

FOR RELEASE AUG. 26, 2015

A Portrait of American Orthodox Jews

A Further Analysis of the 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
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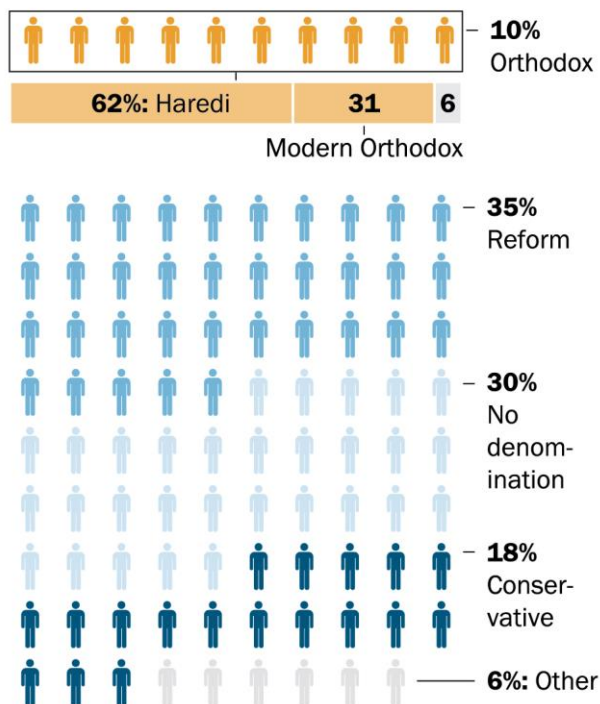
American Jews tend to be more [highly educated](#) and [politically liberal](#) than the U.S. public as a whole, as well as less religiously observant, at least by [standard measures](#) such as belief in God and self-reported rates of attendance at religious services. The U.S. Jewish population also is [older than the general public](#) and has [fewer children](#).

But within the U.S. Jewish community, one important subgroup clearly does *not* fit the picture of a relatively secular, liberal-leaning, aging population with small families. Unlike most other American Jews, Orthodox Jews tend to identify as Republicans and take conservative positions on social issues such as homosexuality. On average, they also are more religiously committed and much younger than other U.S. Jews, and they have bigger families.

This report uses data from the 2013 Pew Research Center Survey of U.S. Jews to look closely at the Orthodox. Information about Orthodox Jews was scattered throughout the initial survey report, "[A Portrait of Jewish Americans](#)." It has been brought together here and supplemented with additional statistical analysis and more detailed charts and tables.

The 2013 survey found that Orthodox Jews make up about 10% of the estimated 5.3 million Jewish adults (ages 18 and older) in the United States.¹ A survey is a snapshot in time that, by itself, cannot show growth in the size of a population. But a variety of demographic measures in the

One-in-Ten American Jews are Orthodox



Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20–June 13, 2013. QH1, QH2. Based on the net Jewish population (both Jews by religion and Jews of no religion). “Don’t know” responses are not shown. Figures may not sum to 100% or to totals indicated due to rounding.

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¹ The estimate of the size of the adult Jewish population depends on the definition of who is Jewish. See [Chapter 1](#) of “A Portrait of Jewish Americans” for a discussion of various possible definitions of Jewishness and for figures on various estimates.

survey suggest that Orthodox Jews probably are growing, both in absolute number and as a percentage of the U.S. Jewish community.

To begin with, the median age of Orthodox adults (40 years old) is fully a decade younger than the median age of other Jewish adults (52). Despite being younger, more than two-thirds of Orthodox adults are married (69%), compared with about half of other Jewish adults (49%), and the Orthodox are much more likely to have minor children living in their household. On average, the Orthodox get married younger and bear at least twice as many children as other Jews (4.1 vs. 1.7 children ever born to adults ages 40-59).² And they are especially likely to have large families: Among those who have had children, nearly half (48%) of Orthodox Jews have four or more offspring, while just 9% of other Jewish parents have families of that size.

Moreover, nearly all Orthodox Jewish parents (98%) say they are raising their children in the Jewish faith, compared with 78% of other Jewish parents. Orthodox Jews are much more likely than other Jews to have attended a Jewish day school, yeshiva or Jewish summer camp while growing up, and they are also more likely to send their children to these kinds of programs.

If the Orthodox grow as a share of U.S. Jews, they gradually could shift the profile of American Jews in several areas, including religious beliefs and practices, social and political views and demographic characteristics. Generally speaking, people who describe themselves as Orthodox Jews follow traditional interpretations of Jewish law, or *halakha*, and 79% of the Orthodox say that observing Jewish law is essential to “what being Jewish means” to them, personally; just 13% of other U.S. Jews say the same. On numerous measures of religious belief and practice, Orthodox Jews display higher levels of religious commitment than do other Jews.

Indeed, in a few ways, Orthodox Jews more closely resemble white evangelical Protestants than they resemble other U.S. Jews. For example, similarly large majorities of Orthodox Jews (83%) and white evangelicals (86%) say that religion is very important in their lives, while only about one-fifth of other Jewish Americans (20%) say the same. Roughly three-quarters of both Orthodox Jews (74%) and white evangelicals (75%) report that they [attend religious services at least once a month](#). And eight-in-ten or more Orthodox Jews (84%) and white evangelicals (82%) [say that Israel was given to the Jewish people by God](#) – more than twice the share of other American Jews (35%) who express this belief.

