

# Record Share of U.S. Electorate Is Pro-Choice and Voting on It

Democrats continue to rally around abortion rights since *Dobbs* verdict

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WASHINGTON, D.C. -- A record-high 32% of U.S. voters say they would only vote for a candidate for major office who shares their views on abortion. The importance of a candidate's abortion stance to one's vote is markedly higher among pro-choice voters than it was during the 2020 presidential election cycle, while pro-life voters' intensity about voting on the abortion issue has waned. Also, voters' greater intensity on the issue today compared with 2020 is explained mainly by Democrats, while Republicans and independents have shown little change.

U.S. adults who are pro-choice are also significantly more likely now than two decades ago to say it is important that any future Supreme Court nominees share their views on abortion.

These results come two years after the Supreme Court's *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* leaked draft decision foretold the court's plan to abolish constitutional protection for abortion.

At the same time, Gallup finds Americans' support for abortion rights and identification as "pro-choice" holding at the historically high levels seen since the *Dobbs* decision was leaked.

These findings are from Gallup's annual Values and Beliefs poll, conducted May 1-23.

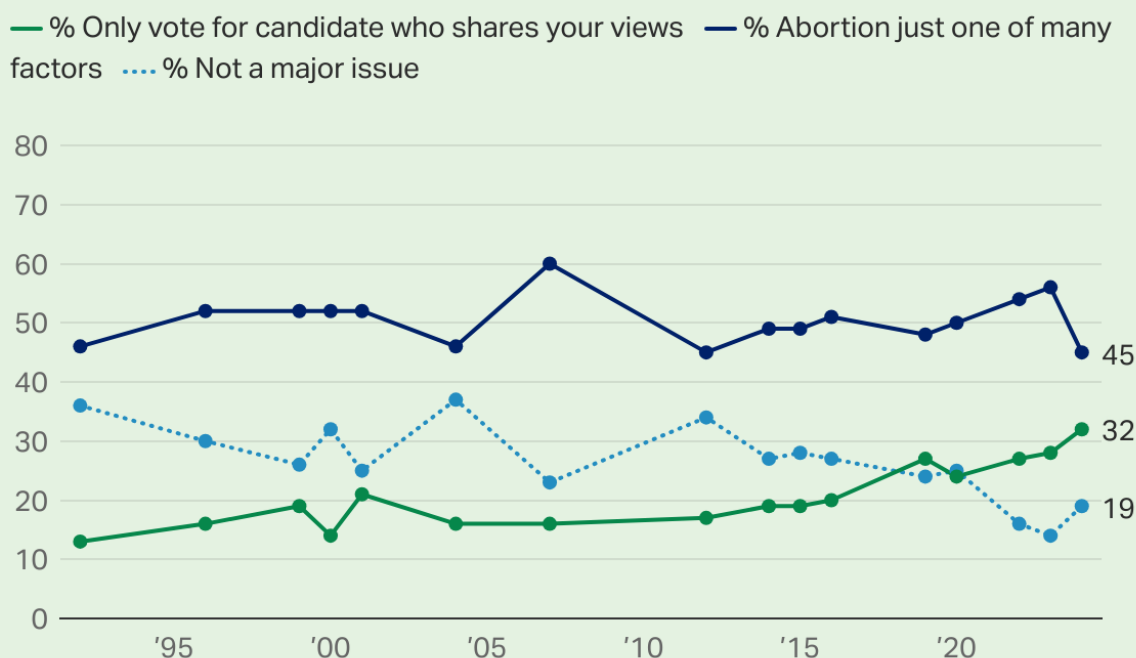
## Abortion's Importance as Voting Issue Up, Especially Among Pro-Choice Voters

Gallup has gauged the importance of a candidate's views on abortion among U.S. registered voters at least once during each presidential election cycle since 1992. The current 32% who say they will only vote for a candidate who shares their views is up four percentage points since last May and eight points since 2020.

Meanwhile, a diminished plurality of voters, 45% (down 11 points from last year), consider abortion to be just one of many important factors, the lowest reading since 2012. Another 19% (up five points) say it is not a major issue for them, which is the third consecutive reading under 20% and well below those taken between 1992 and 2020.

