



2026 TECH TRENDS AND ADULTS 50-PLUS

December 2025

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Executive summary

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In the span of a decade, adults 50-plus have evolved from basic internet and email users to fully engaged participants in a mobile, always-connected world.

- Ownership of smartphones increased from 55% in 2016 to 90% in 2025.
- Usage of tablets and wearables also increased among adults age 50-plus, raising the average number of tech devices owned from four in 2016 to seven in 2025.
- Texting is now the lead communication method among adults age 50-plus.

Digital services and apps are central to everyday life among adults age 50-plus.

- Apps have become integral to staying connected, informed, and entertained, with an average of 14 digital services and 10 different apps used within a three-month period.
- Beyond staples like maps, social media, and weather, adults are increasingly using apps that serve more practical needs - from shopping and banking to tracking health and fitness.
- Nine in ten use social media, and eight in ten stream video weekly.



Executive summary

Older adults are recognizing the potential of technology to meet their needs as they age; however, concerns about data privacy and the perceived value of technology are barriers to adoption.

- Two-thirds (66%) agree that technology enriches life and makes daily life, aging in place, and aging easier.
- Two in five (46%) recognize that technology can enable a healthy life; agreement is broadly consistent across the ages.
- Half now use at least one type of smart-home technology (for example, security, lighting, cleaning, hubs), and home-safety devices are increasing as cameras and alarms become more prevalent.
- Data privacy remains the top-rated barrier to tech adoption, while understanding the value from the purchase is now the second most significant concern.

Interest and use of AI-powered tools are climbing quickly among adults 50-plus, signaling growing curiosity and hands-on experience.

- AI usage has nearly doubled, up from 18% in 2024 to 30% in 2025. More than half of AI users (58%) have interacted with a specific AI platform or app.
- Compared to other new AI-powered tools on the market, older adults express the most interest in AI-Health monitoring devices and indicate using AI tools to answer health questions or provide health or nutritional guidance.
- Trust, privacy and data security remain top concerns, as about half cite them as reasons for hesitating to adopt new tech in general, and specifically when it comes to trying AI tools.



A decade of tech trends

Tech trends a decade later

In 2016, the first AARP technology survey was conducted. A decade ago, owning a smartphone set you apart as an older adult, as desktop computers and “dumb” cell phones were the top tech products owned. Devices like wearables and smart speakers were new and modern, and owned by a relatively small number.

When it came to venturing into the online world, those with devices were using them mainly for email and web browsing; although seven in ten used technology to stay in touch with friends and family.

Ten years ago, dreams of future tech sparked an interest in technology that would make lives easier: automated home cleaning, ever-present internet, centralized home entertainment, a health alert system, and a single diagnostic device.

Today, smartphones are ubiquitous and many own multiple screens. Adults 50-plus have moved from simply owning devices to integrating digital services into their daily lives and adopting innovative tech such as AI-enabled devices.

Technology is a part of everyday life and used for a variety of activities, such as managing everyday tasks, connecting others with their world, and entertainment, but tech for social connection continues to run high.

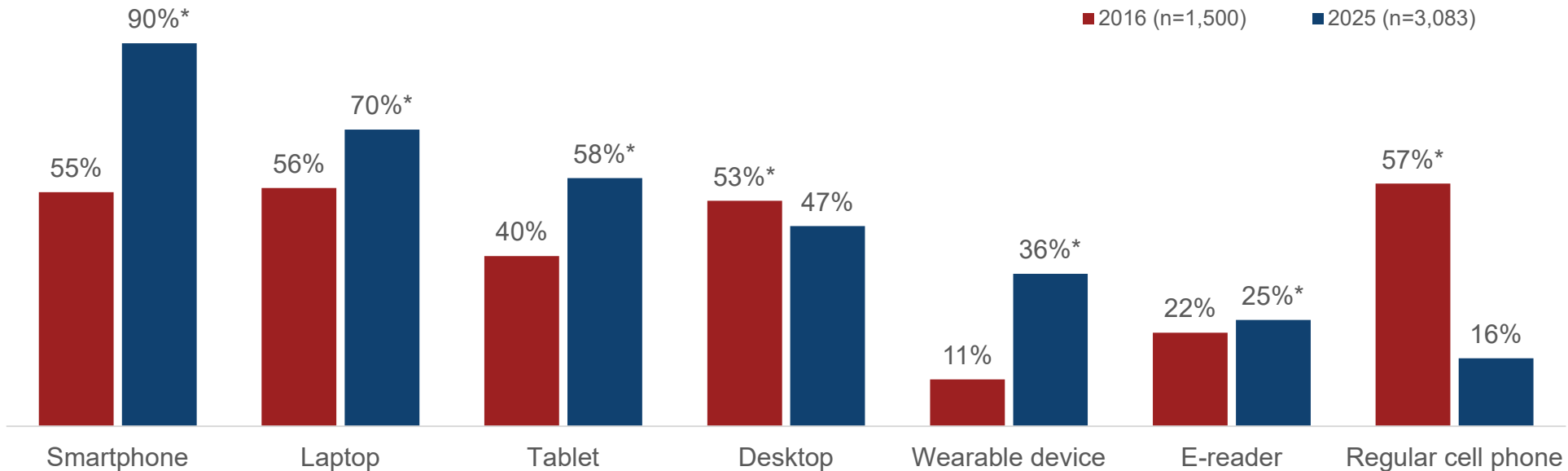
A decade later, future tech zeroed in on AI-enabled innovations related to health, automated home, and generative companions...It will be interesting to see what the next decade holds.

Source: <https://www.aarp.org/pri/topics/technology/internet-media-devices/2016-technology-trends-older-americans/>

The landscape of tech device ownership has changed significantly since 2016.

A decade ago, a small majority of adults 50-plus owned smartphones. Today, nine in ten own a smartphone (an increase of 63 percent). The average number of screens owned has nearly doubled as modern devices such as laptops, tablets, and wearables also increased in ownership over the past 10 years.

Percent of adults who own the following technology devices
Among adults age 50+, 2016 and 2025



Average number of devices owned

7 2025

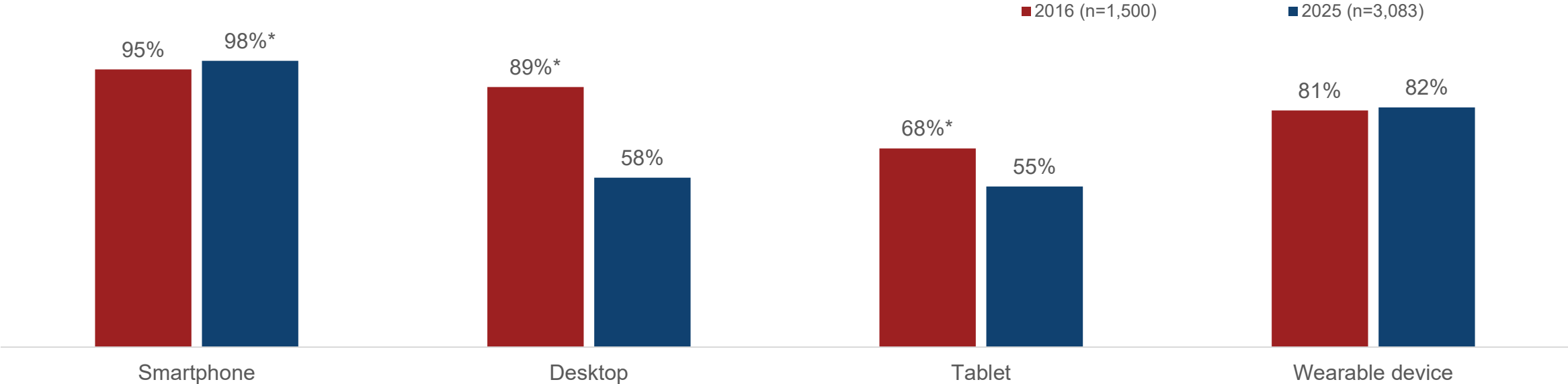
4 2016

Base: Total 50-plus Respondents
Q2. Which of the following items do you have/own?

In the last decade, daily smartphone use increased.

As smartphones became more commonplace and an all-around tool for managing life in your pocket, their everyday use increased, while PC and tablet use declined. Wearables maintained their utility as they adapted to complement smartphones, providing users with convenience and quick access to notifications, health tracking, and other functionalities. This shift in technology usage underscores the increasing importance of mobile devices in everyday life.

Percent who use the following technology devices daily
Among adults age 50+ who have/own the device, 2016 and 2025

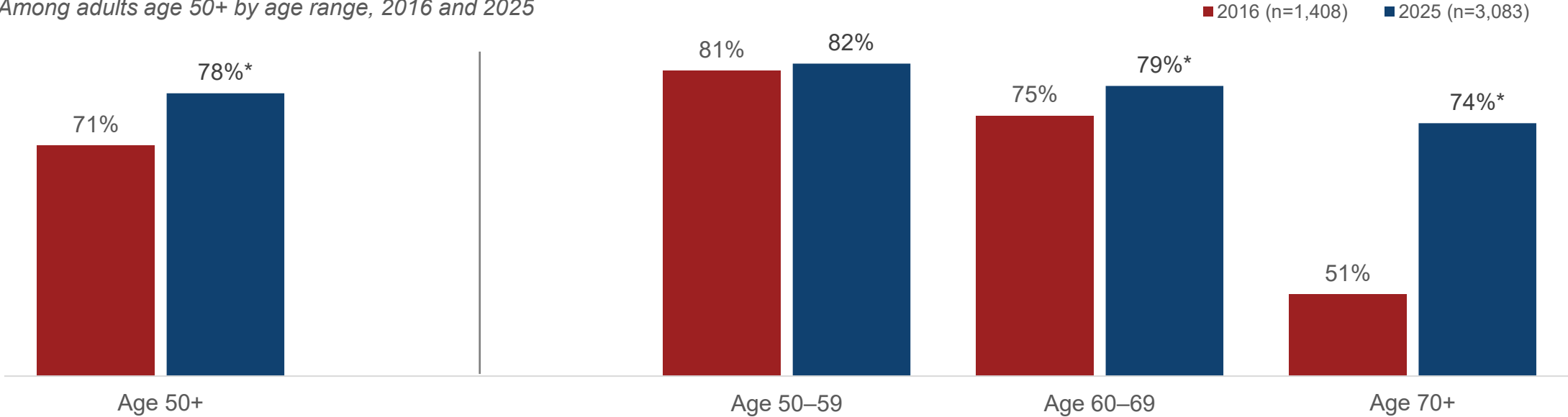


Base: Respondents 50-plus have/own the device
Q3. How often do you currently use the following?

Technology has consistently played a vital role in helping older adults stay connected, and those who adopted it a decade ago have continued to do so as they have aged.

The oldest adults (ages 70-plus) experienced the sharpest jump in using technology to stay connected with loved ones.

Agreement with use/rely on technology to stay in touch with family and friends
Among adults age 50+ by age range, 2016 and 2025



Base: Total 50-plus Respondents who own at least one device (n=1,408)

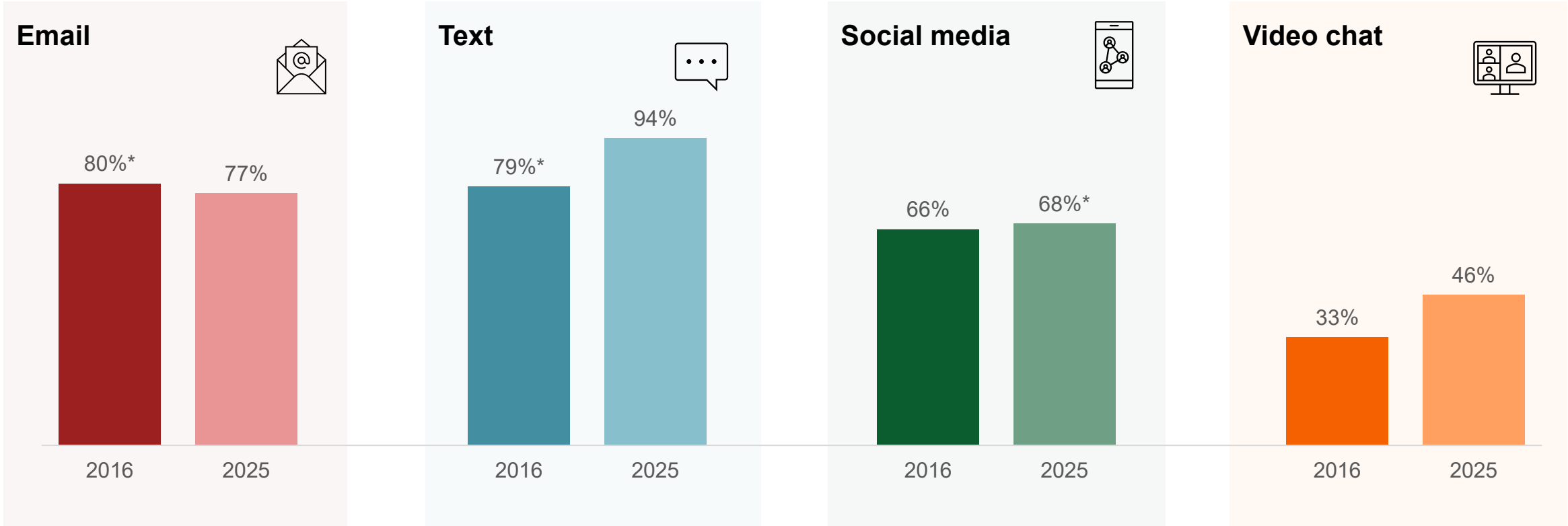
2016 NewQ1. Do you use technology like cell phones, computers, and the Internet to stay connected and in-touch with family and friends?

Base: Total 50-plus Respondents (n=3,083)

2025 Q11. Please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statement: "I rely on technology to stay connected and in touch with friends and family" % agree

Over the past decade, the desire to connect in a more immediate way increased while email remains a constant touch point.

Percent use form of technology to stay connected with family and friends **at least once a month**
Among adults age 50+, 2016 and 2025



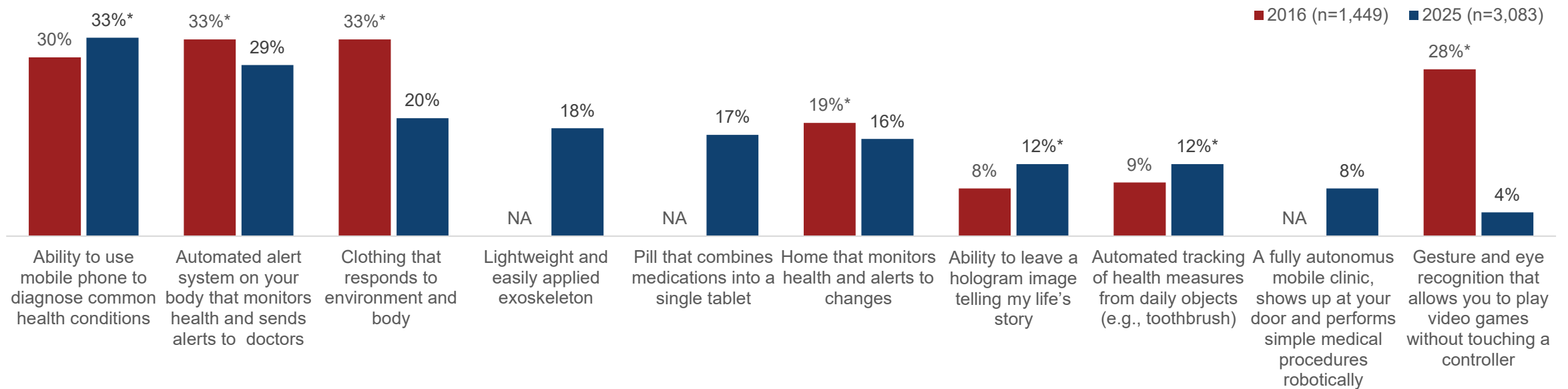
Base: Total 50-plus Respondents use tech to stay connected (2016: n=1,002; 2025: n=3,083)
Q12. How often do you use each of the following to communicate with and stay connected to friends and family?

