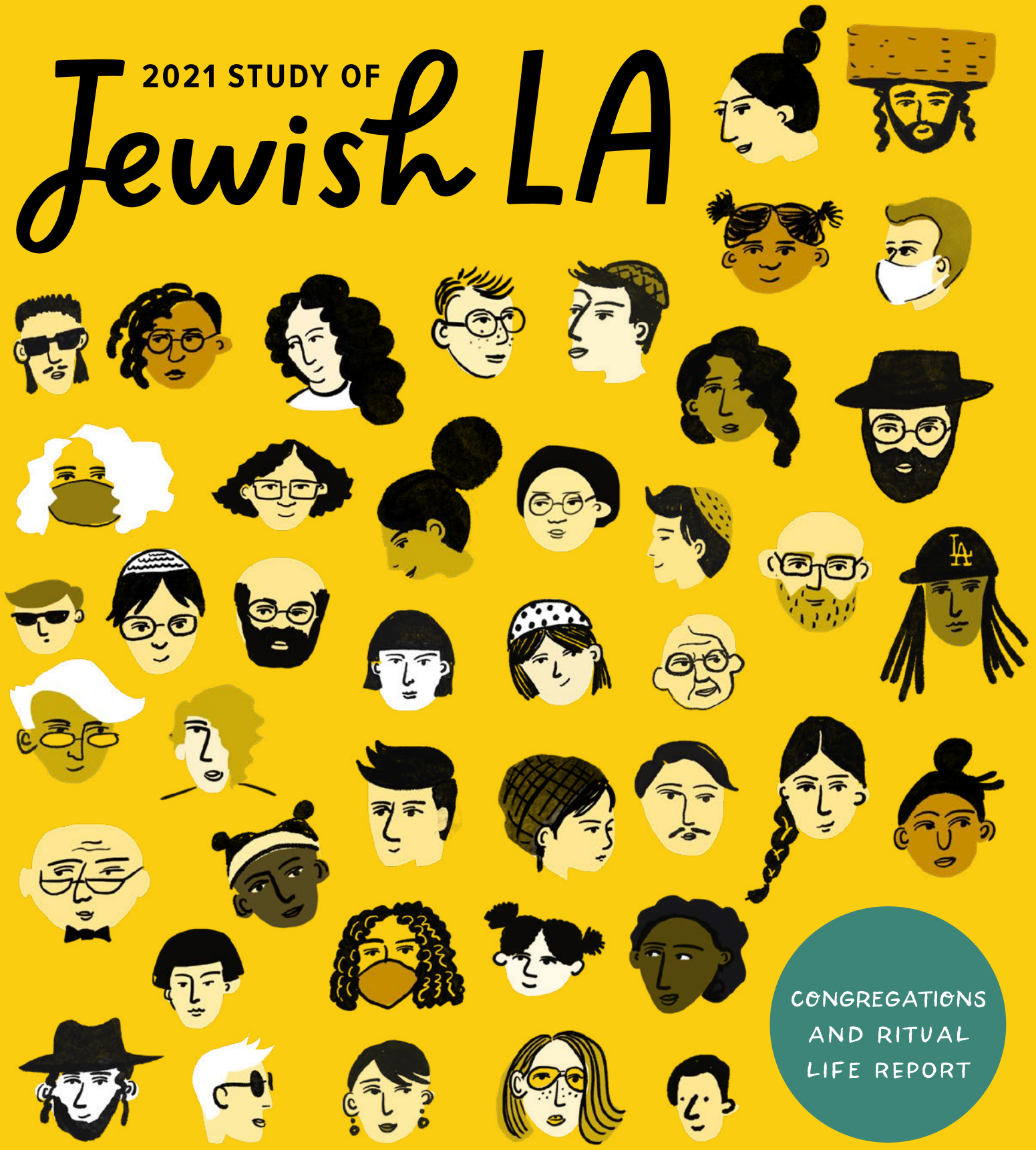


2021 STUDY OF *Jewish* LA



CONGREGATIONS
AND RITUAL
LIFE REPORT

Brandeis

MAURICE AND MARILYN
COHEN CENTER FOR
MODERN JEWISH STUDIES

NORC at the
University of
Chicago

Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies (CMJS)
at Brandeis University and NORC at the University of Chicago



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2021 STUDY OF *Jewish* LA

Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies (CMJS) at Brandeis University and NORC at the University of Chicago

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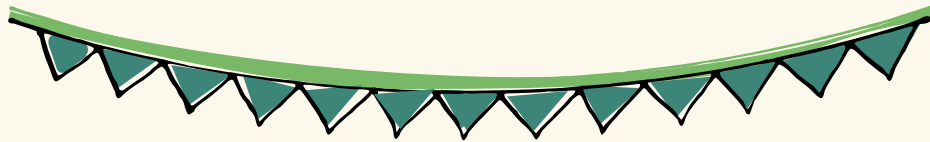
CONGREGATIONS
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LIFE REPORT

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Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies
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The Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies (CMJS), founded in 1980, is dedicated to providing independent, high-quality research on issues related to contemporary Jewish life.

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PREFACE

This is one of a series of reports describing findings from the 2021 Study of Jewish LA. The study was conducted by the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University and NORC at the University of Chicago. For an introduction to the study, along with additional reports and material, visit www.brandeis.edu/cmjs/community-studies/los-angeles-report.html or studyofjewishla.org

JEWISH POPULATION ESTIMATES OF LA, 2021

JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS	294,200
PEOPLE IN JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS	737,900
NON-JEWISH INDIVIDUALS	173,800
JEWISH INDIVIDUALS	564,700
ADULTS	
JEWISH	462,900
NON-JEWISH OR UNKNOWN	143,900
CHILDREN	
JEWISH	101,800
NON-JEWISH OR UNKNOWN	29,900

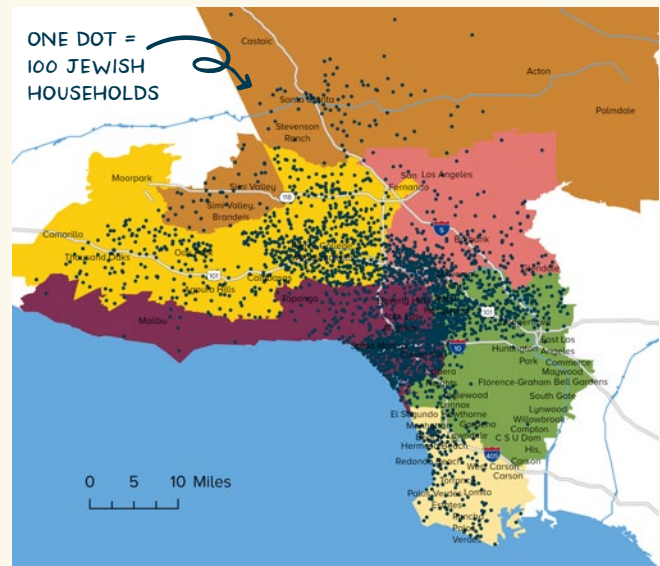
Note: Numbers do not add up to total due to rounding.

How many Jewish people in Los Angeles?