## Importance of Abortion Issue to Registered Voters

Thinking about how the abortion issue might affect your vote for major offices, would you -- [only vote for a candidate who shares your views on abortion (or) consider a candidate's position on abortion as just one of many important factors (or) not see abortion as a major issue]?



Based on registered voters

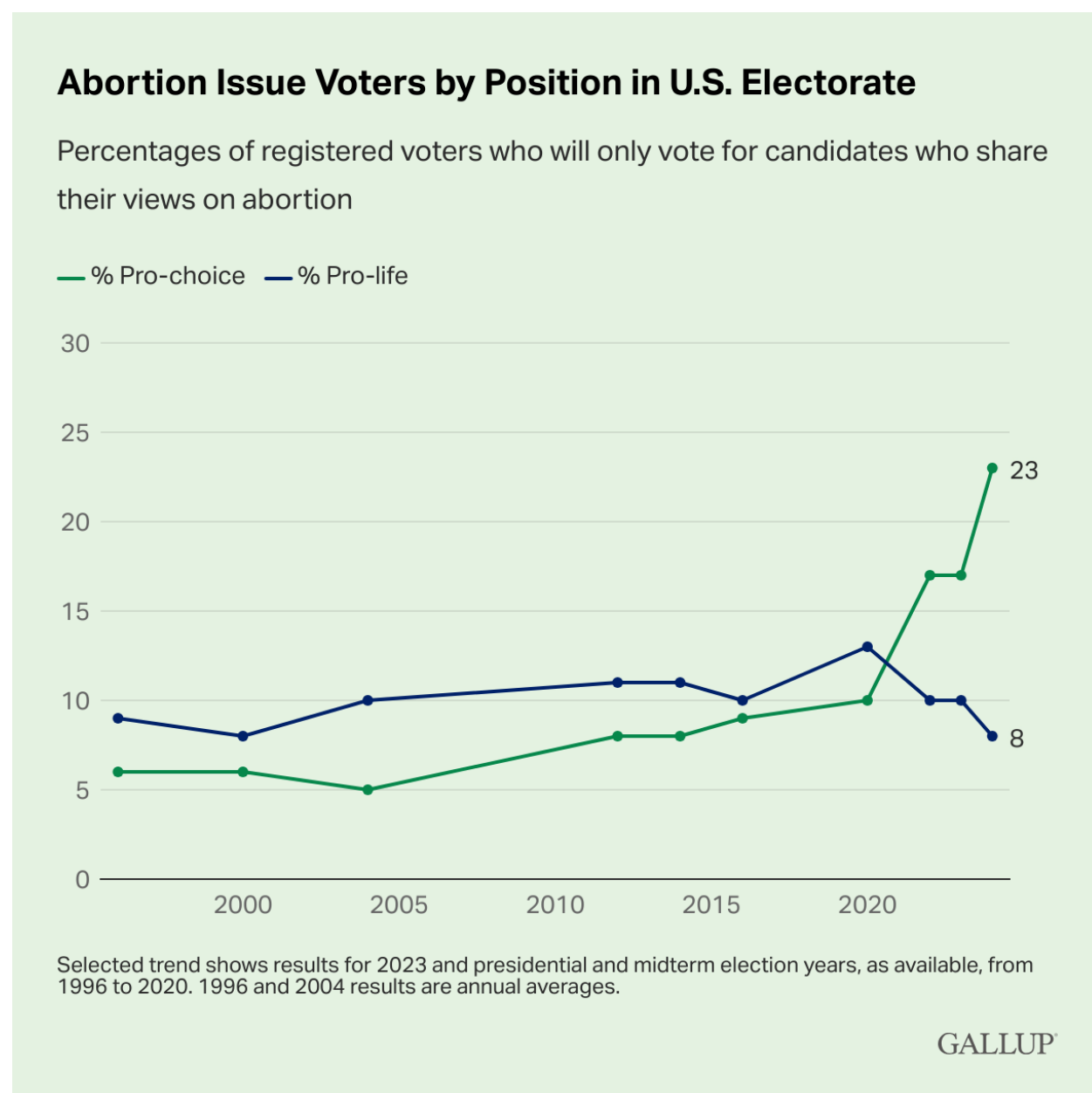
1996 and 2004 results are annual averages. Those with no opinion are not shown.

