

A national poll of registered voters conducted on behalf of the University of Chicago – IOP

Verbatim responses

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When voters are asked...

Please briefly describe what, if anything, is it about some people in the opposite party that makes it difficult to have a relationship with them?

Republicans claim Democrats don't listen to them, are too pushy with their beliefs and refuse to find middle ground.

"They're cocky and think they know it all and get mad when I have my own views. It's like they're trying to convert me, and I just want to live my life." – Strong GOP, Indiana

"If they can't have a conversation without getting upset or angry, it is difficult to have a relationship with them." – Not Strong GOP, Florida

"They can't tolerate views different than their own. When encountering a different view or someone who doesn't agree, they become aggressive and profane." – Strong GOP, New Mexico

"They're not willing to listen to other opinions. It's their way or the Highway." – Strong GOP, Indiana

"They display an unwillingness to try to understand opposing views." – IND/Lean GOP, Minnesota

"They are very pushy on their idea and they think I'm completely wrong for what I believe." – Strong GOP, Minnesota

"They believe it like it is the gospel. They are so brainwashed and frustrated when they don't get their way." – Strong GOP, Texas

And, Democrats claim the same things about Republicans.

“They are bull headed and think that their party is the best.” – Strong DEM, Georgia

“Pushing political beliefs onto my close friends and family.” – Strong DEM, Missouri

“When they try to push their beliefs and agenda on me and all I want to do is have a beer and talk about the latest episode of Big Bang Theory.” – IND/Lean DEM, Colorado

“Close mindedness, inability to digest alternative views.” – IND/Lean DEM, Massachusetts

“Always in your face about why your views are wrong.” – Not Strong DEM, California

“Some people with the opposite party try to force their opinions on others and very rarely will they drop the issue, those are the people that are hard to be friends with.” – Not Strong DEM, Texas

“They refuse to listen or hear out the other side. Telling me their views are the only correct ones and the only ones that are valid and anything else is wrong.” – IND/Lean DEM, New York

“Republicans always think they're freaking right.” – Strong DEM, Wisconsin

“They tend to have no inclination to listen and learn a point of view which differs from their view. They are a pompous outlook and look down on those outside their bubble.” – Strong DEM, Pennsylvania

Both sides accuse the other of listening to and believing in misinformation...

“Wanting to believe lies and misinformation.” – Strong GOP, Kansas

“Lately I find that people are no longer willing to listen or change even if in agreement. It didn't used to be that way. I blame the Media and the Internet with too much incorrect information.” – IND/Lean GOP, Nevada

“It seems that people watch too much news shows and just get their opinions based on what the news stations say to believe, without using their own minds to think for themselves. They do not want to hear anyone else's opinions and think others are stupid.” – Strong GOP, Missouri

“Hard fast views spoon fed disinformation but are unable or unwilling to quantify their views with actual factual data.” – Strong GOP, New Hampshire

“I have dealt with people that are impossible to talk to because they believe the misinformation.” – IND/Lean DEM, North Carolina

“They get their incorrect information from an obscure news source that is not fact checked.” – Strong DEM, Connecticut

“They believe lies, and the lies of right-wing media.” – Strong DEM, Florida

“They thrive on fake news.” – Strong DEM, Pennsylvania

“I believe that people of the opposite party have been gas lit, and belong to a cult, and have watched too much FOX and believe in conspiracy theories. They believe all the lies fed to them without thinking for themselves and using common sense.” – Not Strong DEM, Florida

And of being bullies.

“Some people are very ignorant and stubborn. I am more so referring to the people who get nasty because you don't agree with them. These kind of people tend to stonewall you or bully you in a way or belittle you instead of accepting that opinions exist.” – IND/Lean GOP, Hawaii

“They have seemed to turned into bullies. I have never seen such divisiveness. If you don't agree with them they will literally shut you down, post nasty stuff on your Facebook page. Not sure what ever happened to civil discourse, seems in short supply.” – Strong GOP, New Hampshire

“Some of the ones I have met have just been nasty about being divisive.” – Strong GOP, Texas

“They are mean to others that disagree with them.” – IND/Lean DEM, Ohio

“They become very unfriendly or that they become angry if there is any disagreement. These people are not really great to deal with if they become easily irritated. I'd rather not deal with them.” – Strong DEM, Texas

“They are just loudmouths and are so insistent.” – IND/Lean, Massachusetts

Big time Trump followers tend to be loud and aggressive bullies.” – IND/Lean DEM, New Mexico

And, both claim insult the other side's intelligence and say the other side is "in a cult."

