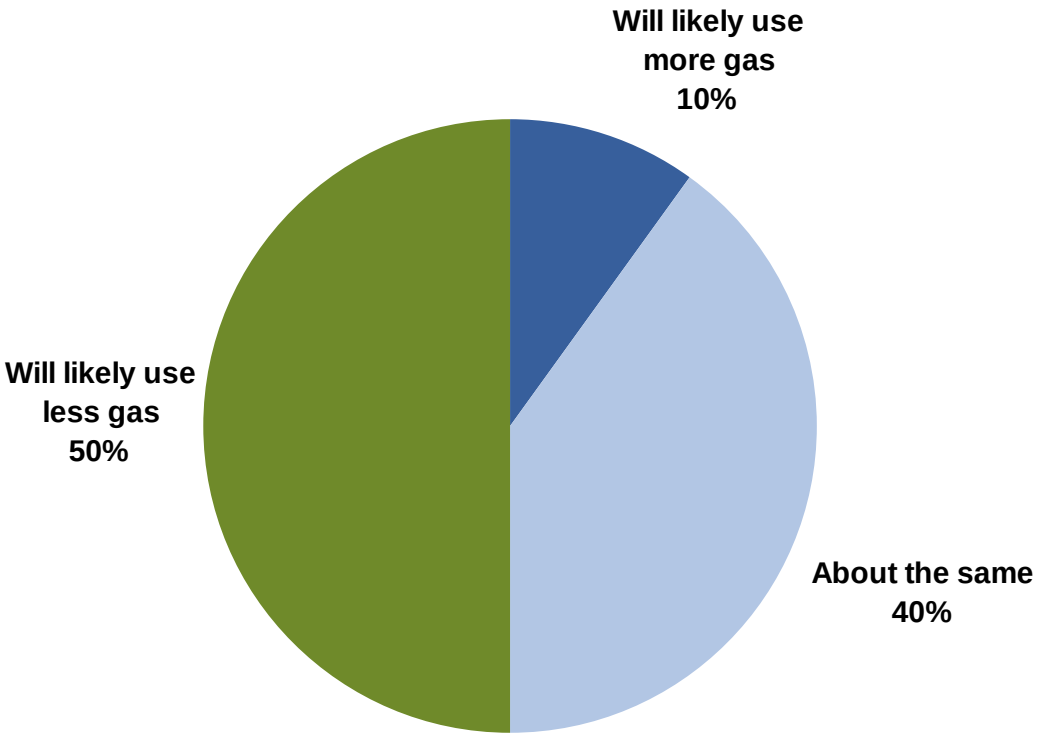
Q6. What type of vehicle are you most likely to purchase next?



Base: All respondents (n=1,051)

Compared Gas Consumption of Current and Future Vehicles

Q7. In terms of gas consumption, how does this vehicle compare to the car you drive now?



Base: All respondents (n=1,051)

Ipsos Reid Public Affairs

Vehicle Maintenance

Highlights: Vehicle Maintenance

BC drivers are fairly diligent about keeping up with vehicle maintenance.

Tune Up Frequency

- One-third (32%) of BC drivers get their car tuned up every 3 months or more frequently and another four-in-ten (39%) get it tuned up every six months.
- One-quarter say they get a tune up once a year (19%) or less than once a year (6%).
- Comparatively few say they never get a tune up (1%) or that they don't know how often they get one (3%).