² The median age of marriage is based on current, intact marriages. It is not necessarily the age of first marriage because it does not account for divorce or the number of times respondents have been married. The share of divorced respondents is comparable across all Jewish denominations, roughly 8%-11%.

Other U.S. Jews lean heavily toward the Democratic Party, but the opposite is true of the Orthodox. As of mid-2013, 57% of Orthodox Jews identified with the Republican Party or said they leaned toward the GOP. Orthodox Jews also tend to express more conservative views on issues such as homosexuality and the size of government; that is, they are more likely than other Jews to say that homosexuality should be discouraged and that they prefer a smaller government with fewer services to a bigger government with more services.

But just as not all Jews are alike, not all Orthodox Jews are the same. The Pew Research Center survey was designed to look at differences within the Jewish community, including between subgroups within Orthodox Judaism. About six-in-ten U.S. Orthodox Jews (62%) are Haredi (sometimes called Ultra-Orthodox) Jews, who tend to view their strict adherence to the Torah's commandments as largely incompatible with secular society.³ Roughly three-in-ten Orthodox Jews (31%) identify with the Modern Orthodox movement, which follows traditional Jewish law while simultaneously integrating into modern society.⁴

The rest of this report details some of the key differences both between Orthodox Jewish groups and among Orthodox Jews overall and other American Jews.

³ See Cohen, Steven M. and Jacob B. Ukeles and Ron Miller. 2012. Jewish Community Study of New York: 2011. UJA Federation of New York. <http://d4ovtrzyow8g.cloudfront.net/494344.pdf>, pages 211-224. See also Waxman, Chaim I. 1998. "The Haredization of American Orthodox Jewry." Jerusalem Letter/Viewpoints. <http://www.bjpa.org/Publications/downloadPublication.cfm?PublicationID=2373>.

⁴ See Berman, Saul J. 2001. "The Ideology of Modern Orthodoxy." Sh'ma: A Journal of Jewish Ideas. <http://shma.com/2001/02/the-ideology-of-modern-orthodoxy/>.

Sidebar: Who is a Jew?

The 2013 Pew Research Center survey of U.S. Jews focused primarily on those who fell into two main categories.⁵ They are:

- Jews by religion – people who say their religion is Jewish (and who do not profess any other religion)
- Jews of no religion – people who describe themselves (religiously) as atheist, agnostic or nothing in particular, but who have a Jewish parent or were raised Jewish and who still consider themselves Jewish in some way

These two groups constitute, for the purposes of this analysis, the “net” Jewish population. Virtually all Orthodox Jews (99%) are Jews by religion.

To identify Orthodox Jews, the survey relied on two main questions. The first asked, “Thinking about Jewish religious denominations, do you consider yourself to be Conservative, Orthodox, Reform, something else or no particular denomination?” Those who self-identified as Orthodox were then asked a follow-up question: “Do you consider yourself to be Modern Orthodox, Hasidic, Yeshivish or some other type of Orthodox?” The Haredi (or Ultra-Orthodox) category includes Jews who come from at least two distinct traditions – the Hasidic tradition and the Yeshivish (or “Lithuanian”) tradition.

Orthodox Jews More Likely to Be Jews by Religion

	Jews by religion %	Jews of no religion %
Orthodox	99	1=100
<i>Haredi</i>	99	1
<i>Modern Orthodox</i>	99	1
Other Jews	75	25
<i>Conservative</i>	93	7
<i>Reform</i>	87	13
<i>No denomination</i>	50	50

Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. RELIG, QA4, QA5.

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⁵ See “[Who is a Jew](#)” sidebar from Pew Research Center’s 2013 report, “A Portrait of Jewish Americans” for more details as to how researchers categorized respondents when analyzing the survey data.

How Were Today's Orthodox Jewish Adults Raised?

The initial Pew Research Center report on Jewish Americans included a detailed look at religious switching among U.S. Jews, showing that about half (52%) of Americans who were raised as Orthodox Jews have left Orthodoxy, though most still identify as Jewish.⁶

This report flips the lens: Among adults who *currently identify* as Orthodox Jews, how many were raised in the Orthodox tradition? And how many became Orthodox after having been raised as Conservative or Reform Jews, or even as non-Jews?

Seven-in-ten adults who currently identify as Orthodox Jews (70%) were raised as Orthodox. Upwards of one-in-ten Orthodox Jews (12%) say they were brought up in the Conservative movement, and 5% were raised as Reform Jews. An additional 8% say they were raised in the Jewish faith but in some other stream of American Judaism (such as Reconstructionist) or gave other answers, such as saying they were raised in a Sephardic Jewish tradition.

By comparison, the other major streams or denominations of American Judaism have smaller shares of adults who were raised in those movements: 57% of adults who identify as Conservative Jews say they were raised in the Conservative movement, and 55% of Jews who identify as Reform were raised in the Reform movement.

