



# Booking burnout: What stresses American travelers in 2025?

Unpacking how Americans book travel in 2025,  
and which parts of the booking process they find  
the most stressful.

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/Research Reality



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# Foreword

**Kenton Barello**

Vice President, YouGov America



**Advances in technology, such as AI-driven recommendations and mobile-friendly platforms, are transforming how travelers research, compare, and secure their trips. But not every traveler is taking advantage of these tools, or the tools aren't necessarily helping with the most impactful pain points, leading to continued stresses for US travelers.**

This report examines how Americans are navigating the travel booking landscape, identifying which stages of the process create the most stress. By understanding real-life pain points, travel and tourism businesses can optimize their services and enhance the travel planning experience.

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# Report takeaways



## High altitude, high stress

Booking airport transfers is the process that US vacationers find most stressful (46%), followed by booking flights (45%) and selecting their luggage allowance (41%).



## Destination hit list 2025

Canada is the top international destination for US travelers, with 11% of Americans planning to visit, jumping up to 17% among 18-34s.



## Packages keeping stress levels down?

Vacation bookers who opt for package vacations are more likely to find all aspects of booking a vacation more stressful than those who choose to book their flights and accommodation separately.



## DIY or bundle bookers?

50% of Americans say they are the “primary person responsible for booking trips.” Of these vacation bookers, more than two-thirds (67%) book flights and accommodation separately, while 14% opt for package vacations.



## The AI opportunity

46% of vacation bookers who use AI-powered recommendations say it is “unhelpful” or “neither helpful nor unhelpful” – indicating potential for improvement to AI-powered booking experiences.





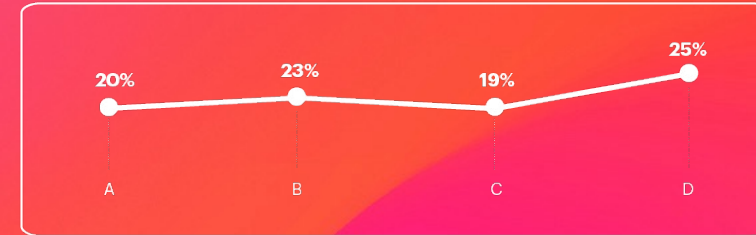
# Real insights into what the world thinks

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## Data results



**37%**  
(vs. Nat Rep)





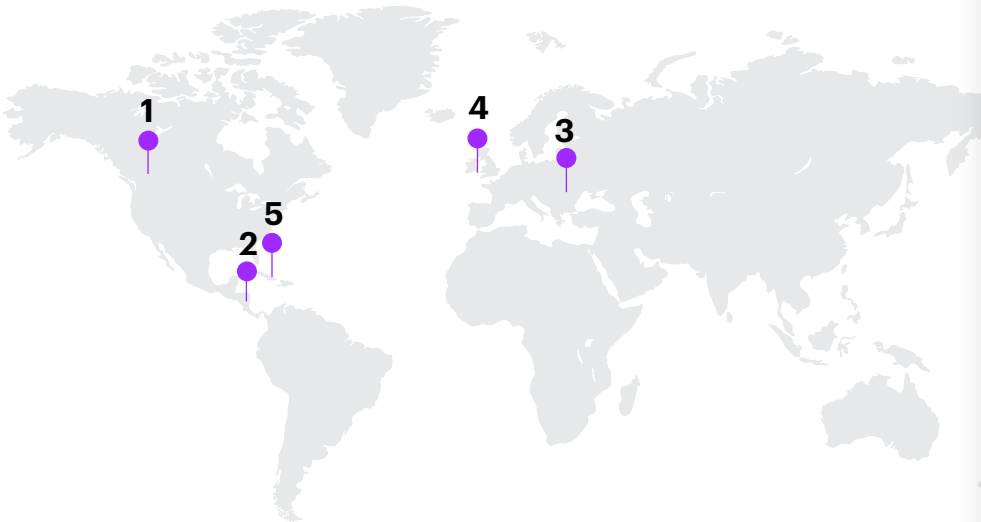
# How Americans are traveling in 2025

Where are US travelers heading, what type of trips are they going on, and how are they booking?





# Travel itinerary: Where Americans are vacationing in 2025



Which, if any, of the following destinations describe where you intend to spend your vacation in the next 12 months? Please select all that apply.

| Top 5 international destinations |                          | Gen pop | 18-34 | 35-49 | 50-64 | 65+  |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|---------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| 1                                | Canada                   | 11%     | 17% ▲ | 8%    | 7%    | 2% ▼ |
| 2                                | Central America          | 9%      | 12% ▲ | 9%    | 7%    | 2% ▼ |
| 3                                | Europe*                  | 8%      | 10%   | 12% ▲ | 4% ▼  | 4%   |
| 4                                | United Kingdom           | 7%      | 9% ▲  | 9%    | 2% ▼  | 3%   |
| 5                                | Caribbean or West Indies | 5%      | 2% ▼  | 8% ▲  | 5%    | 6%   |

