1978 NATIONAL CAMPING MARKET SURVEY

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Abstract

This report summarizes the major findings of a 1978 nationwide camping market survey, and compares them with those of similar surveys conducted in 1971 and 1973. It documents recent trends in camping and in the composition of the camping market, and compares camping demand with the available supply of developed campsites. The active camping market in 1978 included 17.5 million households, up from 14.3 million in 1973. However, the number of former campers exceeded the number of active camping households for the first time in 1978. The average growth of the active camping market continues to be about twice that of new households in the United States, though that growth is down sharply from the late 1960's and early 1970's. Currently active campers use about 60 percent of the available campsites.

1978 NATIONAL CAMPING MARKET SURVEY

Foreword

ONE OF THE DIFFICULTIES in meeting the demand of Americans for camping and other forms of outdoor recreation is that data on participation trends have been collected by different survey methods. As a result, planners often have been unable to make sound policy decisions on the basis of comparisons of these trends. By contrast, identical survey methods were used in each of three nationwide surveys of the camping market that have been conducted in this decade. This report is a summary of the most recent survey.

The three surveys were conducted in 1971, 1973, and 1978, by the Opinion Research Corporation, Princeton, N.J., under contract with the USDA Forest Service. Together, they present a changing picture of one of the most important and most complex outdoor recreation markets. For each survey, approximately 2,000 personal interviews were conducted during November and December. Although several questions have been added or deleted between surveys, the questions asked have been nearly identical. Future surveys of the camping market will be conducted at 5-year intervals, the next being in 1983.

Over the years, this research has been supported in part by Cooperative Regional Research Projects NEM-42 and NE-100, and the camping industry.

THE CAMPING MARKET: 1960-1978

Camping population

The camping market is unquestionably our most studied outdoor recreation market. As a result of low-cost, reliable techniques for conducting national sample surveys of the general population, we are considerably more knowledgeable about who camps than where they camp.

The landmark work of the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission (Ferriss et al. 1962) showed there were 3 to 4 million active camping households in the United States in 1960. By 1965, there were about 6 million (Bureau of Outdoor Recreation 1972). In 1971, the first of three in-depth studies of the camping market by the Forest Service identified 12.4 million active camping households (LaPage 1973). The second Forest Service survey 2 years later identified 14.3 million households (Kottke et al. 1975); and the third survey in 1978 identified 17.5 million active camping households (Table 1). Table 2 shows the size of the American camping market in 1971, 1973, and 1978, as a percentage of total households.

From an average annual growth rate of 20 percent in the 1960's, camping declined in the early 1970's to less than 10 percent, and to less than 5 percent in the late 1970's. In terms of the number of people who camp, the growth rate is even lower as the average household declined from 3.33 persons in 1960 to 2.81 in 1978 (Bureau of the Census 1978, 1979).

The annual growth of the inactive camping market (former campers) is almost twice that of the active market. In 1971, one-third of all households contained at least one adult who had camped. By 1978, one-half of the households included an adult who had camped. However, from 1971 to 1978 there was little increase in the percentage of households with currently active campers (19 to 23 percent).

Potential campers

An increase in the number of people who have camped can occur only with a decline in the number of "potential campers;" that is, those in both high and medium potential categories, or those who have thought about camping and would like to try it. Beginning with the 1971 Forest Service study, we have monitored this decline—from 12 percent of all households to 6 percent in 1978. As the high and moderate potential categories feed new households into the active camping market, they absorb replacements from the low and zero potential groups, or those who previously had never considered camping. During the past 5 years, this reserve from the lower potential categories seems to have dried up. And the supply of high potentials is diminishing rapidly due to the growth of the active camping market. The average annual growth of the active market continues to be nearly twice that of new households in the United States (Bureau of the Census 1978) (Table 3).

PARTICIPATION TRENDS

Equipment

Trends in the types of camping equipment in use during the 1970's generally are inconclusive on the basis of the three Forest Service surveys (Table 4) and do not strongly reflect the market for new recreational vehicles during the past decade (Bevins et al. 1979) (Table 5). The incidence of renting or borrowing equipment for the most recent camping trip has declined sharply as more campers have acquired their own. And the incidence of having just bought the equipment has continued to decline since 1971, a possible indication of approaching market saturation (Table 6). Unlike the sales data reflected in Table 5, these purchases include sales of second-hand equipment.

However, among the two classes of inactive campers (temporarily inactive and permanently inactive), there was little change in the rate of disposal of their camping equipment. In 1973, the majority of inactive campers never owned their own camping equipment and consequently never had to dispose of it. The increase in equipment ownership in 1978 resulted in more equipment disposals by temporarily inactive campers; but one-fourth of the temporarily inactive and one-fifth of the permanently inactive campers still owned their equipment (Table 7). The extent to which this equipment continues to be used by others was not determined.

During the past 5 years, the private sector's share of the camping market has apparently increased while the public's decreased (Table 8). This shift in market shares is probably due to the increased need by campers for utility connections and the higher level of personal service afforded by most private campgrounds.

Experience

The active camping market in 1978 was considerably more experienced than in 1971 when only one-fourth of all active campers had been camping for more than 3 years; by 1978, nearly three-fourths of the currently active campers had more than 3 years of camping experience (Table 9).

Unfortunately, prior to the latest survey (1978), no estimates of actual camping frequency (days per year) were collected. Campers were asked, however, if their participation had been "increasing or decreasing in the past few years." Since 1973, significantly more active campers report an increase in participation (Table 10). All regions and all age groups (head-of-household's age) showed increases, but increasing participation was most common among the 40- to 50-year-olds and in the Northeastern States.

The heavy-half phenomenon, where one-half of all campers are responsible for more than three-fourths of the reported camping days, was noted in 1969 and 1971 (LaPage 1969; LaPage and Ragain 1971), and is again evident in the 1978 national survey data. In 1978, one-half of the active campers accounted for 78 percent of all camping trips and 77 percent of the total reported camping days. And while median participation by active campers in 1978 was only two weekend trips of 3 days each, average participation was 3.4 trips of 4.7 days each (Table 11).

MARKET COMPOSITION

Demographics

Because of the camping market's size and broad appeal to a cross section of society, its characteristics tend to reflect those of the public in general and its trends tend to reflect national trends. For example, in 1973, the income distribution of active, inactive, and potential campers closely paralleled that of all American households in that year. By 1978, the incomes of potential campers and inactive campers continued to reflect the national distribution, while those of active campers revealed a distinct upper income bias (Table 12).

In 1973, the age distribution of all three major camping market classes was strongly skewed in favor of younger heads-of-households. In 1978, the age distribution was more representative for both active and potential campers. The large increase in inactivity among young heads of households in 1978 is probably the result of new people in this age group who formerly camped with their parents and now have households of their own (Table 13).

Occupation, education, sex, home ownership, and size of home town or city all show relatively little change from 1973 to 1978 for the major camping market groups (Table 14). However, three other demographic descriptors (region, marital status, and race) were distinctly different in 1978 (Table 14, 15).

While camping is still predominantly a family activity, there was a distinct increase in single campers and a decrease in married campers between 1973 and 1978 (Table 15). The change is most pronounced among temporarily inactive campers and probably reflects the large increase in temporary inactivity among people 18 to 20 years old (Table 14).