⁶ It appears, however, there has been [less switching out of Orthodox Judaism among younger adults](#). Among Americans raised as Orthodox Jews, 83% of those ages 18-29 are still Orthodox Jews, compared with just 22% of those 65 and older. Some experts believe that this gap is explained in part by a “period effect” (i.e., a surge in switching away from Orthodox Judaism from the 1950s to the 1970s, followed by higher retention within Orthodox Judaism in recent decades), as explained in the [Jewish Identity chapter](#) of the Pew Research Center’s 2013 report “A Portrait of Jewish Americans.”

Most Current Orthodox Jews Were Raised Orthodox

Among those who currently identify as ...

	Orthodox			Other Jews			NET Jewish %
	ALL Orthodox %	Haredi %	Modern Orthodox %	Conservative %	Reform %	No denomination %	
<i>% who were raised in each tradition ...</i>							
Raised Jewish	96	97	95	87	91	69	83
Orthodox	70	78	56	13	4	7	13
Conservative	12	14	10	57	25	12	25
Reform	5	1	12	10	55	15	27
No denomination	7	4	15	3	5	31	14
Other Jewish denomination	1	*	2	2	1	2	2
Not raised Jewish[^]	4	3	5	13	9	31	17
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. QH15, QH16. Figures may not sum to 100% or to totals indicated due to rounding. "Don't know" responses in raised Jewish subgroups are not shown.

[^]Includes those who were raised Jewish and another religion or said they were not raised Jewish.

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Family Structure and Age

Compared with other Jews, Orthodox Jews are much more likely to be married. About seven-in-ten Orthodox Jews ages 18 and older (69%) are married, compared with 49% of other adult Jews. Haredi Jews are largely responsible for this gap; 79% of Haredi adults are married. About half of adults in the Modern Orthodox tradition (52%) are currently married, comparable to the shares of adults in the Conservative (55%) and Reform (52%) traditions.

Nearly all Orthodox Jews who are married have Jewish spouses (98%), while fewer married Conservative and Reform Jews (73% and 50%, respectively) have Jewish spouses.

Orthodox Jews More Likely to Be Married and to Have a Jewish Spouse

	Married %	Not married %	Among married Jews, % who have a ...	
			Jewish spouse %	Non-Jewish spouse %
NET Jewish	51	49=100	56	44=100
Orthodox	69	31	98	2
<i>Haredi</i>	79	21	99	1
<i>Modern Orthodox</i>	52	48	94	6
Other Jews	49	51	50	50
<i>Conservative</i>	55	45	73	27
<i>Reform</i>	52	48	50	50
<i>No denomination</i>	44	56	31	69
Jews by religion	54	46	64	36
Jews of no religion	41	59	21	79

Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. MARITAL, SPRELIG. Results repercentaged to exclude nonresponse.

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Orthodox Jews not only are more likely to be married, but also are more likely to have gotten married before the age of 25.⁷ Roughly seven-in-ten currently married Orthodox Jews (68%) in the survey were married by age 24, compared with just 27% of other Jews. And while a quarter of currently married non-Orthodox Jews (24%) got married at age 35 or later, the vast majority of Orthodox Jews were married before age 35.

Orthodox Jews More Likely to Marry at Younger Age

Among currently married Jews, % who married at age ...

	24 or younger	25-29	30-34	35+
	%	%	%	%
NET Jewish	33	29	17	21=100
Orthodox	68	23	5	4
<i>Haredi</i>	75	24	1	*
<i>Modern Orthodox</i>	48	22	17	13
Other Jews	27	30	19	24
<i>Conservative</i>	32	32	18	18
<i>Reform</i>	26	29	18	27
<i>No denomination</i>	27	30	17	25
Jews by religion	34	30	17	20
Jews of no religion	28	26	18	27

Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. QH26, AGE. Age of marriage is based on current, intact marriages. Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Results repercentaged to exclude nonresponse.

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⁷ Age of marriage is based on current, intact marriages. It is not necessarily the age of first marriage because it does not account for divorce or the number of times respondents have been married.

With a [median age of 40 \(among adults\)](#), Orthodox Jews are younger than other Jews. Roughly a quarter of Orthodox Jewish adults (24%) are between the ages of 18 and 29, compared with 17% of Reform Jews and 13% of Conservative Jews. Moreover, only 12% of Orthodox Jews are 65 or older, while among other Jews, almost twice as many (22%) have reached the traditional retirement age.

Again, Haredi Jews stand out; 32% of Haredi adults are between the ages of 18 and 29, compared with 9% of the Modern Orthodox. Nearly half of Haredi adults (46%) are in the 30-49 cohort, while only 6% are 65 or older.

Orthodox Jews Are Younger Than Other Jews

% of Jewish adults ages ...

	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+
	%	%	%	%
NET Jewish[^]	20	28	27	24=100
Orthodox	24	40	24	12
<i>Haredi</i>	32	46	17	6
<i>Modern Orthodox</i>	9	31	34	25
Other Jews	21	26	31	22
<i>Conservative</i>	13	25	34	29
<i>Reform</i>	17	23	37	22
<i>No denomination</i>	28	30	24	24
Jews by religion [^]	18	27	29	26
Jews of no religion [^]	28	33	23	16
U.S. general public	22	34	26	18

Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. U.S. general public data from the 2013 Current Population Survey. AGE. Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Results repercentaged to exclude nonresponse.