As of 2021, it is estimated that the Los Angeles catchment area is the home to nearly 300,000 Jewish households. These households include almost 740,000 individuals, of whom 564,700 are Jewish.

For this study, Jewish individuals are those who identify as Jewish, whether by religion or ethnicity, and who either have a Jewish parent or converted to Judaism. Jewish households are any households that include at least one Jewish adult.

MAP OF JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS IN LA



PERCENTAGE OF JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS IN EACH REGION:

■ 4% NORTH COUNTY VALLEYS	■ 26% WEST VALLEY
■ 15% EAST VALLEY	■ 24% CENTRAL/METRO/MID
■ 26% WESTSIDE	■ 5% SOUTH BAY

What are the boundaries of Jewish LA?

The Los Angeles Jewish community encompasses all cities and neighborhoods

- East from the coastline
- West from Silver Lake/Downtown/the 710 freeway
- North from San Pedro, including the San Fernando, Conejo, Simi, Santa Clarita, and Antelope Valleys.

For analysis purposes, this report divides the community into six regions: West Valley, East Valley, Westside, Central/Metro/Mid, South Bay, and the North County Valleys.

Index of Jewish Engagement

Jewish life is complex and multidimensional and includes cultural and religious behaviors that are practiced at home, with friends and family, as well as with formal and informal organizations and institutions. Jewish engagement is associated with attitudes, such as feelings of attachment to the Jewish people, and with beliefs, such as valuing social justice.

The 2021 Study of Jewish LA uses a typology of patterns of Jewish engagement as one of its primary analytic tools for understanding Jewish life in LA. LA Jews were categorized into five groups using a statistical analysis (latent class analysis) of levels of participation across 20 different Jewish behaviors, including ritual and cultural behaviors. The names of the five groups reflect the primary ways in which each group engages in Jewish life. This typology is unique to the LA Jewish community and is used throughout this report to highlight the diversity of expressions of Jewish life.

Overview of Methodology

This study is based on analysis of a rich set of data collected from 3,767 eligible households between June and September 2021. Survey respondents were randomly selected from all households in the Los Angeles catchment area (see map). The study design integrated an Address Based Sample (ABS) with known households on Jewish organizational lists. Households were contacted by mail, email, and telephone and invited to complete the survey online or by telephone. Responses were statistically weighted to represent all LA Jewish households. The response rates for the main sample were 11.2% unweighted and 10.2% weighted (see Technical Appendix for details).

Although some survey responses were likely influenced by the special circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, which began in March 2020, the questions were designed to provide a demographic and attitudinal portrait of the stable characteristics of the community. As necessary, questions were modified to account for changes in usual patterns of behavior during the pandemic.

INDEX OF JEWISH ENGAGEMENT

Jewish engagement groups and primary activities of each group



23%

MINIMALLY INVOLVED

Few Jewish activities



27%

HOLIDAY

Passover seder, Hanukkah candles, occasionally mark Shabbat



16%

COMMUNAL

Passover seder, Hanukkah candles, High Holiday services, attend Jewish programs, donate to Jewish causes, partake in Jewish books/TV/music



16%

RITUAL

Passover seder, Hanukkah candles, High Holiday services, mark Shabbat regularly, follow some Kosher rules, donate to Jewish causes, half are congregation members



17%

IMMERSED

All holidays, mark Shabbat weekly, attend Jewish programs, donate to Jewish causes, read Jewish publications, most are congregation members

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

AS YOU READ THIS REPORT, KEEP IN MIND THE FOLLOWING:

TERMS: Unless otherwise specified, references to “all Jewish adults” or “all Jewish households” refer to Jewish adults and Jewish households in Los Angeles.

Throughout this report, the term “couples” includes those who are legally married and those who are partnered and living together. Unless otherwise specified, “children” refers to minor children under age 18.

RESPONSES: Information in this report is based on over 3,700 survey responses. Responses to survey questions are often subjective and reflect respondents’ interpretation of survey questions. Data presented in this report reflect an estimate of the distribution of responses to a particular question if every member of the community had been interviewed.

ESTIMATES: Because estimates are based on a probability survey, no one estimate should be considered an exact measurement. As a guideline, the reader should assume that all estimates have a range of plus or minus five points; therefore, reported differences between any two numbers of less than 10 percentage points may not necessarily reflect true differences in the population.

When a percentage is between 0% and 0.5% and would otherwise round down to 0%, the number is denoted as < 1%. When there are insufficient respondents in a particular subgroup for reporting reliable information, the estimate is shown as “—”.

QUOTES in this report may have been edited for clarity and to protect privacy. While representing an individual experience, the quotes illustrate the themes identified in the numeric data.

COMPARISONS ACROSS SUBGROUPS: When there is a statistically significant difference among subgroups, we are 95% confident that at least some of the differences in estimates reflect actual differences and are not just the result of random chance. However, even in cases where there are statistically significant differences in a full set of responses, it is unlikely that there are statistically significant differences between every pair of numbers. As noted above, as a rule of thumb, differences between any two numbers of less than 10 percentage points may not reflect true differences in the population.

DIFFERENCES THAT ARE NOT STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT are indicated in this report by gray text in tables. This means that even though the numbers are different, these differences are the result of random chance and are not meaningful.



Each report brings a fresh analysis of the data in the hope of stimulating community members to ask new questions, engage in strategy conversations, and consider the implications for our community. These thematic reports are intended to act as a starting point and designed to spark curiosity.

RABBI NOAH FARKAS, PRESIDENT AND CEO
JEWISH FEDERATION OF GREATER LOS ANGELES

Congregations And Ritual Life

The observance of Jewish rituals is one of the traditional ways through which LA Jews enact their Jewish identity. Congregations, including synagogues and other worship communities, are a focal point for ritual practice, but Judaism also includes rituals practiced at home and in non-religious communal settings. For some members of the community, rituals are connected to religious identity; but for many, rituals are a way to connect to tradition, culture, family, and community.

This report reviews the ritual lives of LA Jews, including their membership and participation in synagogue and congregational life.

Note: This study was conducted during the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic, from June to September 2021. Congregation participation and home-based ritual life were disrupted, as were many other aspects of daily life. To provide the most useful data possible, survey questions were adjusted to account for the impact of the pandemic. For example, questions about participation in Jewish life included online and in-person activities. Where relevant, the survey asked about participation in Jewish activities before the pandemic, in the early days of the pandemic (i.e., in 2020), and at the time the survey was conducted in summer 2021. Unless otherwise specified, data presented in this report reflect the highest level of participation in any of those time periods.

TERMS

CONGREGATIONS include all types of Jewish worship communities. For this study, we divide congregations into the following categories

Synagogue: synagogues of all denominations, including no denomination

Chabad

Independent: Minyan, havurah, or other independent worship community

Organization: Hillel, JCC, or other organization-based worship community

CONGREGATION-MEMBER HOUSEHOLDS are Jewish households in which anyone belongs to a congregation, whether or not membership dues are paid.

CONGREGATION-MEMBER JEWISH ADULTS: Jewish adults who live in a Jewish household in which anyone is a congregation member, whether or not membership dues are paid.