YouGov Profiles. December 2024, US. Target group: Gen pop by generation: n> 100

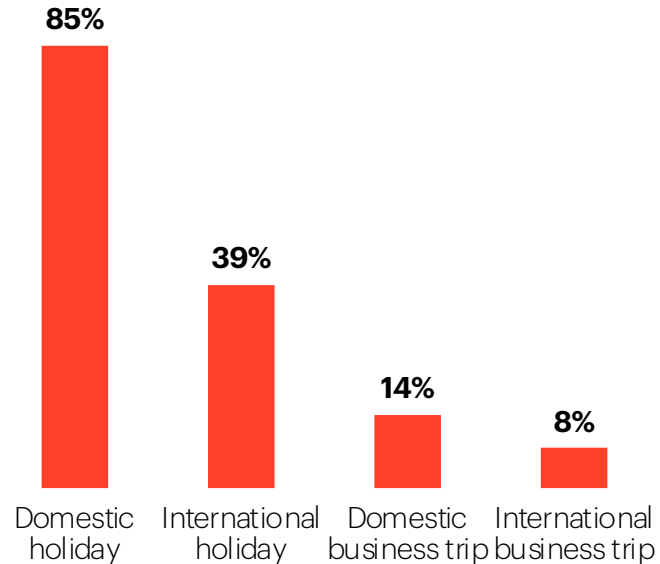
▲/▼: Indicates statistically significant differences compared to gen pop.

\*Excluding Benelux, the United Kingdom and Nordics.

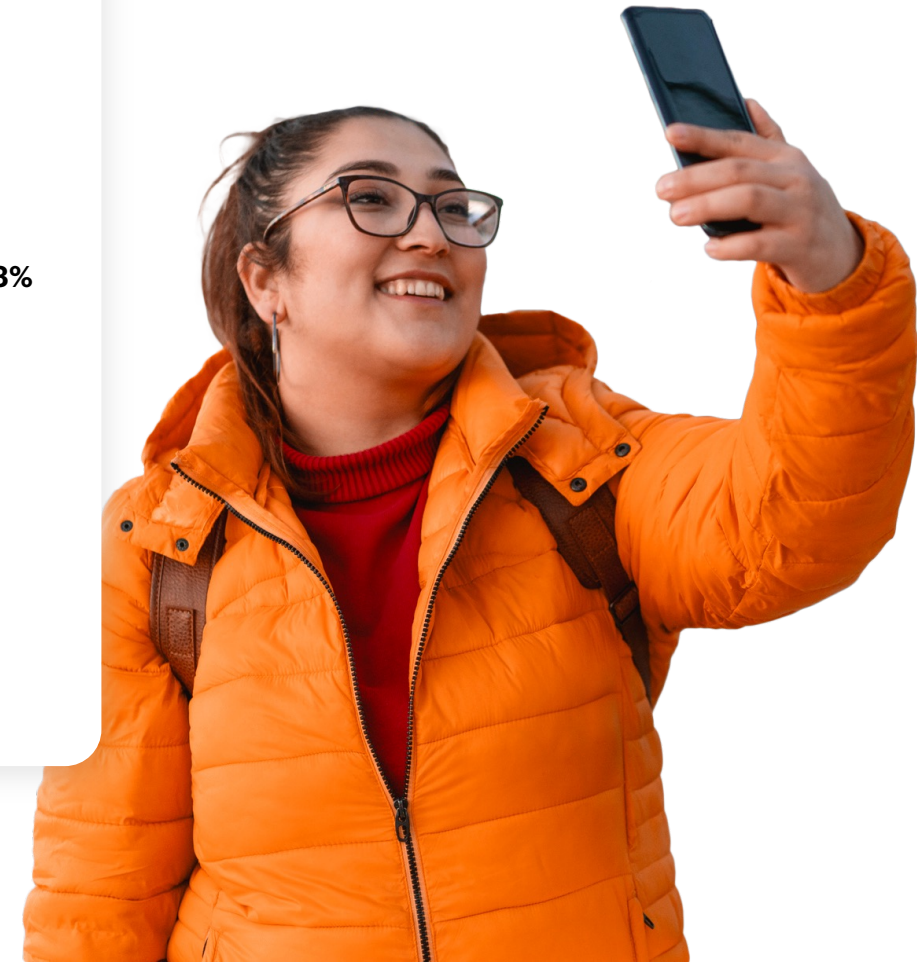
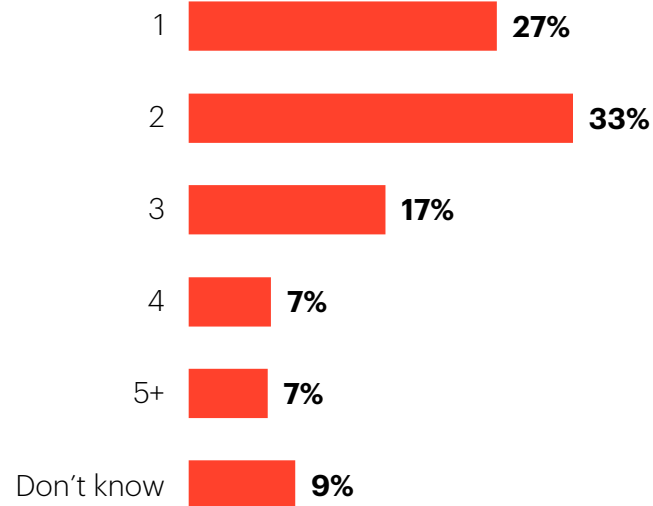
# 31% of US vacationers plan to take 3+ trips in 2025

■ US vacationers

Which, if any, of the following trips are you planning to take in the next 12 months? Please select all that apply.

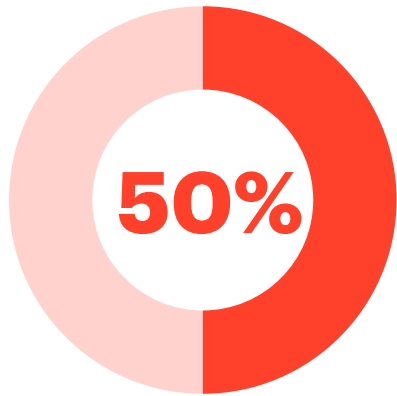


How many trips, if any, are you planning to take for leisure, business or personal reasons in the next 12 months?