Future tech desires remain focused on making life easier and managing personal health.

Many “future tech” aspirations a decade ago, such as automated home cleaning, an ever-present internet, centralized home entertainment, and a health alert system, have been realized, but the desire for tech that can manage, monitor, and personalize health care still exists.

Interest in future tech

Among adults age 50+, 2016[^] and 2025



Base: Total 50-plus Respondents

Q93_2026. Thinking about the future of technology, which of the following would you be most interested in seeing developed?

[^]In 2016 Future tech interest was asked across several questions, in 2025, they were combined into one question with 10 options.

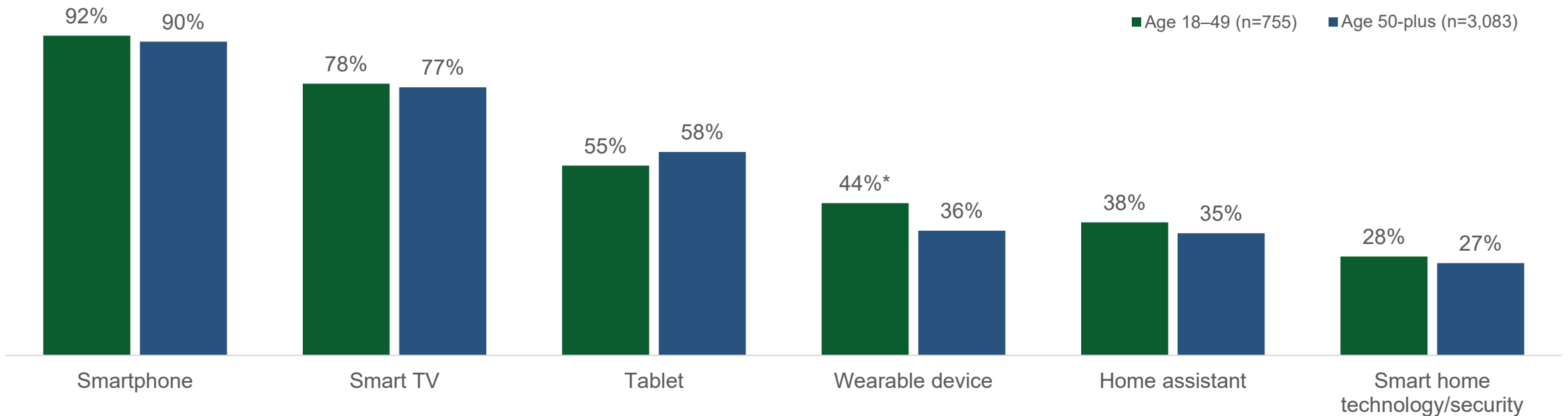


Tech ownership today

Device ownership is consistent across age groups.

Older adults own modern technology at the same rate as younger adults, with the one exception being wearables, which are more commonly owned by adults ages 18-49 than those age 50-plus.

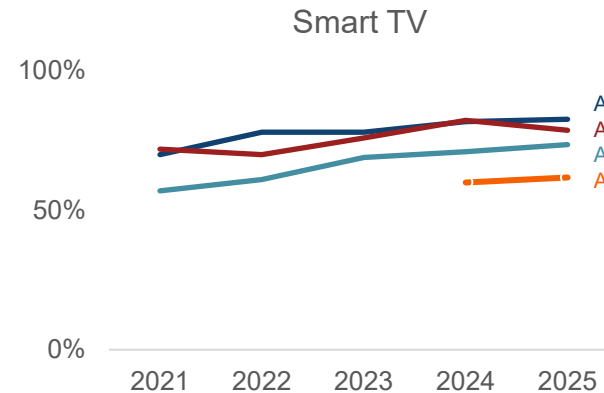
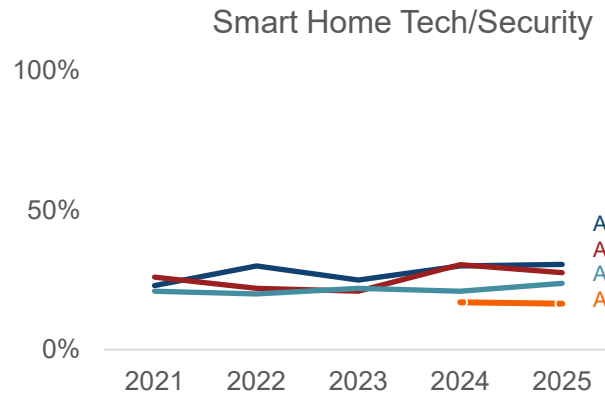
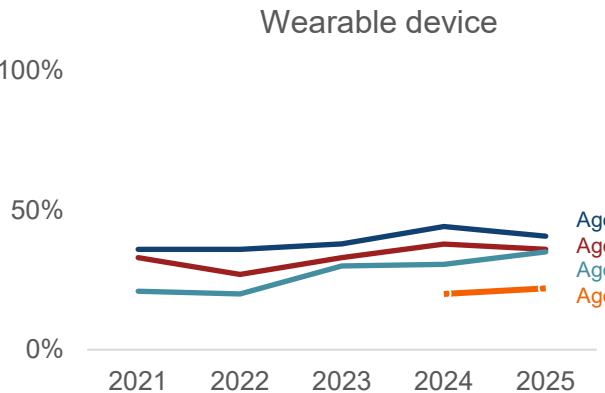
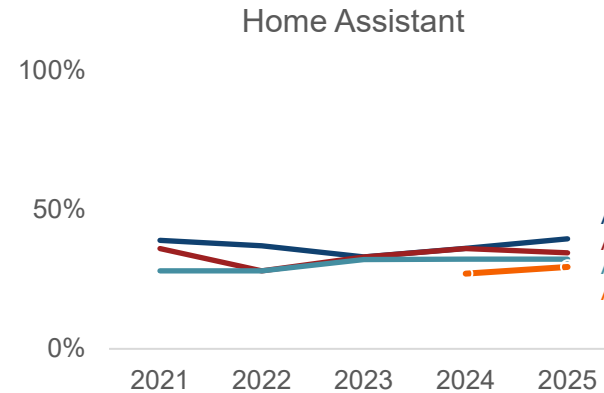
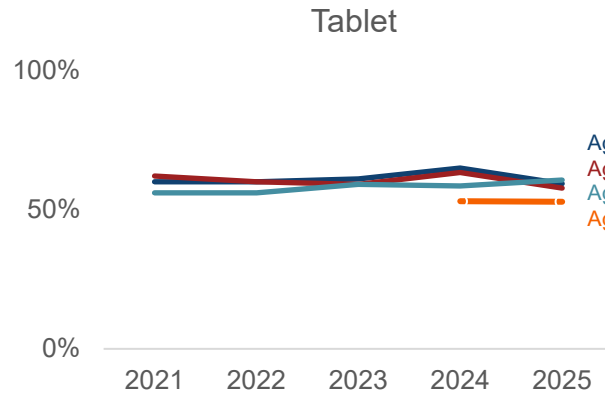
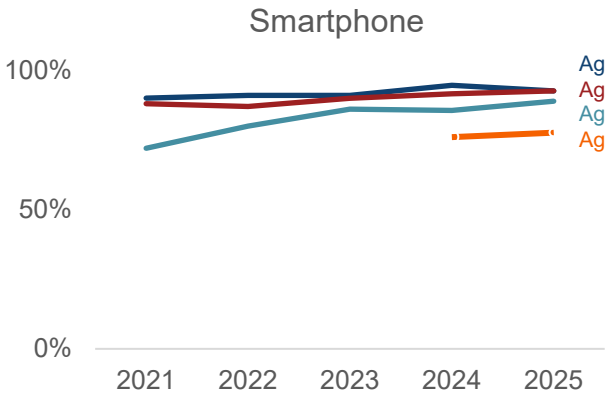
Percent of adults who own the following technology devices
Among adults by age range



Base: Total Respondents

Q2. Which of the following items do you have/own? Q6. Do you currently own a smart TV?

Adults ages 70–79 are narrowing the technology gap with younger cohorts, now surpassing those 50–69 in tablet ownership.



Base: Total 50-plus Respondents
 QTech1/Q2. Which of the following items do you have/own? Q6. Do you currently own a smart TV?

Nearly all older adults own at least one technology device, with ownership averaging seven per person.

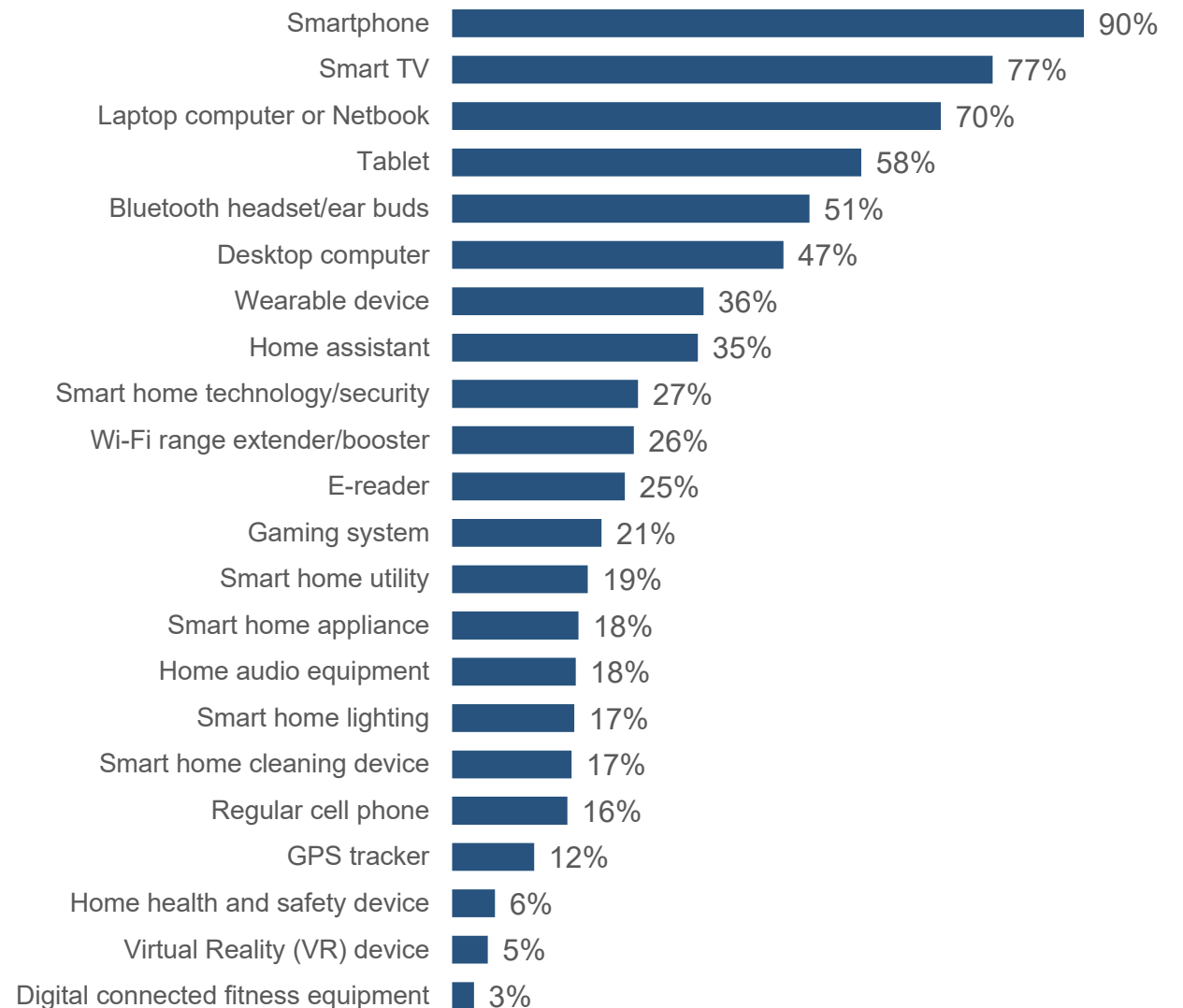
99%



Own at least one primary device in 2025

Base: Total 50-plus Respondents (n=3,083)
 Q2. Which of the following items do you have/own?
 Q6. Do you currently own a smart TV?

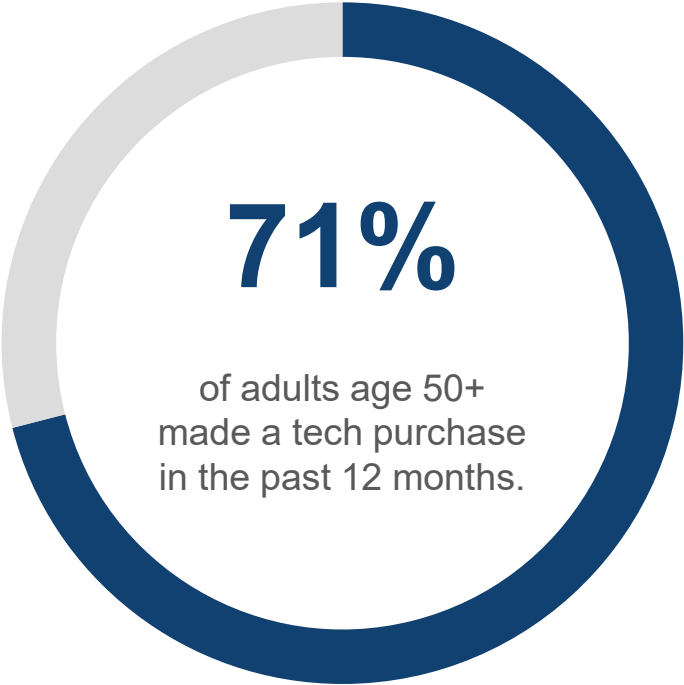
Percent of adults who own the following technology devices
 Among adults age 50+





Tech spending

Tech spending remained strong in 2025 among adults age 50-plus, up from 67% in 2024.



\$94.5B

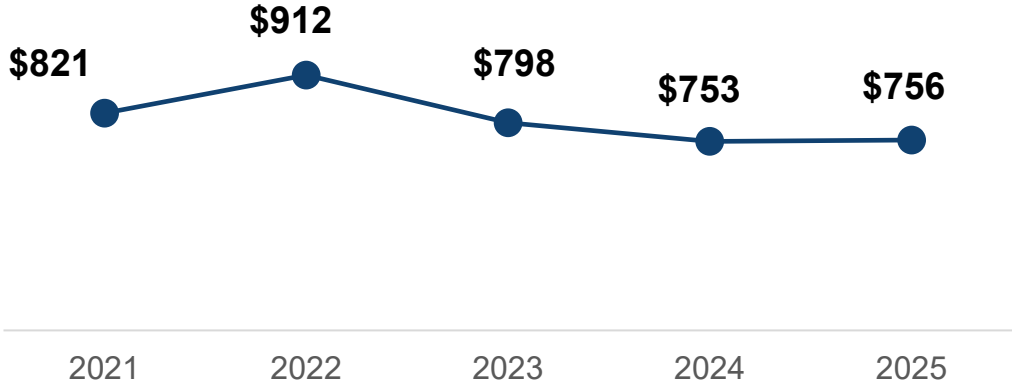
Estimated tech spend value*

Base: Total 50-plus Respondents (n=3,083)

Q30. Which specific technology products did you purchase in the past year (September 2024 – September 2025), for yourself and/or your household?

While more made tech purchases year over year, on average, they spent about the same amount- \$756.

