



# Breakfast Habits

SixthSense™

### **About SixthSense**

SixthSense, part of YouGov plc, is a provider of comprehensive business intelligence. We offer a powerful new type of consumer-driven market intelligence report and online information platform, designed to help your business make better and quicker decisions.

Through our proprietary panel of over 300,000 UK consumers and bespoke research methodology, we collect unique consumer insight.

Our analysts are highly qualified and, on average, each draws on over 15 years industry experience to deliver analysis, comment, opinion and advice on the latest market trends and conditions across a range of sectors including Food & Drink, Retail, Health & Beauty, Lifestyle, Finance and Technology.

YouGov has been acclaimed as the country's most accurate pollster and the most quoted research company in the UK and has operations in the US, Europe and the Middle East.

For more information about our services, please see  
[www.yougovsixthsense.com](http://www.yougovsixthsense.com)

No part of this report may be stored or reproduced (either electronically or mechanically or otherwise) without the express prior permission of YouGov.

This report relies on data, conclusions and recommendations from primary and secondary sources (including third parties) that was gathered in good faith. Although believed to be accurate, this information is not guaranteed and, as such, YouGov can accept no liability for action taken based on any information in this report.

Your payment for this report is for one hard copy and one electronic copy only. If you would like additional hard or electronic copies of this report, or any of its sections, please contact us to purchase them separately.

**PUBLISHED BY :**

YouGov Plc, 50 Featherstone Street, London, EC1Y 8RT  
T: +44 (0)20 7012 6000, F: +44 (0)20 7012 6001, E: [info@yougov.com](mailto:info@yougov.com)

## Table of Contents

Table of Figures .....	3
Introduction.....	5
Report Summary.....	7
Enjoyable eating.....	7
Women are slower than men in the morning.....	7
Traditional roles .....	7
Breakfast benefits .....	7
Cereal and toast are weekday breakfast staples .....	8
Indulgent weekend breakfasts.....	8
Could the tea habit slip away?.....	8
Breakfast is a home-based meal.....	9
Breakfast is quick to prepare...and to eat .....	9
Toast is not just for breakfast .....	9
The Consumer .....	10
Working patterns.....	10
Days worked.....	11
Eating habits .....	11
How consumers see themselves.....	11
Whatever happened to healthy living?.....	13
And that’s not the whole picture!.....	14
There is some good news.....	15
Specific diets .....	16
Dining out.....	16
Snacking .....	17
Influences on food choices .....	18
Ask a friend .....	18
Morning habits .....	20
Cooking habits .....	21
Cooking skills.....	22
Whom do they cook for? .....	23
Breakfast habits.....	26
The importance of breakfast .....	26
Putting theory into practice .....	26
Time issues.....	28
The effect of snacking on breakfast .....	29
Breakfast on a weekday .....	29
Food choices .....	29
Drink choices.....	35
Where breakfast is eaten.....	39
London rules .....	41
Time for breakfast .....	42
Preparing breakfast.....	42
Eating breakfast .....	43
Breakfast at the weekend.....	45
Weekend treaters .....	45
Food choices at the weekend .....	46
Weekend drinks .....	51
Weekend breakfast venues .....	53
Preparing weekend breakfasts .....	54
Weekend breakfast time.....	55
Eating weekend breakfast.....	56

Toast ..... 57

- When toast is eaten ..... 57
- Type of bread ..... 59
- Toppings..... 61
- Attitudes to Toast ..... 63

Outlets Used for Food ..... 64

- Fast food outlets ..... 65
- Sandwich shops and coffee bars ..... 65
- Amount spent on dining out for breakfast ..... 66

