Gun Ownership and Opinion in the United States
A synthesis of several data sources including recent Pew and Gallup polls, and the 2001 National Gun Policy Survey.

Gun Ownership
A Gallup poll, conducted Oct. 13-16, 2011, finds that 4 in 10 Americans report they have a gun in their homes, including 30% who say they personally own a gun and 12% who say another member of their household owns it. These results show essentially no change since this question was last asked in 2000. At that time, 27% of Americans said they personally owned a gun and 14% said another household member owned one.

Urbanicity
There is an inverse relationship between gun ownership and urbanicity, with the majority of guns owned by those living in rural areas. These findings are consistent with trends since the 1970s.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Gun in household (%)</th>
<th>Handgun in household (%)</th>
<th>Personally own (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>65.2</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>43.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town, Small City</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>27.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburb</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large City</td>
<td>21.7**</td>
<td>13.8**</td>
<td>15.6**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**overall differences in means significant at .001 or less

Protecting the Right to Own Guns vs. Controlling Gun Ownership
In September 2011, 50% of the public said it was more important to control gun ownership while 46% said it was more important to protect the rights of Americans to own guns. This marked a substantial change in attitudes from previous years. From 1993 through 2008, majorities of Americans consistently prioritized gun control over gun rights, with a particular upticks in support for gun control following the Columbine High School shooting in 1999 and the 2007 shooting at Virginia Tech. A record-low 26% of Americans favor a legal ban on the possession of handguns in the United States other than by police and other authorized people.

Urbanicity
The majority of respondents in urban and suburban areas reported that gun control was more important than protecting the right to own guns. In rural areas, the majority favored protecting the right to own guns over gun control. These figures are consistent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Protect the right to own guns (%)</th>
<th>Control gun ownership (%)</th>
<th>(VOL.)</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>682</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gun Ownership and Gun Control Opinions
The possession of firearms strongly shapes attitudes toward the regulation of firearms, beliefs about gun safety, and opinions on other gun-related issues. As the table below shows, people’s views vary greatly according to whether they personally own a gun, live in a household with a gun (but do not personally own a firearm), or live in a household without guns. This data is taken from the 2001 National Gun Policy Survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Support for Gun-Control Measures</th>
<th>Personally owns gun</th>
<th>Gun in Household</th>
<th>No Gun in Household</th>
<th>No guns minus personal gun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gun buyers must take gun-safety course</td>
<td>78.7</td>
<td>88.4</td>
<td>91.7</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police permit before purchaseb</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>85.5</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checks on private sales of guns</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>84.2</td>
<td>80.1</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandatory registration of handguns</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>82.3</td>
<td>81.4</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep guns from criminals, even if harder for law-abiding</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>82.2</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requiring that all new handguns be personalized</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>76.3</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandatory background check and 5-day waiting period</td>
<td>72.4</td>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular re-registering of handguns</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>75.5</td>
<td>79.7</td>
<td>37.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limit one handgun per month per buyer</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>71.8</td>
<td>72.3</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handgun owners must at least be licensed and trained</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>72.4</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concealed carrying only for those with special needs</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>60.2</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handguns for law enforcement only</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General concealed carrying laws make it less safe</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total ban on handguns</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| B. Prohibiting Gun Purchases to Criminals Convicted of...                                          |                      |                  |                      |                           |
| Brandishing firearm                                                                               | 92.1                | 96.9             | 95.5                 | 3.4                       |
| Carrying a concealed weapon without a permit                                                      | 73.5                | 84.4             | 88.1                 | 14.6                      |
| Assault and battery that does not involve a lethal weapon or serious injury                        | 67.9                | 83.7             | 88.4                 | 20.5                      |
| Driving under the influence of alcohol                                                            | 54.1                | 69.8             | 73.7                 | 19.6                      |

| C. Penalties and Enforcement                                                                      |                      |                  |                      |                           |
| Illegal gun sales punished more than illegal drug sales                                           | 46.8                | 58.3             | 56.8                 | 10                        |
| Pass and enforce gun laws                                                                         | 31.9                | 45.7             | 64.6                 | 32.7                      |

| D. Miscellaneous Beliefs and Issues                                                               |                      |                  |                      |                           |
| Business should prohibit carrying of concealed weapons on premises                               | 65.9                | 80.8             | 83.1                 | 17.2                      |
| More likely to go to places that prohibited concealed weapons                                     | 52.7                | 66               | 72.5                 | 19.8                      |
| Oppose people having guns in restaurants                                                          | 66.1                | 81.9             | 85.4                 | 19.3                      |
| Oppose people having guns at colleges                                                            | 83.8                | 95.1             | 93.5                 | 9.7                       |
| Oppose people having guns at bars                                                                | 86.9                | 93.7             | 93.5                 | 6.6                       |
| Less safe if more gun carrying in community                                                      | 45.2                | 58.6             | 72.5                 | 27.3                      |
| Home less safe with handgun                                                                      | 13.7                | 16               | 55.3                 | 41.6                      |
Gun Ownership and Interpretation of the 2nd Amendment

Gun owners (roughly one-third of the U.S. adult population) are nearly universal in endorsing the view that the Second Amendment guarantees their right to own guns. Non-owners are less likely to view the amendment this way, but a majority still do.

While the American public backs the view that gun ownership is a constitutional right, Americans favor having legal restrictions on it. In the same poll, 49% favor stricter gun laws than exist now and 38% would like to see gun laws remain as they are. Just 11% advocate gun laws that are less strict.