Congregation Membership

One-in-five (21%) Jewish *households* in LA include someone who is a member of a congregation, including a synagogue or other Jewish worship community. One quarter of Jewish *adults* in LA reside in households in which someone is a member of a congregation; this share is lower than among all US Jewish adults, of whom 35% live in congregation households.¹

With the forms and structure of congregation membership evolving, it is noteworthy that not all congregation members pay dues. Of all congregation-member households, two thirds pay membership dues of some sort to a congregation. In addition, congregation membership does not include those who participate, whether regularly or occasionally, without membership. Some congregations do not have a membership model at all; some individuals participate without committing to membership.

In this report, we describe Jewish engagement among LA households using the Index of Jewish Engagement (see report preface). Congregation membership is one of the key indicators that differentiates the engagement groups. Thus, for example, virtually none of the households in the Minimally Involved and Holiday engagement groups include congregation members. In contrast, almost 80% of the households in the Immersed group, about 40% of households in the Ritual group, and 20% of households in the Communal group are congregation members. Of congregation members in each engagement group, a similar share (about two thirds) pay dues to at least one congregation.

CONGREGATION MEMBERSHIP BY JEWISH ENGAGEMENT






	MEMBER OF ANY CONGREGATION	OF MEMBERS, PAY DUES TO ANY CONGREGATION
ALL JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS	21%	67%
 MINIMALLY INVOLVED	0%	N/A
 HOLIDAY	<1%	N/A
 COMMUNAL	21%	69%
 RITUAL	39%	68%
 IMMERSED	79%	64%

¹Pew Research Center, "Jewish Americans in 2020" (Washington DC: Pew Research Center, 2021). www.pewforum.org/2021/05/11/jewish-americans-in-2020/

Although the majority of congregation members belong to a synagogue, many belong to Chabad or independent congregations. Of the households that include congregation members, 81% are members of synagogues, 15% are members of Chabad, and 6% belong to a minyan, havurah, or other independent worship community.

Among congregation-member households in the Communal, Ritual, and Immersed groups, the majority—more than 80%—belong to a synagogue. However, membership in Chabad is higher among the Immersed group (22%) followed by the Ritual group (13%). Membership in independent worship communities is highest among the Immersed group (9%).

CONGREGATION MEMBERSHIP BY JEWISH ENGAGEMENT

	MEMBER OF ANY CONGREGATION	OF CONGREGATION MEMBERS...				
		SYNAGOGUE	CHABAD	INDEPENDENT	ORGANIZATION	OTHER
ALL JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS	21%	81%	15%	6%	3%	3%
 MINIMALLY INVOLVED	0%	--	--	--	--	--
 HOLIDAY	<1%	--	--	--	--	--
 COMMUNAL	21%	86%	6%	1%	8%	2%
 RITUAL	39%	83%	13%	1%	2%	2%
 IMMERSED	79%	81%	22%	9%	4%	2%

Note: Rows do not total 100 because households can belong to multiple types of synagogues.

The study did not measure the total number of congregations that each household belongs to, but it did measure whether households belonged to multiple types of congregations. Among congregation-member households, 72% belong to synagogues only, 8% to Chabad only, and 2% to an independent worship community only. The remaining 11% belong to multiple types of congregations. This includes 6% that belong to both a synagogue and Chabad and 3% that belong to both a synagogue and an independent worship community.

SYNAGOGUES AND DENOMINATIONS

For most LA Jews who are synagogue members, their synagogue’s affiliation matches how they identify denominationally, but this is not always the case. In part, this is because many worship communities are independent of the denominational movements and, in some cases, this is the result of individuals belonging to multiple congregations.

Among Orthodox Jewish households, three quarters belong to a congregation, with a substantial majority of members (81%) belonging to an Orthodox synagogue. More than one quarter belong to Chabad. About one third of Conservative Jewish households belong to a congregation of any type, and of those, nearly two thirds belong to a Conservative synagogue. Of the one quarter of Reform Jewish households that belong to any congregation, 79% belong to a Reform synagogue.

Although just 6% of households with no denomination belong to a congregation, these households belong to synagogues of all denominations. This group includes the largest share that belongs to an independent worship community. In 14% of congregation-member households, all of the Jewish adults have no specific denomination.

SYNAGOGUE DENOMINATION BY HOUSEHOLD DENOMINATION

	MEMBER OF ANY CONGREGATION	OF MEMBERS OF ANY CONGREGATION, HOUSEHOLDS THAT BELONG TO...							
		SYNAGOGUES				CONGREGATIONS			
		ORTHODOX	CONSERVATIVE	REFORM	RECONSTRUCTIONIST	OTHER OR NO DENOMINATION	CHABAD	INDEPENDENT	ORGANIZATION
ALL JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS	21%	24%	22%	31%	4%	8%	15%	6%	3%
HOUSEHOLD DENOMINATION									
ORTHODOX	77%	81%	6%	2%	0%	1%	26%	10%	4%
CONSERVATIVE	37%	11%	63%	9%	1%	6%	18%	4%	5%
REFORM	24%	2%	6%	79%	1%	2%	10%	1%	3%
OTHER DENOMINATION	41%	12%	8%	9%	28%	33%	8%	4%	3%
NO DENOMINATION	6%	15%	12%	29%	0%	31%	19%	15%	6%

Note: Rows do not total 100 because households can belong to multiple types of synagogues.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF SYNAGOGUE MEMBERS

The overall share of congregation membership does not differ by age. Member households ages 41 and older are, however, more likely to pay dues than those ages 31-40.

The overall share of congregation membership does not differ by age. Member households ages 41 and older are, however, more likely to pay dues than those ages 31-40

CONGREGATION MEMBERSHIP BY AGE

	MEMBER HOUSEHOLD	OF CONGREGATION MEMBERS...				
		PAY DUES TO ANY CONGREGATION	SYNAGOGUE	CHABAD	INDEPENDENT	ORGANIZATION
ALL JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS	21%	67%	81%	15%	6%	3%
22-30	21%	--	--	--	--	--
31-40	28%	54%	92%	15%	6%	4%
41-54	20%	69%	81%	20%	6%	3%
55-54	23%	71%	76%	20%	9%	2%
65-74	17%	70%	76%	18%	5%	3%
75+	19%	77%	89%	12%	3%	3%

Congregation membership is highest among inmarried households (33%) and lowest among intermarried households (12%). Of member households, inmarried households (74%) are most likely to be dues-paying synagogue members, followed by intermarried households (67%) and single households (56%). There are no differences in other membership models.

Parents of minor children are more likely to be congregation members (30%) compared to households without children (18%). Member households with children are also more likely (73%) to be paying dues in a congregation compared with those who do not have children (60%) in the household.

Central/Metro/Mid has the highest proportion of synagogue members (28%), and North County Valleys has the lowest proportion of synagogue members (12%). Among congregation-member households, there are no regional differences in the types of congregations that households belong to.