Total tech spend in the past 12 months
Among adults age 50+, 2021 to 2025



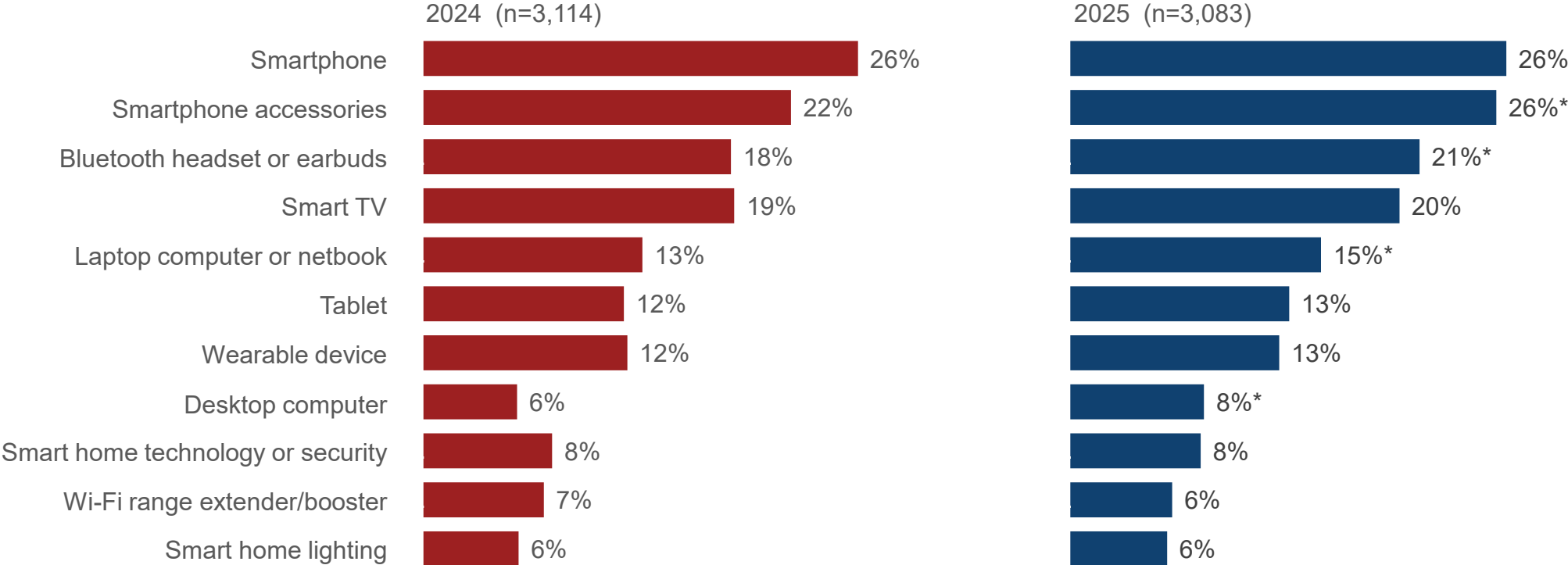
Base: varies

Q31. And thinking about all of the different tech items you purchased in the past 12 months (September 2024 – September 2025), approximately, how much did you spend in total?

*AARP calculation 125 million adults age 50-plus x \$756

Purchasing patterns have seen little change year over year, with smartphones and accessories still the most frequently purchased items.

Percent who purchased the following tech items
Among adults age 50+, 2024 and 2025



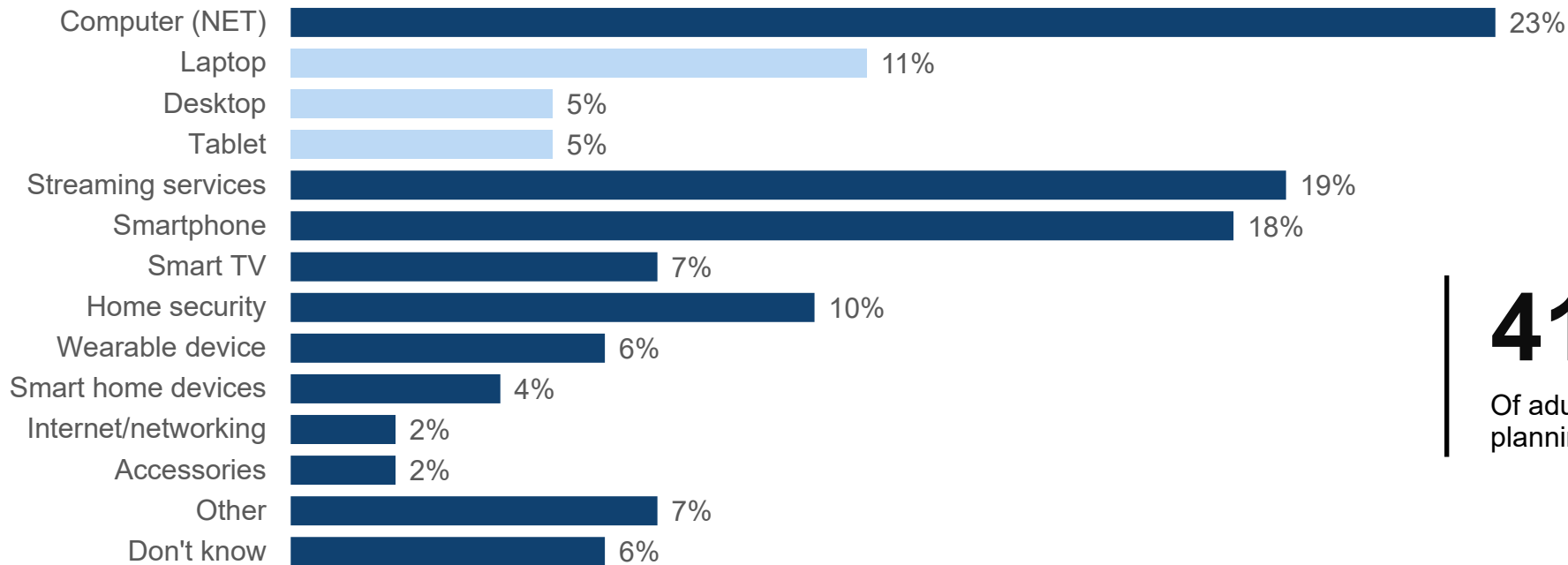
Base: Total 50-plus Respondents
Q30. Which specific technology products did you purchase in the past year (September 2024 – September 2025), for yourself and/or your household?

Two in five older adults are already planning to make a tech purchase in 2026.

Big-ticket purchases like a new computer, smartphone and smart TV are the top future purchase tech items, but streaming services are just as likely to be a future purchase as a smartphone. A small percentage plan to purchase something tech-related, but don't know what it will be.

Percent who are planning to purchase the following tech items in the next 12 months

Among adults age 50+ planning/budgeting for a tech purchase



41%

Of adults age 50-plus are planning future tech purchases

Base: Total 50-plus Respondents coded (n=1,609), Respondents 50-plus planning a tech purchase (n=665)

[NEW QUESTION 2025] Q31c_2026. What tech upgrades, or online or streaming subscriptions, are you planning or budgeting for, with the hope of purchasing in the next 12 months?

Trust and privacy remain a key barrier to tech adoption in general, understanding what value they would get from the purchase is now a bigger question; up from 12% in 2024 to 20%.

Barriers that cause the most amount of tech purchase stress – ranked first
Among adults age 50+



Trust & Privacy (Data Privacy)

25%

- What personal data does it collect?
- Is my personal data secure?
- Any known privacy or identity theft issues?



Awareness & Interest (Relative Value)

20%

- Why should I be interested in this product?
- What new products exist?
- Should I care?



Installation & Adoption (Set-up & Support)

18%

- How do I integrate it into my life?
- How difficult is it to set up?
- Who can help me if I run into problems?



Cost & Acquisition (Cost & Where to Buy It)

18%

- Can I afford it?
- How do I buy it?
- How do I select the right product?



Design & User Experience (Ease of Use)

14%

- Is it easy to use?
- Was it designed for people like me?
- Did they ask people like me to test it?

Base: Total 50-plus Respondents (n=3,083)

[NEW QUESTION 2024] Q28f_2025. Below are the aspects of tech purchasing again. Please place them in rank order from the one that creates the most stress and uncertainty for you to the one that creates the least. Ranked First.



Tech and daily life

Digital services are deeply woven into the daily lives of adults 50-plus, being essential to how they manage their lives.

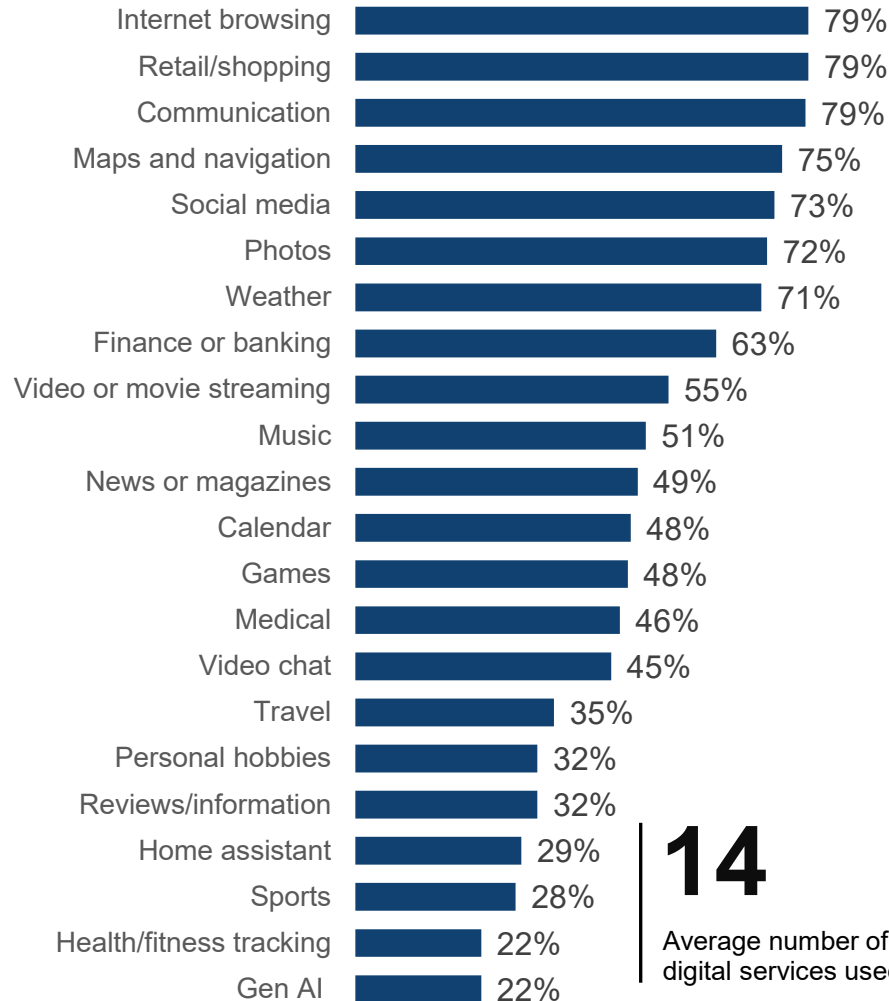
Most are engaging in a variety of digital services related to information, health, and entertainment. Apps provide quick, on-the-go access to some of the most used services and are a primary access point for some less common services. App use likely varies depending on factors such as content and required attention.

Most notably, the use of medical services (e.g., GoodRX, LifeAlert, health records) has significantly increased in the past year, up from 35% in 2024 to 46% in 2025.

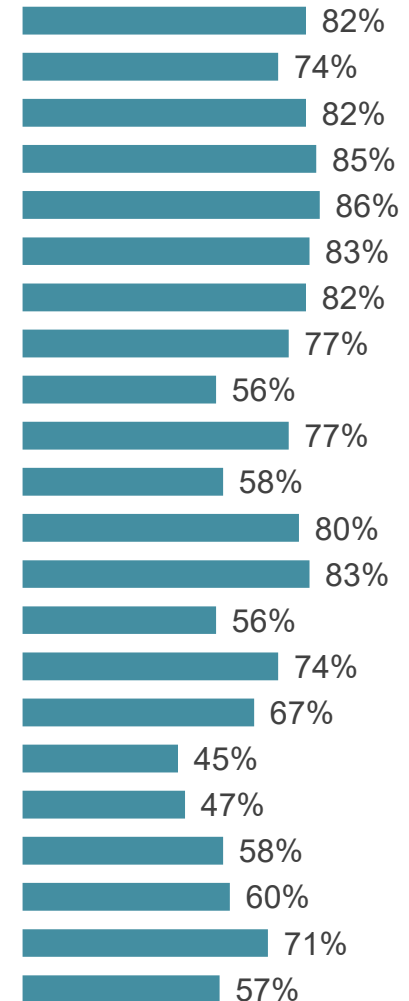
Base: Total 50-plus Respondents (n=3,083) Q4_2024. Which of the following types of information or activities do you engage with online in the past 3 months...Base: Total 50-plus Respondents engaged with digital service (varies) [NEW QUESTION 2025] Q10_2026...., please indicate all those you use an AN APP on your mobile device to access.

Percent who engaged with the following digital services in the past 3 months
Among adults age 50+

Top digital services used



Top digital services used as an app



14

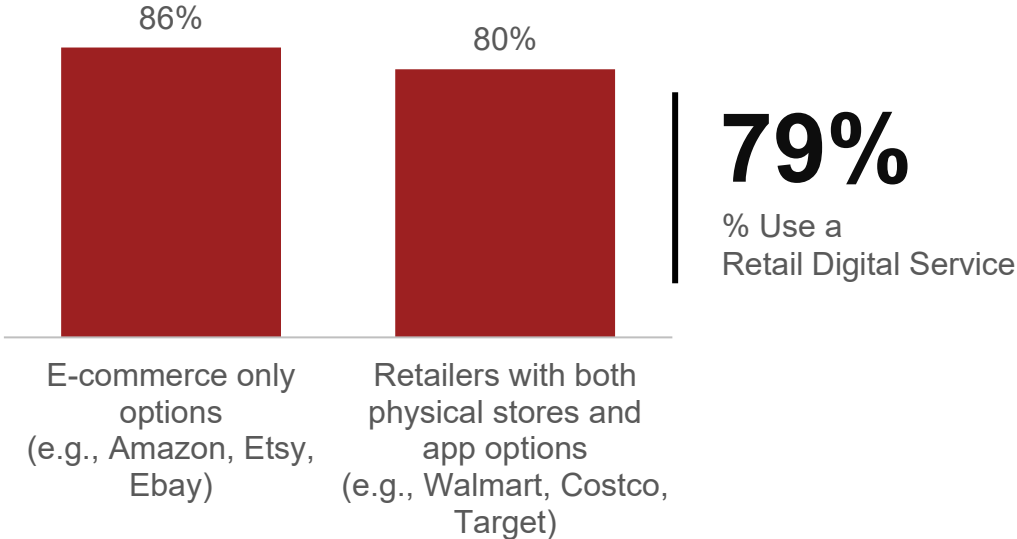
Average number of digital services used

10

Average number of digital services used

Regarding retail apps, those for physical stores are as popular as those for e-commerce only shops.