Appendix..... 67

Tables ..... 67

Questionnaire ..... 71

## Table of Figures

Figure 1	Working status of YouGov SixthSense survey respondents.....	10
Figure 2	Complacency rules .....	12
Figure 3	Enjoying good food ahead of eating healthily .....	14
Figure 4	Evidence of a mid-life crisis among men?.....	15
Figure 5	Consumers are more likely to eat healthily as they get older .....	16
Figure 6	The young, the affluent and those living in London all eat out more often .....	17
Figure 7	More than four in ten consumers snack at least once a day .....	18
Figure 8	Healthy eating noise is largely ignored .....	19
Figure 9	Greater confidence or set in their ways? .....	20
Figure 10	Half of the youngest women take 30 minutes or more to get ready in the morning .....	21
Figure 11	Some men do cook/prepare food at home .....	22
Figure 12	ABC1s see themselves as good cooks.....	23
Figure 13	Cooking for one or others? .....	24
Figure 14	Cooking for children .....	25
Figure 15	Women value breakfast at a younger age than men: the importance of having a 'good breakfast' .....	26
Figure 16	A quarter of consumers rarely or never eat breakfast.....	27
Figure 17	Younger consumers more likely to have no time for breakfast .....	28
Figure 18	Propensity to snack between meals among those who eat breakfast .....	29
Figure 19	Most popular items eaten for breakfast regularly on a weekday .....	30
Figure 20	Most popular items eaten for breakfast occasionally on a weekday .....	31
Figure 21	Different toast eating habits for men and women .....	32
Figure 22	Men are more likely than women to eat a cooked breakfast...occasionally .....	33
Figure 23	Half of Londoners eat croissants for breakfast.....	35
Figure 24	Most popular drinks consumed regularly for breakfast .....	36
Figure 25	Popular drinks for breakfast consumed on an occasional basis .....	37
Figure 26	Younger consumers are turning away from tea .....	38
Figure 27	Londoners have got the coffee habit* .....	39
Figure 28	Breakfast is mainly home-based.....	40
Figure 29	Young women are the most likely to eat 'on the hoof'. .....	41
Figure 30	Londoners are more likely to eat breakfast out. ....	42
Figure 31	Cold cereal is the quickest breakfast to prepare .....	43
Figure 32	Half of people eat breakfast before 8a .....	44
Figure 33	Weekday breakfast is a rush for full-time workers and students.....	45
Figure 34	Those working full-time like to treat themselves at the weekend .....	46
Figure 35	Most popular foods eaten regularly for breakfast at the weekend .....	47
Figure 36	Most popular foods eaten occasionally for breakfast at the weekend .....	47
Figure 37	Croissants are a weekend treat* .....	48
Figure 38	Cooked breakfast at the weekend is for men.....	49
Figure 39	London.... or Paris? .....	50
Figure 40	Most popular drinks at the weekend .....	51
Figure 41	Younger consumers don't drink tea at the weekend either .....	52
Figure 42	Londoners like a cold drink at the weekend* .....	53
Figure 43	Only slightly more time is spent preparing weekend breakfasts .....	54
Figure 44	Weekend breakfast is spread between 7am and 10am .....	55
Figure 45	Almost half of respondents eat weekend breakfasts in under 30 minutes.....	56
Figure 46	Toast is not just for breakfast .....	58
Figure 47	Toast is highly likely to be eaten 'late at night', especially by 25-39 year olds.....	59
Figure 48	White bread is preferred for toast .....	60
Figure 49	Sweet spreads more popular than savoury .....	61

Figure 50	Young men do not like Marmite or soft cheese .....	62
Figure 51	The youngest consumers are the least likely to regard toast as 'delicious' .....	63
Figure 52	McDonalds is the most popular outlet for buying food .....	64
Figure 53	Breakfast is the cheapest meal to eat out .....	66
Figure 54	Foods eaten for breakfast on a weekday .....	67
Figure 55	Drinks consumed for breakfast on a weekday .....	68
Figure 56	Foods eaten for breakfast at the weekend.....	69
Figure 57	Drinks consumed for breakfast at the weekend.....	70
Figure 58	Outlets used in the past 3 months.....	70

## Introduction

Consumer eating habits are in a state of constant flux. Consumers are being bombarded with messages regarding healthy eating while at the same time being tempted by a vast array of food in both supermarkets and catering establishments such as cafes, coffee houses and fast food outlets.

This report looks at consumer behaviour with regard to breakfast, considering how often it is eaten, what constitutes a breakfast meal, where it is eaten and who with, as well as how long it takes to prepare and eat.

For this report, YouGov SixthSense commissioned a survey among YouGov's online panel, drawing on a nationally representative sample of 2,049 UK adults aged 16+. Questions covered the following topics:

### **General lifestyle questions/attitudes**

- Current working status
- Day(s) of the week normally spent at work
- Self perception of weight
- Influence on food choices
- Time spent getting ready in the morning
- Propensity to cook/prepare meals at home
- Self perception of cooking skills
- Cooking for others
- Typical amount spent on dining out for various occasions
- Propensity to snack
- Location for snacking
- Attitudes towards snacking
- Outlets used for dining out

### **Breakfast during the week**

- Frequency of eating breakfast during the week
- Type of food or foods consumed at breakfast during the week
- Frequency of consumption of food or foods consumed at breakfast during the week
- Type of drink or drinks consumed at breakfast during the week
- Frequency of consumption of drink or drinks consumed at breakfast during the week
- Location breakfast is consumed during the week
- Time spent PREPARING breakfast during the week
- Time spent EATING breakfast during the week
- Time breakfast is normally eaten during the week

### **Breakfast at the weekend**

- Frequency of eating breakfast at the weekend
- Type of food or foods consumed at breakfast at the weekend
- Frequency of consumption of food or foods consumed at breakfast at the weekend
- Type of drink or drinks consumed at breakfast at the weekend
- Frequency of consumption of drink or drinks consumed at breakfast at the weekend

Location breakfast is consumed at the weekend  
Time spent PREPARING breakfast at the weekend  
Time spent EATING breakfast at the weekend  
Time breakfast is normally eaten at the weekend

**Breakfast in general**

Breakfast eating habits in general  
Propensity for eating toast  
Type of bread used for toast  
Typical toppings for toast

## Report Summary

### Enjoyable eating

- Two thirds of respondents say 'I enjoy eating good food', far more than the 46% who say they 'take care to eat healthily'.
- Although ABC1s have long been associated with having greater knowledge and involvement in healthy eating, they are also the most likely to enjoy 'good food'.
- Just 7% of men are currently on a diet, while this is true for 16% of women.
- However, health consciousness does seem to increase with age, with women aged 55+ being particularly likely to be careful about what they eat.

