Opera

Alternative Browsers Report · Part 01 of 02

State of Browser Choice

How Americans choose their browsers, what they know about the alternatives, and what they want from the software they use every day.

925
U.S. adults surveyed
Ages 18 to 64

36%
of mainstream browser users have never switched browsers

85%
Would consider switching

Research by Opera · Fielded by Pollfish

opera.com

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People would switch browsers. They just don't know what to switch to.

The browser holds people's passwords, payment details, and nearly everything they do online, yet it rarely gets the comparison shopping they give a phone or a laptop. The first **edition of the Alternative Browsers Report surveyed 925 U.S. adults to find out why.**

Findings

01 **A third of people on Chrome, Edge, or Safari have never switched browsers.**
Yet 85% of them say they would consider it. Most aren't loyal to their browser; they've just never been given a good reason to leave.

02 **Some people don't know a browser can be changed.**
One in six mainstream users had no idea. For them, the browser is simply whatever came with the phone or laptop.

03 **Many people haven't heard of any browser beyond the big four.**
Nearly half couldn't name an option past Chrome, Safari, Edge, and Firefox. Women were less likely than men to know the alternatives.

04 **Even the youngest adults don't know their browser options.**
Gen Z knows more than older generations, but most of those on Chrome, Edge, or Safari still haven't heard of a single alternative.

05 **Security is what people feel their browser is missing most.**
Seven in 10 say their browser is lacking something, and the most common answer is protection: a VPN, an ad blocker, or tracking protection.

06 **People want a browser built around what they love.**
Nearly 8 in 10 would try one designed for their interests, with music and entertainment, shopping, and gaming at the top of the list.

07 **Gen Z wants a browser built for gaming and takes cues from creators.**
Nearly half of Gen Z want a gaming browser, and they're more than twice as likely as Gen X to consider switching because an influencer recommended it.

Who took part?

The Alternative Browsers Report is the first edition of Opera's research into how Americans choose their browsers and what they know about their options. The survey was fielded by Pollfish and analyzed by Opera. All findings presented are based on responses from a national sample of 925 U.S. adults aged 18+. This is part one of two.

925
Respondents
U.S., ages 18+

500
Mainstream Browser Users
Main browser is Chrome, Edge, or Safari

425
Alternative Browser Users
Any other browser

Main browser	Group	N
Chrome	Mainstream	200
Edge	Mainstream	150
Safari	Mainstream	150
Firefox	Alternative	150
Brave	Alternative	100
Opera GX	Alternative	66
Opera	Alternative	61
Other	Alternative	20
Vivaldi	Alternative	18
Arc Browser	Alternative	10

Generation	Ages	N
Gen Z	18 to 29	204
Millennials	30 to 45	355
Gen X	46 to 61	323
Boomers	62+	44

Gender	N
Women	472
Men	453

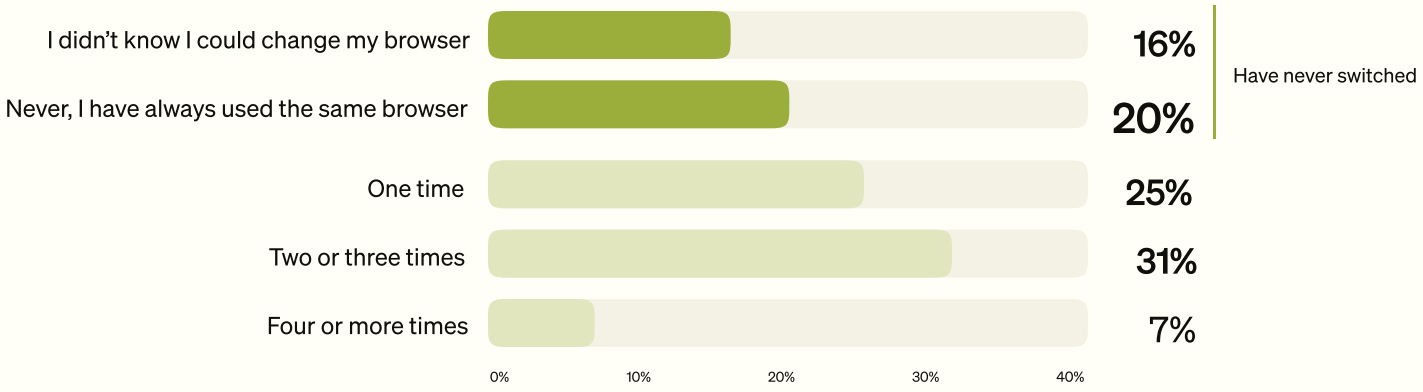
Section 01

For many people, the browser is a default, not a decision.