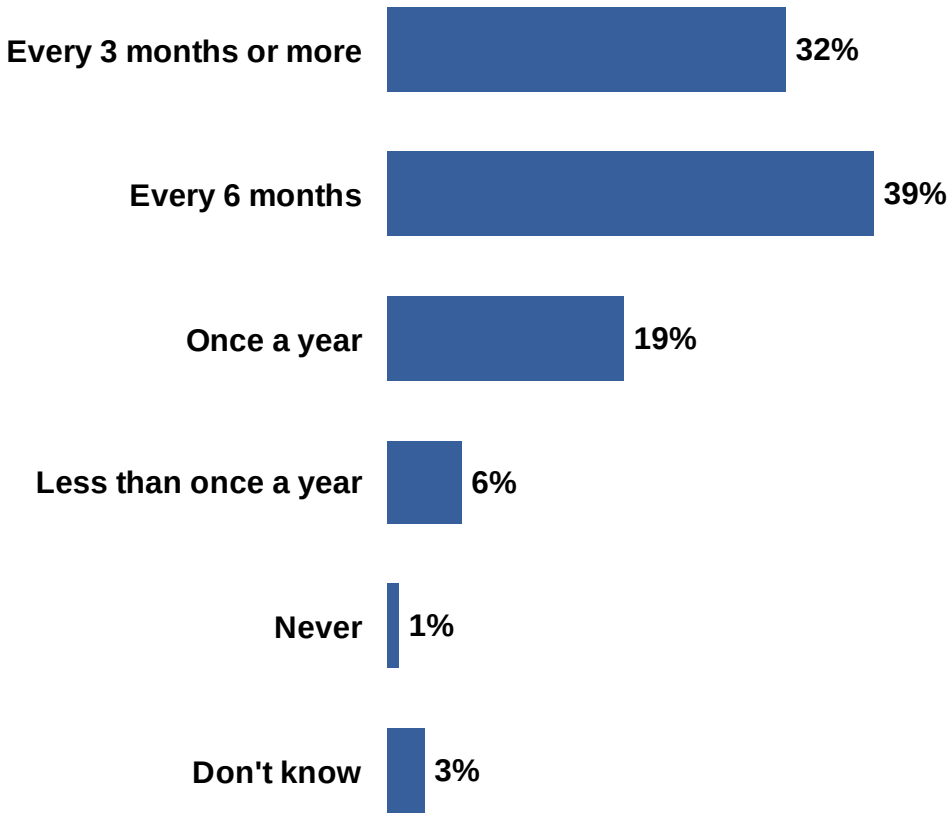
Frequency of Tire Pressure Checks

- Over one-third (36%) of BC drivers check their tire pressure once a month or more and another one-half (51%) say they check every few months.
- Far fewer only check their tire pressure once a year (6%). A similar proportion say they never check their tire pressure (3%) or don't know how often they check it (4%).

These findings are generally consistent across all subgroups.

Tune Up Frequency

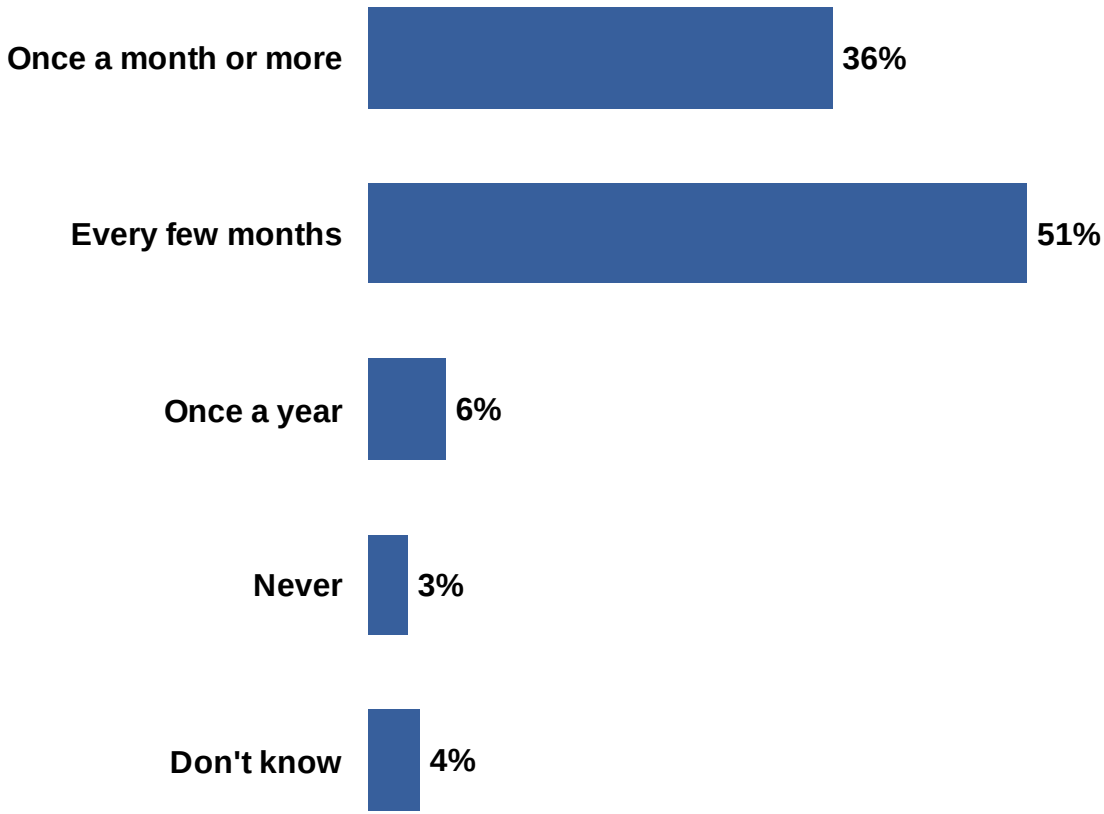
Q8. How often do you get your car tuned up? (This includes oil and filter changes)