[^]These figures are based on all the Jews in surveyed households. Other rows based on respondents only.

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Child Rearing

Orthodox Jews tend to have more children than other Jews. The [2013 Pew Research report noted](#) that Orthodox Jewish respondents ages 40-59 have had an average of 4.1 children in their lifetime, compared with an average of 1.7 born to all other U.S. Jews in that age group (a measure known as “completed fertility”).

Perhaps as a result of their higher rates of marriage, lower median ages and bigger families, Orthodox Jews also are far more likely to have minor children currently living in their household. About half of Orthodox adults have at least one child at home, and 19% have four children or more in the house. Haredi Jews are much more likely than the Modern Orthodox to have at least four children currently living at home (27% vs. 4%). By contrast, most Conservative and Reform Jews do not currently have any children living in their household (78% and 75%, respectively).

Nearly all Orthodox Jewish parents who have at least one child under the age of 18 living in their household (98%) are raising those children Jewish. And an overwhelming majority of Conservative Jewish parents (93%) and Reform Jewish parents (90%) with at least one child at home say they are raising those children Jewish.

Most Orthodox Jewish parents (81%) have a child enrolled in a Jewish day school or yeshiva, compared with 11% of other Jews. And Orthodox Jews are

Orthodox Jews Have More Children Than Other Jews

Average number of children ever born per adult ages 40-59

NET Jewish	1.9
Orthodox	4.1
Other Jews	1.7
Conservative	1.8
Reform	1.7
No denomination	1.4
Jews by religion	2.1
Jews of no religion	1.5
U.S. general public	2.2

Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. U.S. general public data from March 21-April 8, 2013, Pew Research Center survey. FERT. Haredi and Modern Orthodox Jews are not reported due to small sample sizes.

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Orthodox Jews More Likely to Have Children Under 18 Living at Home

% of adults with each number of children currently living at home

	0	1	2	3	4+	DK/ref
	%	%	%	%	%	%
NET Jewish	73	12	9	2	3	1=100
Orthodox	45	13	13	8	19	1
Haredi	32	17	15	8	27	1
Modern Orthodox	69	9	11	7	4	*
Other Jews	76	12	8	2	1	1
Conservative	78	10	6	2	*	3
Reform	75	12	10	2	*	1
No denomination	77	13	7	2	1	1
Jews by religion	72	11	9	3	3	1
Jews of no religion	77	13	8	2	*	1

Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. HHCHILD. Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

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more than twice as likely as other Jews to enroll their children in some other organized Jewish youth program, such as Jewish day care, nursery school, youth group, day camp or sleepaway camp (69% vs 27%).

While most Orthodox Jews who are raising minor children send those children to full-time Jewish schools or yeshivot, other Jews are more likely than Orthodox Jews to enroll their children in other part-time formal Jewish education programs that typically supplement a largely secular education, such as Hebrew school, congregational school or Sunday school (24% vs. 16%).

Most Orthodox Parents Enroll Children in Jewish Schools, Youth Programs

Among parents with at least one child at home, % who have a child ...

	Being raised Jewish/ partially Jewish %	Enrolled in yeshiva/Jewish day school %	Enrolled in other formal Jewish education %	Enrolled in other organized Jewish youth program %
NET Jewish	82	25	22	35
Orthodox	98	81	16	69
<i>Haredi</i>	100	84	17	70
Other Jews	78	11	24	27
<i>Conservative</i>	93	30	50	50
<i>Reform</i>	90	9	28	33
<i>No denomination</i>	53	3	7	8
Jews by religion	93	30	27	42
Jews of no religion	33	3	3	10

Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. HHCHILDPAR, HHCHILDJREL, HHCHILDJOTH, HHCHILDED1/2/3. Modern Orthodox Jews are not reported due to small sample size.

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Childhood Involvement in Jewish Activities

Among adults, far more Orthodox Jews attended a yeshiva or Jewish day school when they were children than did other Jews. Roughly three-quarters of Orthodox Jews (73%) say they attended a full-time Jewish school when they were growing up, compared with 17% of other Jews.

By contrast, Orthodox Jews are significantly less likely to have participated in the kind of part-time Jewish programs that typically supplement a largely secular education, such as Hebrew school or Sunday school, when they were children.

Most Orthodox Adults Participated in Jewish Activities When They Were Children

% of adults who ... as children

	Attended yeshiva/Jewish day school	Received other formal Jewish education	Became bar/bat mitzvah	Attended overnight Jewish summer camp
	%	%	%	%
NET Jewish	23	59	51	38
Orthodox	73	32	72	74
<i>Haredi</i>	81	22	78	85
<i>Modern Orthodox</i>	57	51	62	59
Other Jews	17	62	48	34
<i>Conservative</i>	21	71	59	43
<i>Reform</i>	15	75	53	36
<i>No denomination</i>	16	40	36	27
Jews by religion	26	63	58	44
Jews of no religion	13	44	27	18

Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. Q.H19B, Q.H19C, Q.H20, Q.H23.