CONGREGATION MEMBERSHIP BY HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

	MEMBER HOUSEHOLD	PAY DUES TO ANY CONGREGATION
ALL JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS	21%	67%
MARITAL STATUS		
INMARRIED	33%	74%
INTERMARRIED	12%	67%
NOT MARRIED	22%	56%
CHILD IN HOUSEHOLD		
NO CHILD	18%	60%
CHILD IN HOUSEHOLD	30%	73%

CONGREGATION MEMBERSHIP BY REGION

	MEMBER HOUSEHOLD	PAY DUES TO ANY CONGREGATION
ALL JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS	21%	67%
WEST VALLEY	18%	63%
EAST VALLEY	23%	63%
WESTSIDE	21%	69%
CENTRAL/METRO/MID	28%	65%
SOUTH BAY	16%	74%
NORTH COUNTY VALLEYS	12%	--

RECENT CHANGES IN CONGREGATION MEMBERSHIP

To understand the possible decline in the number of synagogue-member households, the study examined the patterns of adults who were members of congregations in the past five years but are no longer members. Although some of this decline may be related to the pandemic, it is likely that other reasons contributed as well.






In addition to the 26% of Jewish adults who are current members of a congregation, another 10% of were members of a congregation in the past five years but are no longer. The remainder, 64%, have not belonged to a congregation at any time during the past five years.

The biggest decline in congregation membership during this period was experienced by those in the Communal and Ritual groups. While just over one quarter of the Communal engagement group are current congregation

members, another 20% were members in the previous five years. Among the Ritual group, almost 45% are current congregation members, and another 15% were members in the previous five years.



RECENT CHANGES IN CONGREGATION MEMBERSHIP BY JEWISH ENGAGEMENT

	CURRENT MEMBER	FORMER MEMBER (PAST 5 YEARS)	NEVER OR MORE THAN 5 YEARS AGO
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	26%	10%	64%
 MINIMALLY INVOLVED	0%	1%	99%
 HOLIDAY	1%	9%	91%
 COMMUNAL	28%	20%	52%
 RITUAL	45%	15%	41%
 IMMERSED	81%	9%	10%

COST OF CONGREGATION MEMBERSHIP

CONGREGATION MEMBERSHIP BY FINANCIAL SITUATION

There are no significant differences in congregation membership by financial situation—in overall level of membership, membership in different types of congregations, or in the share of each group that pay dues to a congregation.

Very few households indicate that finances are a barrier to congregation membership. All Jewish households were asked if, during the past year, their participation in Jewish congregational life had been limited by their financial situation—specifically if financial considerations prevented them from joining a congregation, or if they required financial assistance to maintain a congregation membership. Only 3% of all Jewish households in Los Angeles did not join for financial reasons, and 1% required financial assistance to maintain their membership.

Eight percent of all financially struggling households did not join a congregation for financial reasons, and another 4% needed assistance to maintain their membership. Note that these numbers may not include households that were receiving financial assistance in the past and continued to do so in the past year.

There are no significant differences in congregation membership by financial situation—in overall level of membership, membership in different types of congregations, or in the share of each group that pay dues to a congregation

HOW FINANCES IMPACTED CONGREGATION MEMBERSHIP

	DID NOT JOIN	REQUIRED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO MAINTAIN MEMBERSHIP
ALL JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS	3%	1%
STRUGGLING	8%	4%
ENOUGH	4%	2%
EXTRA	3%	1%
WELL-OFF	0%	0%

DIVERSITY AMONG CONGREGATION MEMBERS

As information about racial and ethnic diversity within the LA Jewish community has become more available in recent years, we can also consider the degree to which congregations as a whole reflect LA's diverse population.

Among LA Jewish households, Israeli and Persian households are overrepresented in congregation membership, and Russian-speaking Jews are underrepresented. Although 7% of LA Jewish households include an Israeli, 14% of congregation-member households are Israeli households. Similarly, although 4% of all LA Jewish households include a Persian Jew, 13% of congregation-member households are Persian households. In contrast, 7% of congregation members are from Russian-speaking Jewish households, although they represent 10% of all LA Jewish households.

The share of congregation member households that include a JPoC or Latino/a Jewish individual is similar to their share in the entire LA Jewish community.

DIVERSITY WITHIN CONGREGATIONS

	ALL LA JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS	CONGREGATION MEMBERS
ISRAELI JEWS	7%	14%
PERSIAN JEWS	4%	13%
RUSSIAN-SPEAKING JEWS	10%	7%
JEWISH PERSONS OF COLOR	8%	9%
LATINO/A JEWS	7%	7%

Among LA Jewish households, Israeli and Persian households are overrepresented in congregation membership, and Russian-speaking Jews are underrepresented

Jewish Religious Services

Although only one quarter of Jewish adults are part of congregation-member households, about two thirds of these individuals attended Jewish religious services at least occasionally prior to the pandemic, not including occasions such as weddings and funerals.

Twenty percent of Jewish adults attend religious services once a month or more, including 9% who attend at least weekly. Nationally, about 20% of Jewish adults attend religious services monthly or more, including 12% who attend at least weekly.² The lack of congregation membership appears not to be a barrier to occasional participation.

prior to and during the pandemic. Although the share of Jewish adults attending services declined sharply during the pandemic, the proportion attending monthly or more only declined slightly and then remained relatively stable throughout the pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented obstacles and opportunities for engagement in congregation services, restricting in-person attendance but offering possibilities for online participation. All respondents were asked how regularly they attended Jewish worship services—whether in-person or online (excluding occasions like weddings or funerals)—both

Although the share of Jewish adults attending services declined sharply during the pandemic, the proportion attending monthly or more only declined slightly and then remained relatively stable throughout the pandemic

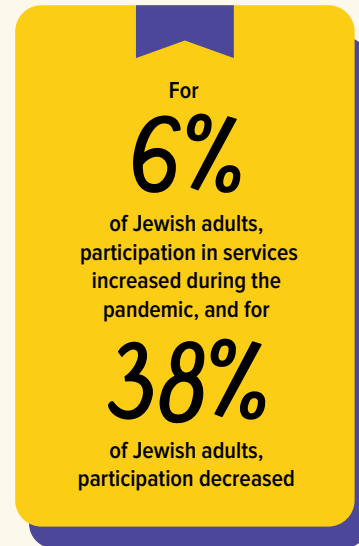
SERVICE ATTENDANCE BEFORE AND DURING THE PANDEMIC (PERCENT OF JEWISH ADULTS)

	TYPICAL YEAR PRE-COVID	2020-SPRING 2021	SUMMER 2021	MOST FREQUENT OF THREE TIME PERIODS
NEVER	36%	67%	77%	35%
ONCE OR TWICE	29%	15%	9%	28%
EVERY FEW MONTHS	17%	8%	3%	17%
ABOUT ONCE A MONTH	5%	3%	3%	6%
TWO OR THREE TIMES A MONTH	5%	3%	2%	6%
ONCE A WEEK OR MORE	8%	4%	5%	9%

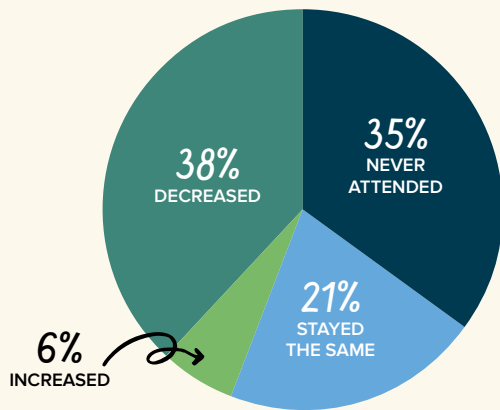
NOTE For the rest of this report, attending Jewish services is reported as the most frequent of these three time frames.