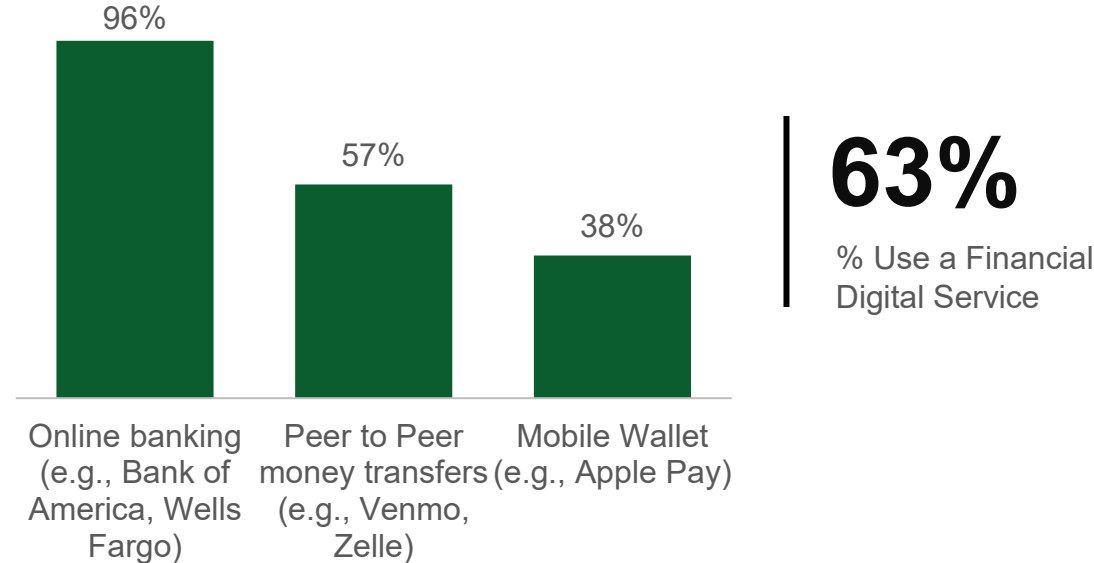
Retail/Shopping apps typically used
Among adults age 50+ who use retail/shopping apps



Base: Total 50-plus Respondents who use retail/shopping apps (n=1,845)
Q10F_2026. You mentioned accessing retail/shopping apps on your mobile device. Which specific types of shopping apps do you typically use?

The most common type of banking app used are those associated with online banking.

Finance/Banking apps typically used
Among adults age 50+ who use finance/banking apps



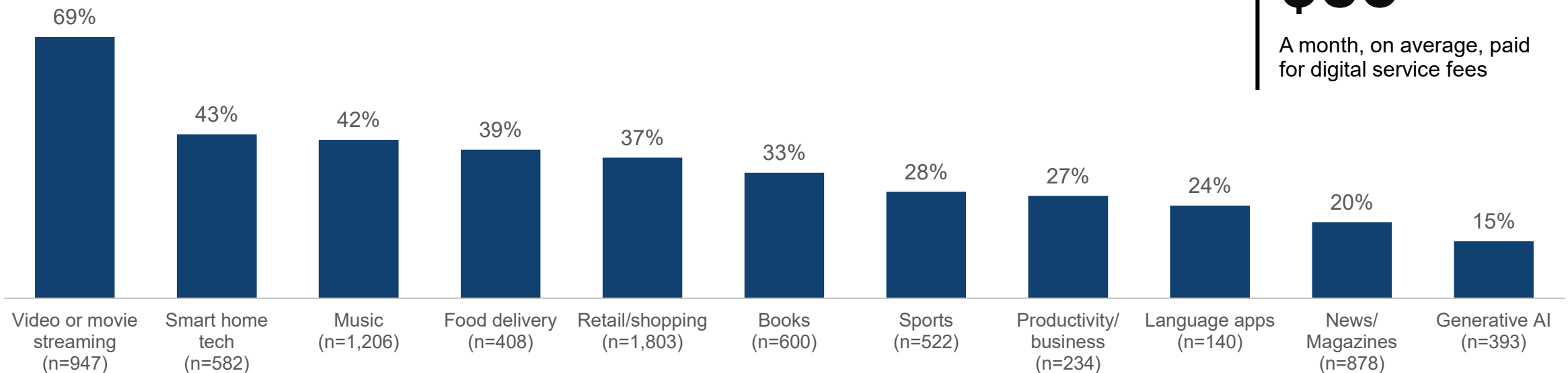
Base: Total 50-plus Respondents who use finance/banking apps (n=1,573)
Q10G_2026. You mentioned accessing finance/banking apps on your mobile device. Which specific types of financial services apps do you typically use?

Many of the apps older adults pay for are entertainment focused – streaming, music, books, sports, with generative AI on the rise, up from 10% in 2024.

Nearly half (47%) who pay a fee for a digital service do not have a budget for their digital services, and one in six have not tracked their digital service spending closely.

Top apps pay a fee for

Among adults age 50+ who use service via app



\$83

A month, on average, paid for digital service fees

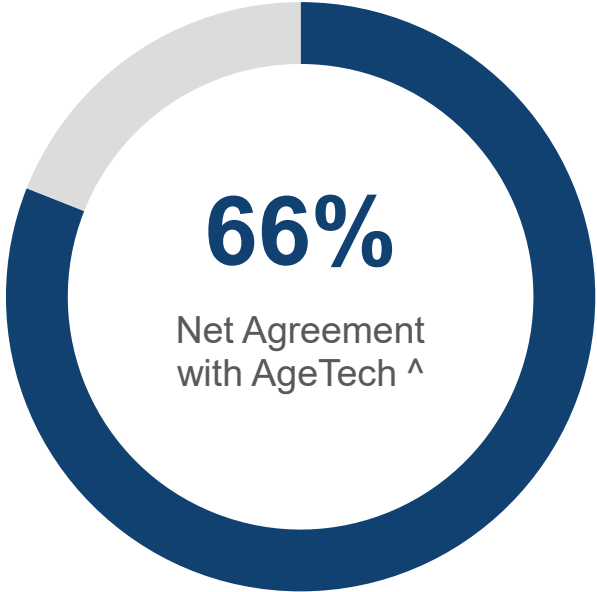
Base: Respondents 50-plus who use service via app

Q10b_2024. Below are the types of apps you said you engaged with recently. Please select all those you pay a fee for access to content available through the app

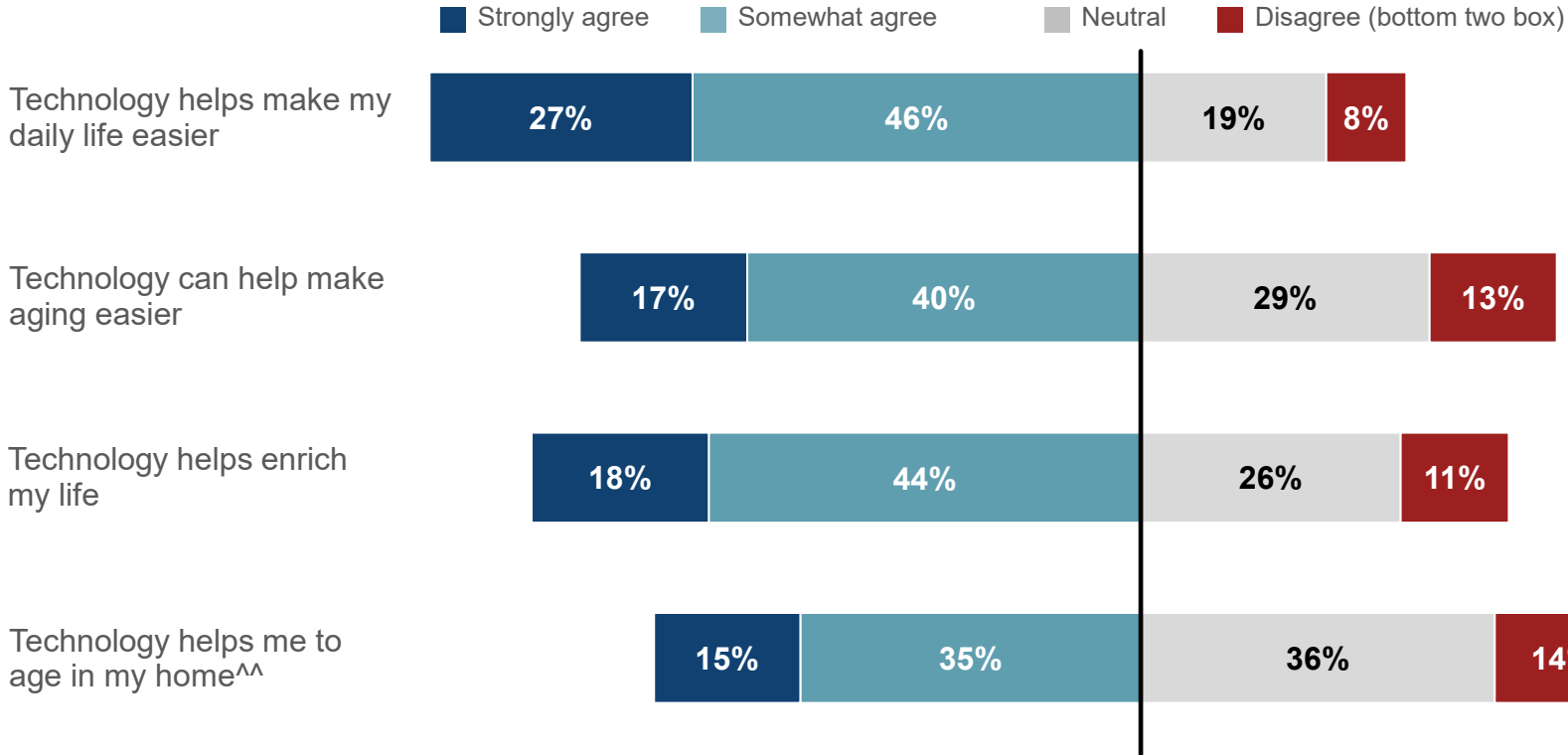
Q10H_2026. What is the amount you budget each month for the online services and apps you use, including any streaming services you subscribe to and also access on your mobile device?

Q10I_2026. Are you able to stick to your online services and apps budget or do you tend to have to make trade-offs with other monthly expenses to make this budget item work?

Most older adults view technology positively, seeing it as enriching their lives, helping them age in their home, and making both daily tasks and aging easier.



Agreement with AgeTech statements
Among adults age 50+



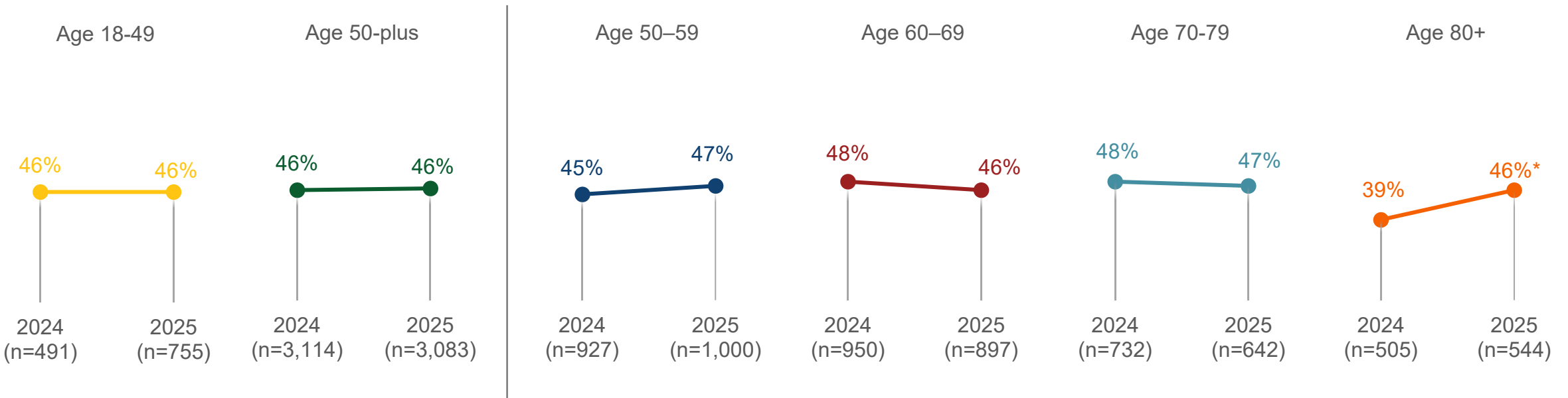
Base: Total 50-plus Respondents (n=3,083)
Q23b_2025. And please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

^{^^}New answer 2025
[^] This is the calculated NET of agreement across the 4 questions.

Many adults recognize technology can enable a healthy life.

There are numerous health-related technologies now available to help people stay healthy, such as devices that track fitness goals or monitor glucose levels, or digital services offering mental health assistance through online therapy and stress management tools. The oldest adults - those aged 80-plus - have become more likely to view technology as an ally in healthy aging, with agreement that it enables a healthy life, rising from 39% in 2024 to 46% in 2025.

Percent of adults who agree and strongly agree that technology enables a healthy life
Among adults by age range, 2024 and 2025



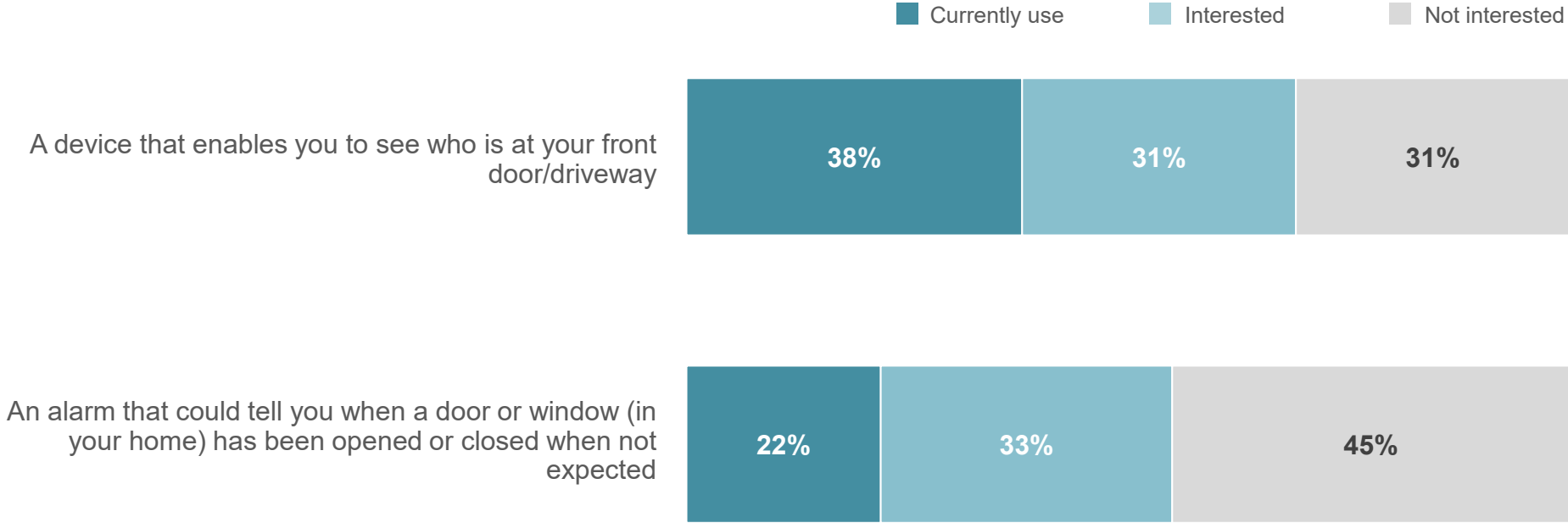
Base: Total Respondents

Q23a_g. Please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following: Technology enables me to lead a healthy life.

Most older adults recognize technology provides security and peace of mind at home.

The use of home safety tech such as cameras and alarms increased from 34% and 19% in 2024, respectively.

