



Badger Poll™
University of Wisconsin Survey Center
University of Wisconsin Madison
1800 University Avenue, Room 203
Madison, WI 53726-4090

The Badger Poll Methodology and Standards

The BADGER POLL™ is conducted by the University of Wisconsin Survey Center (UWSC) as part of its ongoing program of research designed to benefit the research community and the people of Wisconsin. The Director of the poll operations is Chad J. Kniss, UW Survey Center. The Faculty Director of the poll content is Professor Katherine Cramer Walsh, Department of Political Science, UW-Madison. The BADGER POLL™ is intended to be a research tool investigating matters of concern to Wisconsinites including politics, culture, and their daily lives, adhering to the highest standards of polling methodology and rigorous independence. The Badger Poll also serves as an omnibus survey where clients with an interest in a statewide telephone sample can add questions to the survey.

Sampling

The BADGER POLL™ is an RDD telephone survey of Wisconsin residents age 18 and over who live in households with working landline telephone numbers. Cell phone-only households are NOT currently included in samples. The telephone numbers sampled for the BADGER POLL™ are supplied by Survey Sampling International (SSI) of Fairfield, Connecticut. All telephone numbers are randomly generated by computer so that each exchange and working block will have a probability of selection equal to its share of listed telephone households. There are no quotas used in samples of either telephone numbers or respondents.

Interviewing

The UWSC uses the CASES (Computer Assisted Survey Execution System) CATI software (Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing). Telephone numbers are released for interviewing in replicates, including a representative sample for the entire state. Telephone calls for the BADGER POLL™ are typically made over a period of 7 to 9 days (always including at least one weekend), during which telephone numbers are called multiple times during the field period. Calls are made between 9 am and 9 pm Monday through Friday and between 10 am and 5 pm on Saturdays and from 12 noon to 9 pm on Sunday. The UWSC makes up to 10 attempts on each number in order to confirm if it was a residential number, select an eligible respondent and/or to convert first time refusals.

The UWSC also retains a highly trained and professional interviewing staff. Besides a multi-day training period immediately after hiring, all interviewers attend study-specific training sessions before a new project begins to ensure the interviewers are well prepared to deal with issues and answer questions from respondents pertaining to the study when they call. Interviewers are also monitored by shift leaders to ensure high quality data collection.

Respondent Selection

Results of the BADGER POLL™ are based on interviews with approximately 500 persons who were randomly chosen within households. In households where there is only a single adult, that lone adult is the only person eligible to participate for that telephone number. A respondent is randomly chosen from multiple adult households, by asking for the number of adult men and the number of adult women in the household and the CATI system generates a list of all possible adults and then randomly chooses one – the only person with whom an interview can be completed.

Weighting

The results reported from the BADGER POLL™ are based on scientifically weighted data. All cases have an equal probability of selection at the beginning of the field period. The data are then weighted to adjust for the response rate, the number of landline telephone numbers that reach each responding household, as well as to adjust for the unequal probability of selection within households (so that respondents from households with larger adult populations are given greater weights to adjust for their lower probability of selection with the household).

Finally, data are post-stratified and weighted using demographic information from the Census to adjust for sampling and non-sampling deviations from population values. Respondents are classified into one of eight cells based on gender and age groups (see table below). Weights are assigned so the proportion in each of these eight cells matches the actual population proportion according to the Census Bureau's most recent Current Population Survey (<http://www.census.gov/cps/>).

	Female	Male
18-29	cell 1	cell 2
30-44	cell 3	cell 4
45-59	cell 5	cell 6
60 plus	cell 7	cell 8

Likely Voter Modeling

The BADGER POLL™ usually samples all adult residents of the state of Wisconsin who live in households with working landline telephone numbers. Occasionally, the BADGER POLL will change and sample only adults who are registered to vote in Wisconsin or who are “likely voters” in an upcoming election. The model that is used to determine who is a “likely voter,” whether used as the basis for the sample or as a sub-group of the larger sample of all adult residents, is based on respondents’ answers to questions within the interview. This model includes past voting history (did they vote in the last election (either general or primary

depending on the current election at hand)), the likelihood of voting in the upcoming election and whether or not they have already cast a ballot by absentee. The model also includes current voter registration status and knowledge about where to cast a ballot.

Sampling Error

Theoretically, results from this survey have a "margin of error" of a little over +/- 4%. This means that, had we asked every resident in Wisconsin exactly these questions at the time the survey was conducted, there is only a one in twenty chance that the answers would differ by more than that in either direction from what we report here. There could be differences because of changes in question wording, events occurring in the meantime, or any of the practical difficulties involved in taking a scientific survey. Results based on subgroups are subject to a larger "margin of error."

The most conservative estimate of the sampling error for a sample of 500 interviewers where respondents are split evenly (50% / 50%) on a dichotomous question is +/- 4.4%.

Advance Letters

Since 2007 the Badger Poll has been experimenting with advance letters in an effort to increase efficiency as well as the response rate. When advance letters have been sent, they are sent to households with listed telephone numbers. These households are identified by running the randomly drawn sample through a reverse telephone directory – matching the telephone number to an address listed in publicly available databases.