Although the change in the percentage of nonwhites in the active camping market was insignificant during the past 5 years, there is a strong multiracial interest in camping among both inactive and potential campers (Table 14). In fact, more than one of every four potential campers is nonwhite. This group represents a major opportunity for market expansion that apparently is being ignored or, at best, not effectively pursued.

Regional trends

Gains and losses in the number of campers, by region, are not evenly distributed and do not reflect patterns of population growth for any of the four major regions (Table 1). More than half of the Nation's 3.2 million new campers (from 1973 to 1978) live in the North Central States. Further, the North Central's gains in active campers were accompanied by almost no losses in potential campers or increases in the numbers of temporarily inactive campers. At the same time, the Northeast gained 1 million campers while losing nearly that many to temporarily inactive status. The pattern in the West was similar to the Northeast's, and the Southern States actually experienced a net loss in numbers of campers.

Despite substantial shrinkage in the numbers of potential campers (26 percent), the South continues to have the largest supply of prospective campers. However, if the trend from 1973 to 1978 means anything, that potential does not produce large numbers of active campers in the South. Possibly, by moving from the South, these potential campers later contribute to the active camping market in other regions, particularly the North Central and the West. Similarly, the largest reservoir of temporarily inactive campers is in the Southern States. In 1978, for the first time since the camping market has been studied in detail, the combined total of permanent dropouts and temporarily inactive campers exceeded the size of the active camping market. In the late 1960's and early 1970's there were two active campers for every inactive camper. By 1974, the two groups were about equal in size. Today, the households with former campers outnumber those with actives by more than 2 million.

THE CAMPING EXPERIENCE

Perceptions

Despite enormous changes in the quantity and quality of available camping opportunities and in the nature of the demand for them, the ways in which Americans perceive camping as an outdoor activity seem surprisingly resistant to change. Camping may no longer be "roughing it," but it is more popular today than ever. In assessing the camping market's growth potential, we examined camping's popular image in both the 1973 and 1978 national surveys. Perceptions about camping were determined by the use of a series of word pairs. Each pair of adjectives included a 5-point scale ranging from very favorable to very unfavorable. For example, respondents decide whether camping is pleasant or unpleasant, and to what degree. From the responses emerged a composite image of camping that is substantially more favorable than unfavorable among the general public (Table 16). And there are few significant changes in these images within the major camping market categories over the past 5 years (Tables 17, 18).

Perceptions of camping are particularly important if they act as barriers to participation. For example, if most people who would like to try camping see it as "difficult" or "complex," that perceived "difficulty" becomes a real barrier to participation. In 1973, 50 percent of all prospective campers saw camping as being "easy." By 1978, only 41 percent of the prospective campers held that view of camping (Table 17). Similarly, "comfortable" dropped from 54 to 39 percent for this same group; and "fun" dropped from 57 to 42 percent. Perceptions of "crowding" increased from 35 to 43 percent among potential campers (Table 18).

Among temporarily inactive campers, the same kinds of perceptual barriers reduce the likelihood that they will return to the active market. Perhaps most importantly, increasingly favorable perceptions among active campers could reflect improved conditions and reduced intentions of dropping out of the market. Of the 12 image factors studied, 8 showed higher positive images and 4 had higher negative images in 1978 than in 1973 (Tables 17, 18). For example, active campers in 1978 seemed to feel that camping was less crowded, more convenient, more interesting, easier, and more comfortable than in 1973. However, active campers were less likely to see camping as safe and fun, Table 19 includes image indexes for selected demographic and camping market groups. An image index is the number of persons who have a generally favorable perception of camping for each person who has a generally unfavorable perception.

Satisfaction

Like camping's image, a camper's satisfaction with his last camping trip is remarkably resistant to change (Table 20). Both image and satisfaction are potentially useful indicators for monitoring how well the campground industry is providing quality camping experiences. In view of the rapid growth in the number of inactive campers, our data on images and satisfactions suggest that the accelerated dropout rate apparently is not due to a decline in the quality of camping. The one possible exception is that the availability of utility hookups may not be keeping pace with the demand for more self-contained camping (Table 20).

Also, a minor decline was noted in the 1978 level of satisfaction with camping fees. However, temporarily inactive campers actually were more favorable toward camping fees on their last trip than they were in 1973. The average camping fee ($6.76)[1] apparently has not yet reached the point where it seriously affects participation.

Costs

Camping's "cost image" apparently is changing; camping seems as good a bargain—or better—than it was 5 years ago for all market segments except potential campers (Table 21). Among temporarily inactive campers, the belief that camping is a more economical way of traveling and vacationing was much more prevalent in 1978 than in 1973. The discrepancy in attitudes about camping's cost advantages between potential campers and people who have camped may indicate that an industry-sponsored campaign on comparative costs could stimulate market growth.

Public attitudes about fees also were assessed in 1973 and 1978 by asking people if they believed that camping fees at State and national campgrounds should be high enough to cover all or most of the cost of operating them, or kept low and subsidized by taxes. No significant change in attitude was found among people who have camped; however, there was a strong increase in support of subsidized camping among those who expressed a high interest in becoming a camper (Table 22).

Other activities

The camping experience for most people involves more than temporary living in tents, trailers, or motor homes. Not surprisingly, participation in other major outdoor recreation activities by both active and inactive campers greatly exceeds the average participation rate for these activities (Table 23). Campers participate in boating at twice the national rate. The same is true for hiking, off-road vehicle use, hunting, snow skiing, and canoeing. Participation by campers in selected activities seems a sensitive indicator of general trends in those activities. In monitoring 10 outdoor activities for both the 1973 and 1978 National Camping Market Surveys, it was found that participation trends of campers often paralleled those of the general public.

Camping, like any recreational activity, involves both anticipation (planning) and recollection. To monitor trends in these "off-site" aspects of the activity, we collected information on the frequency of visits to camping and outdoor equipment shows, and on campers and noncampers who have friends and relatives who camp. Both of these measures also provide an indicator of intentions to return to camping by temporarily inactive campers, as well as a means of estimating the intensity of interest in camping by potential campers. Attendance at camping shows was higher for temporarily inactive campers in 1978 than in 1973; but attendance, as well as the incidence of having friends who camp, was down for the potential campers (Table 24). The potential campers of 1978, in many respects, don't seem

[1]News release on campground fees, June 1, 1979, Wheelers Guides, Print Media Services, Park Ridge, Ill.

to have as strong an interest in camping as they had in 1973.

A question added to the 1978 survey was intended to monitor the extent to which camping plans are altered by factors such as energy availability and cost. Preliminary findings suggest that upwards of one-third of the active campers cancelled or shortened trips in 1978 (Table 25). The reasons given most often were "family or personal," "weather," and "lack of time." Cost did not seem a significant factor in 1978, nor was the availability of gasoline. The fact that only 8 percent of the permanently inactive campers had plans to camp in 1978 tends to support the classification scheme that identified them as market dropouts.

SUPPLY AND DEMAND COMPARISONS

Assumptions

Any attempt to relate the camping participation data from this survey to the available supply of campsites in the Nation necessitates accepting a number of assumptions. For example, many of the available camping spaces in this country are used by citizens of Canada and other nations not included in the survey. We have assumed that an equal amount of the camping reported to us by Americans is done outside of the United States. This may be a dangerous assumption if the United States is a net importer of campers, but we have no basis to adjust the assumption at this time.