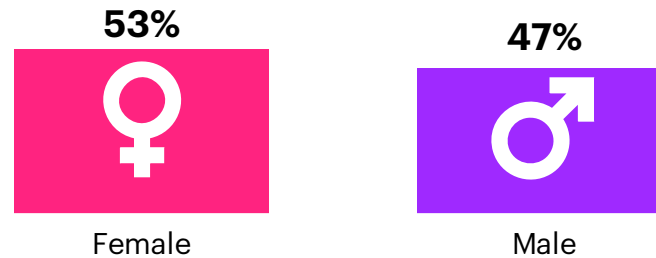


# Meet the **planners**: Who are American vacation bookers in 2025?

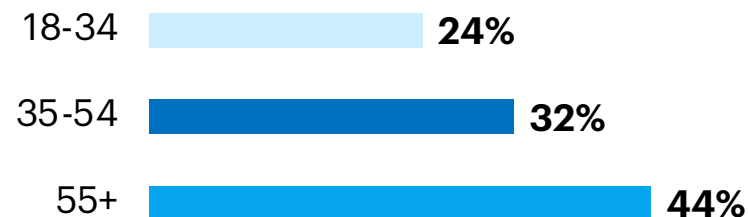


of Americans identify as the  
“**primary person responsible  
for booking trips**”

Gender of US vacation bookers



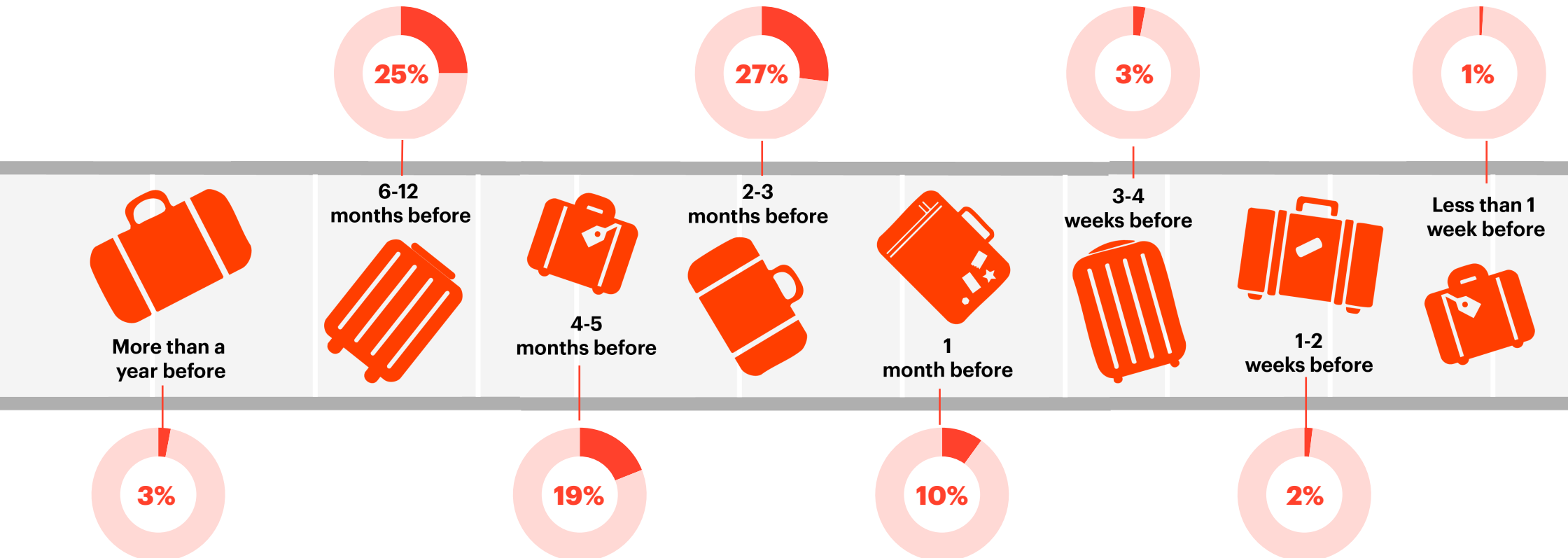
Age of US vacation bookers



# When are are US vacation bookers making reservations?

Nearly half of US vacationers begin booking more than 3 months in advance (47%), while less than a sixth (16%) of vacation bookers book within a month of traveling

How far in advance do you typically book vacations?