Use and interest in **home safety** technology
Among adults age 50+



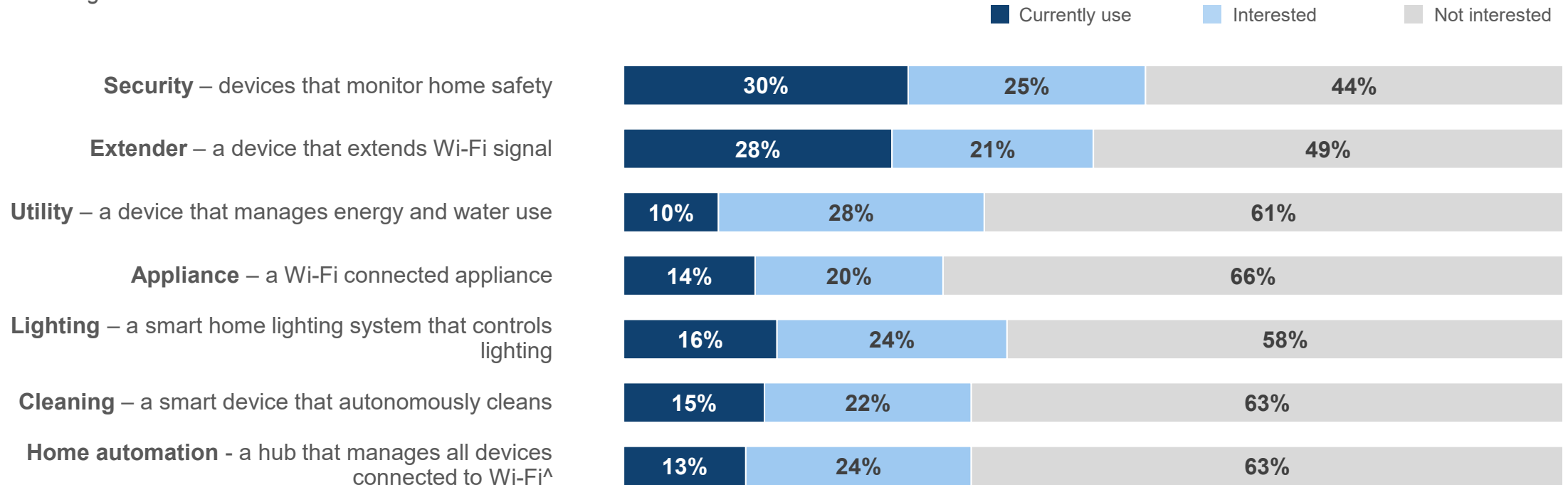
Base: Total 50-plus Respondents (n=3,083)

[QUESTION UPDATED 2025] Q40. Now please indicate your level of familiarity and interest in the use of home safety technology devices for your home.

Half of adults age 50-plus use at least one type of smart home tech.

Smart home tech continues to achieve moderate adoption and interest from older adults.

Use and interest in smart home technology
Among adults age 50+



Base: Total 50-plus Respondents (n=3,083)

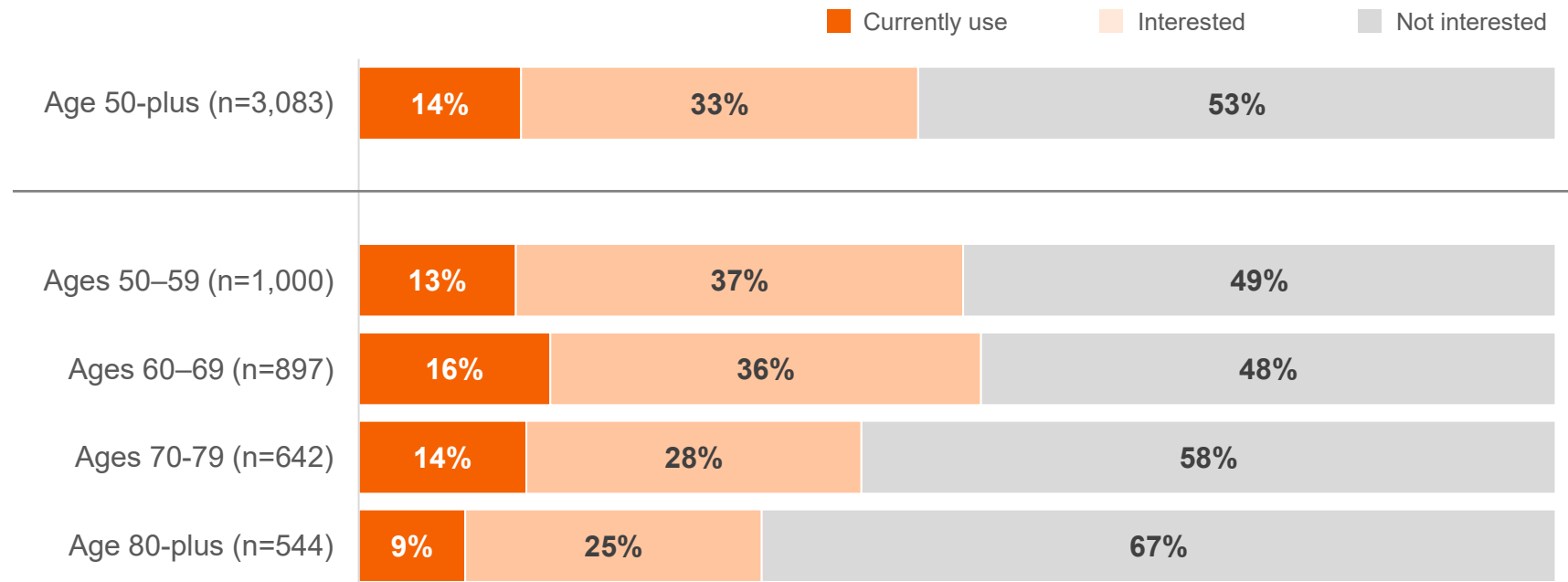
[QUESTION UPDATED 2025] Q77_2024. Please indicate your level of familiarity with each of the following types of smart home devices.

^New answer 2025

Adoption and interest in tech for brain health peaks among adults in their 50s and 60s, with growth likely as more worry about staying sharp.

Brain health, which is the ability to think, reason and remember encompasses overall brain function and is distinct from the term “mental health,” which focuses on emotional and psychological well-being[^]. As more older adults become aware of the tech designed to maintain brain health, and two in five adults age 50-plus are worried about their mental sharpness, adoption is likely to grow.

Use and interest in technology to maintain **brain health**
Among adults age 50-plus

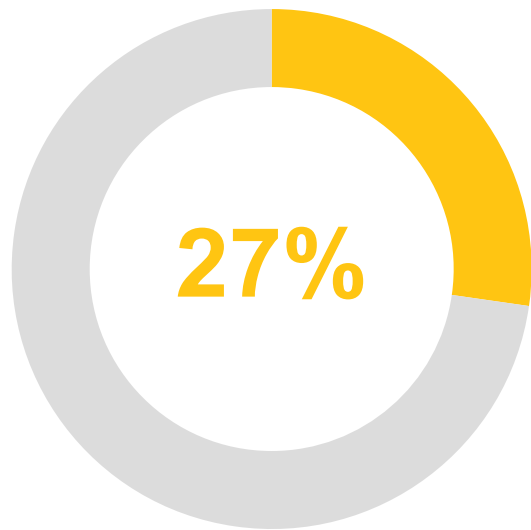


Base: Total 50-plus Respondents
 Q41_2025. What is your level of engagement and/or interest in using technology to help maintain brain health?

[^]Source: What Adults Do and Think About Brain Health
<https://www.aarp.org/pri/topics/health/brain-health/brain-health-behaviors-outcomes/>

Caregivers are finding digital allies in tools that help them care smarter.

With 63 million caregivers nationwide[^], and caregiving needs growing more common and complex, technology is increasingly seen as essential for providing care, managing routines, tracking health, and providing peace of mind. Half of all caregivers (55%) are using one or more forms of tech to manage routines, coordinate care, or track health.



of adults age 50plus were a caregiver in past year

Base: Total 50-plus Respondents (n=3,083)

D6. In the past year, have you provided unpaid care or assistance to an adult friend or family member who needs assistance due to aging, a disability, or a health-related issue?

Use and interest in caregiver tech

Among adults age 50+ who have provided caregiving assistance

Currently use Interested Not interested

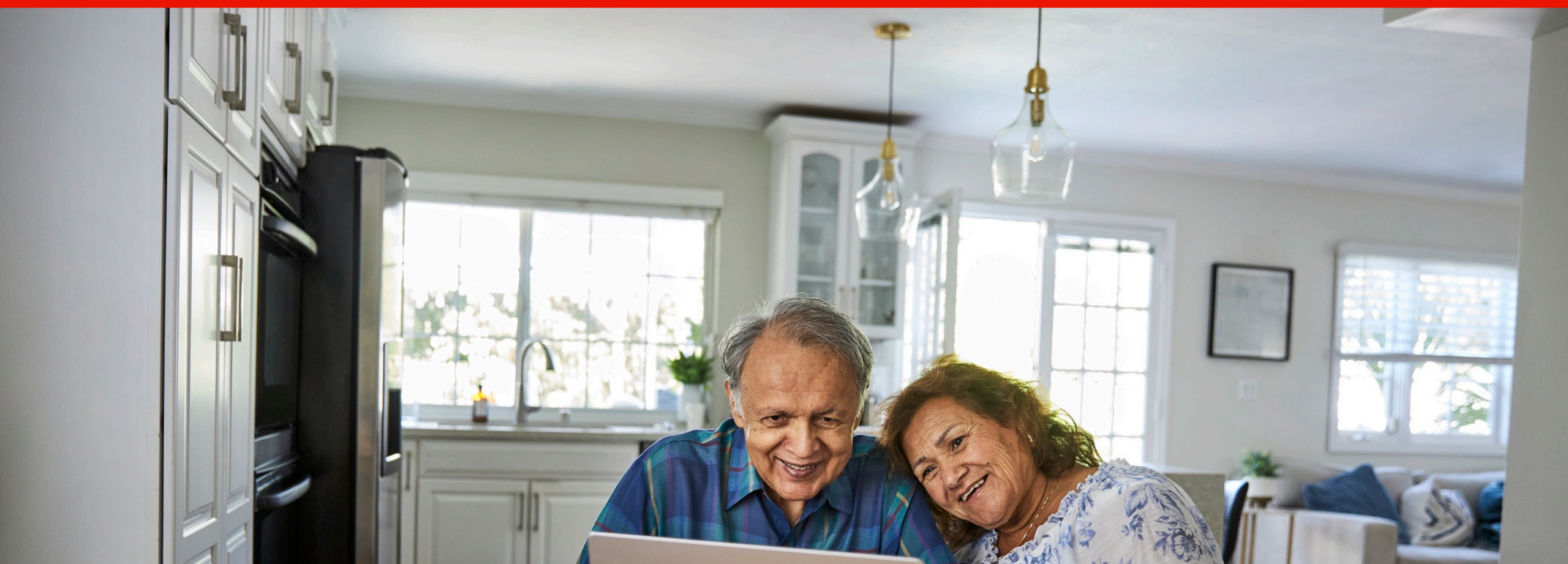
Technology	Currently use	Interested	Not interested
Telemedicine – provides remote healthcare consultation with a professional	29%	27%	43%
Location detectors - GPS devices to help keep track of a loved one	26%	26%	47%
Motion Sensors - monitors routines or lack of motion	12%	29%	57%
Remote patient monitoring - wearable or device that tracks health markers and activity that is shared with health professionals (e.g., Apple Watch or Zio Patch)	12%	29%	59%
Emergency response systems - physically or voice activated systems to alert emergency care	12%	36%	52%
Scheduling Assistants - helps families coordinate care, appointments, medications	9%	28%	63%
Daily activity tracker - monitors and supports daily activities of the person being cared for	8%	29%	62%
AI health bot – provides personalized health information, available through health websites or apps	6%	27%	66%
Medication dispenser or “smart” pill bottles – device with sensors that tracks medication (e.g., Hero, AdhereTech Smart Pill Bottle)	5%	31%	63%
Online Support Communities - emotional support for the caregiver	4%	27%	68%

Base: Total 50-plus Caregivers (n=917)

[QUESTION UPDATED 2025] Q81_2025. Thinking about your role as a caregiver, please indicate your level of familiarity with and interest in each.

* Indicates a significant difference across years at a 95% confidence level

[^]New answer 2025

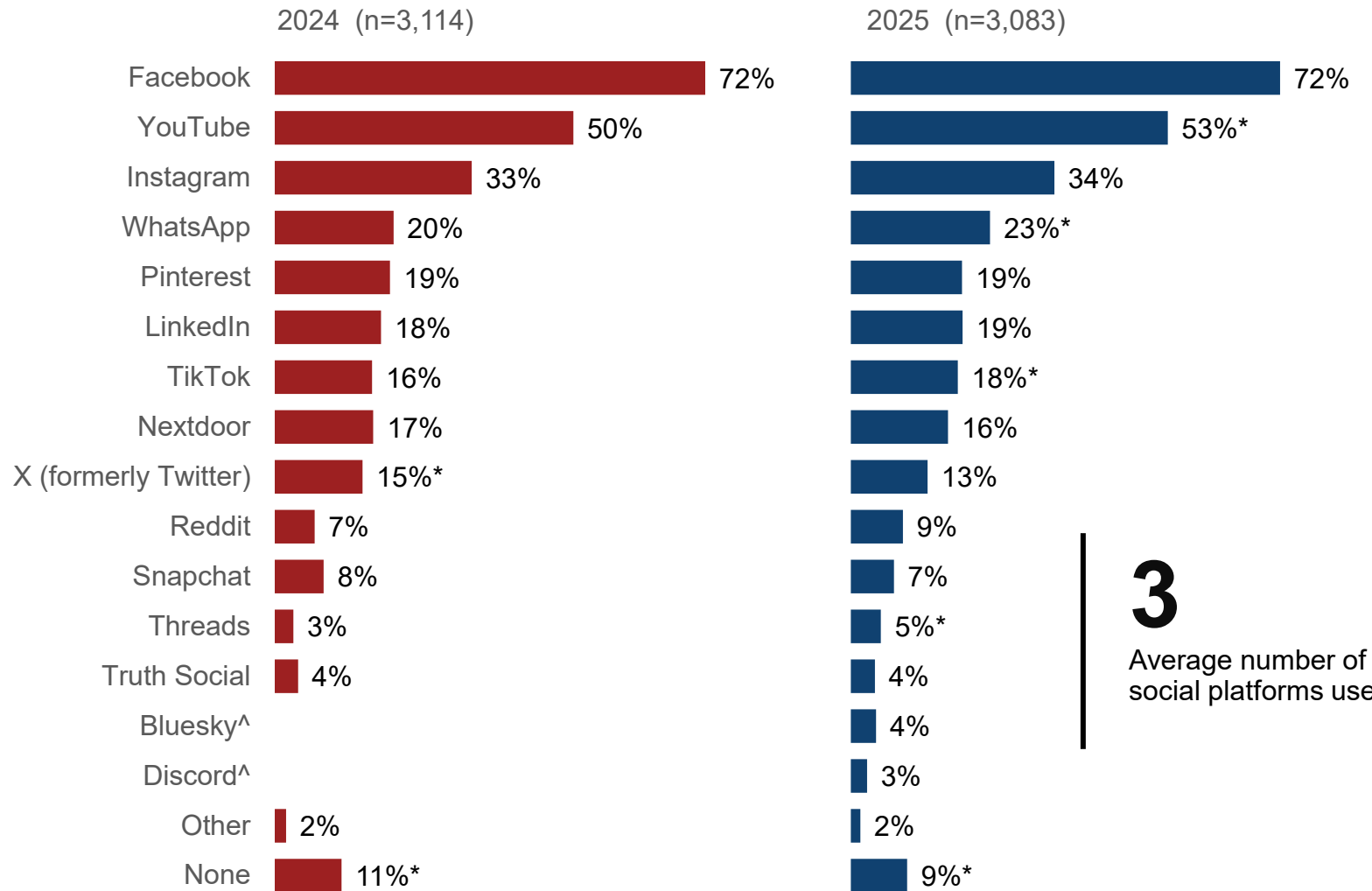


Tech and social connection

Social media goes beyond connection, providing users with entertainment, education, and a sense of community.