² Pew Research Center, "Jewish Americans in 2020" (Washington DC: Pew Research Center, 2021). www.pewforum.org/2021/05/11/jewish-americans-in-2020/

Thirty-five percent of Jewish adults did not attend services during any of the three time periods. For 21% of Jewish adults, the frequency of their participation remained consistent prior to and during the pandemic. For 6% of Jewish adults, participation in services increased during the pandemic, and for 38% of Jewish adults, participation decreased.



IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON SERVICE ATTENDANCE (PERCENT OF JEWISH ADULTS)



DEMOGRAPHICS OF RELIGIOUS SERVICE ATTENDANCE

Religious service attendance is, unsurprisingly, highly correlated with overall Jewish engagement. Forty-one percent of the Immersed engagement group attended religious services once a week or more, and another 37% attended monthly or more. Service attendance is somewhat higher in the Ritual group than in the Communal group. None of the Jewish adults in the Minimally Involved and Holiday groups attended services regularly, but half of those in the Holiday group attended occasionally.

SERVICE ATTENDANCE BY JEWISH ENGAGEMENT

	NEVER	OCCASIONALLY (LESS THAN ONCE A MONTH)	MONTHLY OR MORE (BUT LESS THAN WEEKLY)	ONCE A WEEK OR MORE
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	35%	44%	12%	9%
MINIMALLY INVOLVED	91%	9%	0%	0%
HOLIDAY	50%	50%	0%	0%
COMMUNAL	6%	77%	15%	2%
RITUAL	0%	72%	22%	6%
IMMERSED	0%	23%	37%	41%

The frequency of participation in Jewish religious services also differs by age, household composition, and region. Similar shares of Jewish adults of all ages attend services monthly and weekly. However, half of Jewish adults ages 31 to 54 attend services occasionally—more than those who are younger and older. One reason may be that these age groups include more parents who attend with their children.

SERVICE ATTENDANCE BY AGE

	NEVER	OCCASIONALLY (LESS THAN ONCE A MONTH)	MONTHLY OR MORE (BUT LESS THAN WEEKLY)	ONCE A WEEK OR MORE
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	35%	44%	12%	9%
22-30	32%	43%	14%	10%
31-40	22%	50%	19%	9%
41-54	30%	50%	12%	9%
55-54	41%	39%	11%	8%
65-74	37%	43%	10%	9%
75+	54%	28%	11%	9%

Approximately three quarters of inmarried Jewish adults attend services at least occasionally, compared to half of intermarried adults and two thirds of single adults. About three quarters of parents attend services at least occasionally, compared to 61% of those without minor children.

SERVICE ATTENDANCE BY HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

	NEVER	OCCASIONALLY (LESS THAN ONCE A MONTH)	MONTHLY OR MORE (BUT LESS THAN WEEKLY)	ONCE A WEEK OR MORE
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	35%	44%	12%	9%
MARITAL STATUS				
INMARRIED	24%	48%	16%	13%
INTERMARRIED	51%	40%	6%	3%
NOT MARRIED	34%	41%	15%	10%
PARENT STATUS				
NOT PARENT	39%	41%	12%	8%
PARENT	23%	49%	15%	12%

There are significant differences by region in service attendance. Service attendance is highest among Jewish households in Central/Metro/Mid and lowest in South Bay and North County Valleys.

CONGREGATION MEMBERSHIP BY REGION

	NEVER	OCCASIONALLY (LESS THAN ONCE A MONTH)	MONTHLY OR MORE (BUT LESS THAN WEEKLY)	ONCE A WEEK OR MORE
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	35%	44%	12%	9%
WEST VALLEY	33%	48%	12%	7%
EAST VALLEY	35%	45%	15%	5%
WESTSIDE	32%	45%	14%	9%
CENTRAL/METRO/MID	30%	42%	13%	15%
SOUTH BAY	56%	33%	8%	4%
NORTH COUNTY VALLEYS	54%	30%	10%	6%

As expected, service attendance is much higher among congregation members than non-members. Nearly all congregation members attend services at least occasionally, and 29% attend weekly or more. However, about half of non-member Jewish adults attend services at least occasionally.

About half of Jewish adults who are not congregation members attend services at least occasionally

SERVICE ATTENDANCE BY CONGREGATION MEMBERSHIP

	NEVER	OCCASIONALLY (LESS THAN ONCE A MONTH)	MONTHLY OR MORE (BUT LESS THAN WEEKLY)	ONCE A WEEK OR MORE
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	35%	44%	12%	9%
CONGREGATION MEMBER	1%	38%	32%	29%
NOT A MEMBER	47%	46%	6%	1%

HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICES






The survey asked about attendance at High Holiday services in 2020, whether in person or online. To account for changes in plans during the pandemic, the survey also asked about intentions to attend services during the High Holidays of 2021.

Forty percent of Jewish adults attended a High Holiday service in 2020, and almost half expected to attend in 2021. While it is possible that in the second year of the pandemic there were fewer reservations about congregation attendance due to the availability of COVID vaccines and lower rates of COVID-related hospitalization, it is also possible that the higher figures in 2021 can be attributed to people's *expectations* about what they might do rather than what they *actually* did.

High Holiday service attendance is strongly correlated with Jewish engagement. The majority of those in the Immersed, Ritual, and Communal groups attended High Holiday services in 2020 and expected to attend in 2021.

Although there were no significant age differences related to 2020 High Holiday service attendance, intentions to attend services in 2021 were significantly higher among younger adults. Among those ages 40 and younger, 57% expected to attend High Holiday services in 2021.

HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICE ATTENDANCE BY JEWISH ENGAGEMENT

	ATTENDED HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICES 2020	INTEND TO ATTEND HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICES 2021
ALL JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS	40%	49%
 MINIMALLY INVOLVED	0%	0%
 HOLIDAY	15%	20%
 COMMUNAL	62%	73%
 RITUAL	70%	86%
 IMMERSED	86%	99%

HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICE ATTENDANCE BY AGE

	ATTENDED HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICES 2020	INTEND TO ATTEND HIGH HOLIDAYS 2021
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	40%	49%
22-30	44%	57%
31-40	45%	57%
41-54	45%	47%
55-54	40%	49%
65-74	35%	42%
75+	32%	35%

Half of inmarried Jewish adults attended High Holiday services in 2021, and 59% expected to attend in 2021. The share of intermarried and unmarried adults who attended High Holiday services was lower. Half of parents attended High Holiday services in 2020, and 60% expected to attend in 2021.

HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICE ATTENDANCE BY HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

	ATTENDED HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICES 2020	INTENDED TO ATTEND HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICES 2021
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	40%	49%
MARITAL STATUS		
INMARRIED	50%	59%
INTERMARRIED	28%	34%
NOT MARRIED	40%	50%
PARENT STATUS		
NOT PARENT	39%	47%
PARENT	50%	60%

Although there were no significant regional differences in 2020 High Holiday service attendance, South Bay and North County Valleys had smaller shares of Jewish adults who planned to attend services in 2021.

HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICE ATTENDANCE BY REGION

	ATTENDED HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICES 2020	INTENDED TO ATTEND HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICES 2021
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	40%	49%
WEST VALLEY	41%	52%
EAST VALLEY	42%	52%
WESTSIDE	46%	54%
CENTRAL/METRO/MID	43%	50%
SOUTH BAY	28%	26%
NORTH COUNTY VALLEYS	29%	29%

The majority (85%) of congregation members attended High Holiday services in 2020, and nearly all (95%) expected to attend in 2021. Among non-members of congregations, one quarter of Jewish adults attended High Holiday services in 2020, and one third planned to attend in 2021.

HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICES BY CONGREGATION MEMBERSHIP

	ATTENDED HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICES 2020	INTENDED TO ATTEND HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICES 2021
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	40%	49%
CONGREGATION MEMBER	85%	95%
NOT A MEMBER	26%	33%

Marking Shabbat in Meaningful Ways

Aside from congregation membership and participation in religious services, many Jews engage in home ritual observance. This section explores the frequency and the ways in which LA Jewish adults mark Shabbat.

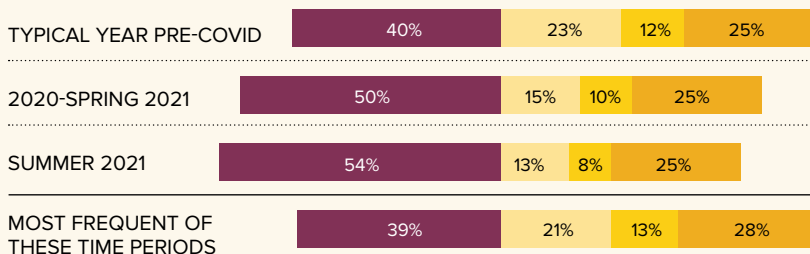
In a typical year prior to the COVID crisis, 60% of Jewish Angelenos marked Shabbat in any way at least occasionally, and one quarter did so weekly or almost weekly. This is a similar share to the average across Jewish communities in the United States: 61% of US Jewish adults mark Shabbat in a personally meaningful way at least sometimes; among those, 20% mark Shabbat often.³

The proportion of Jewish adults who marked Shabbat weekly remained steady at about one quarter throughout the pandemic. There was, however, a decline in the share who sometimes marked Shabbat. Over half of Jewish adults (60%) marked Shabbat at least occasionally prior to the pandemic, but 46% did so at the time the survey was conducted in summer 2021.

FREQUENCY OF MARKING SHABBAT

Percent of Jewish adults

■ NEVER ■ LESS THAN ONCE A MONTH ■ ONCE A MONTH OR MORE ■ EVERY WEEK OR ALMOST EVERY WEEK



NOTE

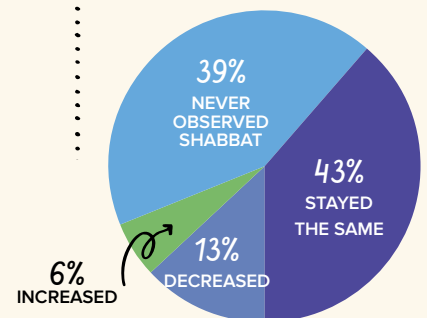
For the rest of this report, the frequency of marking Shabbat is counted as the most frequent of these three time frames.

³Pew Research Center, "Jewish Americans in 2020" (Washington DC: Pew Research Center, 2021). www.pewforum.org/2021/05/11/jewish-americans-in-2020/

While some rituals like gathering with friends and family for meals became more challenging during the pandemic, others, such as taking a break from work, might have become easier for some. Over the three time periods assessed (typical year pre-Covid, 2020-spring 2021, and summer 2021), 39% of Jewish adults never marked Shabbat, 6% increased the frequency of marking Shabbat, 13% decreased the frequency of observing Shabbat, and 43% remained at the same level.

IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON MARKING SHABBAT






Percent of Jewish adults



DEMOGRAPHICS OF MARKING SHABBAT

Nearly all of the Jewish adults in the Immersed (100%) and Ritual (94%) groups mark Shabbat in some way at least occasionally. The majority of those in the Immersed group (88%) and half of the Ritual group (51%) mark Shabbat weekly.

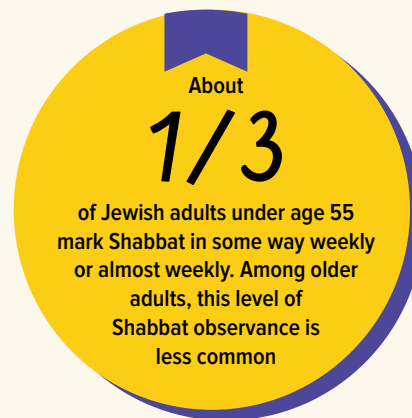
MARKING SHABBAT BY JEWISH ENGAGEMENT

	EVER	WEEKLY OR ALMOST WEEKLY
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	61%	28%
 MINIMALLY INVOLVED	6%	1%
 HOLIDAY	51%	9%
 COMMUNAL	84%	12%
 RITUAL	94%	51%
 IMMERSED	100%	88%

About one third of Jewish adults under age 55 mark Shabbat in some way weekly or almost weekly. Among older adults, this level of Shabbat observance is less common.

MARKING SHABBAT BY AGE

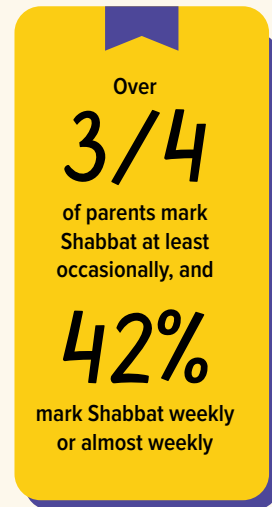
	EVER	WEEKLY OR ALMOST WEEKLY
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	61%	28%
22-30	69%	37%
31-40	80%	36%
41-54	71%	32%
55-54	60%	27%
65-74	46%	25%
75+	41%	17%



Shabbat observance is higher among inmarried Jewish adults, compared to intermarried and single adults. Parents of minor children mark Shabbat more often than those without children. Over three quarters of parents mark Shabbat at least occasionally, and 42% mark Shabbat weekly or almost weekly.