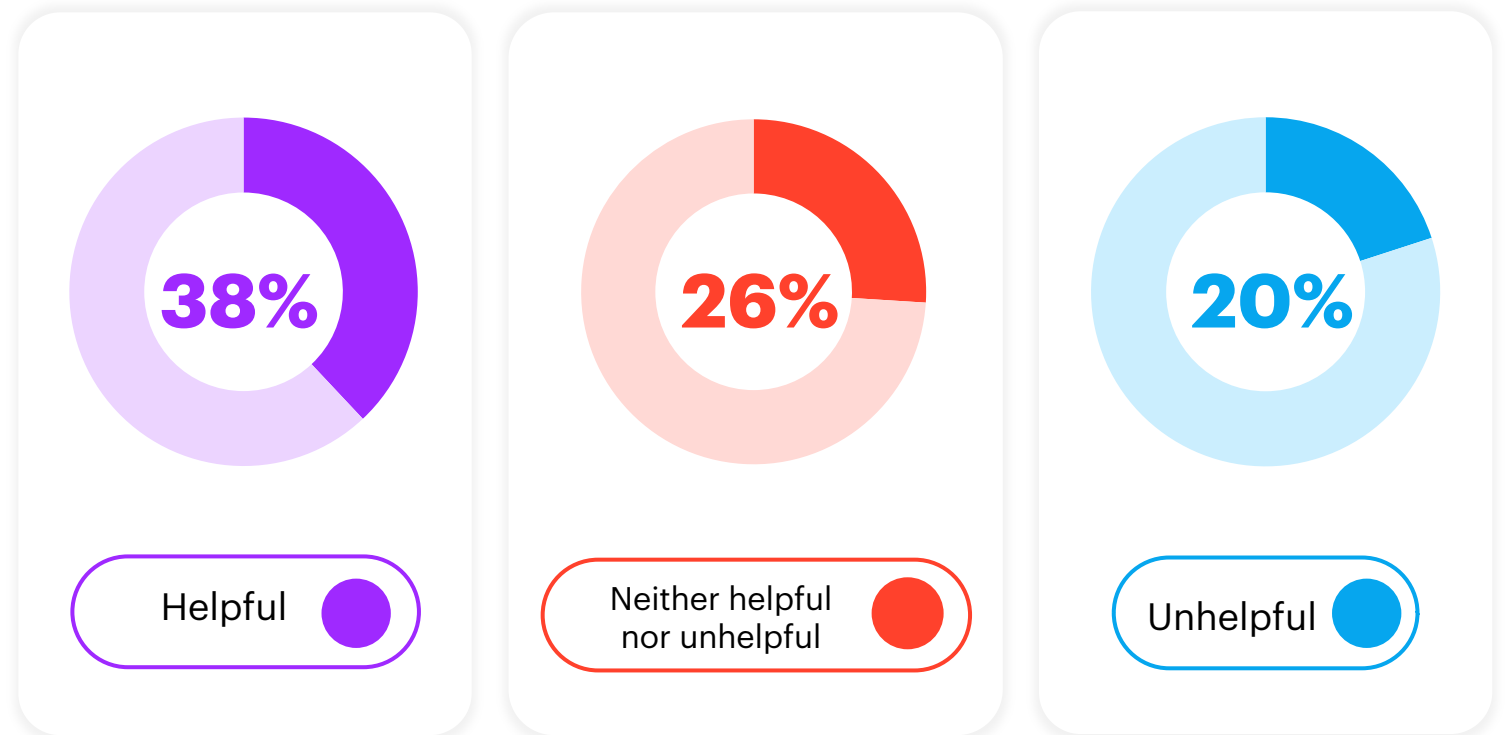




## The travel AI-volution: 38% of US vacation bookers who use AI-powered recommendations find it helpful

46% of vacation bookers who use AI-powered recommendations say it is “unhelpful” or “neither helpful nor unhelpful” – indicating potential for improvement to AI-powered booking experiences.

How helpful or unhelpful do you find AI-powered vacation recommendations (such as suggested destinations, flights and accommodation) when it comes to booking a vacation?



# DIY destination planning or bundle booking: How do US vacationers secure flights and lodging in 2025?

More than two thirds of vacation bookers opt to book flights and accommodation separately (67%).