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Upwards of seven-in-ten

Orthodox Jewish adults (72%) say that they became a bar or bat mitzvah when they were young, compared with 48% of other Jews.⁸ And 74% of Orthodox Jews attended an overnight Jewish summer camp while growing up; among other Jews, 34% went to such a camp.

Haredi Jews are significantly more likely than Modern Orthodox Jews to report attending Jewish day school, becoming a bar/bat mitzvah or attending overnight Jewish summer camp, although majorities of adults in both groups say they had these experiences when they were children.

⁸ Among Orthodox Jews, men and women do not have bar/bat mitzvahs at equal rates. An overwhelming majority of Orthodox men (93%) report having undergone this rite of passage, compared with 52% of Orthodox women.

Socioeconomic Status

Orthodox Jews – especially Haredi Jews – tend to receive less formal, secular education than do other Jews. A third of Orthodox Jewish adults have a high school education or less, compared with just 15% of other Jews. And 30% of both Conservative and Reform Jews have post-graduate university degrees, compared with 17% of Orthodox Jews.

However, in terms of secular education, Modern Orthodox Jews are more similar to Conservative and Reform Jews than they are to Haredi Jews. Three-in-ten Modern Orthodox Jews (29%) have post-graduate degrees, and an additional 36% have bachelor's degrees; among Haredi Jews, just 10% have post-graduate degrees, and an additional 15% have bachelor's degrees.

Orthodox Jews Receive Less Formal Secular Education Than Conservative, Reform Jews

% of Jews with each level of education

	High school or less	Some college	Bachelor's degree	Post-grad degree
	%	%	%	%
NET Jewish	17	25	30	28=100
Orthodox	33	28	22	17
<i>Haredi</i>	38	36	15	10
<i>Modern Orthodox</i>	21	14	36	29
Other Jews	15	25	31	29
<i>Conservative</i>	18	20	32	30
<i>Reform</i>	10	29	31	30
<i>No denomination</i>	18	24	31	27
Jews by religion	16	24	30	29
Jews of no religion	18	29	30	23
U.S. general public	42	29	19	10

Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. EDUC. U.S. general public data from the U.S. Census Bureau. Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Results repercentaged to exclude nonresponse.

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There are only modest differences among Jewish denominations when it comes to annual incomes. Haredi Jews are just as likely as Jews overall to report having household incomes of \$150,000 or more per year, and an especially large share of Modern Orthodox Jews make \$150,000 or more (37%).⁹

Orthodox Jews as Likely as Other Jews to Earn \$150,000 or More

% of Jews by annual household income

	Less than \$50K %	\$50,000- \$99,999 %	\$100,000- \$149,999 %	\$150K+ %
NET Jewish	32	26	17	25=100
Orthodox	39	19	14	28
<i>Haredi</i>	43	20	13	24
<i>Modern Orthodox</i>	30	18	15	37
Other Jews	31	27	18	25
<i>Conservative</i>	31	28	18	23
<i>Reform</i>	25	28	18	29
<i>No denomination</i>	36	24	18	22
Jews by religion	30	27	17	26
Jews of no religion	39	24	17	20
U.S. general public	56	27	10	8

Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. INCOME. U.S. general public data from Pew Research Center surveys conducted February-June 2013. Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Results repercentaged to exclude nonresponse.

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⁹ It should be noted that the survey asked about household, rather than individual, incomes. It is possible that larger household sizes among Haredi Jews could contribute to higher reported incomes.

Geographic Distribution

An overwhelming majority of American Haredi Jews (89%) live in the Northeast region of the country, including New York and New Jersey. Most Modern Orthodox Jews (61%) also live in the Northeast, although roughly a third live in either the South (20%) or the West (12%).

Other Jews, while still more heavily concentrated in the Northeast than the U.S. general public, are more evenly distributed across the country than Orthodox Jews. The Northeast is home to the biggest shares of Conservative (43%) and Reform (36%) Jews, but roughly three-in-ten members of each group live in the South (including Florida), and about one-in-five Conservative and Reform Jews live in the West.

Majority of Orthodox Jews Live in the Northeast

% of Jews who live in the ...

	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
	%	%	%	%
NET Jewish	43	11	23	23=100
Orthodox	79	7	9	5
<i>Haredi</i>	89	6	4	1
<i>Modern Orthodox</i>	61	6	20	12
Other Jews	39	11	25	25
<i>Conservative</i>	43	9	30	18
<i>Reform</i>	36	13	28	22
<i>No denomination</i>	40	10	18	32
Jews by religion	46	10	24	20
Jews of no religion	32	15	22	31
U.S. general public	18	21	37	23

Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. U.S. general public data from June 2013 Current Population Survey. Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

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Jewish Friendship Networks

Orthodox Jews, especially Haredi Jews, tend to have close circles of friends consisting mostly or entirely of other Jews. This is less common among Conservative and Reform Jews.

About eight-in-ten Orthodox Jews (84%) say that all or most of their friends are Jewish. By comparison, among other Jews, about a quarter (27%) say the same.