MARKING SHABBAT BY HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

	EVER	WEEKLY OR ALMOST WEEKLY
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	61%	28%
MARITAL STATUS		
INMARRIED	78%	43%
INTERMARRIED	45%	11%
NOT MARRIED	59%	27%
PARENT STATUS		
NOT PARENT	58%	25%
PARENT	78%	42%

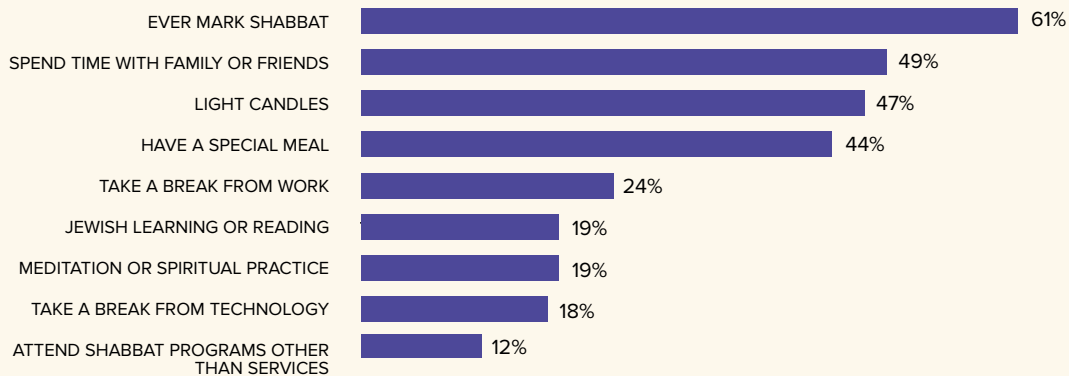


WAYS OF MARKING SHABBAT

Nearly half of LA's Jewish adults mark Shabbat by spending time with family or friends (49%), lighting candles (47%), or having a special meal (44%). LA Jewish adults also mark Shabbat by taking a break from work (24%), engaging in Jewish learning or reading (19%), participating in meditation or spiritual practice (19%), or taking a break from technology (18%).

SHABBAT PRACTICES

Percent of Jewish adults



Much like congregation membership is different across the engagement groups, so too is marking Shabbat. Very few Jewish adults in the Minimally Involved group mark Shabbat in any way. For the other groups, the most popular Shabbat practices are spending time with family and friends, lighting candles, and having a special meal.

Although the Ritual group has the largest share of Jewish adults marking Shabbat at least occasionally, aside from the Immersed group, the Communal group has the largest share who participate in Jewish learning, meditation, technology breaks, and Shabbat programs other than services.

SHABBAT PRACTICES BY JEWISH ENGAGEMENT

	EVER MARK SHABBAT	SPEND TIME WITH FAMILY OR FRIENDS	LIGHT CANDLES	HAVE A SPECIAL MEAL	TAKE A BREAK FROM WORK	JEWISH LEARNING OR READING	MEDITATION OR SPIRITUAL PRACTICE	TAKE A BREAK FROM TECHNOLOGY	ATTEND SHABBAT PROGRAMS OTHER THAN SERVICES
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	61%	49%	47%	44%	24%	19%	19%	18%	12%
MINIMALLY INVOLVED	6%	4%	1%	2%	3%	0%	1%	0%	0%
HOLIDAY	51%	39%	34%	32%	12%	6%	12%	10%	1%
COMMUNAL	84%	71%	62%	65%	30%	27%	26%	23%	18%
RITUAL	94%	73%	76%	65%	35%	16%	21%	18%	10%
IMMERSED	100%	86%	91%	84%	61%	54%	40%	47%	40%

Among the age groups, Jewish adults in their 30s include the largest share who ever mark Shabbat (80%). The youngest age group, 22-30, has the largest share of Jewish adults who mark Shabbat with meditation and spiritual practice (30%) and technology breaks (33%).

SHABBAT PRACTICES BY AGE

	EVER MARK SHABBAT	SPEND TIME WITH FAMILY OR FRIENDS	LIGHT CANDLES	HAVE A SPECIAL MEAL	TAKE A BREAK FROM WORK	JEWISH LEARNING OR READING	MEDITATION OR SPIRITUAL PRACTICE	TAKE A BREAK FROM TECHNOLOGY	ATTEND SHABBAT PROGRAMS OTHER THAN SERVICES
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	61%	49%	47%	44%	24%	19%	19%	18%	12%
22-30	69%	53%	56%	48%	38%	24%	30%	33%	17%
31-40	80%	73%	61%	69%	39%	24%	27%	27%	18%
41-54	71%	61%	57%	57%	28%	21%	23%	20%	13%
55-54	60%	47%	47%	41%	22%	15%	15%	16%	10%
65-74	46%	30%	33%	25%	12%	15%	11%	6%	7%
75+	41%	28%	26%	23%	9%	10%	6%	7%	7%

Seventy-eight percent of inmarried Jewish adults mark Shabbat, compared to about half of intermarried (45%) and 59% of unmarried Jewish adults. Over three quarters of parents mark Shabbat at least occasionally, compared to slightly over half of those without children (58%).

SHABBAT PRACTICES BY HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

	EVER MARK SHABBAT	SPEND TIME WITH FAMILY OR FRIENDS	LIGHT CANDLES	HAVE A SPECIAL MEAL	TAKE A BREAK FROM WORK	JEWISH LEARNING OR READING	MEDITATION OR SPIRITUAL PRACTICE	TAKE A BREAK FROM TECHNOLOGY	ATTEND SHABBAT PROGRAMS OTHER THAN SERVICES
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	61%	49%	47%	44%	24%	19%	19%	18%	12%
MARITAL STATUS									
INMARRIED	78%	66%	65%	62%	31%	23%	21%	23%	15%
INTERMARRIED	45%	34%	32%	30%	16%	14%	15%	13%	5%
NOT MARRIED	59%	45%	43%	39%	28%	18%	18%	17%	15%
PARENT STATUS									
NOT PARENT	58%	45%	42%	40%	24%	17%	17%	16%	12%
PARENT	78%	66%	65%	61%	33%	21%	23%	24%	14%

Jewish Holiday and Home-Based Rituals

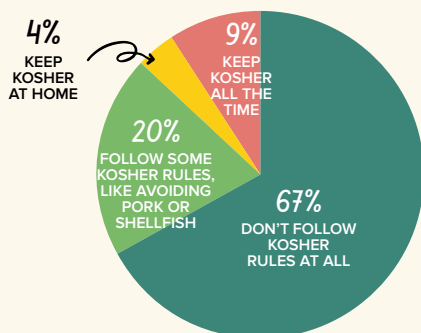
Jewish rituals at home include the observance of festivals in the Jewish calendar. The most commonly observed holiday among LA Jewish adults is Hanukkah, and more than three quarters (78%) light Hanukkah candles.

Among LA Jewish adults, levels of participation in the Passover seder and fasting on Yom Kippur (61% and 47% respectively) are similar to those among all US Jewish adults (62% attend a Passover seder, 47% fast on Yom Kippur).⁴

About one third of LA Jewish adults follow some kosher rules, including 13% who keep kosher at home or all the time.

OBSERVANCE OF KOSHER RULES

Percent of Jewish adults



Other than those in the Minimally Involved group, all of the engagement groups include a near total of Jewish adults who light Hanukkah candles and a majority who attend a Passover seder. Participation in all of these practices is highest among the Immersed group. Although the Communal and Ritual groups have a similar share of Jewish adults who light Hanukkah candles and attend a Passover seder, those in the Ritual group are far more likely to fast on Yom Kippur (86%) compared to those in the Communal group (44%).