## DIY bookers

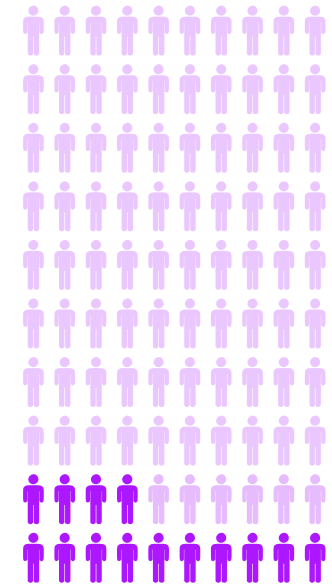
67%



of US vacation bookers  
**book flights and  
accommodation separately**

## Bundle bookers

14%



of US vacation bookers  
**book vacation  
packages**



## ● DIY bookers deep-dive

# How independent planners book flights and accommodation



### How do you typically book flights?

■ DIY bookers

Direct with airline **63%**

Through a flight comparison website **28%**

Through online travel agents **3%**

Through offline travel agents **2%**

### How do you typically book accommodation?

■ DIY bookers

Direct with hotel **48%**

Through accommodation comparison websites **35%**

Through online travel agents **7%**

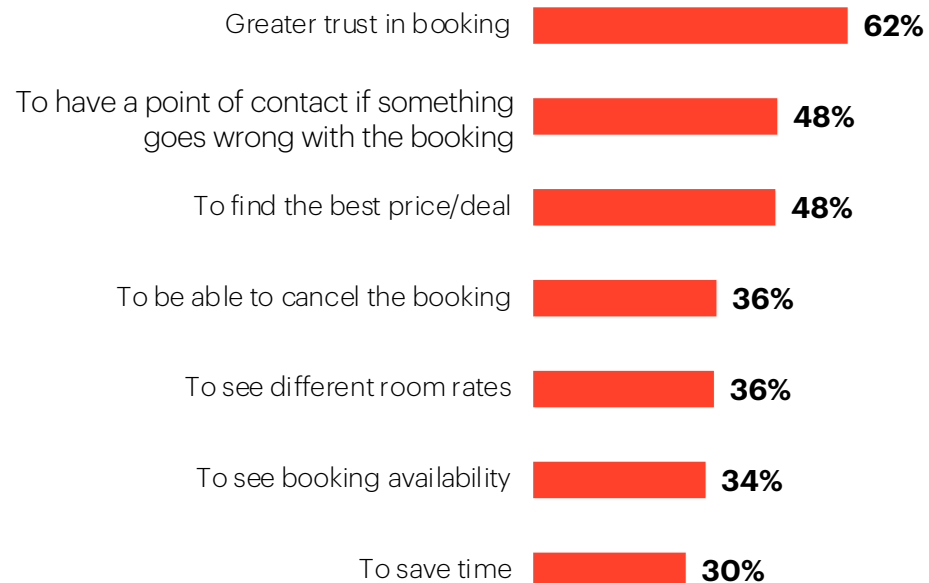
Through offline travel agents **2%**

## ● DIY bookers deep-dive

# What motivates accommodation booking choices?

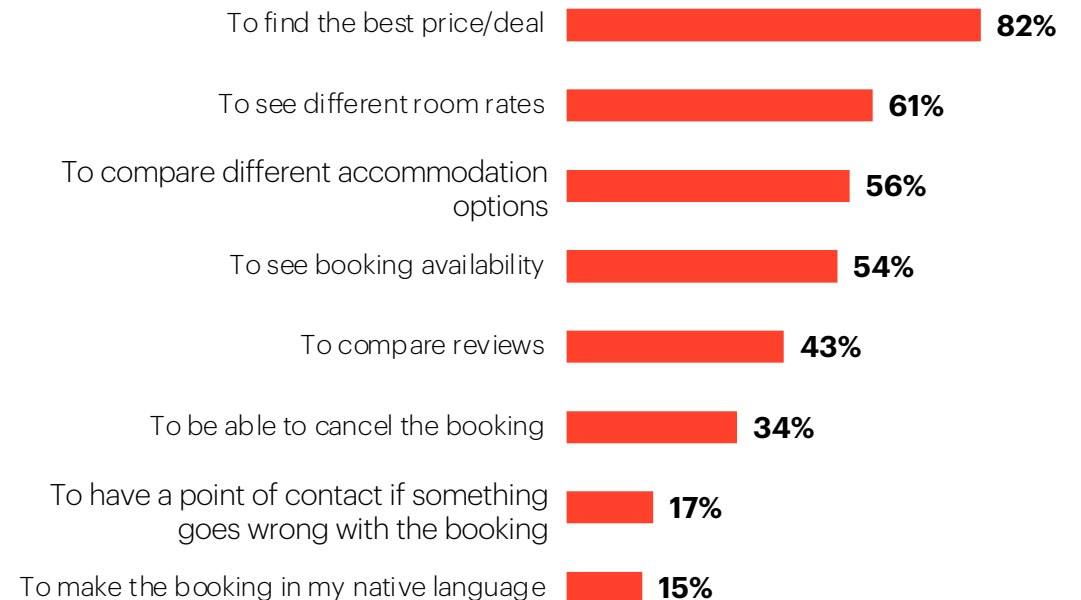
### Why do you typically book accommodation direct with a hotel?

#### ■ DIY bookers (direct with hotel)



### Why do you typically book accommodation through an accommodation comparison website?

#### ■ DIY bookers (accommodation comparison websites)



## ● Bundle bookers deep-dive

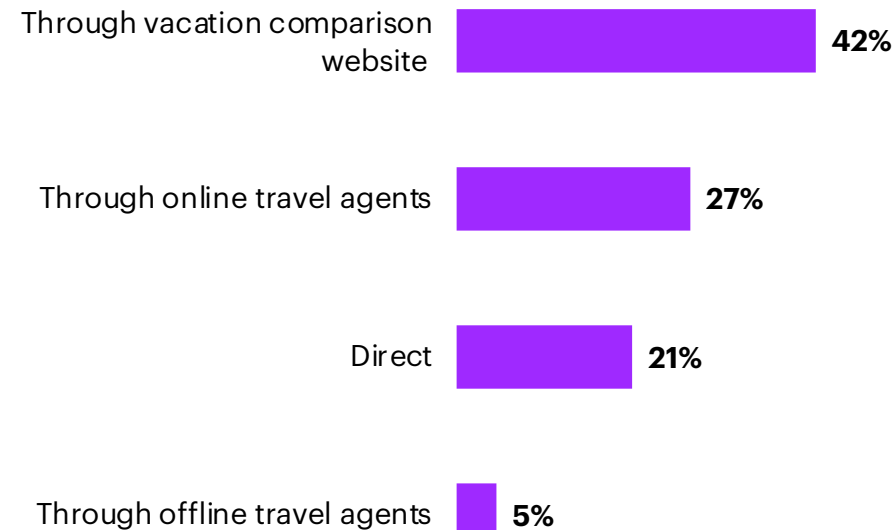
# How all-in-one vacation bookers find the best package deals

14%

of US vacation bookers book package vacations (which combine flights and accommodation)

### How do you typically book vacation packages?

■ Bundle bookers



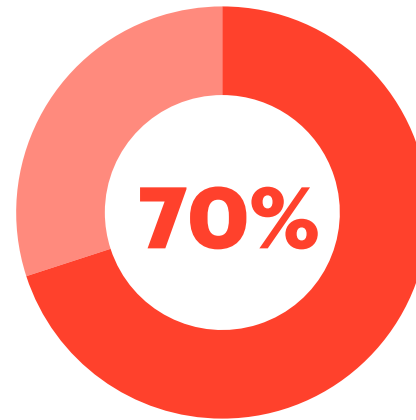


# Unpacking the top stressors among US vacation bookers

What induces stress when Americans book vacations in 2025?