The browser has become the window to nearly everything people do online, yet choosing one remains among the least-discussed decisions in tech. Despite more and more of daily life running through it, from banking and shopping to work and gaming, the conversation about which browsers are out there has stayed mostly among enthusiasts.

For everyone else, it's simply the one that came with their device. Most mainstream users are open to switching, but a meaningful share don't know the alternatives that exist.

More than 1/3 of mainstream browser users have never switched browsers



Q: How many times have you changed your main browser?

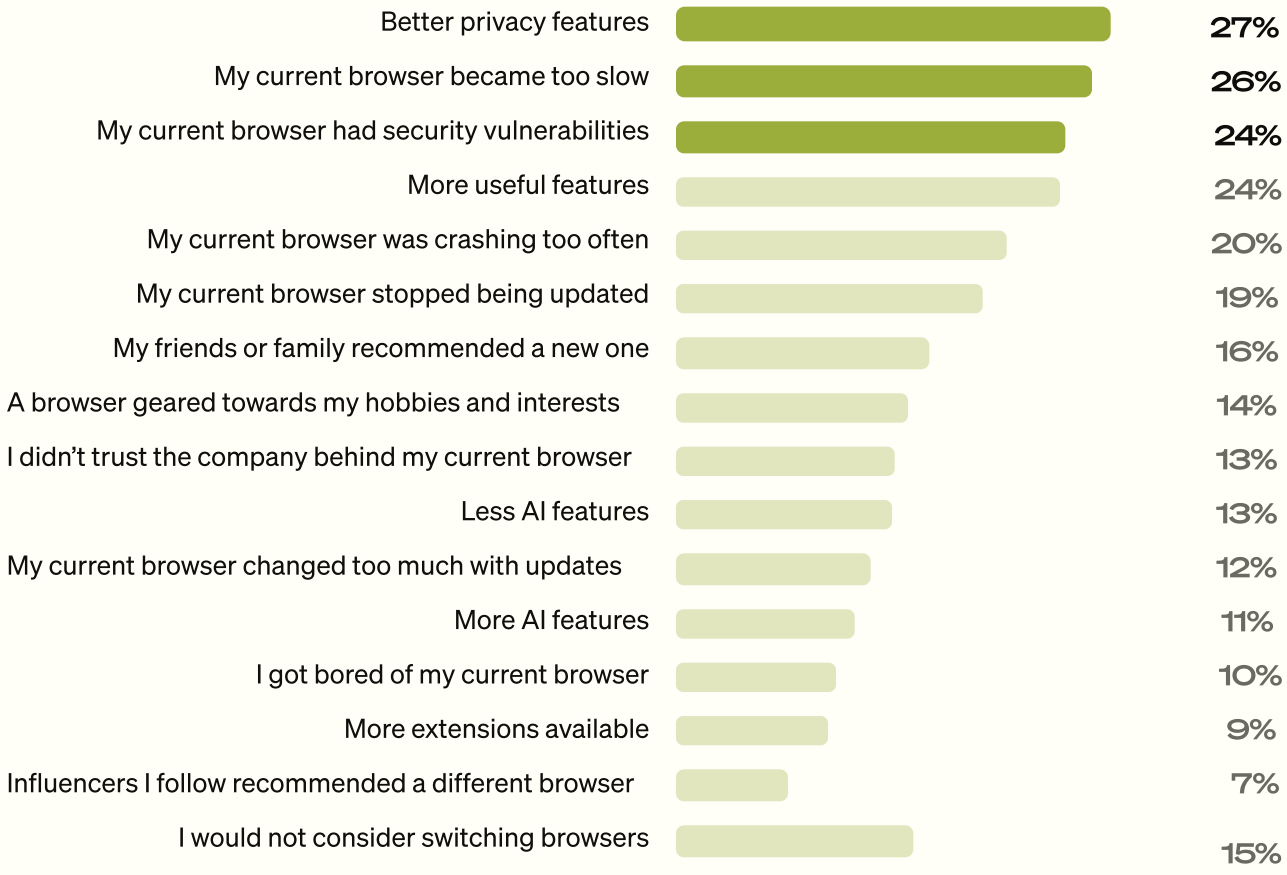
In context

For many mainstream users, the browser was never a decision. Sixteen percent (16%) didn't know a browser could be changed, so the one that came with their device is the one they use. That makes distribution, not head-to-head comparison, the biggest driver of browser market share.