A majority of non-Orthodox Jews in the U.S. say that at least *some* of their friends are Jewish, but 23% say that hardly any or none of their

friends are Jewish. That is in stark contrast with the 1% of Haredi Jews and 4% of Modern Orthodox Jews who report that hardly any or none of their friends are Jewish.

Nearly All Haredi Jews Say All/Most of Their Friends Are Jewish

% of Jews who say ... of their friends are Jewish

	All %	Most %	Some %	Hardly any/ none %	Don't know %
NET Jewish	5	27	46	21	*=100
Orthodox	33	51	13	3	*
<i>Haredi</i>	45	53	2	1	*
<i>Modern Orthodox</i>	13	52	31	4	0
Other Jews	2	24	50	23	*
<i>Conservative</i>	4	35	44	16	1
<i>Reform</i>	2	26	53	19	*
<i>No denomination</i>	2	15	48	35	*
Jews by religion	6	32	44	18	*
Jews of no religion	2	11	53	34	*

Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. QE11. Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

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Sense of Belonging and Importance of Religion

Virtually all Orthodox Jews in the survey say they have a strong sense of belonging to the Jewish people, while 73% of other Jews say the same. Similarly, more Orthodox Jews than other Jews say that being Jewish is very important to them and that they have a special responsibility to care for Jews in need.

Followers of the major streams or denominations within U.S. Judaism are more similar when it comes to Jewish pride. Overwhelming majorities of both Orthodox Jews (98%) and other Jews (94%) say they are proud to be Jewish.

Being Jewish Is Very Important to Most Orthodox Jews

% of Jews who say that ...

	They have strong sense of belonging to Jewish people	Being Jewish is very important to them	They have special responsibility to care for Jews in need	They are proud to be Jewish
	%	%	%	%
NET Jewish	75	46	63	94
Orthodox	99	87	92	98
<i>Haredi</i>	99	89	95	100
<i>Modern Orthodox</i>	100	89	87	93
Other Jews	73	41	60	94
<i>Conservative</i>	92	69	82	98
<i>Reform</i>	78	43	64	96
<i>No denomination</i>	53	22	39	87
Jews by religion	85	56	71	97
Jews of no religion	42	12	36	83

Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. QH5B, QE9A-C.

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There are, at most, only modest differences between Modern Orthodox Jews and Haredi Jews on these measures of Jewish identity and belonging. Among members of both groups, big majorities say that they have a strong sense of belonging to the Jewish people, that being Jewish is very important to them, that they have a special responsibility to care for Jews in need and that they are proud to be Jewish.

The 2013 survey finds that religion plays a far greater role in the lives of Orthodox Jews than it does for other Jews. About eight-in-ten Orthodox Jews (83%) say religion is very important to them, compared with 20% of other Jews. Around the same time period, 56% of Americans overall said religion is very important in their life.

On this question, Orthodox Jews look more like white evangelical Protestants – one of the most religiously committed major U.S. Christian groups – than like other Jews. Fully 86% of white evangelicals say religion is very important in their life.¹⁰

Religion Central to Lives of Most Orthodox Jews

% of people who rate religion as ... in their life

	Very important %	Somewhat important %	Not too/not at all important %	DK/refused %
NET Jewish	26	29	44	1=100
Orthodox	83	15	3	*
<i>Haredi</i>	89	11	*	0
<i>Modern Orthodox</i>	77	19	4	0
Other Jews	20	31	49	1
<i>Conservative</i>	43	39	17	*
<i>Reform</i>	16	40	43	1
<i>No denomination</i>	8	18	74	*
Jews by religion	31	35	33	1
Jews of no religion	8	9	82	*
U.S. general public	56	23	20	1

Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. QH5A. U.S. general public data from March 21-April 8, 2013 Pew Research Center survey. Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

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¹⁰ Data on white evangelical Protestants come from a [Pew Research Center survey](#) conducted March 21-April 8, 2013.

Most Orthodox Jews say that being Jewish is either mainly a matter of religion (46%) or a matter of religion as well as of ancestry and/or culture (38%). A majority of other Jews say that being Jewish is mainly a matter of ancestry and/or culture (67%); only 11% say it is mainly a matter of religion.

Most Orthodox Jews Think Being Jewish Is a Matter of Religion

% who say being Jewish is ...

	Mainly religion	Religion and ancestry/culture	Mainly ancestry/culture	Other/DK/refused
	%	%	%	%
NET Jewish	15	23	62	1=100
Orthodox	46	38	15	1
<i>Haredi</i>	53	35	11	2
<i>Modern Orthodox</i>	35	46	19	1
Other Jews	11	21	67	1
<i>Conservative</i>	15	37	48	*
<i>Reform</i>	13	20	67	*
<i>No denomination</i>	8	11	80	1
Jews by religion	17	26	55	1
Jews of no religion	6	11	83	*

Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. QE3, QE3A. Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

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Beliefs and Practices

Orthodox Jews are more likely than other Jews to believe in God with absolute certainty and participate in various Jewish religious practices. For example, 89% of Orthodox Jews (including 96% of the Haredi) say they are certain in their belief in God, compared with 41% of Conservative Jews and 29% of Reform Jews. (Many Conservative and Reform Jews [believe in God, but with less certainty](#).) And most Orthodox Jews (62%) report that they attend religious services at least weekly, compared with just 6% of other Jews.¹¹

