

Sleep in America[®] Poll 2021

Americans weigh-in on the effects of the clock changes

Most Americans don't think their sleep, routines or moods are affected by the changing of the clocks – and among those who do see impacts, there are divisions between there being positive or negative ones, the National Sleep Foundation's 2021 Sleep in America[®] Poll finds.

Overall, 57 percent of those living in states that observe Daylight Saving Time say there's no downturn in their sleep, mood or how well they can maintain their daily routines when they set the clocks forward or back, and 45 percent report no impact at all in any of these areas, positive or negative.

On sleep specifically, about seven in 10 say there's no change in their sleep when the clocks are moved in either direction, with the rest splitting evenly between saying it gets better or worse. Similarly, about two-thirds report no impact of seasonal time changes on their ability to maintain a routine and about six in 10 say the same about their mood.

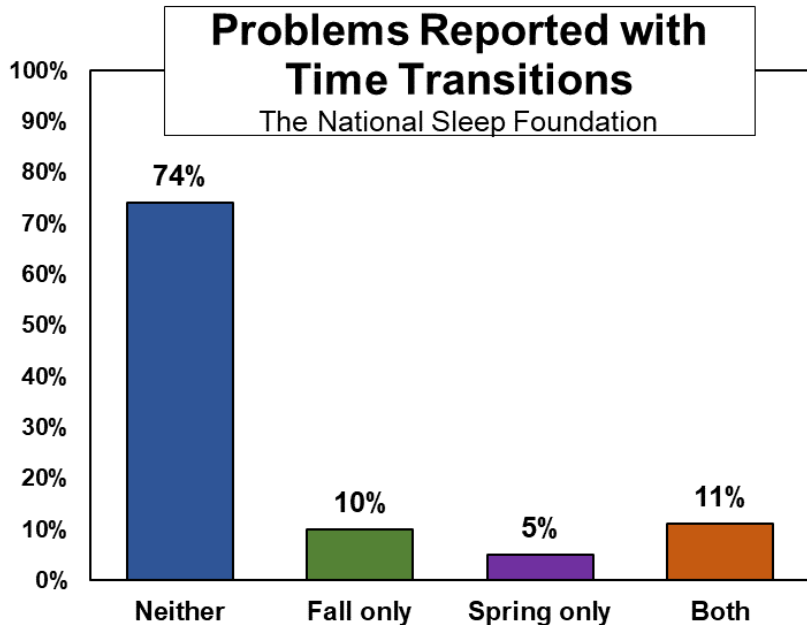
Where negative impacts are perceived, they're most apt to be associated with setting the clocks to standard time – back one hour – in the fall. Twenty-seven percent say this negatively impacts their mood, 23 percent their ability to maintain their routines and 16 percent their sleep. Fewer, 12 percent, say moving their clock forward in the spring negatively affects their mood and routine alike, and 14 percent say the same about their sleep.

When clocks are changed in the...

	Fall			Spring		
	Better	No change	Worse	Better	No change	Worse
Your sleep	13%	71%	16%	13%	72%	14%
Maintaining your daily routine	10	67	23	23	65	12
Your mood	9	63	27	26	61	12

In separate but related results, most say that changing the clocks right now wouldn't affect their sleep or productivity. Eighty-three percent think they would get the same amount of sleep as they do currently if they transitioned now to daylight saving time, and 74 percent think there'd be no difference in the amount they get done in a day.

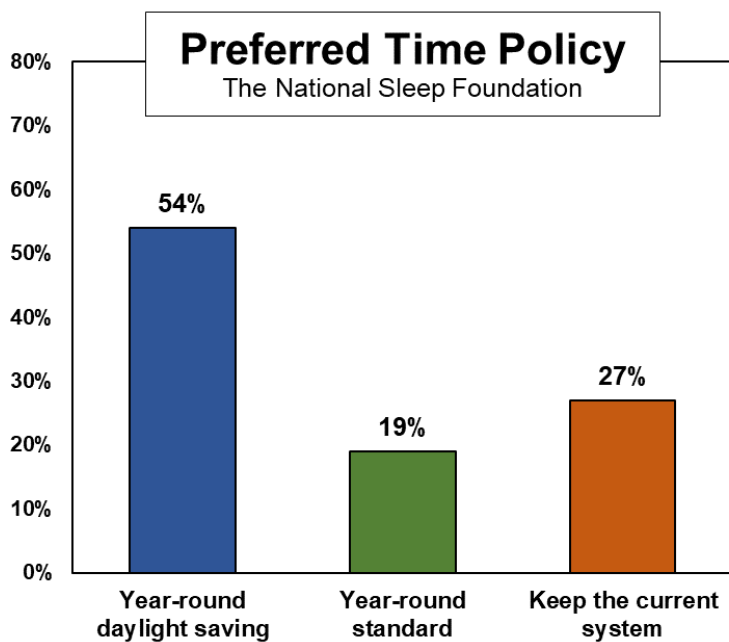
Given minimal self-reported impacts, it's not surprising unsurprising that, all in all, few see the clock transitions as a problem: three-quarters say the changes aren't a problem for them in either season. Ten percent have problems with falling back, 5 percent with springing forward and 11 percent with both. Evidence, however, shows a higher number of heart attacks, car crashes, and workplace injuries in the days after changing the clocks.