"Most Democrats base their politics on emotion and I'm frustrated in their inability to use logic." – IND/Lean GOP, California

"They are absolute morons that only look at news from mainstream media which are proven liars." – Strong GOP, Colorado

"They are gullible and not seeing the world as a logical person." – Strong GOP, Georgia

"Lack of common sense." – Strong GOP, Arizona

"It just seems they have crazy ideas and support crazy things. You can't talk to them anymore. It's like they're in a cult." – Strong GOP, Missouri

"They seem like zombies and only listen to their points of view and only watch and read news sources they agree with. Most of my family only watches Fox News and Newsmax." – IND/Lean DEM, California

"I just cannot get over the ability to not look at facts. The last Presidential election was fair and there was no significant fraud or anything that would make the election fraudulent. The MAGA Republicans cannot get past the lies. They are stupid." – IND/Lean DEM, Oregon

"They are misinformed and generally uneducated." – IND/Lean DEM, Washington

"Their bigotry and anti-intellectualism." – Not Strong DEM, Texas

"They have no critical thinking skills and do not watch a variety of news outlets to get a better-rounded picture of what is going on." – Strong DEM, California

"Close minded, confused, in a cult." – Strong DEM, Kansas

Other voters blame extremist for making it difficult to have relationships with the other party.

“It's not a Democrat or Republican issue. It's extremism on both sides. The liberal side hold very different values than I do, but most people on both sides are good people. The extremists are only out fighting to be hateful or get attention.” – Not Strong GOP, Arkansas

“Only if they're very radical and only want to talk about politics and get upset with me if I don't share their views.” – Not Strong GOP, North Dakota

“When they are one, too extreme, i.e. the ten percent and try to impose their views on the ninety percent and two, when they don't respect difference of opinion and my preference to keep politics out of conversations.” – Not Strong GOP, Missouri

“People who are on the far left and far right don't seem interested in listening to opposing views. They just want their own views reinforced. It's very cultish.” – IND/Lean DEM, Arizona

“Politics in this country have devolved into essentially a team sport mentality, whereas the other side is the enemy and politicians exacerbate that problem. It makes sane political discourse extremely rare.” – Not Strong DEM, Arizona

“The level of extremes in politics is ridiculous and due to overwhelming misleading info or just out right lying. People are not interested in finding facts.” – Strong DEM, Florida

Finally, there are some voters who try to not to make politics part of their relationships and avoid disagreements.

“I have friends who have completely different political beliefs than I have. We still get along and stay friends by just not talking politics.” – Strong GOP, New Jersey

“My political views are rooted in my faith in God. I will not knowingly discriminate those who have different opinions than me politically. It is difficult to have relationships with people with different political beliefs if they are hard headed about it.” – IND/Lean GOP, New York

“I do not choose my friends on their political affiliation.” – IND/Lean GOP, New Jersey

“They start scandals. I avoid them.” – Strong GOP, California

“None. I don’t use politics to base who my friends are going to be.” – Strong GOP, Georgia

“Everybody is so rigid in their beliefs. It is almost only able to preach to the choir anymore. And, I have even had arguments with people I agree with because I didn't hate the other side as much as them. I avoid discussions on politics like the plague.” – IND/Lean DEM, Florida

“Only when they are aggressive about it. I have friends with different views but they are respectful. Politics doesn't interfere with our relationships.” – IND/Lean DEM, Texas

“It's the same as religious beliefs. These are topics that are personal and private and don't need to be challenged. Each has the right to choose for themselves.” – Not Strong DEM, Tennessee

“I respect others' opinions even if I don't agree with them.” – Not Strong DEM, Louisiana

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