Year over year YouTube, WhatsApp, TikTok and Threads have gained popularity while X has declined.

Percent who use the following social media platforms
Among adults age 50+, 2024 and 2025



3
Average number of social platforms used

Base: Total 50-plus Respondents
Q12b. Which of the following social media platforms do you use?

^New answer option in 2025







Amazon Prime and Netflix remain the most dominant among the streaming services.

Though most services do not see significant year-over-year growth among adults age 50-plus, Paramount does - up from 27% in 2024 to 30% in 2025.

The free ad-supported service, Tubi, also sees year-over-year growth, increasing from 17% to 19%.

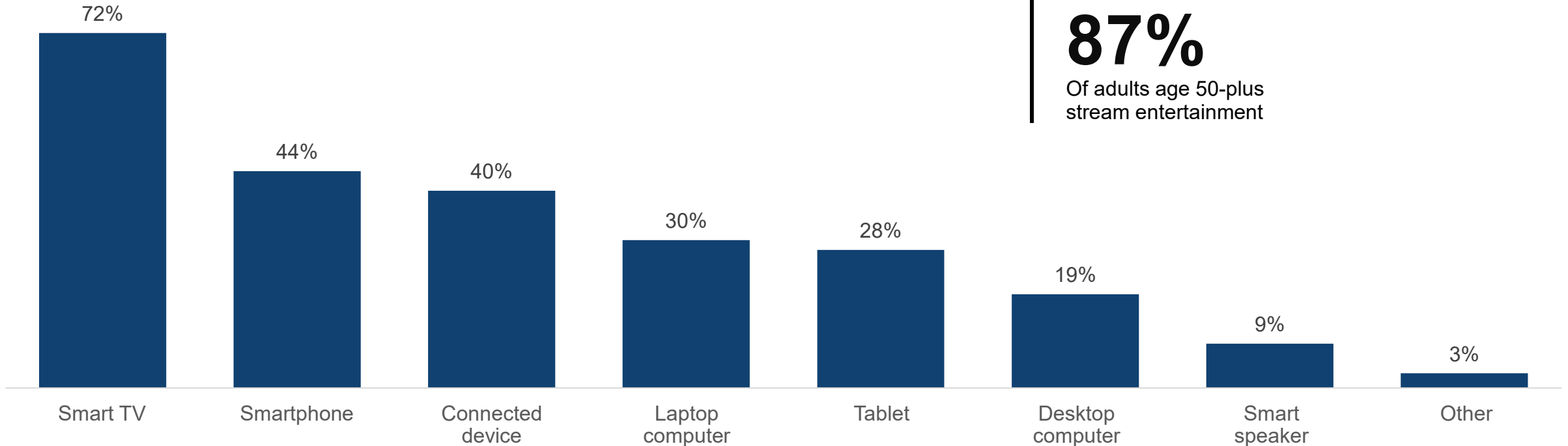
*Base: Respondents 50-plus who watches streamed content
Q9. Which of the following streaming services do you currently subscribe to?*

Percent who subscribe to the following streaming platforms
Among adults age 50+ who stream entertainment, 2024 and 2025

	2024 (n=2,727)	2025 (n=2,706)	
	63%	65%	<div style="border-left: 1px solid black; padding-left: 10px;"> <p>4 Average number of subscriptions</p> </div>
	60%	62%	
	35%	35%	
	27%	30%*	
	27%	27%	
	29%	27%	

Streaming remains nearly universal, with adults using a mix of devices to watch content both at home and on the go.

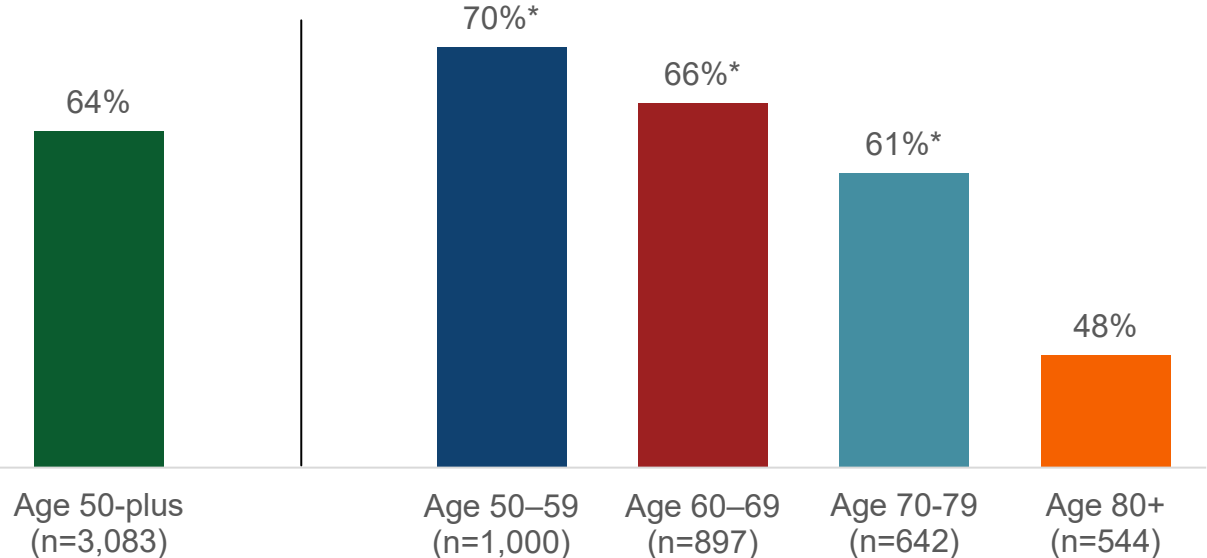
Percent of adults who use the types of devices to stream entertainment
Among adults age 50+ who stream



Base: Respondents 50-plus who use any streaming service (n=2,688)
Q7b_2023. Which types of devices do you use in the home for streamed entertainment, such as shows, movies, series, and/or videos?

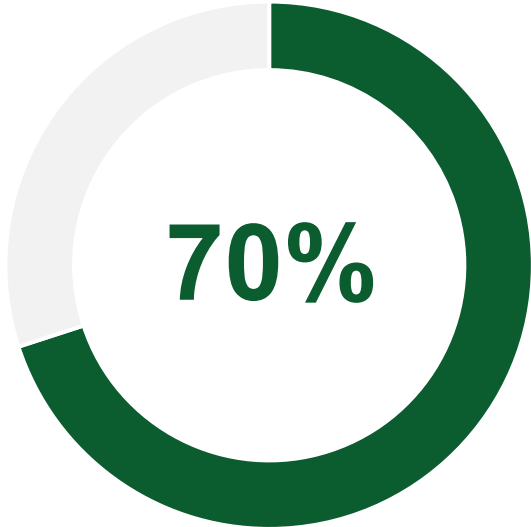
Even though older adults are active online, many still say they lack both the skills and the speed to make the most out of their experience.

Percent of adults who agree and strongly agree that they have the digital skills necessary to fully take advantage of being online
Among adults age 50+



Base: Total 50-plus Respondents
Q23a_d. Please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following: I have the digital skills necessary to fully take advantage of being online.

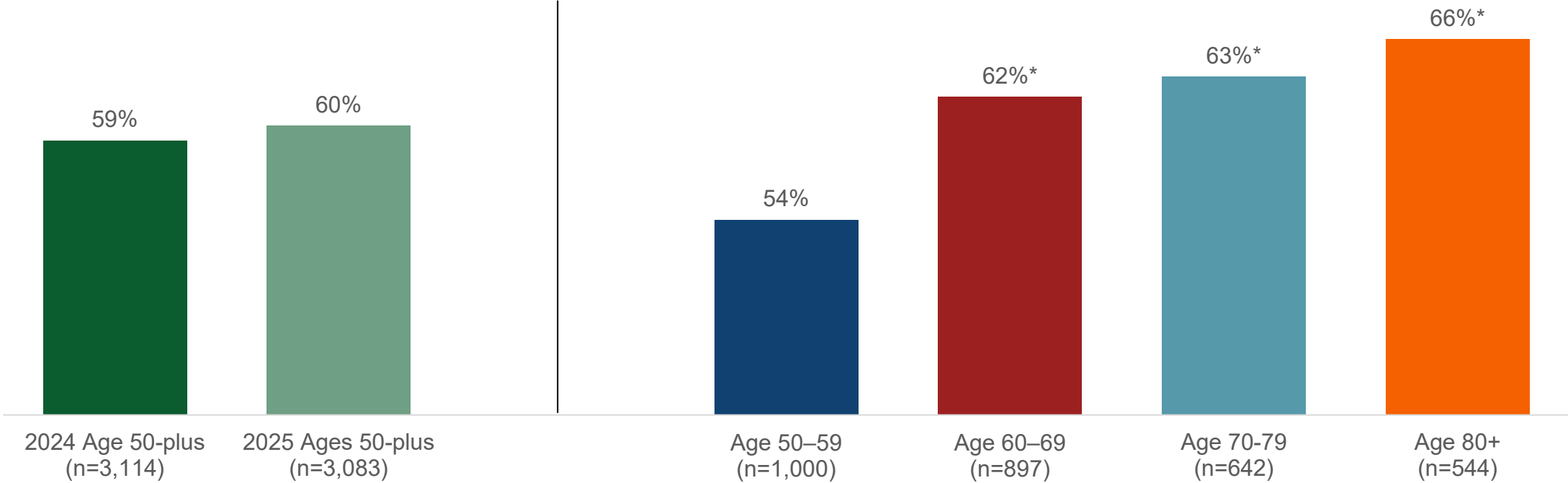
Percent have adequate Internet speed
Among adults age 50+



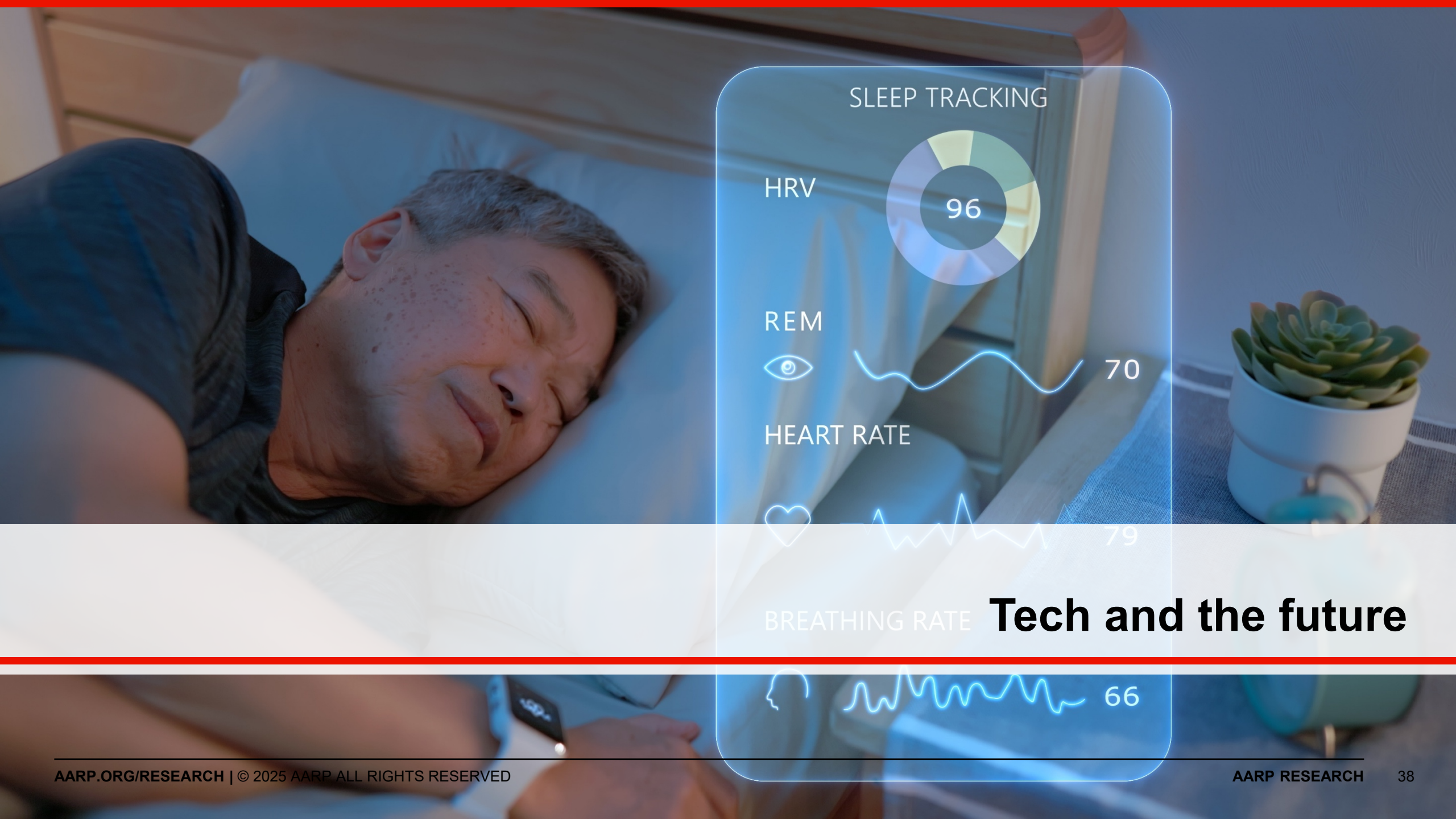
Base: Total 50-plus Respondents (n=3,083)
[NEW QUESTION 2025] Q5C. Do you feel you currently have adequate internet speed to take full advantage of the internet and AI-powered services?

Most adults continue to feel technology is not designed with their age in mind, with no change in this perception year over year.

Percent who feel technology is not designed with their age in mind
Among adults age 50+



Base: Total 50-plus Respondents
Q28b. Do you feel like technology today is being designed with your age in mind?



SLEEP TRACKING

HRV



REM



70

HEART RATE



79

BREATHING RATE



66

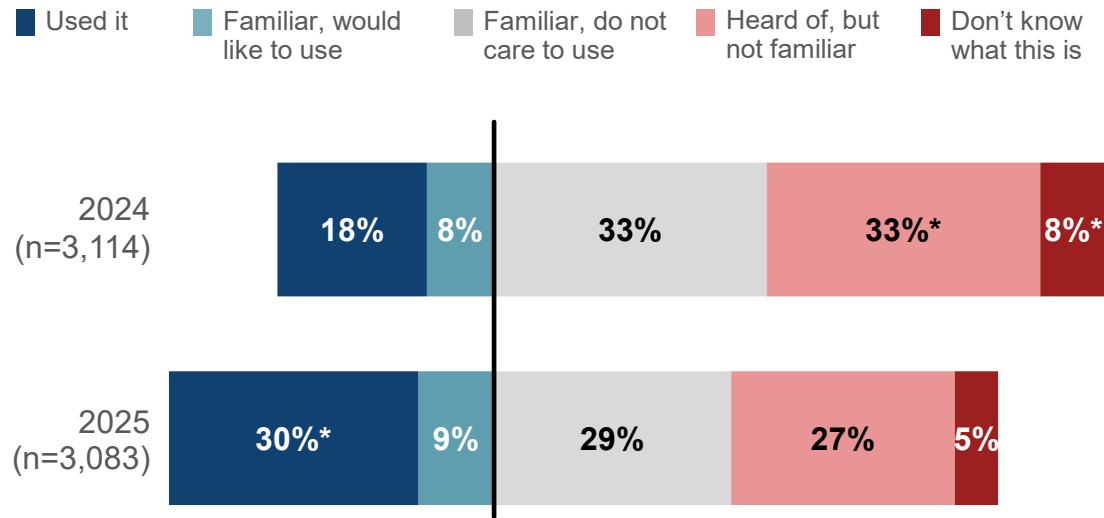
Tech and the future

Generative AI use continues to expand with adults of all ages.