Again, by these measures, Orthodox Jews are similar to white evangelical Protestants. For example, 93% of white evangelical Protestants believe in God with absolute certainty and 61% attend religious services weekly or more often.¹²

Orthodox Jews are almost twice as likely as other Jewish adults to say they fasted for all or part of Yom Kippur, the Jewish Day of Atonement, in 2012 (95% vs 49%). And they are more than four times as likely as other Jews to participate in such religious practices as regularly lighting Sabbath candles, keeping a kosher home and avoiding handling money on the Sabbath.¹³ The gap between Orthodox Jews and other Jews narrows somewhat when it comes to Passover – virtually all Orthodox Jews (99%) attended a seder during the Passover previous to when the survey was conducted in 2013, compared with 66% of other Jews.¹⁴

While Modern Orthodox and Haredi Jews are largely similar in their high levels of observance, lighting Sabbath candles and keeping kosher are more universal practices in Haredi homes.

¹¹ Among Orthodox Jews, men and women do not attend religious services at equal rates. Nearly three-quarters of Orthodox men (73%) report attending synagogue weekly, compared with 50% of Orthodox women.

¹² Data on belief in God among white evangelical Protestants come from a Pew Research Center survey conducted June 28-July 9, 2012. Data on religious service attendance among white evangelical Protestants come from aggregated data from surveys conducted by the Pew Research Center between February and June of 2013.

¹³ The Pew Research Center's question about handling money on the Sabbath was taken from the [2000-2001 National Jewish Population Survey](#), which found that 81% of Orthodox Jews said they refrain from handling money on the Sabbath. However, the wording of the question – “Do you personally refrain from handling or spending money on the Jewish Sabbath?” – may have been confusing to some respondents because of a double negative: A “no” answer means the respondent does *not refrain* from handling money on the Sabbath. It is possible that in both the 2000-2001 NJPS and the 2013 Pew Research survey, some respondents (particularly those with limited English-language ability) may have answered “no” when they really meant to indicate that they do not handle money on the Sabbath.

¹⁴ Some researchers suggest that non-Orthodox Jews participate in Passover at higher rates than other Jewish observances because they see the Passover seder as a sentimental, or even secular, family gathering rather than a religious obligation. For example, see Pleck, Elizabeth H. 2000. “Celebrating the Family: Ethnicity, Consumer Culture, and Family Rituals.” Harvard University Press, pages 95-116.

Orthodox Jews Much More Observant of Jewish Rituals

% who ...

	Believe in God with absolute certainty	Attend religious services weekly or more	Attended Passover seder	Fasted all/ part of Yom Kippur	Always/usually light Sabbath candles	Keep kosher	Avoid handling money on Sabbath
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
NET Jewish	34	11	70	53	23	22	13
Orthodox	89	62	99	95	90	92	77
<i>Haredi</i>	96	60	100	98	99	98	76
<i>Modern Orthodox</i>	77	67	98	90	78	83	81
Other Jews	28	6	66	49	16	14	7
<i>Conservative</i>	41	13	80	76	34	31	13
<i>Reform</i>	29	4	76	56	10	7	4
<i>No denomination</i>	18	3	47	25	9	10	4
Jews by religion	39	14	78	62	28	25	16
Jews of no religion	18	1	42	22	6	11	5

Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. QH6, H6B, ATTEND1, QH11C, QH12, QH10, QH11A, QH11B.

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Connection With and Attitudes Toward Israel

The survey finds that 61% of Orthodox Jews say they are very emotionally attached to Israel, whereas 27% of other Jews say the same. And there are significant differences between Modern Orthodox Jews and Haredi Jews on views toward Israel. Broadly speaking, Modern Orthodox Jews display stronger attachment to Israel; they are more likely than Haredi Jews to say that they are very emotionally attached to Israel (77% vs. 55%), that caring about Israel is essential to being Jewish (79% vs. 45%) and that the U.S. is not supportive enough of Israel (64% vs. 48%).¹⁵

The 2013 survey also asked several questions about the Middle East peace process. It is important to bear in mind that opinions on this topic may have shifted since the survey was conducted due to events in the region (including the 2014 Israel-Gaza conflict and recent Israeli elections). As of 2013, however, there were significant differences between Orthodox Jews and other Jews in attitudes toward the prospects for peace. For example, Orthodox Jews were less than half as likely as other Jews to say that Israel and an independent Palestinian state can coexist peacefully. Non-Orthodox Jews also were much more likely than Orthodox Jews to say that building Jewish settlements in the West Bank hurts Israel's security (47% vs. 16%).

Again, the survey found differing viewpoints within Orthodox Judaism. Roughly three-quarters of Modern Orthodox Jews (73%) said in 2013 that the Israeli government was making a sincere effort to reach a peace settlement, compared with 53% of Haredi Jews who said the same.