An equally difficult problem is that of assessing how many of the total estimated camper days are spent at developed campsites as opposed to wilderness, roadside, and open-field camping. Further difficulty arises with the realization that a great many campers doubleup, or camp with another party, on one site. We have assumed that camping with another party on one site is characteristic of at least 5 percent of the camping days.[2] Camping on undeveloped sites has no impact on the supply of available developed sites, so some adjustment must be made for this as well. Since most developed sites, public and private, have an associated fee we have reduced by 20 percent the total estimated camping participation to account for those campers who do not pay fees (Table 20).

Using the total of 17.5 million households that contain people who camped in 1978, this combined reduction (25 percent) results in a total of 13.1 million households that have campers who apparently use the available supply of developed campsites.

Campsite occupancy

One-half of the households (6.55 million) included campers who reportedly camped less than the median of 6 days. The average participation for this group appears to be about two weekends or 4 days. Their impact on the available supply is, therefore, 26.2 million occupied site-days. Campers from the other half of the market camp an average of about 20 days, producing a total of 131 million occupied site-days.

To assess the impact of the total of 157 million occupied site-days on the available supply of campsites (percent occupancy), we need a reliable estimate of that supply. Most major campground directories list just over 1 million campsites. However, directories tend to list only those campsites that meet the publisher's minimum standards. The only available total is provided by the 1974 National Association's of Conservation Districts' 1974 inventory of recreation sites (NACD 1977). According to that inventory, there are an estimated 1,724,712 campsites nationally, but that figure does not include sites in the State of Texas. Woodall's 1978 campground statistics (Woodall Publishing Co. 1978) includes an estimate of 48,114 campsites in Texas. Therefore, our best estimate is 1.77 million campsites in the United States. Of these sites, an estimated one-tenth are open year round, providing 65 million available site-days; the others are open on an average, 120 days each year, providing another 191 million available site-days. By dividing the total occupied site-days (157 million) by total capacity (256 million site-days) we arrive at an occupancy rate of 61 percent.

By way of an independent comparison, in

[2]Unpublished data from a long-term study of campground use in New Hampshire, on file at the Northeastern Forest Experiment Station, Durham, N.H.

1978, a small-scale national survey of occupancy by the National Campground Owners Association revealed an occupancy rate of 58 percent.[3]

CONCLUSIONS

The 1978 National Camping Market Survey documents a turning point in the market. For the first time the number of inactive campers exceeds the actives. People from 27 percent of all households have tried camping and dropped it, temporarily or permanently! And the potential camping market has been reduced to half its size at the turn of the decade. Not only are potential campers fewer in number, they have decidedly less "potential" in terms of their images of camping, attendance at camping equipment shows, and number of friends who camp.

The major implication of this turning point is that the industry must look in new directions for continued market growth. Over the past two decades, that growth has resulted from attracting new (potential) campers. Much of that reserve has now dried up; and what remains includes those who apparently are more resistant to conventional marketing techniques.

The best prospects for sustained growth at this time seem to be in two distinct areas: (1) the 9 million temporarily inactive camping households; and (2) the "light half" of the active camping market—people from another 8 million households who camp less than 6 days each year. The greatest improvement in favorable images toward camping between 1973 and 1978 occurred among: Northeastern adults, heads-of-households in the $10,000 to $15,000 annual income range, and people 30 to 50 years old.

The camping market is clearly changing despite its enormous size and broad appeal. Comparisons with the 1971 and 1973 surveys indicate a number of areas that—if present trends continue—might provide useful marketing clues. The North Central States seem to be the best ones for encouraging new campers to enter the market. Younger heads-of-households (particularly former campers), nonwhites (particularly potential campers), and nonmarrieds clearly have favorable attitudes toward camping and have historically been underrepresented in the market.

Finally, the 1978 survey contains no hint of how the market may react to the worsening energy situation in the United States. Continuation of all of the trends identified in this report is totally dependent on the availability and price of gasoline. It is a fact of American geography that there are few camping opportunities near major urban areas. It seems likely that a continuing energy scarcity could result in a minor campground construction boom near urban areas, despite the apparent adequate numbers of currently available campsites. And the current trend toward a greater proportion of available campsites being rented on a season-long basis probably will be accelerated.

[3]LaPage, W. F., and M. I. Bevins 1978. The nationwide camping indicators program—1978. Report to the board of directors of the National Campground Owners Association.

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APPENDIX

Sampling Procedures

The essential characteristic of probability sampling is that, for each person in the population under study, the probability that he will be included in the sample can be specified. This means that the degree of reliability of any finding from a study based on a probability sample can be estimated mathematically.

Opinion Research Corporation's master sample design is a major improvement over standard area probability designs now in common use. The sampling method eliminates the important problems of traditional probability sampling by using current address directories as the basis of a system for defining interviewing starting points—a system that includes in the sample those households which are not in the directory. The method is both statistically and administratively as efficient as possible, providing the most reliable data for any given expenditure.

The master sample consists of 360 counties in the contiguous United States, six subsamples of 60 counties each. Each of these subsamples is itself a national probability sample.

To construct the sample, all 3,070 counties in the United States were grouped into areas designated by the U.S. Office of Business Economics. These 171 area groupings were then arranged in geographical order from north and east to south and west. Within these geographical orders, counties were arranged by descending population. Three hundred sixty counties were then chosen at random by systematic sampling to fit the above criteria.

The next step was to select an area from each of the 360 counties in the master sample. Again, a probability sampling method was used to select, within each county, a minor civil division (MCD) as defined by the Bureau of the Census. A minor civil division may be a town, township, city, or part of a city. The probability that any particular minor civil division was selected in a county was proportional to the population of that minor civil division. The minor civil division, then, is the primary sampling unit.

The next step is the determining those households where interviewing is to take place. Because they are the most up-to-date and the most complete listing of addresses available, telephone books are the sources of locations adjacent to interviewing starting points when general public surveys are being done. From this list of households one or more addresses is chosen at random. Each address defines the place that the interviewer begins following the interview site selection process. An interview in a cluster or "neighborhood" does not begin at the household selected from the list, but at the adjacent household, which may or may not be on the original list. Thus, the list does not define the universe of households in an MCD, but rather the list of households adjacent to possible starting points. Depending on the number of households contacted from each starting point, the number of starting points chosen, and the criteria for being included on the original list, every household in the MCD has a known, or knowable, probability of being included in the sample.

The specific persons to be interviewed are selected as follows:

(1) A certain number of starting points are selected from the telephone books covering the minor civil divisions, or communities, selected. The starting points are chosen in a manner that each household, within the minor civil division, listed in the phone book has an equal chance of being selected.

(2) Each starting point selected determines a group of households, called a "cluster," in which interviews are conducted. This cluster of households includes households both with and without listed telephones. The first household in which an interview is conducted is the household immediately to the left of the household selected from the telephone book as the starting point. Thus, the first household can be one either with or without a telephone.

(3) The interviewer conducts an interview in the first household and then (following a prescribed rule) works through the group of households. For example, interviews might be conducted in every third household. The interviewer continues working through the cluster until interviews have been completed in a preassigned number of households.

(4) A respondent-selection procedure determines which person to interview in any given household. Every eligible respondent in the household has the same chance to be interviewed as any other eligible respondent. The interviewer is not allowed to make any substitutions.

Once all interviews have been completed, weighting procedures are employed to ensure that the sample properly represents the population from which it was drawn.

Statistical Interpretation

Reliability of survey percentages

Results of any sample are subject to sampling variation. The magnitude of the variation is measurable and is affected by the number of interviews and the level of the percentages expressing the results.