Once that first switch is made, it becomes a domino effect. Sixty-four percent (64%) of people who use Chrome, Edge, or Safari have switched browsers at least once. Thirty-one percent (31%) of mainstream users have changed browsers two or three times and 7% four or more times, meaning six in 10 of those who have switched have done it more than once.

85% of mainstream browser users would consider switching for the right reason

What could make them switch



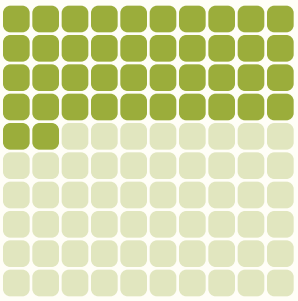
Q: What could make you consider switching to a new browser?

In context

The reasons people would switch are mostly practical. Privacy, speed, and security lead the list, while recommendations from friends, family, and influencers rank lower, suggesting a browser has to prove itself on performance and protection first. Many of the top triggers are moments when something goes wrong, revealing that loyalty to the default is thinner than market share suggests, since it often lasts only as long as the browser keeps meeting basic expectations.

Awareness rarely reaches past the big four.

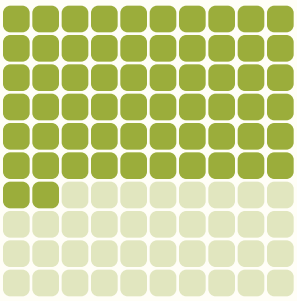
42% of all respondents haven't heard of a single browser beyond Chrome, Safari, Edge, and Firefox



42%

All respondents

haven't heard of any browser beyond the big four



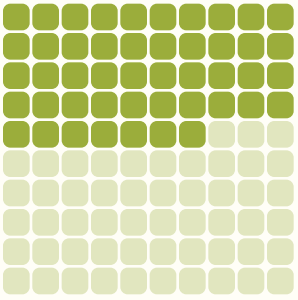
62%

Chrome, Edge, and Safari users

haven't heard of any browser beyond the big four

Q: Which of the following browsers have you heard of before?

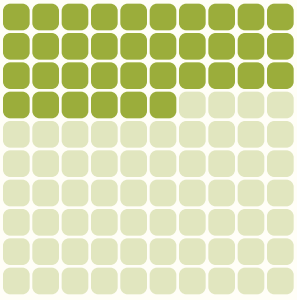
47% of women haven't heard of a single browser beyond the big four



47%

Women

haven't heard of any browser beyond the big four



36%

Men

haven't heard of any browser beyond the big four

Q: Which of the following browsers have you heard of before?

In context

Before consumers buy a new phone or laptop they consider factors like screen size, storage, and pricing - all features that are promoted by companies. What they don't consider or even hear about is the browser it comes with. Nobody gives browser options in the buying process, so most people never find out there's a choice. One tab leads to another, and the browser you start with tends to be the one you stay with.