### Women are slower than men in the morning

- The amount of time available for breakfast is, of course, influenced by the amount of free time available in the morning. YouGov SixthSense therefore asked respondents how long it takes them to get ready on a typical morning.
- Most respondents take between 10-30 minutes to get ready (includes showering, shaving, applying make-up, etc), with the average time being 19 minutes.
- Women are likely to spend longer than men getting ready. This is strongly influenced by the fact that almost half (49%) of women aged 16-24 spend more than 30 minutes doing so.

### Traditional roles

- Three quarters of women are responsible for all or most of the cooking/preparing food in their household, which would, of course, include breakfast.
- However, the emergence of the 'new man' is apparent, with older women much more likely than younger women to have to shoulder the responsibility in the kitchen.
- The majority of people describe their cooking skills as either 'good' (48%) or 'okay' (36%). Men are slightly more likely to see themselves as 'bad' or 'terrible', with 16-24 year old men especially prone to say this.

### Breakfast benefits

- Just over half of respondents recognise the importance of eating a 'good' breakfast, although only 5% say they cannot get through the morning without a 'big' breakfast.
- Only slightly more respondents (57%) always eat breakfast, with a quarter saying they rarely or never do.
- Some 13% of respondents feel that they 'don't really have time to eat a proper breakfast on a working day' (rising to 19% of those who work full-time).

### **Cereal and toast are weekday breakfast staples**

- Cold cereal and/or toast are the most popular choices by a wide margin and are eaten regularly by 47% and 26% respectively.
- A further 60% of consumers eat toast occasionally and 35% cold cereal.
- Despite being the staples of an English breakfast, cooked items such as eggs and bacon are eaten regularly by only a minority of respondents. However, they are popular on an occasional basis, especially among men.

### **Indulgent weekend breakfasts**

- Just over a third (36%) of respondents says they like to 'treat' themselves at the weekend. Among those who are working full-time, 46% say this.
- As on a weekday, cold cereal and/or toast remain the most popular breakfast food eaten on a regular basis, but significant numbers also like to eat eggs, bacon, hot cereal and/or fruit.

### **Could the tea habit slip away?**

- Tea is the most likely drink to be consumed at breakfast, both on a weekday and at the weekend.
- Almost half of consumers drink it for breakfast on a regular basis – twice as many as for its nearest rival, fruit juice. Furthermore, just over two in five respondents drink tea occasionally.
- However, it is much less likely to be drunk regularly by younger consumers, suggesting that the traditional view of the British as great tea drinkers may no longer hold true.

## **Breakfast is a home-based meal**

- Most consumers eat breakfast at home, with almost two thirds (63%) doing so every weekday and 73% on weekend days.
- However, weekday breakfasts are most likely to be eaten at home every day by those who are retired (85%). Among those who work, 36% of full-timers and 21% of part-timers eat breakfast at work/in the office at least occasionally.
- The youngest group are the most likely to have breakfast in the car, on public transport, on foot or in fast food restaurants.

## **Breakfast is quick to prepare...and to eat**

- The majority of people do not spend much time preparing breakfast: six in ten take less than 5 minutes and three in ten take around 6-10 minutes. The average is just 5.2 minutes.
- Even at the weekend, when even many full-timers do not need to rush, the average time taken to prepare breakfast is only 8.7 minutes.
- When it comes to eating on a weekday, a quarter of respondents take less than 5 minutes and around half (46%) 6-10 minutes, meaning that the average time is only 8.3 minutes.
- At the weekend, eating breakfast only takes slightly longer (on average 11.6 minutes), with most respondents taking under 15 minutes.
- However, those who enjoy 'good food' are likely to spend slightly longer than average (12 minutes), with those who regularly eat cooked breakfasts also spending considerably longer.

## **Toast is not just for breakfast**

- Although toast is widely seen as a breakfast food, it is also connected with snacking occasions by a significant number of people, with late night snacking especially likely to be mentioned.
- Toast is more likely to be seen as a breakfast food (and eaten) by those aged 25 and over, with consumption peaking among men aged 25-54 (83%).
- People aged 25-39 are the most enthusiastic toast snackers, particularly at mid-morning and late at night.