The table below shows the possible sample variation that applies to percentage results reported from the Opinion Research Corporation sample. The chances are 95 in 100 that a survey result does not vary, plus or minus, by more than the indicated number of percentage points from the result that would be obtained if interviews had been conducted with all persons in the universe represented by the sample.

Size of sample on which survey result is based	Approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels		
	10 or 90	30 or 70	50
	Percent		
2,000 interviews	2	3	3
1,000 interviews	2	4	4
500 interviews	3	5	5
250 interviews	5	7	8
100 interviews	7	11	12

Sampling tolerances when comparing two samples

Tolerances are also involved in comparing results from different parts of any one sample and in comparing results between two different samples. A difference, in other words, must be of at least a certan size to be considered statistically significant. The table below is a guide to the sampling tolerances applicable to such comparisons.

Size of samples compared	Differences required for significance at or near these percentage levels[a]		
	10 or 90	30 or 70	50
	Percent		
2,000 and 2,000	2	4	4
2,000 and 1,000	3	4	5
1,000 and 1,000	3	5	6
1,000 and 500	4	6	7
500 and 500	5	7	8
500 and 200	6	9	10
200 and 200	7	11	12
200 and 100	9	14	15
100 and 100	10	16	17

[a]Based on 95 chances in 100.

Sample characteristics, November 1978, Caravan

The data in the table below compare the characteristics of weighted[a] Caravan sample with those of the total population, 18 years of age or over. The table shows that the distribution of the total sample parallels that of the population under study.

Item	Total	
	Population[b]	Caravan sample
	Percent	
Age		
18 - 29 years	30	30
30 - 39	18	18
40 - 49	15	14
50 - 59	15	15
60 years and over	22	23
Race		
White	88	88
Nonwhite	12	12
Metro size		
Nonmetro	32	32
Metro	68	68
Geographic region		
Northeast	23	23
North Central	27	27
South	32	32
West	18	18

[a]Weights were introduced into the tabulations to ensure proper representation of the interviews in the sample.
[b]Source: 1979 data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, regular and interim reports.

ASK EVERYONE

SECTION C

Col. 5

The following set of questions concerns your interest in family camping and your experience with any of the types of equipment shown on this card.

SHOW EXHIBIT C-1

C1. Within the past two years, have you visited a camping show or recreational vehicle show where any of these types of equipment were displayed?

1 YES
2 NO
3 DON'T KNOW

6

C2. Do any of your friends own or use any of the types on this card?

1 YES
2 NO
3 DON'T KNOW

7

C3. Considering the total cost of camping, including taxes on equipment, campsite fees, extra tolls and insurance, and equipment costs, do you feel that camping is more economical or less economical or about the same as other ways of traveling and taking a vacation?

1 MORE ECONOMICAL
2 LESS ECONOMICAL
3 ABOUT THE SAME
4 DON'T KNOW

8

SHOW EXHIBIT C-4

C4. This exhibit contains descriptive words that can be used to describe camping. As I read the letter before the descriptive word, please choose a point on the scale which is closest to how it would describe your impression of camping.

For instance, if you will look above the list of words, there is an example. If you were describing the weather and you felt it was "a cold day," you would place it on the scale toward #5.

The colder it was, the closer to #5 you would place it. On the other hand, if you felt it was a hot day, you would place it on the scale toward #1. The hotter you thought it was, the closer you would place it to #1. If you felt it was neither very cold nor very hot, you would place it toward the middle of the line.

First, let's start with Description A. What point on the scale is closest to how Description A best describes camping to you. (INTERVIEWER: CIRCLE # FOR DESCRIPTION A AND REPEAT FOR EACH DESCRIPTION.)

						No Answer	
A	1	2	3	4	5	0	9
B	1	2	3	4	5	0	10
C	1	2	3	4	5	0	11
D	1	2	3	4	5	0	12
E	1	2	3	4	5	0	13
F	1	2	3	4	5	0	14
G	1	2	3	4	5	0	15
H	1	2	3	4	5	0	16
I	1	2	3	4	5	0	17
J	1	2	3	4	5	0	18
K	1	2	3	4	5	0	19
L	1	2	3	4	5	0	20
M	1	2	3	4	5	0	21

SHOW EXHIBIT C-1 AGAIN

C5. Have you ever gone on an overnight trip with your family, or with friends, and used any of the types of equipment shown on this card? Do not include any camping trips you may have taken with scouting groups or military experience.

1 YES → SKIP TO Q. C9
2 NO
3 DON'T KNOW

22

(IF "NO" OR "DON'T KNOW" ON Q. C5, ASK):

C6. Have you, as a household, considered such a camping trip in the past 1 - 3 years?

1 YES
2 NO
3 DON'T KNOW → SKIP TO Q. C8

23

(IF "YES" ON Q. C6, SHOW EXHIBIT C-7 AND ASK):

C7. Did you decide not to camp at that time for any of these reasons? Just read me the numbers that apply, please. (Check as many as apply.)

24

1 2 3 4 5 6 OTHER (Specify):________________
7 NONE OF THESE
8 NO OPINION

SHOW EXHIBIT C-8

C8. Which of the statements on this card best describes your household's present attitude toward camping? Just read me the number, please.

25

1 NEXT YEAR
2 HOPE TO GO IN FUTURE

3 UNLIKELY TO GO
4 NOT INTERESTED
5 DON'T KNOW → SKIP TO Q. C22

(INTERVIEWER: CHECK BACK TO Q. C5. IF "YES" ON Q. C5, ASK Q. C9; OTHERWISE SKIP TO Q. C22):

C9. In what year did you last go camping? (Check one)

1 1978 → SKIP TO Q. C12
2 1977
3 1976
4 1975 OR EARLIER

26

(IF "1977 OR EARLIER" ON Q. C9, ASK):

C10. Can you recall why you stopped camping? (PROBE: What specifically has kept you from going camping again since that last trip?)

27
28
29

X HAVE NOT STOPPED → SKIP TO Q. C12

C11. Have you sold your tent, trailer, or other camping shelter, have you given it away, or do you still have it?

1 SOLD IT (or is selling it)
2 GIVEN AWAY
3 STILL HAVE IT
4 DID NOT OWN (rented or borrowed)
5 DON'T KNOW

30

C12. In what year did you first go camping as an adult?

1 1978 → SKIP TO Q. C14
2 1977
3 1976
4 1975
5 BEFORE 1975
6 DON'T RECALL

31

(IF "1977 OR EARLIER" ON Q. C12, ASK):

C13. Has your participation in camping been increasing or decreasing in the past few years? (Check one)

1 ABOUT THE SAME
2 INCREASED LATELY
3 DECREASED LATELY
4 DON'T KNOW

32

C14a. During the past year, did you cancel any of your camping trips, cut them shorter than you planned, or postpone the purchase of a major item of camping equipment? Which of these happened? (Check as many as apply.)

1 TRIP CANCELLATIONS
2 SHORTENED TRIPS
3 POSTPONE PURCHASES
4 NONE OF THE ABOVE

33

(IF "1," "2," OR "3" CIRCLED ON Q. C14a, SHOW EXHIBIT C-14B AND ASK):

C14b. Did this happen for any of these reasons? Just read me the number(s) that apply.