Preferred Time Policy

About three-quarters of Americans say they'd prefer a consistent year-round time system, bucking a decades-long national policy of twice-yearly clock changes.

That includes slightly more than half, 54 percent in the national, random-sample survey, who say they'd prefer year-round DST, the "spring ahead" clock setting that occurred March 14; and 19 percent who prefer year-round standard time, the "fall back" clock setting. About one in four prefer sticking with the current system.



The survey separately posed the issue as a personal preference rather than a choice in public policy, with a similar result: Fifty-eight percent opt for later sunsets year-round, equivalent to the intention of a DST policy.

Permanent DST also prevails in overall strength of sentiment. Of those who prefer permanent DST, 22 percent express a "very" strong preference for their choice, compared with 8 percent for year-round standard time and 9 percent for the current system. That said, whether preferring year-round DST, year-round standard time, or the

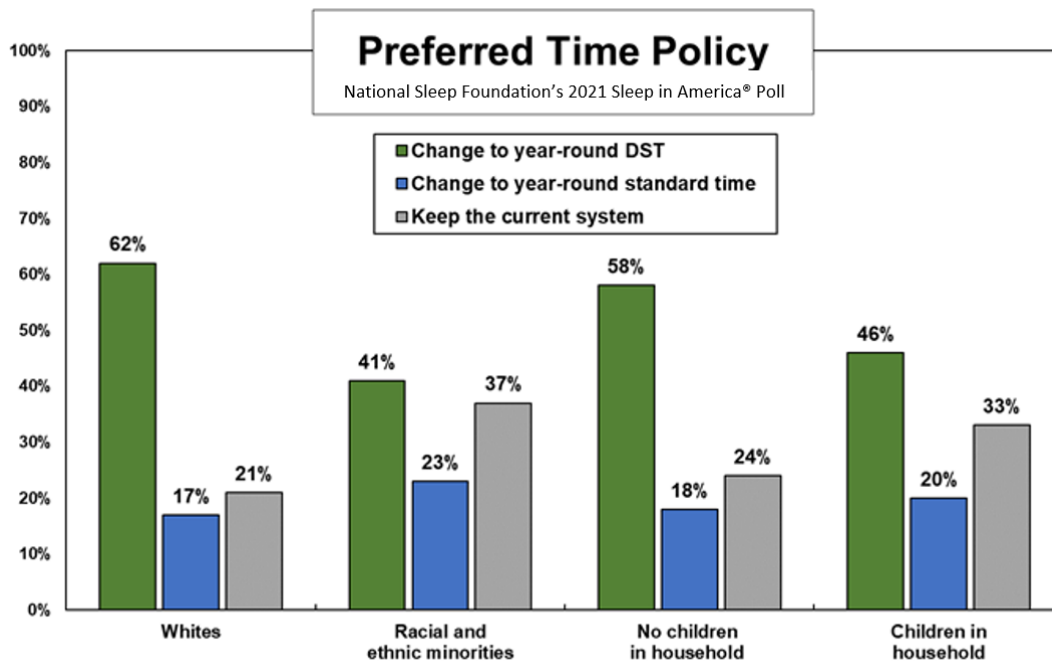
current system, the majority of these groups feel at least somewhat strongly about their position.

Research suggests that shifting to and from standard time can upset circadian rhythms and produce negative outcomes including short-term sleep deprivation and cardiovascular problems. Some sleep experts advocate year-round standard time, citing its better alignment with the timing of sunrise and sunset, which influence natural sleep/wake cycles. All states save Arizona and Hawaii observe Daylight Saving Time from mid-March to early November, making about 97 percent of the U.S. population subject to twice yearly time changes.

As noted, a majority prefers changing to a consistent year-round time system, and experiences of problems with time changes are reflected, to some extent, in policy preferences. Eighty-nine percent of those who experience either or both transitions as a problem prefer changing to a consistent year-round time system, compared with 68 percent of those who don't have a problem. And 63 percent of those with a time-change problem favor year-round DST specifically.

Fifty-two percent of respondents without time change-related problems support moving to DST year-round. Support among this group for keeping the current system, meanwhile, is 32 percent, compared with just 10 percent among people reporting time change-related problems.

Some attitudes vary by group. Whites are much more likely than members of racial or ethnic minority groups to support switching to all-year DST, for example, 62 vs. 41 percent. And year-round DST preference is higher among those in households without children, 58 percent, than among those with them, 46 percent.



Morning and Evening Preferences

Before asking about daylight saving time, the survey asked respondents their preferences more generally – sunrise earlier in the morning, or sunset later in the evening. Later sunset was preferred by 69 percent in the fall/winter and 70 percent in the spring/summer. Fifty-eight percent preferred later sunset for both times of year. Just 17 percent favored an earlier sunrise throughout the year, and about one in 10 favored it in one case, either spring/summer or fall/winter, but not both.