Usage has nearly doubled again among older adults age 50-plus, up from 9% in 2023, 18% in 2024, to 30% in 2025. Two in five adults in their 50s have used AI, while employed adults are twice as likely as those not in the workforce to have engaged with generative AI.

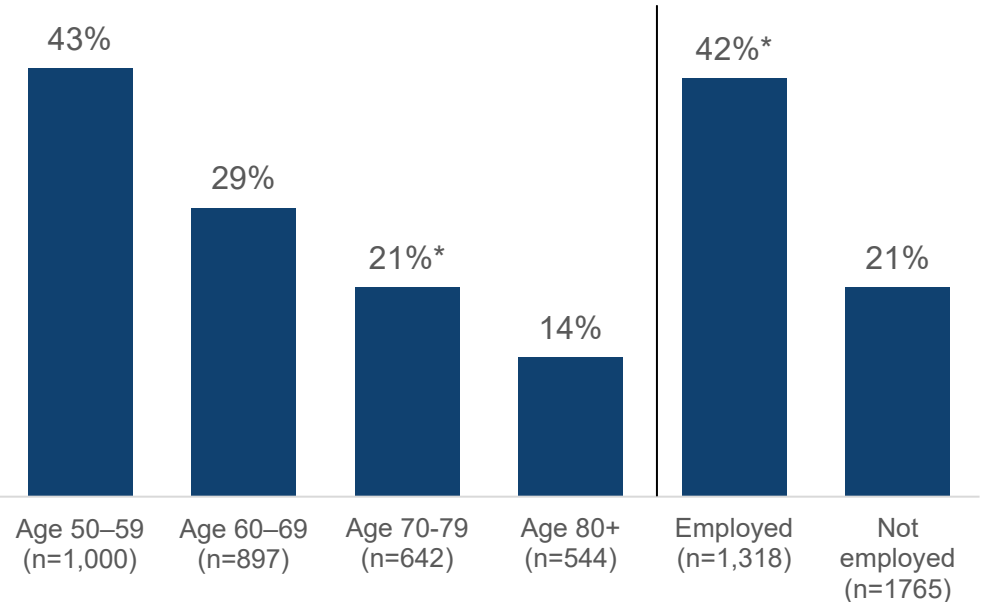
Experience with Generative AI

Among adults age 50-plus, 2024 and 2025



Experience with Generative AI in 2025

Use among adults age 50-plus, by age band and employment status



Base: Total Respondents

Q73_2024. What best describes your experience with Generative AI?

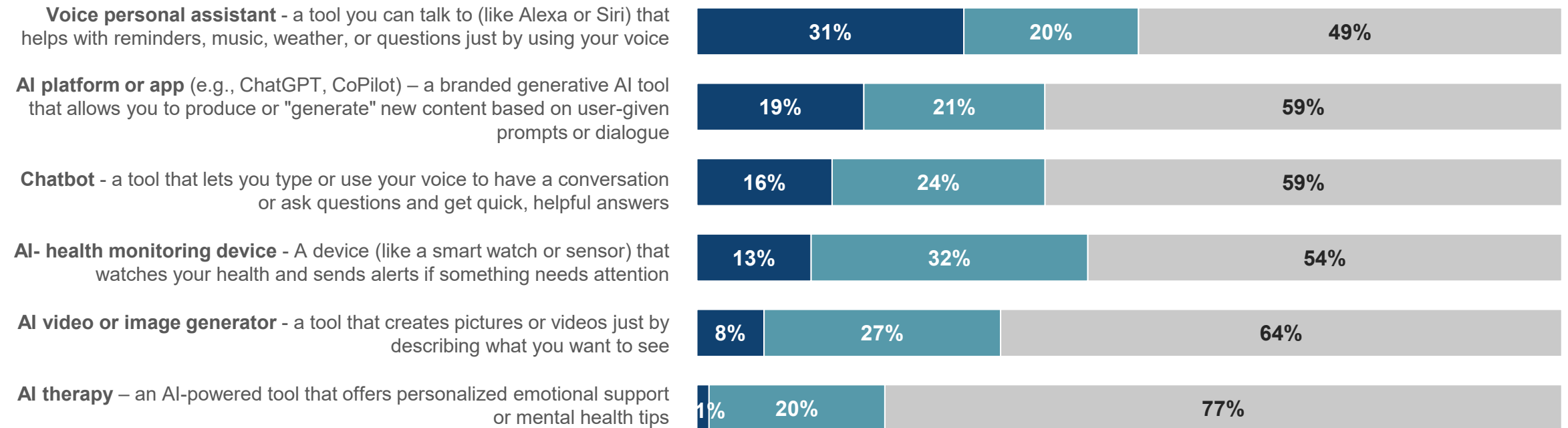
There is interest and use in a variety of AI tools among older adults.

There is a strong interest in practical AI; about half are using or interested in AI-powered health devices. Conversely, few have used, identified a need for, or expressed interest in AI for therapy or image generation.

Overall use and interest in AI technology category

Among adults age 50+

■ Currently use ■ Interested ■ Not interested



Base: Total 50-plus Respondents (n=3,083)

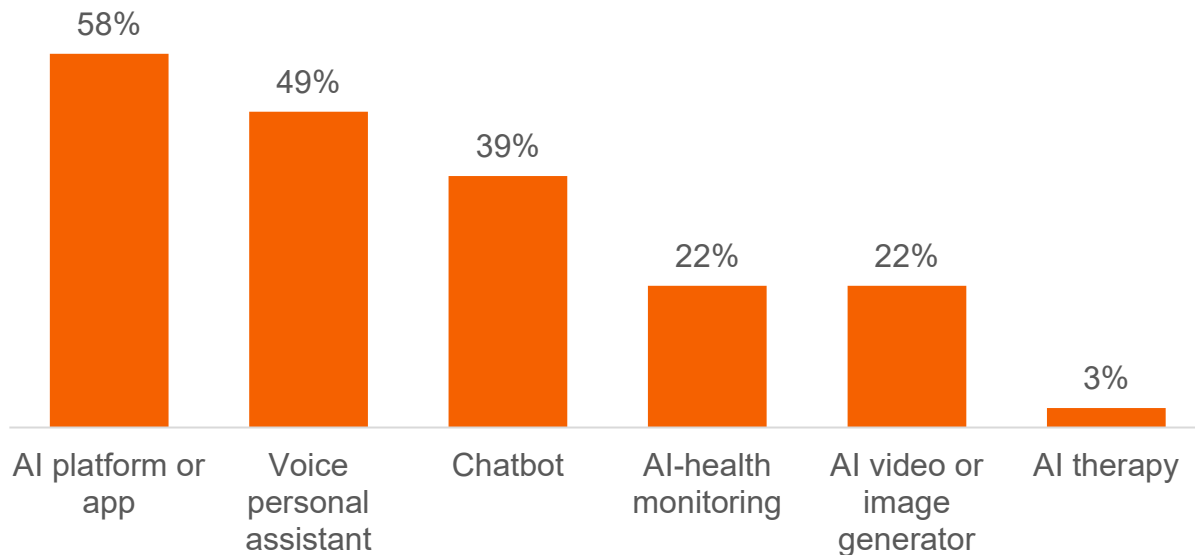
[NEW QUESTION 2025] Q92_2026. Below is a list of types of technology tools specifically related to AI. Please indicate your level of familiarity with and interest in each.

Among current AI users, engagement with an AI platform or app is most common.

More than half of AI users have interacted with a specific AI platform or app. Among users, half prefer typing as their method of communication with AI tools, while one-third have no preference between typing and voice interaction

Types of AI technology tools currently used

Among adults age 50+ who have used AI



Base: Respondents 50-plus who have used AI (n=999)

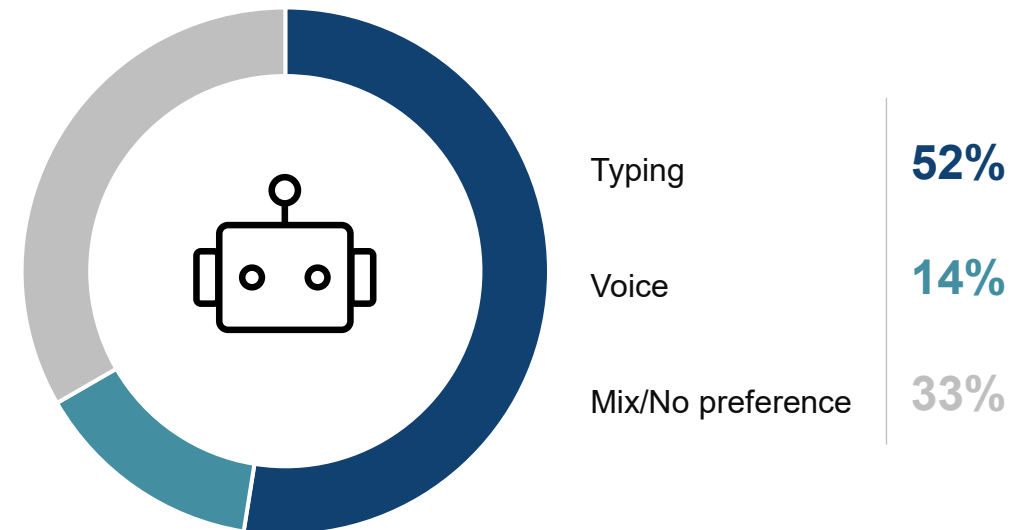
[NEW QUESTION 2025] Q92_2026. Below is a list of types of technology tools specifically related to AI. Please indicate your level of familiarity with and interest in each.

Base: Respondents 50-plus used AI (n=836)

[NEW QUESTION 2025] Q92c_2026. When interacting with an AI tool, which method do you most prefer to use for the majority of your conversations?

Preferred method for communicating with AI tool

Among adults age 50+ who have used AI



Generative AI has become a go-to companion for research, health guidance, career support, and creativity.

Examples of Generative AI Uses

Research



“When I **want answers to questions regarding a person, place, or thing**. The name of a song I'm hearing at the moment. Driving directions. **Detailed information on a product I'm interested in purchasing. Information about a person I'm interested in..**”

“To inquire about medical conditions based on symptoms & what possible treatments/ cures are possible. Reminders for Dr appointments. **Describing something I cannot think of the name of, or to get an idea of what trees, flowers I want to plant.** Finding out **reviews or answer questions about items I am considering purchasing.**”

“Currently using AI to help **plan out travel itineraries.** Figure out **worthwhile attractions to visit.**”

“Asking general **questions such as how much is the population on Earth expected to grow in the next 10 years.** What are **things to consider when considering where to retire.**”

Q75d_2025. Please use the space below to provide us with a few examples of how you [have used generative AI/anticipate using generative AI in the future].

Health



“I have used generative AI to **help with side effects from my medication, and to identify medications that might be best for someone my age with my health conditions.** This **helps me to have better discussions with my doctor about my prescriptions.** I have also used generative AI to answer specific questions that I might find in the news when I need more information to be better informed.”

“**Schedule my regular medicine taking and remind me to place an order for that medication when I run out.** It can recommend alternative products when I do a search for a particular product.”

“I might need it to monitor my physical health as I age. I may **ask questions about symptoms and natural remedies.**”

Job assistance



“To help me **generate content for work tasks, to compile data quickly, calculations and projections for budgets and project scopes.**”

“To help with **organizing material for reports; to help optimize matching mentors with mentees according to specifications, to assign reviewers to applications, to help with market research, to generate suggested SMART goals.** To identify ideal places to live based on specified parameters.”

“I've used AI to help **develop emails for work, protocols for business related projects and refinement of discussions for better understanding of work related topics.**”

“At work to **summarize meetings. Generate content for graphic art development, support my doing my job.**”

Idea inspiration



“I use AI to help **generate images and captions for birthday and wedding events. I also do the same to send funny emails to my friends.**”

“It has **helped me with my children books, online website items, make recommendations, design material,** and so many other questions that I ask and get responses too. It is not always perfect but it evaluates what I submit and provides reasons why the decisions were made.”

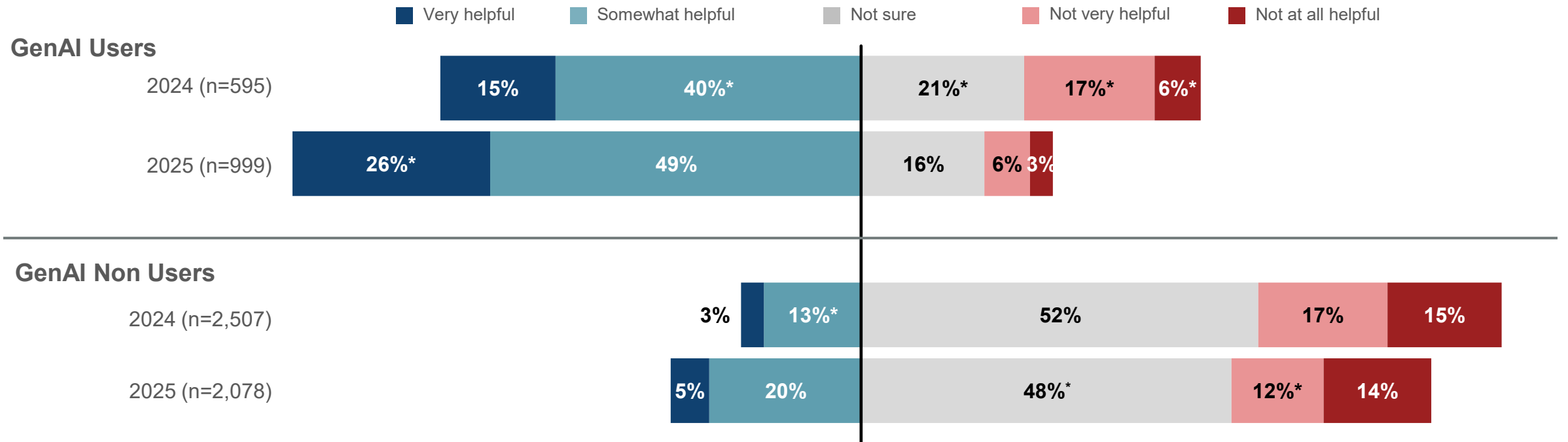
“To **come up with a title and emotive description for photographic work.**”

“**Help with songwriting. Generating song albums cover.**”

“I am a book author, and I was able to use Gemini to **create excellent book covers that would have cost me a fortune had a paid someone to create them.**”

Perceived helpfulness of AI has climbed sharply among users, with non-users showing signs of warming to it.