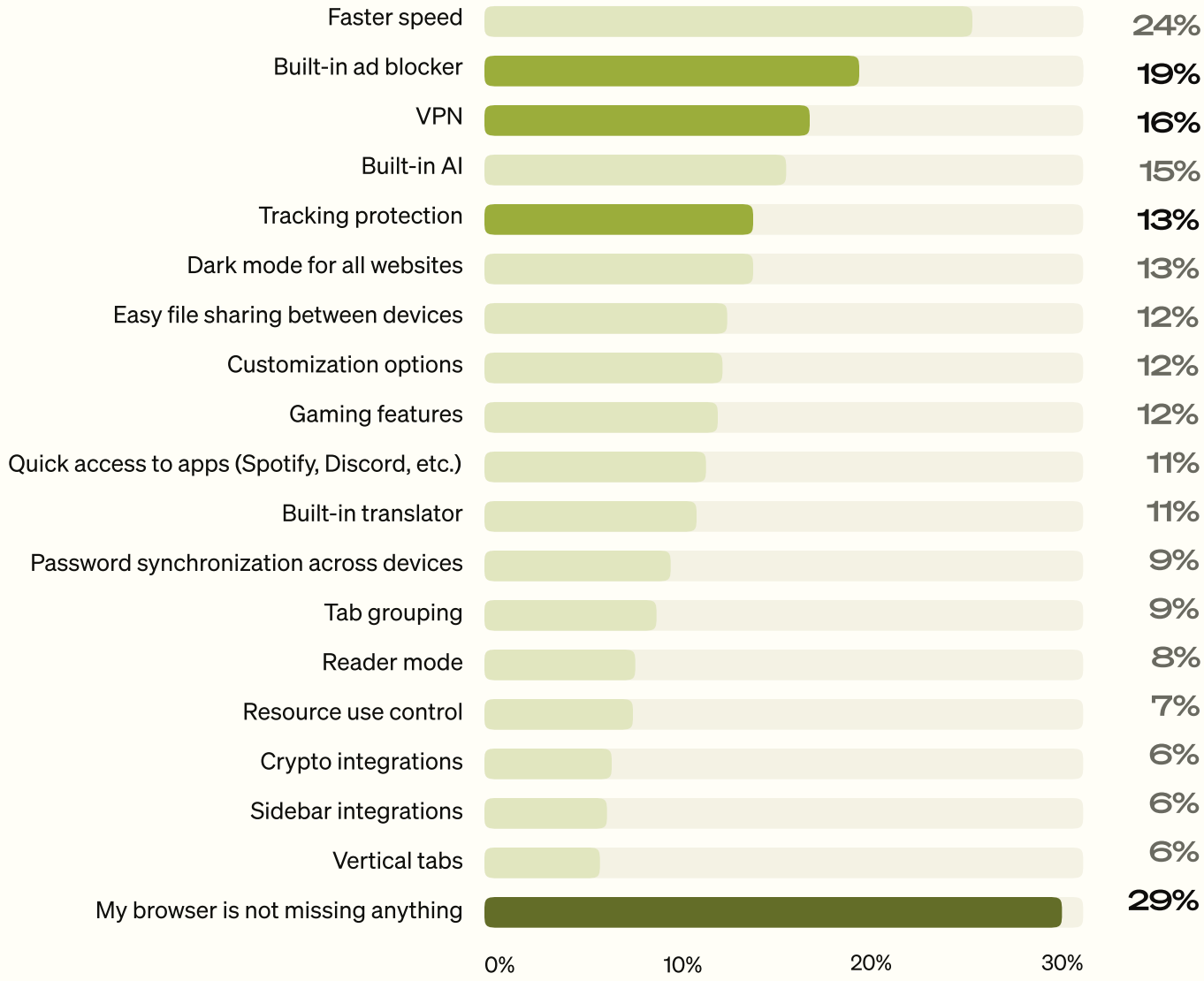
Section 02

People know what they want from a browser, even if they don't realize it already exists.

Technology has spent years learning to fit around the people using it. What we watch, listen to, shop for, and read is shaped by recommendations built around our tastes, and people now expect that kind of curation in nearly every app and service they touch. The browser, where most of that activity actually happens, has largely flown under the radar.

That is starting to change. Tools that once had to be tracked down separately or bolted on as add-ons now come built into many browsers, and newer browsers are designed around how specific groups of people spend their time online. People are beginning to see that a truly curated online experience starts with the browser everything else runs through.

71% say their browser is missing something, and security features top the list



35% said their browser is missing at least one of a VPN, ad blocker, or tracking protection.

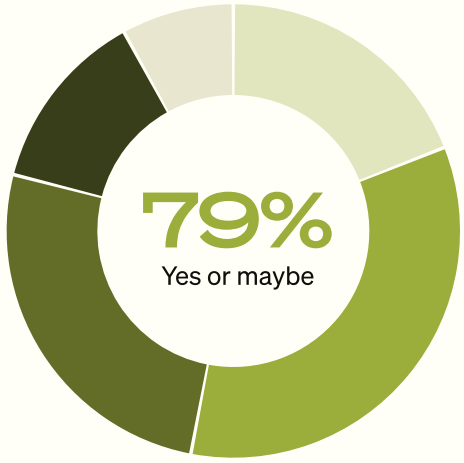


One of the three **25%** Two of the three **8%** All three **2%** None of the three **65%**

Many people chose more than one security feature, so the individual figures above add up to more than 35%.

Q: Is there anything you think your main browser is missing?