JEWISH HOLIDAY RITUALS BY JEWISH ENGAGEMENT

RITUALS	HANUKKAH CANDLES	PASSOVER SEDER	FAST ON YOM KIPPUR	KOSHER AT HOME
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	78%	61%	47%	13%
★ MINIMALLY INVOLVED	27%	1%	4%	3%
🕎 HOLIDAY	92%	63%	28%	<1%
🏠 COMMUNAL	92%	83%	44%	3%
🕍 RITUAL	99%	87%	86%	12%
👤 IMMERSED	98%	99%	91%	52%

⁴ Pew Research Center, "Jewish Americans in 2020" (Washington DC: Pew Research Center, 2021). www.pewforum.org/2021/05/11/jewish-americans-in-2020/

Jewish ritual practices, in particular Hanukkah and Passover, are strongly correlated with age. The share who fast on Yom Kippur is similar across all ages except for those ages 75 and older, who may be limited in ability to fast due to health restrictions.

Jewish ritual practices are strongly correlated with age. Jewish adults ages 40 and younger are most likely to participate in a Passover seder and fast on Yom Kippur

JEWISH HOLIDAY RITUALS BY AGE

RITUALS	HANUKKAH CANDLES	PASSOVER SEDER	FAST ON YOM KIPPUR	KOSHER AT HOME
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	78%	61%	47%	13%
AGE				
22-30	94%	73%	54%	14%
31-40	86%	80%	58%	18%
41-54	85%	66%	43%	14%
55-54	78%	63%	47%	11%
65-74	74%	52%	44%	10%
75+	59%	38%	27%	10%

A larger share of inmarried Jewish adults participate in these holiday rituals compared to intermarried and single adults. Parents with children at home are similarly more likely to observe these four practices compared with those who are not parents.

JEWISH HOLIDAY RITUALS BY HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

RITUALS	HANUKKAH CANDLES	PASSOVER SEDER	FAST ON YOM KIPPUR	KOSHER AT HOME
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	78%	61%	47%	13%
MARITAL STATUS				
INMARRIED	94%	80%	59%	21%
INTERMARRIED	65%	43%	30%	3%
NOT MARRIED	75%	60%	47%	12%
PARENT STATUS				
NOT PARENT	76%	59%	45%	10%
PARENT	90%	75%	55%	21%

Non-Jewish Religious Services and Rituals

How do intermarried families integrate their Jewish and non-Jewish lives? All Jewish LA adults were asked whether they attend Jewish services only, non-Jewish services only, or both types of services. They were also asked whether they had a Christmas tree during the previous December.

In a typical year, over one third of intermarried Jewish adults (39%) never attend any religious services, and more than one third (37%) attend Jewish services only.

Almost one quarter of intermarried Jewish adults attend non-Jewish religious services (not including occasions like weddings and funerals) at least occasionally. About half of this group (12%) attend non-Jewish services only, and the other half (12%) attend both Jewish and non-Jewish services.

These patterns vary based on whether the non-Jewish partner has no religion or a religion other than Judaism. When the non-Jewish partner has another religion, 15% of Jewish adults attend non-Jewish services only, and 16% attend both Jewish and non-Jewish services.

ATTENDANCE AT JEWISH AND NON-JEWISH RELIGIOUS SERVICES BY MARITAL STATUS

	NEVER ATTENDED SERVICES	JEWISH SERVICES ONLY	NON-JEWISH SERVICES ONLY	BOTH JEWISH AND NON-JEWISH SERVICES
ALL JEWISH ADULTS	30%	54%	6%	10%
INMARRIED	23%	70%	1%	6%
INTERMARRIED	39%	37%	12%	12%
NON-JEWISH PARTNER HAS NO RELIGION	41%	42%	10%	7%
NON-JEWISH PARTNER HAS OTHER RELIGION	31%	38%	15%	16%
NOT MARRIED	28%	51%	5%	15%

CHRISTMAS TREES

For some Jewish households, the “winter holiday” season includes a Christmas tree in the household as well as—or instead of—lighting Hanukkah candles. Just under one third of LA Jewish households had a Christmas tree in their home in 2020, including almost two thirds (61%) of intermarried households.

Twenty-nine percent of LA Jewish adults live in a home in which there is a Christmas tree. In comparison, among all US Jewish adults in 2013, 32% had a Christmas tree in their home.⁵

Russian-speaking Jewish households (43%) were more likely than all LA Jewish households to have a Christmas tree in their homes, as were households with Jewish Persons of Color (44%) and those with Latino/a Jews (45%).

CHRISTMAS TREES IN JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS BY MARITAL STATUS

ALL JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS	31%
INMARRIED	20%
INTERMARRIED	61%
NOT MARRIED	17%

⁵ Pew Research Center, “A Portrait of Jewish Americans” (Washington DC: Pew Research Center, 2013). <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2013/10/01/jewish-american-beliefs-attitudes-culture-survey/>
Note: This question was not asked in 2020.

CONCLUSION:

Enriching Congregational and Ritual Life

For many Jewish households, marking Jewish holidays and Jewish rituals is a central aspect of their Jewish identity. However, the ways in which they observe those occasions is not always traditional, nor is a synagogue or congregation necessarily the focal point of their Jewish engagement. This report describes the engagement of LA Jews with congregations and religious ritual. As Jewish organizations and leaders seek to expand and enrich participation in Jewish holidays, Shabbat, and worship, several questions emerge:

- ✓ In what ways can organizations support the celebration of Jewish life at home as well as in a congregational setting? For nearly two-in-five LA Jewish adults, Jewish holidays and rituals are one of the primary ways they connect with Jewish life, including 27% of Jewish adults who are in the Holiday engagement group and 16% who are in the Ritual engagement group. For the Holiday group, Jewish life takes place primarily in the home and centers around Hanukkah, Passover, and an occasional meal on Shabbat with friends and family. In the Ritual group, most go to worship services, particularly on the High Holidays, and about half are congregation members.
- ✓ How can Jewish households connect with synagogues and congregations outside of the traditional membership structure? The centrality of synagogues and congregations as the primary site of Jewish life has evolved, and membership is no longer a prerequisite for participation. About one-in-five Jewish households are members of a congregation. However, note that
 - One third of households that consider themselves members do not pay dues to any congregation.
 - Of Jewish adults who are not members of congregations, about half attend religious services at least occasionally, and one third expected to attend a High Holiday service in 2021.
- ✓ How can Jewish leaders support and enrich the many ways that LA Jewish adults mark Shabbat? Almost two thirds of Jewish adults mark Shabbat in some way, and more than one quarter do so weekly. Although the majority of these adults mark Shabbat by spending time with friends and family, lighting Shabbat candles, or having a special meal, many Jewish adults use the time to take a break from work or technology, to learn and read Jewish content, or engage in meditation or a spiritual practice.

The Study of Jewish LA reports that accompany this one provide critical additional information about the ways in which Jewish adults think about and engage in Jewish life both within the context of worship communities as well as through the observance of holidays and rituals. Together, these reports paint a rich portrait of “where people are” today. Jewish organizations can look to these activities and attitudes as possible entry points for deepening Jewish engagement in their communities.