Anticipated helpfulness of Generative AI in making life easier and more enjoyable
Among adults age 50+, 2024 and 2025

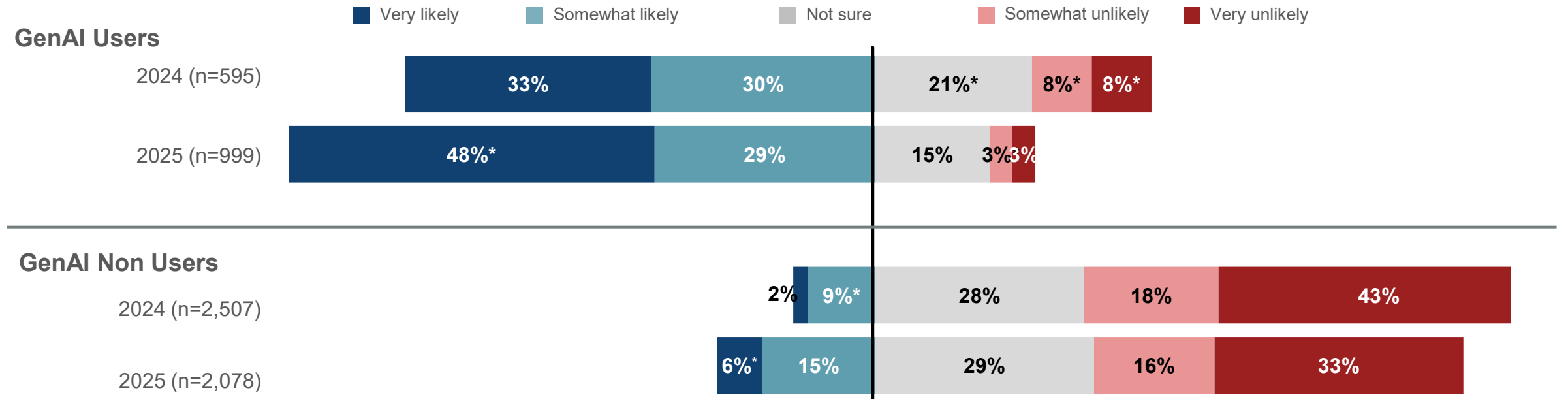


Base: Total 50-plus Respondents
Q75b_2025. How helpful has/do you anticipate generative AI been/will be in making your everyday life easier and more enjoyable?

Older adults are increasingly likely to consider engaging with AI in the near future - up noticeably from a year ago.

Though non-user interest seems small, it represents 38% of potential AI activity in the next 6 months.

Likelihood of using Generative AI in the next 6 months
Among adults age 50+, 2024 and 2025

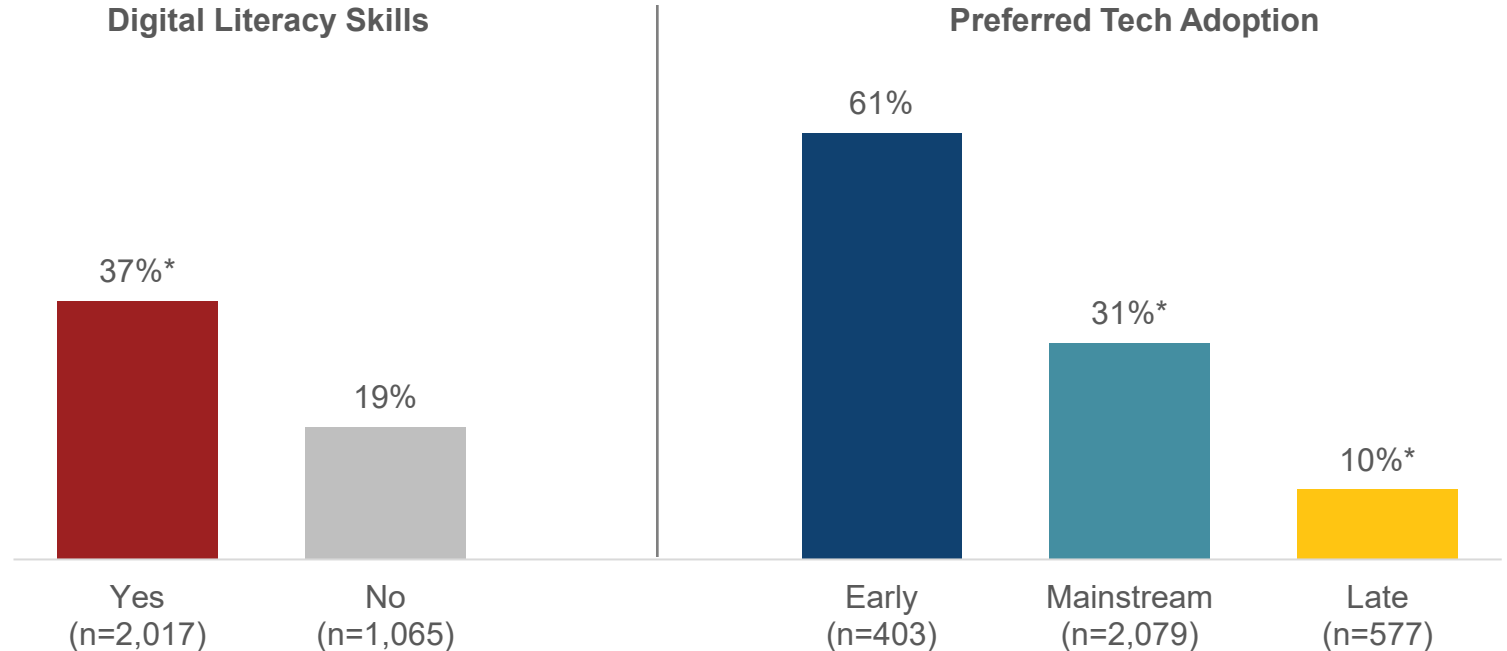


Base: Total 50-plus Respondents
Q75c_2025. How likely are you to use generative AI in the next 6 months to assist you in personal needs?

AI use lags for those who are less confident in their digital literacy skills or prefer to wait and see when it comes to tech adoption.

Closing the digital confidence gap may be the most important lever for expanding AI use among older adults, as those who perceive themselves as skilled and curious are more likely to experiment early, and experimentation fuels adoption.

Percent who have used Generative AI
Among adults by age and tech experience



Base: Total 50-plus Respondents
Q73_2024. What best describes your experience with Generative AI?

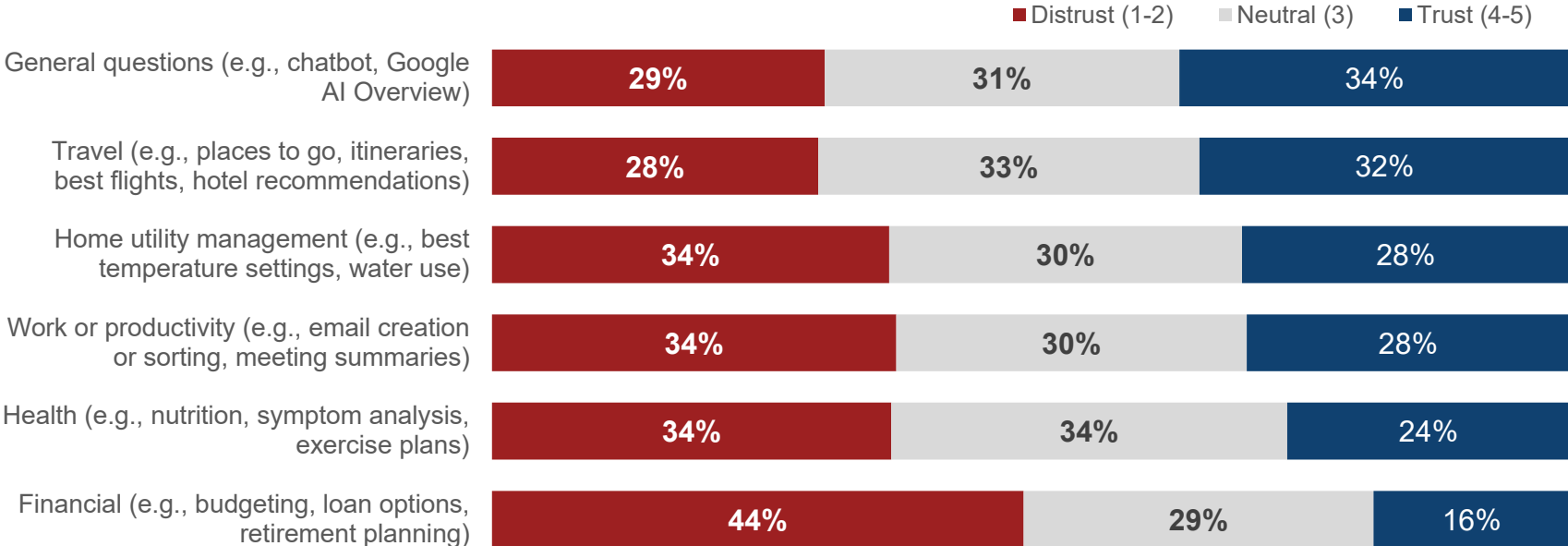
Much of the adoption of AI depends on trust and transparency, and there is work to be done to truly gain the trust of older adults.

Despite growing exposure to AI, trust in the information it provides remains fragile, particularly in areas that matter most, such as finances and health. Interestingly, though many seek help from AI for health questions, few appear to trust the information it provides.

77%

Agree that sometimes it's hard to determine if what I am looking at is AI generated content or real content (e.g., real people, real places)

Trust in AI-powered information
Among adults age 50+



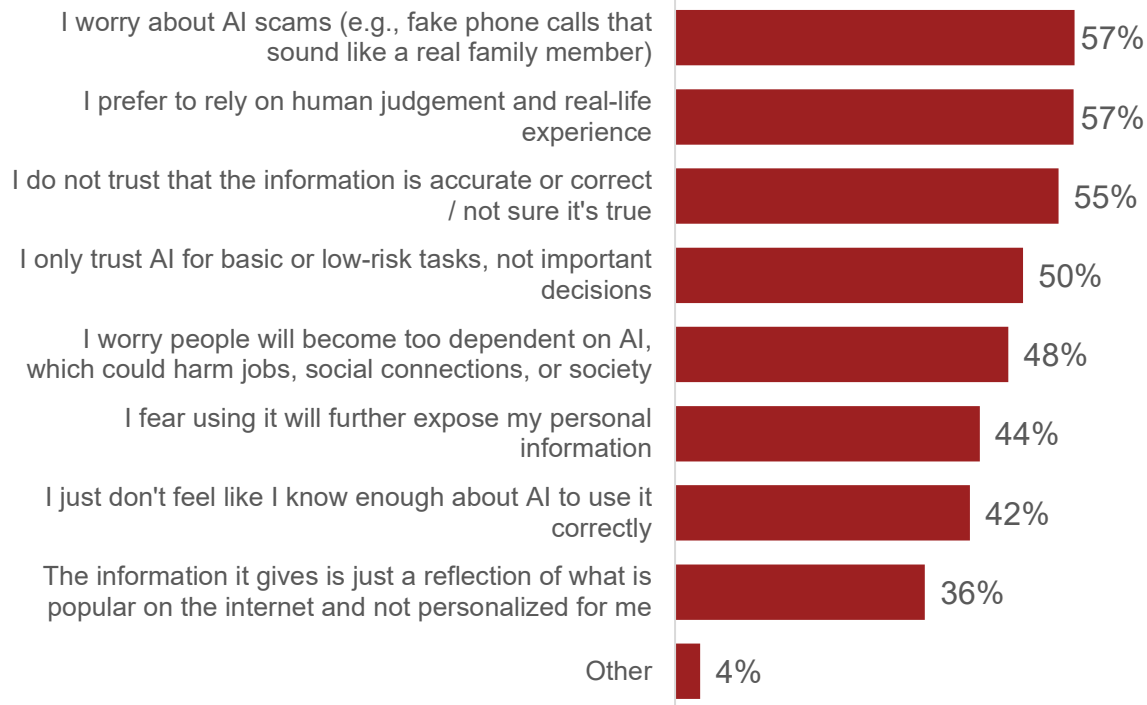
Base: Total 50-plus Respondents (n=3,083)

[NEW QUESTIONS 2025] Q90_2026. How much trust or distrust do you have in AI-powered information and recommendations in each of the following categories?

Q91_2026. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statement:

Those who do not trust AI provide a host of reasons why...

Reasons do not completely trust AI-powered information
Among adults age 50+ who do not completely trust AI information



Base: Total 50-plus Respondents who do not completely trust AI information (n=2,747)
Q90B_2026. Which of the following best describes why do you not completely trust AI-powered information?

But provide little guidance on what is needed to improve its trustworthiness.

What would be needed to trust AI-powered information
Among adults age 50+ who do not completely trust AI information

“

“Nothing - I do not trust AI.”

“Not sure, I don't know enough about AI.”

“100% accuracy in the answers it provides”

“More time and information as well as seeing it used more.”

”

Base: Total 50-plus Respondents who do not completely trust AI information (n=2,747)
Q90c_2026. What would you need to know, see, or experience in order to increase your trust in AI-powered information and increase your use of such tools?



IMPLICATIONS

Implications

Over the last decade, technology has evolved from being just a helpful add-on to being an embedded tool that makes life easier. **It is proving to help older adults stay socially connected, age in place and live better lives.** Many are now integrating smart home, health, and digital services into their daily lives to support independence, connection, and safety.

AI represents the next major opportunity. The use of generative AI has grown, as older adults are increasingly turning to it for information, creativity, health insights, and productivity. **This rising interest underscores a demand for technology that offers convenience, peace of mind, and control.**

Yet concerns about trust, privacy, data use, and usability remain key barriers. For many, the design of the tech keeps it out of reach. For others, it is their lack of confidence in their digital skills. And for others still, they don't trust that their personal data will remain private. Those who see AI as helpful are leaning in, while skeptics remain unconvinced.

The opportunity for the industry is to connect innovation to impact - **translating complex capabilities into tangible, everyday value.** Doing so means designing technology that feels intuitive, trustworthy, and personally meaningful; educating users on the real-world benefits; and demonstrating how digital tools can enhance, rather than replace, the human connections and independence that matter most as people age.





Methodology

Methodology: Quantitative Survey, n=3,838

Objective: Annual survey exploring technology use and attitudes among the 50-plus around device ownership, digital services used, interest in new technologies and AI, connecting with friends and family, and barriers to adoption.

NEW for 2026 Report: AI tools, trust in AI, future tech interest

Methodology: Online survey using NORC's research panel + Dynata

Qualifications: age 18+, U.S. Population

Sample: n=3,838 TOTAL; n=3,083 50-plus

Interviewing Dates: September 9 – October 6, 2025

Language of Interview: English and Spanish

Weighting: Weighted according to demographics for US adults age 18+, 50-plus, 18-49

Questionnaire length: The survey was approximately 22 minutes in length online

Note: Unweighted base sizes are presented throughout the report.



Respondent profile

	Age 18–49	Age 50-plus	Age 50–59	Age 60–69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Base:	755	3,083	1,000	897	642	544
Gender						
Men	50%	47%	49%	49%	45%	43%
Women	50%	53%	51%	52%	55%	57%
Education						
Less than HS	7%	4%	5%	4%	4%	4%
HS graduate	28%	29%	26%	29%	29%	41%
Vocational/tech school/some college/ associates	28%	27%	26%	29%	28%	23%
Bachelor's degree	23%	22%	25%	21%	24%	15%
Post grad study/professional degree	14%	17%	19%	16%	15%	18%
Ethnicity						
White, non-Hispanic	59%	60%	50%	56%	68%	85%
Black, non-Hispanic	11%	13%	14%	15%	12%	6%
Other, non-Hispanic	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	2%
Hispanic	20%	16%	21%	18%	12%	5%
2+ race/ethnicity, non-Hispanic	3%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Asian, non-Hispanic	5%	9%	13%	10%	6%	2%
Income						
Less than \$40K	31%	27%	24%	28%	28%	32%
\$40K-\$75K	24%	27%	21%	28%	29%	34%
\$75K+	46%	47%	55%	44%	43%	35%

About AARP

AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With nearly 38 million members and offices in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, AARP works to strengthen communities and advocate for what matters most to families with a focus on health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment. AARP also works for individuals in the marketplace by sparking new solutions and allowing carefully chosen, high-quality products and services to carry the AARP name. As a trusted source for news and information, AARP produces the nation's largest circulation publications, AARP The Magazine and AARP Bulletin. To learn more, visit www.aarp.org or follow @AARP and @AARPadvocates on social media.

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This research was designed and executed by AARP Research