**More than 2 in 3  
vacation bookers  
find at least one  
part of the process  
stressful...**



of US vacation  
bookers find at  
least **one part** of  
the **booking**  
**process stressful.**

YouGov Surveys, November 13 – December 3, 2024. US vacation bookers. n> 750. "Stressful" combines respondents who selected "very stressful" and "somewhat stressful."



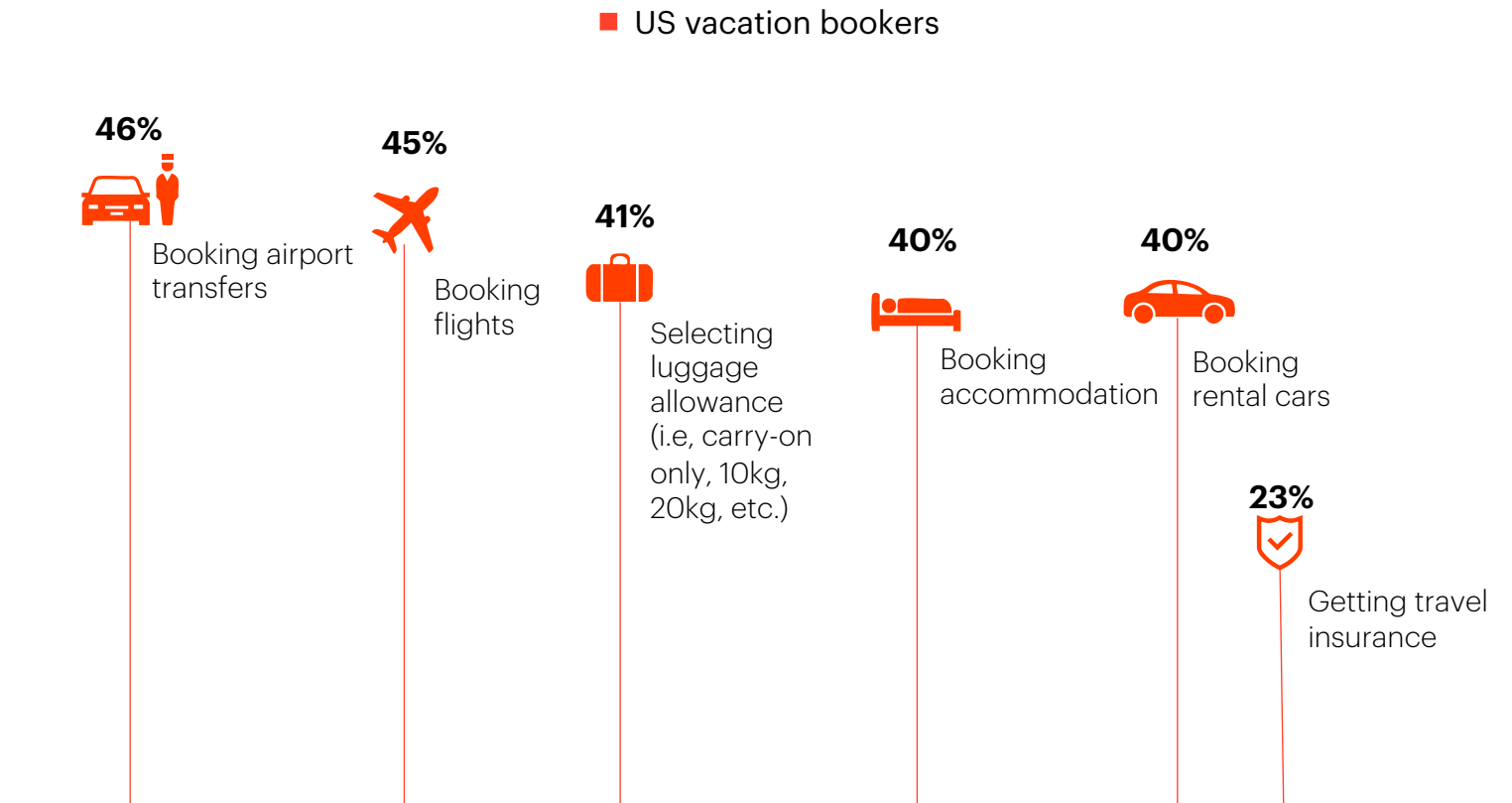


# Flight fright? Air travel most likely to cause stress

“Booking airport transfers” is the top travel planning activity that vacationers find stressful (**46%**), followed closely by booking flights (**45%**) and selecting luggage options (**41%**).

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## What US vacation bookers find stressful



YouGov Surveys, November 13 – December 3, 2024. US vacation bookers. n> 750.  
“Stressful” combines respondents who selected “very stressful” and “somewhat stressful.”



# Who’s more stressed: DIY or bundle bookers?

US vacation bookers who opt for package vacations are more likely to say the various aspects of booking a vacation are stressful than those who choose to book flights and accommodation separately.