Base: All respondents (n=1,051)

Frequency of Tire Pressure Checks

Q9. How often do you check your tire pressure (Or have someone check it for you)?



Base: All respondents (n=1,051)

Ipsos Reid Public Affairs

Gas Wasting Activities

Highlights: Gas Wasting Activities

- Nearly all (96%) BC drivers admit to engaging in at least one of the gas wasting activities tested.
- A majority of drivers let their car idle for more than 10 seconds (68%) and drive at speeds of 10 to 20 km/h over the speed limit (62%).
- One-half admit to driving somewhere they could have walked to (51%) and letting their car ‘warm-up’ before they drive it (51%).
- Four-in-ten (38%) are guilty of using a drive-thru when going inside to purchase their food would be faster and three-in-ten confess that they drive a large vehicle when driving alone (34%), don’t always plan their trips (30%), drive around with extra weight in their car (29%) and quickly accelerate from stops (29%).
- One-quarter admit to using the air conditioner all summer (26%), sitting and talking on their cell phone while their car runs (24%) and driving around or cruising just for the sake of driving around (24%).
- Fewer BC drivers admit to having the air conditioning on when the windows are rolled down (10%).

Highlights: Gas Wasting Activities

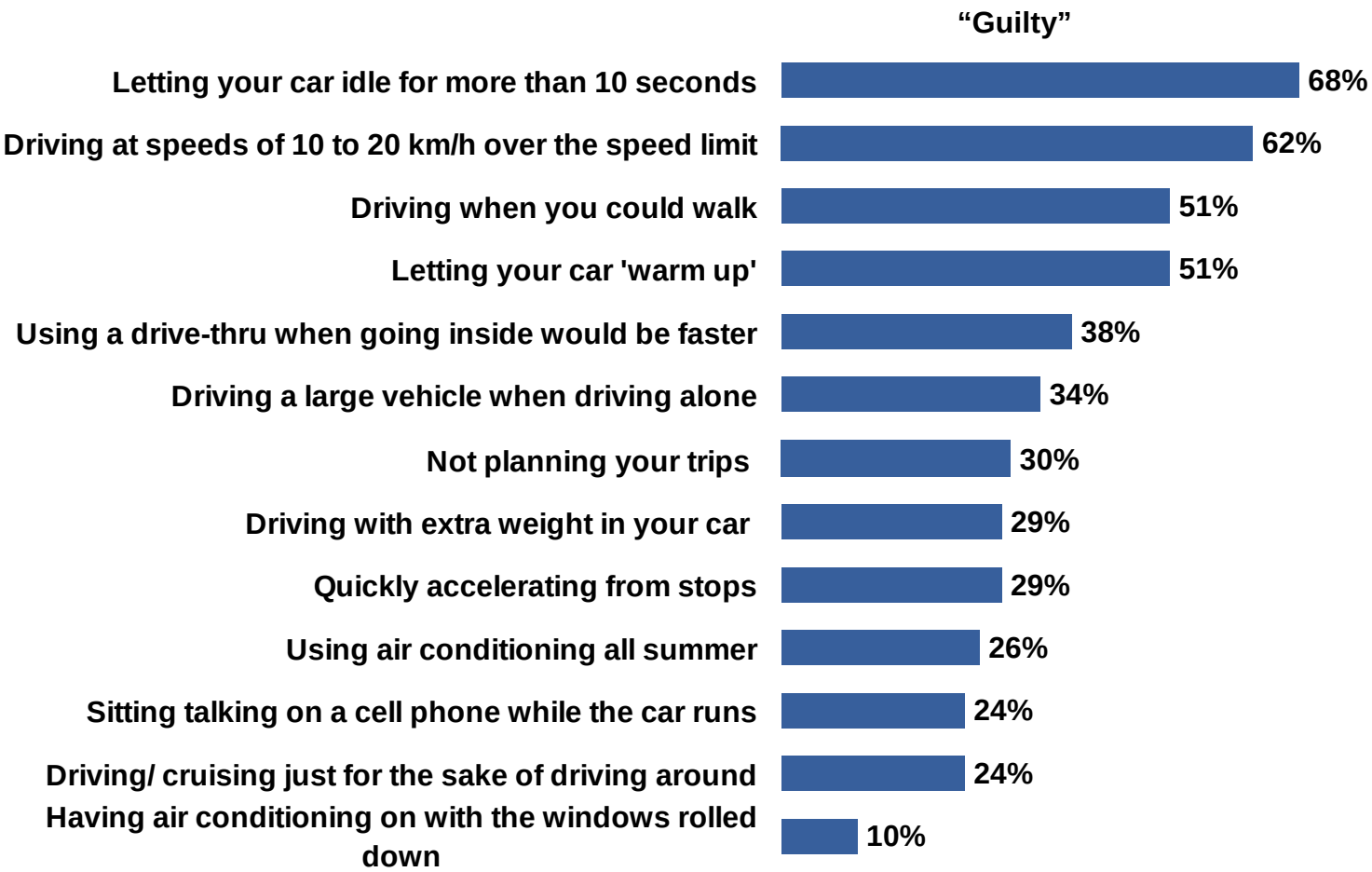
Sub-Group Differences – Gas Wasting Activities

In viewing these results by subgroup we see a variety of differences, mainly by age and gender.

- Generally speaking, for all of the gas wasting activities tested, the likelihood of conducting the activity declines with age.
- Where we see the largest gaps is with respect to speeding, talking on a cell phone with the car idling and not planning trips. Younger drivers (age 18 to 25) are more likely than their older counterparts to participate in these gas wasting activities.
- By gender, men are slightly more likely than women to let the car idle for more than 10 seconds, drive a large vehicle alone, drive with extra weight, make jack rabbit starts and drive for the sake of driving. Women on the other hand are slightly more likely to drive when they could walk or use a drive-thru.

Gas Wasting Activities

Q10. Are you "guilty" of any of these activities that typically use more gas?



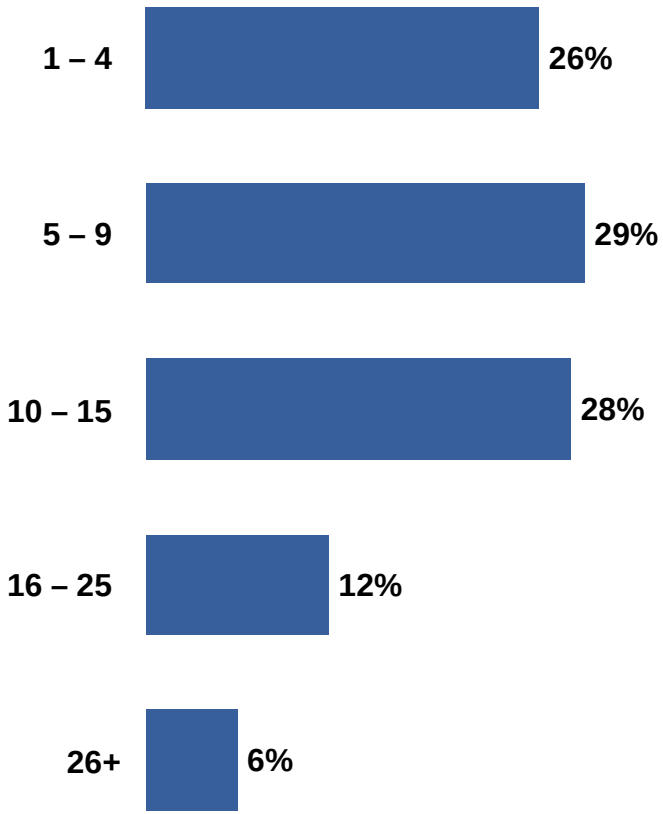
Base: All respondents (n=1,051)