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An examination of voters' responses to this question based on their stance on abortion shows that pro-choice candidates stand to benefit more than pro-life candidates from single-issue abortion voters. Specifically, nearly twice as many pro-choice voters (40%) as pro-life voters (22%) say they will only vote for a candidate who agrees with them on abortion. This is the third consecutive year that abortion-centric pro-choice voters have outnumbered abortion-centric pro-life voters in the U.S., marking a reversal of the pro-life advantage between 1996 and 2020.

As a result of these changes, the 32% of all registered voters who say they will only vote for candidates who share their views on abortion now includes 23% who are pro-choice and 8% who are pro-life. (Another 1% don't identify with either label.)

Before 2022, electoral energy was more balanced or leaned toward the pro-life side. During this time, no more than 10% of voters said they were pro-choice and would only vote for those with the same beliefs and no more than 13% of voters identified as pro-life and would only support candidates with the same position.



The increase in pro-choice Americans who say they prioritize the issue when voting may have helped Democrats blunt Republicans' anticipated gains in the 2022 midterm election and would appear to be an even greater advantage for the party today. One cautionary note is that all of the increase since then in voters saying they will only support candidates who share their position on abortion has occurred among Democrats. A slight majority of Democratic registered voters (52%) now say this, up from 37% in 2022.

In an era of hyper-partisanship and where candidates generally align with their party's position on the abortion issue, this isn't likely to affect whom Democrats vote for, but it could help drive Democrats to the polls. Meanwhile, independents' and Republicans' focus on the issue has been steady at just over 20%.

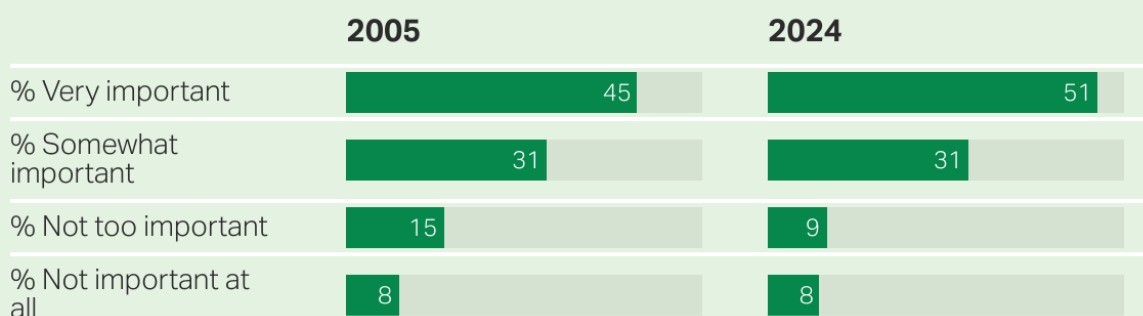
## More Say Future Supreme Court Nominees' Abortion Stance Is Important

One way abortion is likely to be discussed in the presidential campaign is how the candidates' potential choices of Supreme Court nominees might influence U.S. law on the issue. (Donald Trump's appointment of three justices in his term, all of whom voted to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, made clear how presidential elections can affect abortion policy.) A slim majority of 51% of Americans say it is "very important" that future nominees share their views on abortion, and another 31% say it is "somewhat important." Just 9% believe nominees' abortion stance is "not too important" and 8% "not important at all."

The only other reading on this question was taken in 2005. At that point, slightly fewer U.S. adults, 45%, viewed it as very important that the abortion views of nominees to the nation's highest court were consistent with their own.

### Importance of Future Supreme Court Nominees' Abortion Views to Americans

Now, thinking about future nominees to the United States Supreme Court, how important is it to you, personally, that they share your views on the abortion issue -- very important, somewhat important, not too important or not important at all?



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Again, those who identify as pro-choice are more likely than their pro-life counterparts to feel most strongly. A 58% majority of pro-choice Americans consider it very important that nominees' abortion stance be the same as their own, compared with 45% of pro-life U.S. adults who say the same. In 2005, when abortion was legal nationwide, the opposite was true, with 53% of pro-life and 37% of pro-choice Americans saying it was very important.