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## Bundle bookers more likely to feel stressed during travel planning

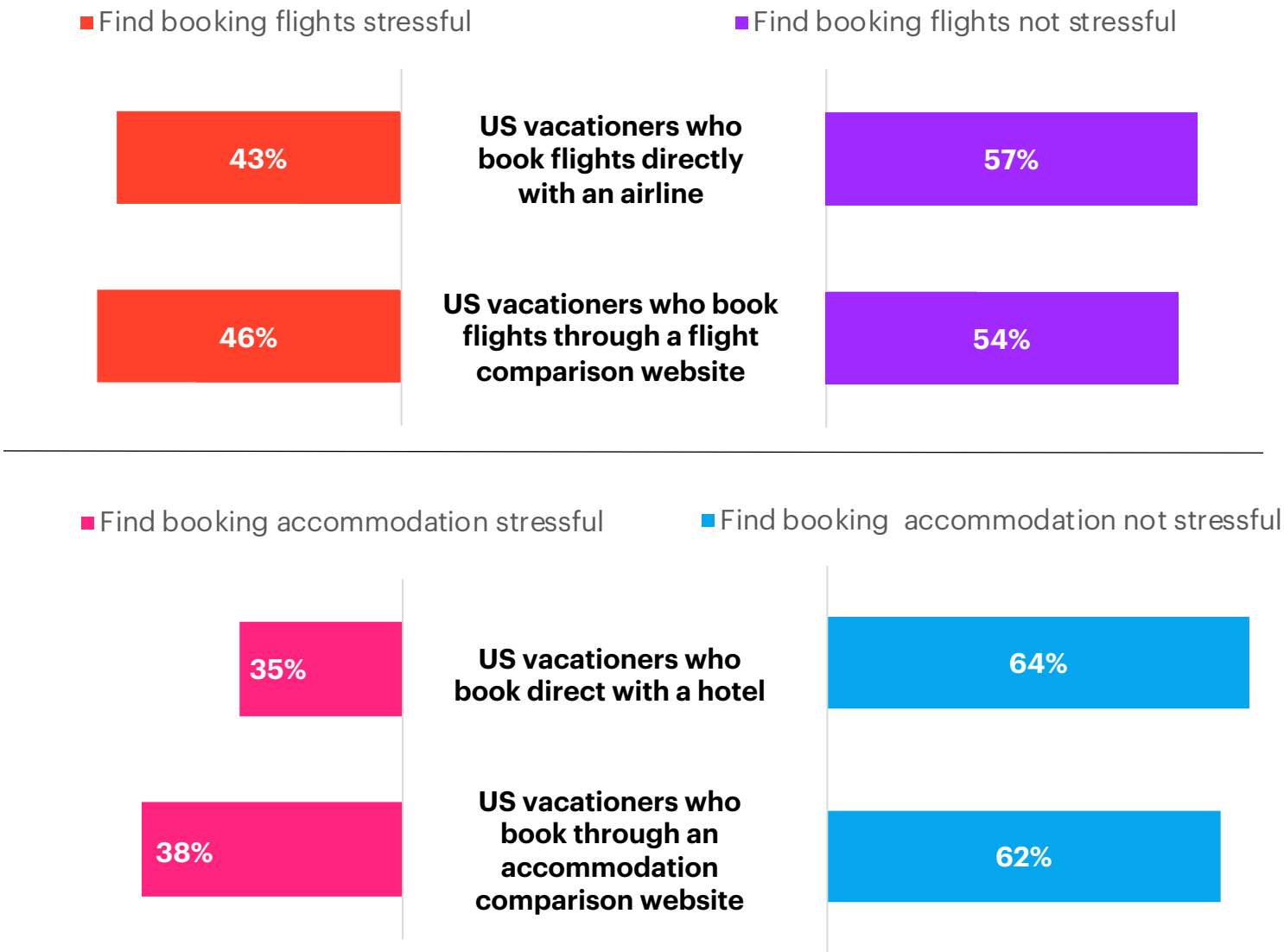
| Travel activity                                                                       |                             | DIY bookers find stressful | Bundle bookers find stressful |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
|    | Booking flights             | 44%                        | 54%                           |
|    | Booking accommodation       | 36% ▼                      | 48% ▲                         |
|    | Booking airport transfers   | 47%                        | 55%                           |
|    | Booking rental cars         | 38% ▼                      | 49% ▲                         |
|  | Getting travel insurance    | 21% ▼                      | 40% ▲                         |
|  | Selecting luggage allowance | 39% ▼                      | 50% ▲                         |

YouGov Surveys, November 13 – December 3, 2024. US DIY bookers: n> 500; US bundle bookers: n> 100.  
▲/▼: Indicates statistically significant difference between groups.  
“Stressful” combines respondents who selected “very stressful” and “somewhat stressful.”

# Which booking methods have the most stressed travel-goers?

Americans who typically book through comparison websites are slightly more likely to find booking flights and accommodation stressful.

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YouGov Surveys, November 13 – December 3, 2024. US vacation bookers: n>100.  
“Don’t know” responses, “Other” responses, and “None of these” responses not shown.  
“Stressful” combines respondents who selected “very stressful” and “somewhat stressful.”