¹⁵ The differences between Haredi and Modern Orthodox Jews may reflect the ambivalence that some Haredi Jews have felt about the state of Israel ever since its establishment. Some opposed the formal creation of a Jewish state before the arrival of the messiah. Modern Orthodox Jews, in contrast, integrated support for a Jewish state with their religious beliefs, seeing the formation of Israel as the beginning of religious redemption for the Jewish people.

Orthodox Jews Have Strong Connection With Israel

% who say that ...

	They are very emotionally attached to Israel	Caring about Israel is essential to being Jewish	U.S. is not supportive enough of Israel	Israel was given to the Jews by God[^]	Israel and Palestinian state can coexist peacefully	Building Jewish settlements hurts Israel's security	Israeli government is making sincere effort for peace
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
NET Jewish	30	43	31	40	61	44	38
Orthodox	61	55	53	84	30	16	61
<i>Haredi</i>	55	45	48	81	26	18	53
<i>Modern Orthodox</i>	77	79	64	90	33	12	73
Other Jews	27	41	28	35	64	47	36
<i>Conservative</i>	47	58	42	54	62	36	52
<i>Reform</i>	24	42	30	35	58	50	36
<i>No denomination</i>	16	31	17	24	72	48	27
Jews by religion	36	49	35	47	58	40	44
Jews of no religion	12	23	17	16	72	56	21

Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. QC2, QC3, QE5H, QG2, QG5, QG7, QH6C.

[^]Question was only asked of respondents who said they believe in God.

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Social and Political Attitudes

Compared with other U.S. Jews, Orthodox Jews are far more socially and politically conservative. When the survey was conducted in 2013, 57% of Orthodox Jews said they identified with or leaned toward the Republican Party. By contrast, just 18% of other Jews identified with or leaned toward the GOP. Orthodox Jews were also much more likely than other Jews to self-identify as politically conservative (54% vs. 16%).

As on some measures of religious belief and observance, when it comes to political attitudes, Orthodox Jews resemble U.S. white evangelical Protestants. For example, 66% of white evangelical Protestants identified as or leaned Republican as of 2013, and 62% are politically conservative.¹⁶

About six-in-ten Orthodox Jews (58%) say they would prefer a smaller government that provides fewer services over a bigger government providing more services, compared with 36% of other Jews who take the same position. Orthodox Jews also are far more likely than other Jews to say that homosexuality should be discouraged by society, with more Haredi Jews (70%) than Modern Orthodox Jews (38%) saying this.

¹⁶ The figures for white evangelical Protestants come from aggregated data from surveys conducted by the Pew Research Center between February and June of 2013.

Politically, Orthodox Jews Are More Conservative Than Other Jews

% who ...

	Identify as/lean Republican	Say they are politically conservative	Disapprove of Obama	Prefer smaller government with fewer services	Say homosexuality should be discouraged
	%	%	%	%	%
NET Jewish	22	19	29	38	13
Orthodox	57	54	54	58	58
<i>Haredi</i>	58	64	54	57	70
<i>Modern Orthodox</i>	56	41	57	58	38
Other Jews	18	16	27	36	8
<i>Conservative</i>	27	28	33	41	14
<i>Reform</i>	17	13	27	37	4
<i>No denomination</i>	15	13	24	35	8
Jews by religion	24	22	31	40	15
Jews of no religion	12	11	22	30	7
U.S. general public	39	38	43	51	36

Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013. PARTY, PARTYLN, IDEO, QB2, QB4, QB5. U.S. general public data on political party identification, political ideology, and approval of Obama from aggregated Pew Research Center polls, February-June 2013. U.S. general public data on size of government from Pew Research Center poll, September 2012. U.S. general public data on views on homosexuality from Pew Research Center poll, March 2013.

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About This Report

Pew Research Center completed interviews with 3,475 Jewish respondents, including 517 Orthodox Jews, 659 Conservative Jews, 1,168 Reform Jews and 908 Jews of no denomination. Interviews were conducted by telephone (landlines and cellphones) between Feb. 20 and June 13, 2013, by the research firm Abt SRBI, in English and Russian. After taking into account the complex sample design, the margin of error on the 3,475 completed interviews with the NET Jewish population is +/-3.0 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence. The table at right shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey. More information about the survey's methodology can be found in the initial survey report's [appendix on methodology](#).

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

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Margins of Error

Group	Sample size	Plus or minus _____ percentage points
NET Jewish	3,475	3.0
Orthodox	517	9.1
<i>Haredi</i>	326	12.9
<i>Modern Orthodox</i>	154	12.4
Other Jews	2,958	3.2
<i>Conservative</i>	659	6.5
<i>Reform</i>	1,168	4.8
<i>No denomination</i>	908	5.9
Jews by religion	2,786	3.4
Jews of no religion	689	6.2

The margins of error are reported at the 95% level of confidence and are calculated after taking into account the design effect based on the survey weights $[1+CV^2]$. The actual margin of error for many of the survey's questions will be smaller than indicated here when the bootstrap weights (described in the 2013 report's methodology section) are used to calculate standard errors. The bootstrap weights were used to evaluate the statistical significance of all claims made in the body of the report.

These margins of error apply to estimates of the attitudes and beliefs of the groups indicated. These are not the margins of error for the estimates of the size of the Jewish population.

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