1 2 3 4 5 6 OTHER (Specify): ____________

7 NONE OF THESE
8 NO OPINION

34

SHOW EXHIBIT C-1 AGAIN

C15 On your last camping trip, which of these types of camping equipment did you use? Just read me the number, please. (INTERVIEWER: CIRCLE APPROPRIATE NUMBERS BELOW AND ASK Q. C16 FOR EACH TYPE USED IN Q. C15.)

35- 1. TENT	C16a. For this trip did you 1. Rent 2. Borrow 3. Purchase 4. Or already own this equipment? 5. DON'T KNOW	36
2. CAMPING TRAILER (Folding)	C16b. For this trip did you 1. Rent 2. Borrow 3. Purchase 4. Or already own this equipment? 5. DON'T KNOW	37
3. TRAVEL TRAILER (Any kind, any size)	C16c. For this trip did you 1. Rent 2. Borrow 3. Purchase 4. Or already own this equipment? 5. DON'T KNOW	38
4. TRUCK CAMPER	C16d. For this trip did you 1. Rent 2. Borrow 3. Purchase 4. Or already own this equipment? 5. DON'T KNOW	39
5. PICK-UP COVER	C16e. For this trip did you 1. Rent 2. Borrow 3. Purchase 4. Or already own this equipment? 5. DON'T KNOW	40
6. MOTOR HOME	C16f. For this trip did you 1. Rent 2. Borrow 3. Purchase 4. Or already own this equipment? 5. DON'T KNOW	41
7. VAN OR BUS CONVERSION	C16g. For this trip did you 1. Rent 2. Borrow 3. Purchase 4. Or already own this equipment? 5. DON'T KNOW	42
X. OTHER (Please specify): ____________	C16h. For this trip did you 1. Rent 2. Borrow 3. Purchase 4. Or already own this equipment? 5. DON'T KNOW	43
Y. DON'T KNOW		

C17. On your last camping trip were you generally satisfied or generally dissatisfied with: (INTERVIEWER: READ EACH STATEMENT BELOW AND CIRCLE RESPONDENT'S ANSWER.)

	GENERALLY SATISFIED	GENERALLY DISSATISFIED	DON'T KNOW	DOES NOT APPLY TO MY STYLE OF CAMPING	
A. The availability of tentsites and trailersites	1	2	3	4	44
B. The availability of recreational facilities at the campground	1	2	3	4	45
C. The cleanliness and condition of campgrounds	1	2	3	4	46
D. The availability of hook-ups	1	2	3	4	47
E. The level of camping fees	1	2	3	4	48
F. The trip as a whole	1	2	3	4	49

C18. On your last trip did you camp at privately-owned campgrounds, publicly-owned campgrounds, such as federal or state parks, or both public and private?

1 PRIVATELY-OWNED
2 PUBLICLY-OWNED 50
3 BOTH
4 DON'T KNOW

C19. On your last camping trip, can you recall how many days you were away from home?

__________DAYS 51-52

X DON'T KNOW

C20. Thinking back to the year that you last went camping, approximately how many camping trips did you go on during that year?

__________TRIPS 53

X DON"T KNOW

C21. And, about how many days did each trip last on the average?

__________DAYS 54-55

X DON'T KNOW

INTERVIEWER: ALL RESPONDENTS ARE ASKED THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.
SHOW EXHIBIT C-22

C22. During the next year, which of the following types of equipment do you expect to purchase? Just read me the numbers, please. (Circle each item answered.)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 56

11 12 13 14 15 16 OTHER (Please specify):__________ 57
17 NONE OF THESE
18 DON'T KNOW

SHOW EXHIBIT C-23

C23. Many campgrounds are provided on public lands such as State and National Parks. Here are two opposite ideas about fees for camping at these public parks. Which of these statements do you most agree with?

1 FEES COVER ALL COSTS
2 FEES KEPT LOW
3 NO OPINION

58

SHOW EXHIBIT C-24

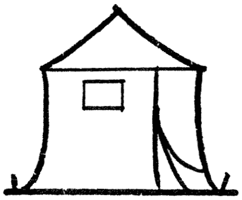
C24. During the past 12 months have you, personally, participated in any of the following types of leisure time activities? Just read me the numbers, please.

1 BOATING (motor boats)
2 CANOEING
3 FISHING
4 HIKING
5 SKIING (on snow)
6 PICNICKING (away from home)
7 SWIMMING (away from home)
8 TRAIL BIKE RIDING OR SNOWMOBILING
9 HUNTING (any type, any place)
10 BACK PACKING
X NONE OF THE ABOVE
Y DON'T RECALL

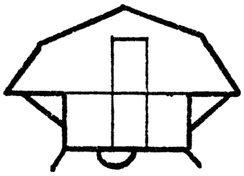
59

79-80(03)

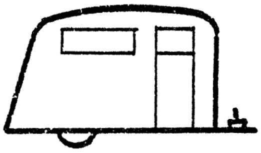
EXHIBIT C-1



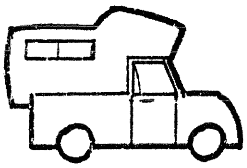
1 TENT (Any kind, any size)



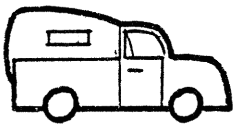
2 CAMPING TRAILER (Folding)



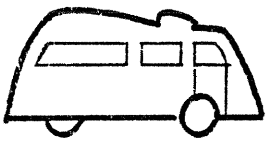
3 TRAVEL TRAILER (Any kind, any size)



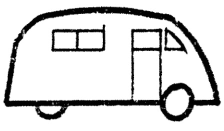
4 TRUCK CAMPER



5 PICK-UP COVER



6 MOTOR HOME



7 VAN OR BUS CONVERSION

Example:

A warm day	1	2	3	4	5	A cold day

EXHIBIT C-4

I think camping would be:

A. . . . . . Interesting	1	2	3	4	5	Boring
B. . . Unfriendly people	1	2	3	4	5	Friendly people
C. . . . . Clean	1	2	3	4	5	Dirty
D. . . . . Dangerous	1	2	3	4	5	Safe
E. . . . . . . .Refreshing	1	2	3	4	5	Tiring
F. . . . . Crowded	1	2	3	4	5	Uncrowded
G. . . . . Expensive	1	2	3	4	5	Not expensive
H. . . . . Difficult	1	2	3	4	5	Easy
I. . . . . .Pleasant	1	2	3	4	5	Unpleasant
J. . . . . .Work	1	2	3	4	5	Fun
K. . . . . . . .Convenient	1	2	3	4	5	Not convenient
L. . . . . . . Complicated	1	2	3	4	5	Easy
M. . . . . Uncomfortable	1	2	3	4	5	Comfortable

EXHIBIT C-7

Reasons for deciding not to camp

1 The expected costs of camping

2 We lacked information about camping equipment

3 We lacked information about places to camp

4 We were uncertain about whether we would enjoy associating with campers

5 We could not find enough time

6 Other reasons (please specify)

EXHIBIT C-8

1 We expect to go camping nexc year

2 We hope to go camping at some time in the future, but probably not next year

3 We are unlikely to go camping in the foreseeable future

4 We are definitely not interested in camping

EXHIBIT C-14B

1 Because of personal or family reasons

2 Increased costs of camping

3 Unfavorable weather conditions

4 Loss of interest in camping

5 Lack of time

6 Other reasons (please specify)

EXHIBIT C-22

Next year I expect to buy:

1 FISHING EQUIPMENT

2 SNOWMOBILE

3 CANOE

4 SKIING EQUIPMENT

5 MOTOR BOAT

6 HUNTING EQUIPMENT

7 TRAIL BIKE -- OR OFF-ROAD RECREATIONAL VEHICLE

8 HIKING EQUIPMENT

9 BACK PACK

10 SLEEPING BAGS

11 CAMP STOVE

12 TRAILER OR TENT HEATER

13 LIGHT WEIGHT, MOUNTAINEERING TENT

14 COOLER CHEST OR REFRIGERATOR

15 GAS OR PROPANE LANTERN

16 OTHER (please specify)

EXHIBIT C-23

1. Camping fees should be set high enough to cover all -- or most -- of the costs of operating a public campground

2. Camping fees on public lands should be kept low and most of the costs of operating campgrounds should be paid out of our taxes

EXHIBIT C-24

1 BOATING (MOTOR BOATS)

2 CANOEING

3 FISHING

4 HIKING

5 SKIING (ON SNOW)

6 PICNICKING (AWAY FROM HOME)

7 SWIMMMING (AWAY FROM HOME AND OUTDOORS)

8 TRAIL BIKE RIDING OR SNOWMOBILING

9 HUNTING (ANY TYPE, ANY PLACE)

10 BACK PACKING

INDEX TO TABLES

Table 1.—Distribution of active, temporarily inactive, and potential camping households, by region, 1973-1978,[a] in millions

Region	Total households		Camping market households					
			Active		Temporarily inactive[b]		Potential[c]	
	1973	1978	1973	1978	1973	1978	1973	1978
Northeast	16.4	17.3	2.3	3.3	1.0	1.8	2.1	1.1
North Central	18.4	20.1	3.2	4.9	2.1	2.2	1.2	1.1
South	21.2	24.2	4.8	4.6	2.0	3.0	2.2	1.9
West	12.3	14.4	4.0	4.7	1.2	2.1	0.6	0.4
United States[d]	68.3	76.0	14.3	17.5	6.1	9.1	6.1	4.5

[a]For an approximate estimate of total persons (campers), multiply 1973 households by 3.01 persons per household, and 1978 households by 2.81.

[b]Temporarily inactive campers have not camped for 3 years *or* longer. If longer, they said that they had not quit. In 1973 there were an additional 7.5 million permanently inactive households which had increased to 11.4 by 1978.

[c]This includes "high" and "moderate" potential for camping; that is, those who plan to camp or who have a distinct interest in trying it. In 1973 there were an additional 34 million households with little or no interest in camping—by 1978 this figure had not changed significantly.

[d]*Northeast:* Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania

North Central: Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas

South: Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas

West: Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, Washington, Oregon, California

Table 2.—Size of the American camping market in 1971, 1973, and 1978, as a percentage of total households

Market class	1971	1973	1978
Camper:			
Active	19	21	23
Temporarily inactive	5	9	12
Permanently inactive	9	11	15
Noncamper:			
High potential	3	1	1
Medium potential	9	8	5
Low potential	4	17	18
Zero potential	51	33	26

Table 3.—Average annual growth in the numbers of active, inactive, and potential campers, and new households in the United States, during the periods 1971-1973 and 1973-1978, in percent

Market class	Average annual growth	
	1971-1973	1973-1978
Camper:		
Active	+ 7.6	+ 4.5
Temporarily inactive	+42.4	+ 9.8
Permanently inactive	+14.7	+10.4
All campers	+14.9	+ 7.2
Noncamper:		
High and medium potential	−10.4	− 5.2
Low and zero potential	− 2.5	0
All noncampers	− 3.9	− 1.0
New households in United States	+ 2.3	+ 2.4

Table 4.—Type of shelter used by active campers on last camping trip, 1971, 1973, and 1978, in percent

Shelter[a]	1971	1973	1978
Tent	50	41	42
Camping trailer	13	11	11
Travel trailer	17	17	19
Truck camper	15	15	12
Motor home	3	7	9
Van or converted bus	6	10	10
Pickup cover	6	5	11
Other	—	5	4
Unknown	—	1	1

[a]Totals exceed 100 percent because some campers use more than one type of shelter on a camping trip.

Table 5.—Recreational vehicle shipments, 1970-1978

Year	Camping trailer	Truck camper	Motor home	Travel trailer	Total shipment	Change from preceding year
	Percent				*Thousands*	*Percent*
1970	31	25	8	36	380	− 5.2
1971	21	24	13	42	451	+18.7
1972	19	18	20	43	583	+29.3
1973	19	17	24	40	529	− 9.3
1974	19	15	23	43	296	−44.1
1975	14	13	29	44	340	+14.9
1976	12	10	35	43	441	+29.7
1977	13	8	39	41	414	− 6.1
1978	12	6	40	41	390	− 5.8

Table 6.—Percentage of active campers who rented, borrowed, bought, or already owned camping equipment, 1971, 1973, and 1978

Source	1971	1973	1978
Rent	8	7	2
Borrow	32	28	25
Buy	10	5	4
Already own	50	60	69

Table 7.—Disposition of camping equipment by inactive campers in 1973 and 1978, in percent

Disposition	Inactivity class			
	Temporary		Permanent	
	1973	1978	1973	1978
Sold it	7	12	17	13
Gave it away	2	4	7	7
Still have it	28	27	18	18
Never owned any[a]	40	34	53	58
Don't know	3	6	6	5
Total asked	80[b]	83[b]	100	100

[a]Equipment used when camper was active either rented or borrowed.

[b]The remaining respondents did not consider themselves as inactive.

Table 8. — Percentage of campers who camped at privately owned or publicly owned campgrounds, or both, on their last camping trip

Campground	1973	1978
Active		
Private	26	34
Public	51	44
Both	18	16
Temporarily inactive		
Private	32	28
Public	52	50
Both	13	19

Table 9.—Percentage of campers who entered the camping market within each of the past 4 years.

Year began camping	Survey year		
	1971	1973	1978
This year	8	6	4
Last year	9	7	4
2 years ago	25	8	6
3 years ago	21	8	6
Over 3 years ago	26	58	71
Don't recall	11	13	9

Table 10.—Recent trends in camping participation by campers who began camping before each survey year (1973, 1978), in percent

Camper group	About the same each year		Increased lately		Decreased lately	
	1973	1978	1973	1978	1973	1978
All campers	20	17	16	22	50	54
Campers without children	20	13	13	16	51	59
Campers with children	20	19	18	26	48	50
Currently active campers	31	25	28	40	26	24
Head of household under 30	19	15	16	20	45	54
Head of household 30-39	21	19	22	30	45	43
Head of household 40-49	22	24	13	27	53	46
Head of household 50-59	20	21	13	15	56	61
Head of household 60 or older	13	8	12	15	60	70
Northeast	20	25	18	29	53	42
North Central	15	16	16	22	54	50
South	23	13	12	18	43	61
West	19	16	20	22	50	56

Table 11.—Frequency of camping participation by active campers, in 1978, and by inactive campers before 1978

Category	Active	Inactive	
		Temporary[a]	Permanent[b]
Average length of last camping trip (days)	5.6	5.3	5.6
Average number of trips in last camping year	3.4	2.2	1.7
Average number of days camped per trip last camping year	4.7	4.9	5.2
Average number of days camped in last camping year	16	11	9

[a]In general, their last camping trip would have been sometime during the period 1975-1977.
[b]Have not camped for at least 3 years.