# The best for booking: Online travel agency rankings

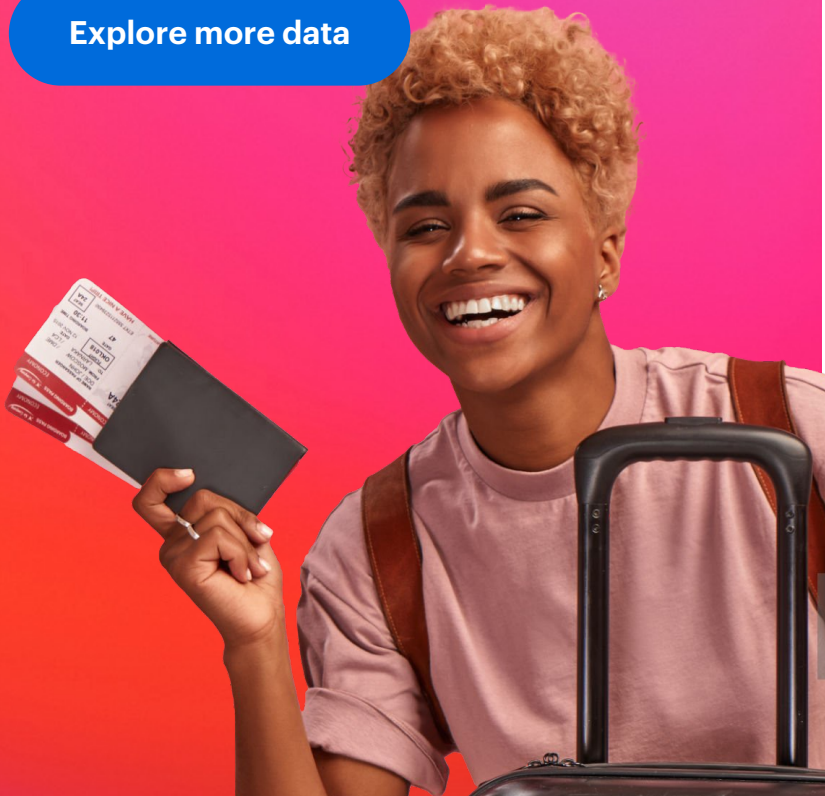
Based on net customer satisfaction.





# Top ranked OTAs (online travel agencies) based on net customer satisfaction

Explore more data



| Rank | Online travel agency | Net customer satisfaction |
|------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1    | Booking.com          | 63.9                      |
| 2    | Trivago              | 63.2                      |
| 3    | choicehotels.com     | 62.0                      |
| 4    | Tripadvisor          | 60.2                      |
| 5    | Hotels.com           | 59.6                      |
| 6    | Expedia              | 59.6                      |
| 7    | Kayak                | 55.6                      |
| 8    | Travelocity          | 52.6                      |
| 9    | CheapTickets         | 50.0                      |
| 10   | Priceline            | 49.0                      |

YouGov BrandIndex US: January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024. Current and former customers (n> 2,200 per brand). To qualify as top ranked, brands have held tracked scores for at least 6 months (183 days).  
Q: Of which of the following brands would you say that you are a “satisfied customer”?

# Most improved OTAs based on net customer satisfaction year-on-year

Explore more data



| Rank | Online travel agency | 2024 net customer satisfaction | 2023 net customer satisfaction | Change in net customer satisfaction |
|------|----------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1    | CheapTickets         | 50.0                           | 42.7                           | +7.3                                |
| 2    | Hotwire.com          | 47.3                           | 42.7                           | +4.6                                |
| 3    | Expedia              | 59.6                           | 55.4                           | +4.2                                |
| 4    | Booking.com          | 63.9                           | 60.2                           | +3.7                                |
| 5    | Trivago              | 63.2                           | 59.5                           | +3.7                                |
| 6    | Hotels.com           | 59.6                           | 56.2                           | +3.4                                |
| 7    | Tripadvisor          | 60.2                           | 57.1                           | +3.1                                |
| 8    | Travelocity          | 52.6                           | 50.1                           | +2.5                                |
| 9    | Orbitz               | 47.6                           | 45.1                           | +2.5                                |
| 10   | Priceline            | 49.0                           | 47.0                           | +2.0                                |

YouGov BrandIndex US: Jan 1, 2024 – Dec 31, 2024. Current and former customers (n> 1,800 per brand per year). To qualify for improvement rankings, brands have held tracked scores for at least 18 months (548 days). Q: Of which of the following brands would you say that you are a “satisfied customer”?



# Methodology

## The insights in this report have been sourced via YouGov Surveys: Serviced, YouGov Profiles, and YouGov BrandIndex.

The insights in this report were sourced via YouGov Surveys: Serviced – providing rapid answers from the right audience. The multi-region survey was conducted from November 13 – December 3, 2024, with 1,500 US respondents.

Only US data from this multi-market survey was referenced in this report, but additional insights are available for 16 other markets.

The profile deep dive in this report was powered by YouGov Profiles – an ever-growing source of living consumer data, with 2+ million data variables from YouGov’s 27+ million global panelists. The data used in this report was accessed via Profiles+ US on 2024-12-15.

The brand rankings are sourced from YouGov’s always-on brand tracker, YouGov BrandIndex. To qualify as a top ranked brand, brands must have scores available for at least 183 days between January 1 to December 31, 2024. A minimum base size of 300 (N) is required.

To qualify as a top improver, brands must have scores for at least 18 months (548 days) between January 1, 2023, to December 31, 2024. Top improvers are ranked based on the change to their satisfaction scores.

Net satisfaction scores are rounded to the nearest decimal point, and differences are determined from those rounded scores

In cases where the change in scores is the same, the current scores are used as a secondary metric to determine their ranking. A minimum base size of 300 (n) is required.

Throughout the report, various consumer segments are referenced:

- The target group of **US vacationers** refers to Americans who are likely to travel within the next 12 months.
- The target group of **US vacation bookers** refers to those who answered: “I am the primary person responsible for booking my trips” to the question “Which of the following statements best describes your role in booking vacations?”
- The target group of **DIY bookers** additionally filters US vacation bookers by looking at the subgroup who answered “I book flights and accommodation separately” to the question “Do you usually book package vacations or book flights and accommodation separately?”
- The target group of **bundle bookers** additionally filters US vacation bookers by looking at the subgroup who answered “I book package vacations” to the question “Do you usually book package vacations or book flights and accommodation separately?”.



# Thank you

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