One's personal sleep schedule has a clear influence on these preferences. People who currently wake up before 6 a.m. on weekdays support an earlier sunrise. Late risers, those who awake from 9 to just before 11 a.m., are about half as likely to support earlier sunrises. Support from those who get up from 6 to just before 9 a.m. falls in between.

As with the direct DST gauge, there are differences on this question among groups. Sixty-four percent of whites consistently prefer later evening sunsets, compared with 47 percent of racial and ethnic minorities. The large majority of both genders prefer later sunsets year-round, though there's a small gender gap. Men are more likely to favor earlier sunrises generally, while women are more apt to prefer later sunsets in fall and earlier sunrises in spring. And those with kids at home are slightly less in favor of a year-round later sunset, 53 vs. 60 percent.

METHODOLOGY – This survey for the National Sleep Foundation was conducted among a random national sample of 1,017 adults, Jan. 15-25, 2021. Results have a margin of sampling error of 3.5 points for the full sample. Error margins are larger for subgroups.

The survey was produced by [Langer Research Associates](#) of New York, N.Y., with sampling and data collection by Ipsos Public Affairs via its online KnowledgePanel®, which provides internet access to randomly recruited participants.

Full results follow. * = <0.5%

1-14 previously released.

15. Which of these is your preference in the fall and winter?

	Have the clock set so that sunrise is earlier in the morning	Have the clock set so that sunset is later in the evening	Skipped
1/25/21	29	69	2

16. Which of these is your preference in the spring and summer?

	Have the clock set so that sunrise is earlier in the morning	Have the clock set so that sunset is later in the evening	Skipped
1/25/21	28	70	2

15/16 NET Table

	Always earlier rise	Always later set	Earlier fall/winter later spring/summer	Later fall/winter earlier spring/summer	Skip
1/25/21	17	58	12	11	2

17. If the clock was set forward right now, so that sunrise was an hour later than it currently is, with sunset also an hour later, do you think you would get...

	More sleep than you do now	About the same amount of sleep as you do now	Less sleep than you do now	Skipped
1/25/21	10	83	6	*

18. Again, if the clock was set forward right now, so that sunrise was an hour later than it currently is, with sunset also an hour later, do you think you would get...

	More done during the day than you do now	About the same amount done during the day as you do now	Less done during the day than you do now	Skipped
1/25/21	19	74	6	1

19. Currently in most of the country clocks are (set forward by one hour in the spring, called daylight saving time), and are set (back by one hour in the fall, to standard time). Which of these do you prefer:

	Change to year-round daylight saving time (later sunrise, more daylight in the evening)	Change to year-round standard time (earlier sunrise, less daylight in the evening)	Keep the current system	Skipped
1/25/21	54	19	27	*

20. How strongly do you prefer (changing to year-round daylight saving time/changing to year-round standard time/keeping the current system)?

	----- More strongly -----		----- Less strongly -----				
	Very	Somewhat	Not so	Not strongly			
	strongly	strongly	strongly	at all	Skipped		
NET			NET				
1/25/21	75	39	37	24	18	7	*

19/20 NET Table

	--- Change to year-round ---		--- Change to year-round ---							
	daylight saving time	More	Less	Skp.	NET	Less	More	Skp.	Keep current system	Skp.
		strgly	strgly			strgly	strgly			
NET					NET					
1/25/21	54	41	13	*	19	5	14	*	27	*

21. [IF DOES NOT LIVE IN ARIZONA OR HAWAII] When clocks are set back one hour in the fall, do these get better, get worse, or is there no change?

Summary table

	Gets better	No change	Gets worse	Skipped
a. Your sleep	13	71	16	*
b. Maintaining your daily routine	10	67	23	*
c. Your mood	9	63	27	1

22. [IF DOES NOT LIVE IN ARIZONA OR HAWAII] When clocks are moved forward one hour in the spring, do these get better, get worse, or is there no change?

Summary table

	Gets better	No change	Gets worse	Skipped
a. Your sleep	13	72	14	*
b. Maintaining your daily routine	23	65	12	*
c. Your mood	26	61	12	*

23. [IF DOES NOT LIVE IN ARIZONA OR HAWAII] Overall, is it a problem or annoyance for you when the clocks are set back one hour in the fall, or not?

	----- A problem -----		----- Not a problem -----				
	A major	A minor	An annoyance,	Not a problem			
	problem	problem	not a problem	or an annoyance	Skipped		
NET			NET				
1/25/21	20	6	14	80	48	32	0

24. [IF DOES NOT LIVE IN ARIZONA OR HAWAII] Overall, is it a problem or annoyance for you when the clocks are moved forward one hour in the spring, or not?

	----- A problem -----		----- Not a problem -----				
	A major	A minor	An annoyance,	Not a problem			
	problem	problem	not a problem	or an annoyance	Skipped		
NET			NET				
1/25/21	16	5	11	84	49	35	*