Table 12.—Income distribution for active, inactive, and potential campers in 1973 and 1978, in percent

Household income	United States[a]		Active		Inactive[b]		Potential	
	1973	1978	1973	1978	1973	1978	1973	1978
Under $7,000	30	26	22	15	25	21	28	26
$7,000 to $10,000	19	11	19	13	22	11	18	10
$10,000 to $15,000	26	18	29	24	30	18	29	21
$15,000 to $25,000	20	26	26	31	19	27	21	28
Over $25,000	6	15	5	15	4	19	4	15

[a]Based on total sample distribution in the 1978 camper survey, 2,013 households.
[b]Includes temporarily inactive campers only (12 percent of households).
[c]Includes both high and medium potential campers, totaling 6 percent of all households.

Table 13.—Age distribution for active, temporarily inactive, and potential campers in 1973 and 1978, in percent

Head-of-household's age	United States 1973	United States 1978	Active 1973	Active 1978	Inactive 1973	Inactive 1978	Potential 1973	Potential 1978
18-29	27	30	44	41	38	55	42	39
30-39	19	19	25	28	23	15	26	22
40-49	15	14	12	14	15	14	17	20
50-59	15	14	10	9	15	8	8	14
60 or older	24	23	9	8	9	8	7	5

Table 14.—Demographics of the camping market in 1978, in percent

Characteristic	U.S. public[a]	Camping household: Active	Inactive[b]	Potential[c]
Age of head of household:				
18-29 years	30	41	55	38
30-39	18	28	15	22
40-49	14	14	14	20
50-59	14	9	8	14
60	23	8	8	5
Education:				
Less than high school	33	26	23	35
High school	38	42	41	42
Some college	17	20	23	13
Occupation:				
Executive, professional, manager	15	17	17	14
White collar	23	26	26	25
Skilled	19	27	22	19
Semiskilled	20	19	22	37
Retired	19	8	10	3
Place of residence:				
Rural	17	17	17	6
Urban (nonmetro)	16	19	11	20
Metro (50,000-999,999)	33	35	38	40
Metro (1,000,000 or over)	34	29	34	33
Region:				
Northeast	23	19	19	25
North Central	27	27	23	24
South	32	26	34	43
West	18	27	23	8
Income:				
Under $7,000	26	15	21	26
$7,000 - $9,999	11	13	11	10
$10,000 - $14,999	18	24	18	21
$15,000 - $24,999	26	31	27	28
$25,000 or over	15	15	19	15
Race:				
White	88	97	93	83
Nonwhite	12	3	7	17
Family composition:				
No children in household	43	34	34	19
With children under 18	52	63	63	81
Home ownership:				
Own	68	68	54	65
Rent	30	32	42	35

[a]Based on a sample of 2,013 households surveyed in December, 1978.
[b]Temporarily inactive only.
[c]High and medium potential only.

Table 15.—Marital status, family composition, and race of active, inactive, and potential campers 18 years old and older, 1973-1978, in percent

Camper group	Marital status: Married	Marital status: Widowed, divorced, separated	Marital status: Never married	Family composition: No children	Race: White	Race: Nonwhite
Active						
1973	80	8	12	40	98	2
1978	75	8	16	34	97	3
Temporarily inactive						
1973	83	8	9	40	97	3
1978	62	11	26	34	93	7
Permanently inactive						
1973	79	12	9	57	96	5
1978	70	16	13	49	92	8
Potential						
1973	86	6	8	23	83	17
1978	79	11	9	19	72	28
Low and zero potential						
1973	74	20	6	59	88	12
1978	70	18	11	55	83	17
Total U.S.						
1973	78	14	8	50	89	11
1978	71	14	14	43	88	12

Table 16.—Percentage of selected camping groups with a favorable or unfavorable image of camping's environment, conditions, and attractions, 1973 and 1978

Image	Total U.S. 1973	Total U.S. 1978	Active 1973	Active 1978	Temporarily inactive 1973	Temporarily inactive 1978	Potential 1973	Potential 1978
Environment:								
Favorable[a]	52	55	80	81	72	75	72	68
Unfavorable[b]	18	16	9	8	14	10	10	12
Conditions:								
Favorable[c]	35	35	49	50	42	40	42	41
Unfavorable[d]	22	22	18	18	20	23	23	25
Attraction:								
Favorable[e]	35	36	58	60	50	44	49	40
Unfavorable[f]	28	26	15	15	22	21	20	23

[a]Composite of interesting, friendly, refreshing, pleasant.
[b]Composite of boring, unfriendly, tiring, unpleasant.
[c]Composite of clean, safe, uncrowded, inexpensive.
[d]Composite of dirty, dangerous, crowded, expensive.
[e]Composite of easy, fun, convenient, comfortable.
[f]Composite of difficult, work, inconvenient, uncomfortable.

Table 17.—Percentage of camping market households with a positive image of camping, 1973-1978

Image description	Camping market household											
	All		Active		Temporarily inactive		Permanently inactive		High and medium potential		Low and zero potential	
	1973	1978	1973	1978	1973	1978	1973	1978	1973	1978	1973	1978
Environment:												
Interesting	55[a]	57	86	88	79	77	65	56	83	74	30	34
People friendly	59	59	78	79	66	75	69	59	64	57	47	44
Refreshing	44	47	73	71	70	68	47	41	62	58	21	26
Pleasant	52	57	81	84	73	79	63	59	81	81	27	32
Composite	52	55	80	81	72	75	61	54	72	68	31	34
Conditions:												
Clean	34	34	54	52	39	36	40	30	47	49	21	21
Safe	43	42	64	62	60	53	45	44	45	49	30	27
Uncrowded	25	26	29	34	26	30	36	25	35	26	19	21
Inexpensive	37	37	50	52	44	42	41	37	40	41	28	27
Composite	35	35	49	50	42	40	40	34	42	41	24	24
Attraction:												
Easy	35	35	56	62	47	40	36	37	50	41	21	18
Fun	40	39	62	57	56	46	45	45	57	42	23	25
Convenient	27	32	47	53	40	39	31	36	35	37	15	16
Comfortable	39	39	65	67	56	49	43	43	54	39	20	20
Composite	35	36	58	60	50	44	39	40	49	40	20	20
Number of respondents	2,199	2,013	450	423	214	238	281	318	198	109	1,056	908

[a]In 1973, 55 percent of the U.S. public felt that camping was interesting; that is, they assigned a 1 or 2 on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being the most positive, 5 being the most negative).

Table 18.—Percentage of camping market households with a negative image of camping, 1973-1978

Image description	Camping market household											
	All		Active		Temporarily inactive		Permanently inactive		High and medium potential		Low and zero potential	
	1973	1978	1973	1978	1973	1978	1973	1978	1973	1978	1973	1978
Environment:												
Boring	19[a]	15	6	3	10	8	15	17	3	6	30	26
People unfriendly	11	12	11	11	16	11	10	17	17	23	3	11
Tiring	25	23	10	9	18	11	28	28	15	16	35	33
Unpleasant	18	15	8	9	13	9	15	16	7	2	26	23
Composite	18	16	9	8	14	10	17	20	10	12	24	23
Conditions:												
Dirty	22	19	15	12	17	24	23	19	15	17	26	22
Dangerous	15	16	9	16	10	14	17	17	21	18	16	18
Crowded	32	32	32	27	35	34	38	42	35	43	29	29
Expensive	18	22	15	17	17	22	19	26	21	21	18	23
Composite	22	22	18	18	20	23	24	26	23	25	22	23
Attraction:												
Difficult	25	26	13	16	24	24	30	28	22	25	29	29
Work	26	25	18	18	21	20	26	26	18	24	32	32
Inconvenient	33	28	19	17	24	21	36	32	26	23	40	34
Uncomfortable	26	23	11	10	18	18	28	23	12	22	35	31
Composite	28	26	15	15	22	21	30	27	20	23	34	32
Number of respondents	2,199	2,013	450	423	214	238	281	318	198	109	1,056	908

[a]In 1978, 19 percent of the U.S. public felt that camping was boring; that is, they assigned a 4 or 5 rank on the scale of 1 to 5.