## **Majority of Americans Identifying as Pro-Choice Has Become the New Normal**

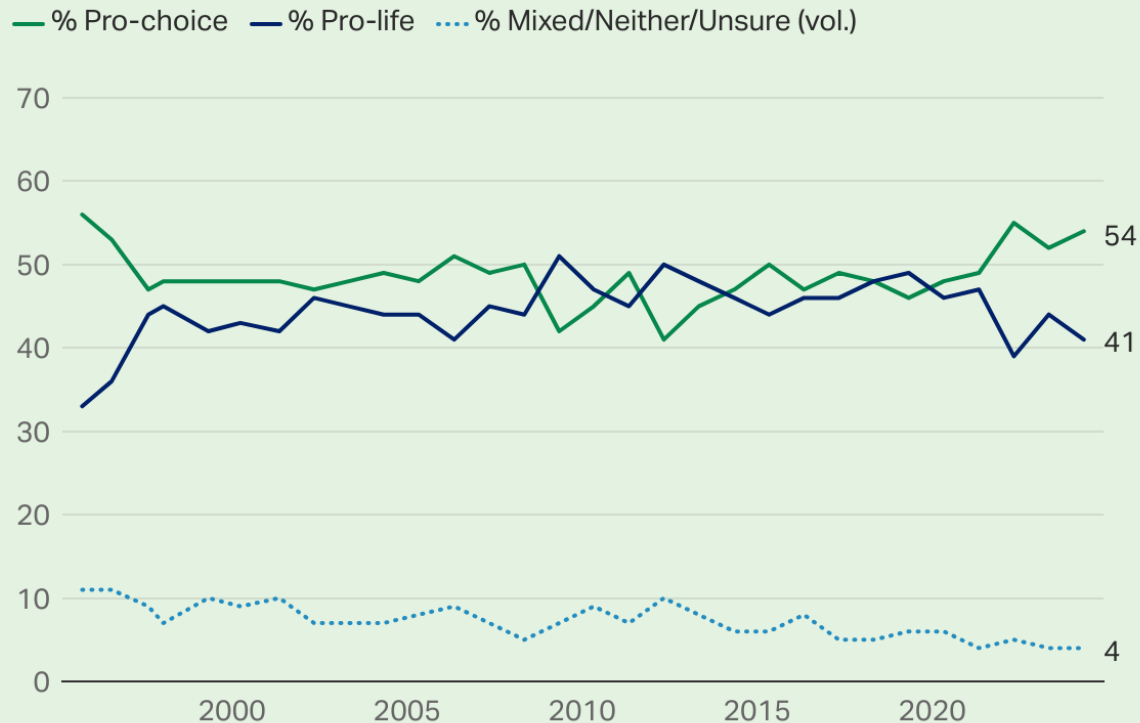
At the same time that pro-choice voters are showing record intensity on the abortion issue, the pro-choice segment of the American public remains historically large.

Currently, 54% of U.S. adults identify as pro-choice on the issue, continuing the pattern of majority-level support for the position seen since the *Dobbs* decision was leaked, including [55% in the initial post-\*Dobbs\* reading](#) in May 2022. That was the highest pro-choice share Gallup had measured since 1995 and the first time since 2006 that more than half of Americans were in the pro-choice camp on this measure. It has not fallen below that threshold since.

Meanwhile, 41% of Americans now identify as pro-life, similar to the 39% to 44% levels recorded since the *Dobbs* leak but in contrast with the average 46% in the decade and half before it.

## Americans' Self-Identification on Abortion Issue

With respect to the abortion issue, would you consider yourself to be pro-choice or pro-life?



(vol.)=volunteered response

Selected trend is based on date closest to May of each year.