Ipsos Reid Public Affairs

Driving Characteristics

Average Hours Driven per Week

How many hours do you drive in a given week?

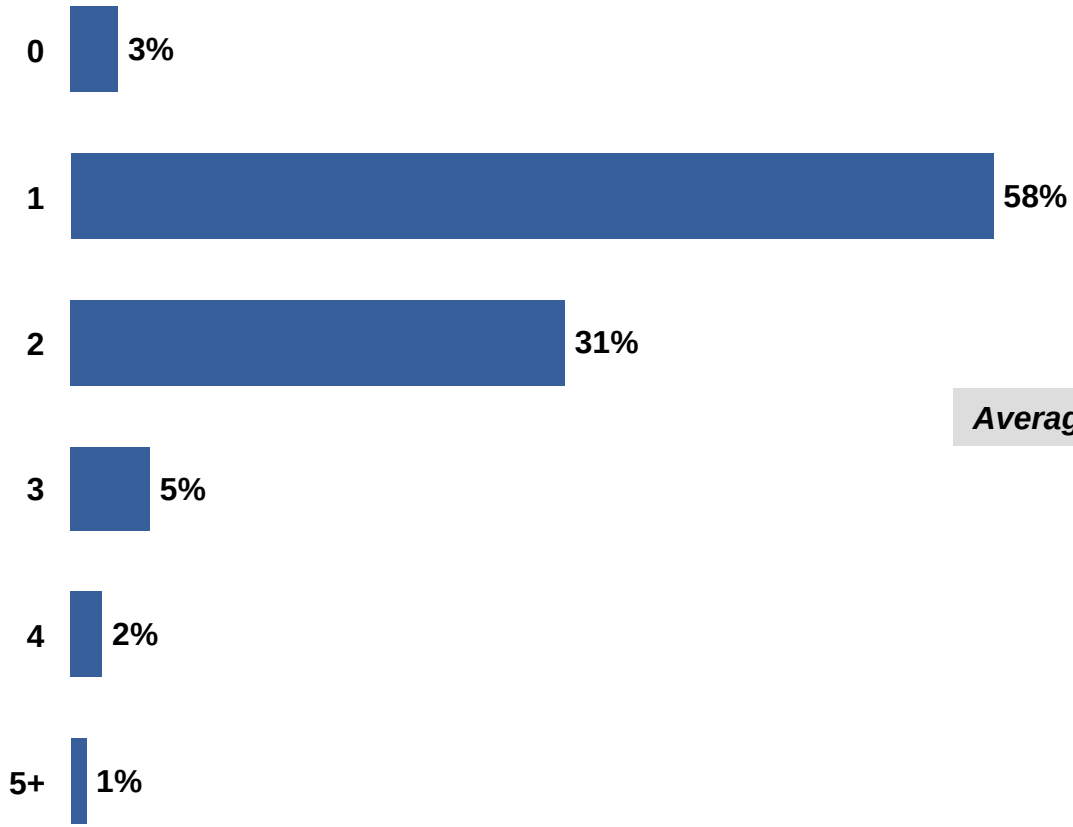


Average Number per Week = 10.9 Hours

Base: All respondents (n=1,051)

Number of Vehicles Owned

How many vehicles do you currently own?



Average Number Owned = 1.5 Vehicles

Base: All respondents (n=1,051)