Table 19.—Image indexes[a] for selected demographic and camping market classes, 1973-1978

Item	1973		1978	
	Number	Image index	Number	Image index
Total U.S.	2,207	1.69	2,013	1.97
Sex:				
Male	1,067	1.99	995	2.29
Female	1,116	1.44	1,018	1.67
Age:				
18-29 years	590	2.56	569	2.50
30-39	418	1.61	411	1.94
40-49	327	1.52	287	1.89
50-59	331	1.46	265	1.72
60 or older	529	1.25	481	1.50
Education:				
Less than high school	758	1.73	561	2.13
High school	757	1.77	689	1.84
Some college	676	1.57	421	2.04
Place of residence:				
Rural	310	1.68	194	2.26
Urban (nonmetro)	307	1.98	209	1.83
50,000-999,999	651	1.77	656	2.21
1,000,000 or more	939	1.57	954	1.70
Region:				
Northeast	516	1.35	485	1.94
North Central	620	1.62	561	1.61
South	724	1.80	602	2.02
West	347	2.23	365	2.47
Income:				
Under $7,000	656	1.96	363	1.90
$7,000-$9,999	413	1.87	262	2.04
$10,000-$14,999	560	1.63	343	2.44
$15,000 or more	548	1.41	974	1.76
Race:				
White	1,979	1.67	1,775	2.00
Nonwhite	188	1.97	236	1.88
Family size:				
No children	1,102	1.61	972	1.87
Children under 18	1,105	1.77	907	2.02
Home ownership:				
Own	1,514	1.53	1,364	1.80
Rent	664	2.13	620	2.37
Camping group:				
Active	450	4.27	423	4.61
Temporarily inactive	213	2.94	238	2.94
Permanently inactive	295	1.85	318	1.79
High and medium potential	181	2.62	109	2.54
Low and zero potential	1,053	0.84	908	0.99

[a]The image index is the number of persons in each group who have a generally favorable image of camping for each person who has a generally unfavorable image.

Table 20.—Camper satisfaction or dissatisfaction with last camping trip, 1973 and 1978, in percent

Degree of satisfaction[a]	Active		Temporarily inactive		Permanently inactive	
	1973	1978	1973	1978	1973	1978
Overall trip:						
Generally satisfied	93	93	89	91	73	78
Generally dissatisfied	4	5	8	8	16	14
Does not apply to my camping style	2	1	2	1	6	4
Campsite availability:						
Generally satisfied	78	78	75	83	63	71
Generally dissatisfied	9	11	12	9	13	15
Does not apply to my camping style	12	10	11	8	18	9
Hookup availability:						
Generally satisfied	53	48	54	54	39	52
Generally dissatisfied	5	8	7	8	7	9
Does not apply to my camping style	38	43	33	33	40	36
Recreation facilities:						
Generally satisfied	73	72	71	72	55	66
Generally dissatisfied	11	11	12	14	14	15
Does not apply to my camping style	15	15	15	13	24	13
Cleanliness and condition of campground:						
Generally satisfied	78	80	76	76	65	72
Generally dissatisfied	12	9	13	13	15	13
Does not apply to my camping style	9	11	9	8	15	10
Level of camping fees:						
Generally satisfied	70	66	70	75	54	65
Generally dissatisfied	9	11	8	6	5	8
Does not apply to my camping style	17	20	16	13	25	16

[a]Totals do not equal 100 percent in most cases because of nonresponses.

Table 21.—Attitude toward the total cost[a] of camping compared with other ways of traveling and taking a vacation, 1973 and 1978, in percent[b]

Camping group	More economical		Less economical	
	1973	1978	1973	1978
U.S. public	43	46[b]	14	14[b]
Active	66	67	13	13
Temporarily inactive	51	72	18	9
Permanently inactive	45	49	18	19
High-potential households	51	40	15	5
Medium-potential households	53	47	9	13
Low-potential households	36	32	16	15
Zero-potential households	27	24	11	16

[a]Respondents were asked to visualize the total cost of camping as including taxes on equipment, campsite fees, extra tolls, insurance, and other equipment costs.

[b]Totals for each year do not equal 100 percent due to many respondents reporting "no opinion."

Table 22.—Opinion of respondents concerning public campground fees, 1973 and 1978, in percent

Camping group	Fees should cover all costs		Fees should be kept low		No opinion	
	1973	1978	1973	1978	1973	1978
Active	43	43	51	52	6	5
Temporarily inactive	56	57	37	32	7	10
Permanently inactive	49	48	34	38	17	13
High potential	52	20	42	69	6	11
Medium potential	48	52	45	26	7	22
Low potential	36	37	30	30	34	32
Zero potential	31	31	20	20	49	49
Total	40	42	34	34	26	24

Table 23.—Percentage of active and temporarily inactive campers and the adult public participating in selected recreation activities, 1973 and 1978

Recreation activity	Active		Temporarily inactive		Total U.S. adults[a]	
	1973	1978	1973	1978	1973	1978
Picknicking away from home	70	73	62	76	48	49
Swimming away from home	63	74	60	62	43	45
Fishing	65	63	55	49	37	35
Motorboating	49	48	37	41	25	24
Hiking	45	44	30	28	18	19
Hunting	34	26	31	21	15	13
Trail bike use/ snowmobiling	22	17	14	19	9	9
Canoeing	12	18	13	13	6	8
Snow skiing	11	14	7	15	5	7
Backpacking	14	13	8	5	4	5
None of the above	3	3	8	7	23	28

[a]From the 1973 and 1978 National Camping Market Surveys—asked of all respondents, campers and noncampers.

Table 24.—Percentage of respondents who visited a camping or recreational vehicle show within the past 2 years, and who have friends who own camping equipment, 1973 and 1978

Market group	Visited camping show		Camping friends	
	1973	1978	1973	1978
Camper				
Active	51	44	94	94
Temporarily inactive	34	39	90	90
Permanently inactive	22	23	77	73
Noncamper				
Potential	26	23	68	51
Low and zero potential	9	6	36	37
Total households	23	22	60	62

Table 25.—Incidence of and reasons for trip cancellations by active, temporarily inactive, and permanently inactive campers in 1978, in percent

Category	Active	Temporarily inactive	Permanently inactive
Cancelled or shortened a trip, or postponed purchase of camping equipment[a]	30	22	8
Reason:			
Personal or family	9	5	2
Cost	1	1	2
Weather	10	4	1
Lost interest	2	1	1
Lack of time	7	8	4
Other	6[b]	7	—

[a]A similar question about the specific effects of the 1973 gas shortage was asked in the 1973 survey, and resulted in answers of 11 percent for active campers, 6 percent for temporarily inactives, and 4 percent for permanently inactives.
[b]Totals exceed the percent listed above due to multiple reasons given.

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