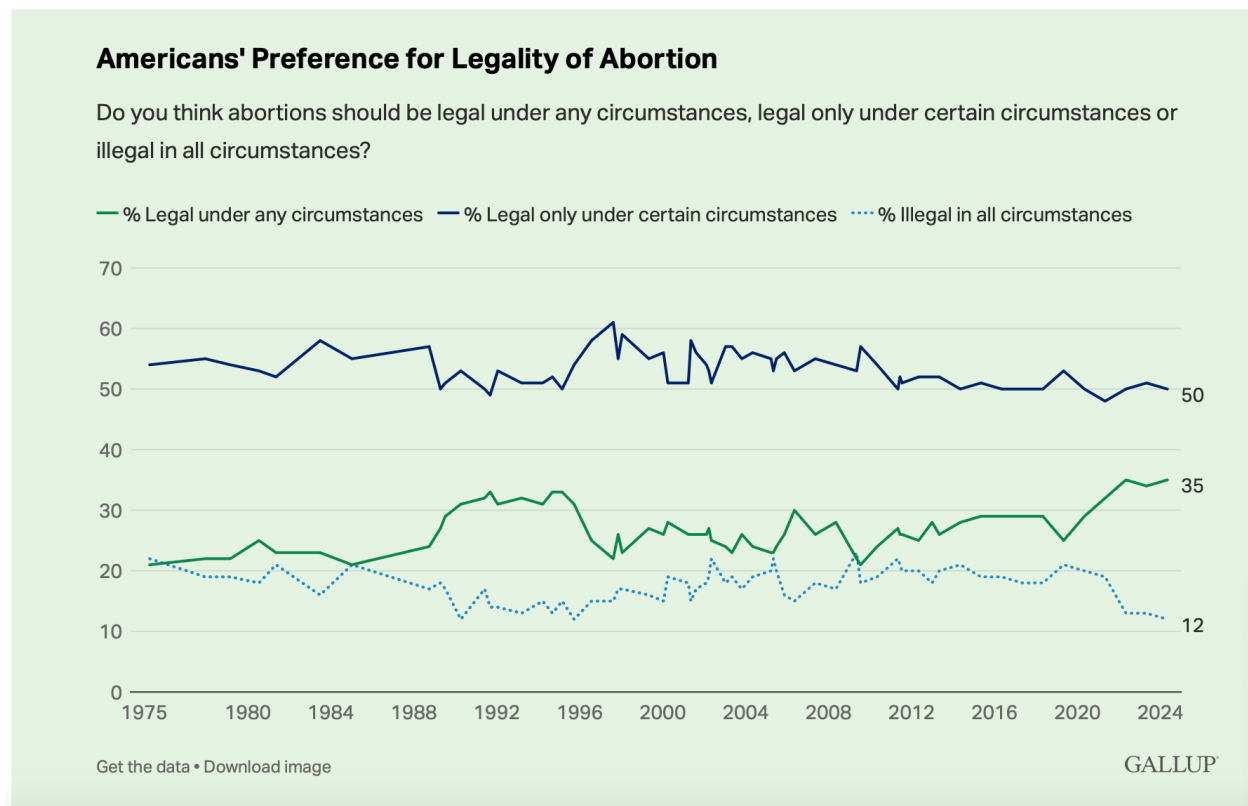
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## Americans Favor Legal Abortion, Say It Is Morally Acceptable

Americans have also become more likely to think abortion should be broadly legal and more tolerant of the morality of abortion in recent years.

On the legality questions, the public has been trending in favor of abortion rights since 2021, when the percentage saying it should be legal under any circumstances registered above 30% for the first time in nearly three decades. It has since ticked up further to today's 35%, exceeding the 1992 record high by one point. Offsetting this, the percentage saying abortion should be illegal in all cases has declined by seven points, from 19% in 2021 to 12%, tying the record lows from

1990 and 1995. Meanwhile, most respondents, now 50%, have consistently said abortion should be legal “only under certain circumstances.”



Since 1994, Gallup has asked Americans who hold the middle position on abortion to say whether they think it should be legal in most or only a few circumstances. In all years through 2021, their answers leaned strongly toward the “only a few” side, resulting in a majority of Americans favoring more restrictive laws on abortion, either saying it should be legal in only a few circumstances or illegal in all.

In the wake of the *Dobbs* draft leak in 2022, however, combined support for the more restrictive positions fell to 45%, while the percentage saying abortion should be legal in all or most circumstances rose to 53%. Although the two broad sides were tied last year, the positions in favor of expansive abortion rights are again the majority, at 51% today, while 45% prefer more restrictive rights.

#### SOURCE

<https://news.gallup.com/poll/645836/record-share-electorate-pro-choice-voting.aspx>