Nearly 8 in 10 would switch to, try, or consider a browser built for their interests



Yes or maybe · 79%

Yes, I'd switch to one	19%
Yes, I'd be curious to try one	34%
Maybe, depending on what it offers	26%

No · 21%

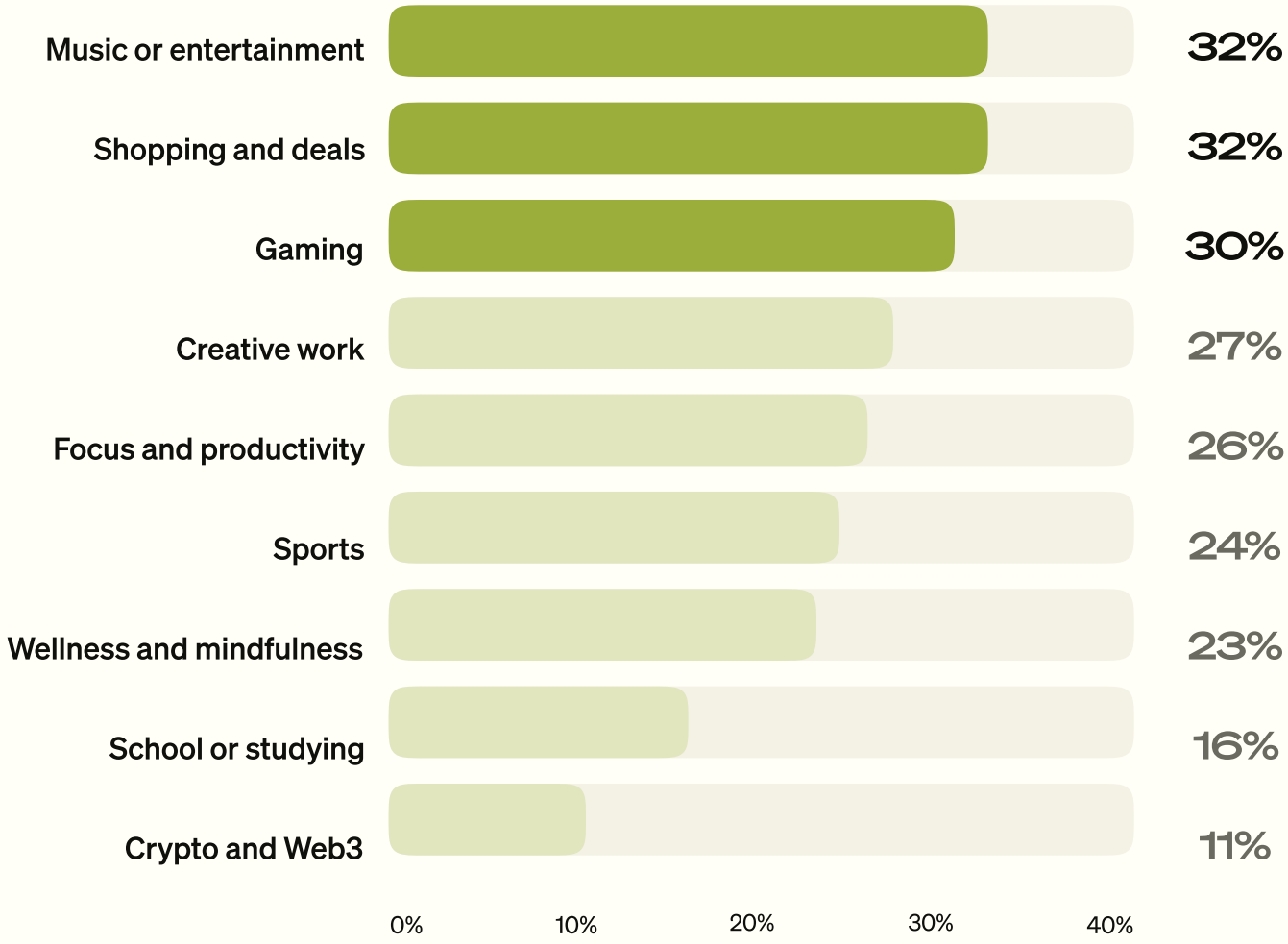
No, I'm happy with the browser I have	13%
No, I just want a browser that works	8%

Q: Would you be interested in a browser designed around your interests or hobbies?

In context

Consumer brands figured out long ago that one product rarely serves everyone. A shampoo company sells different formulas for different hair, and a carmaker sells a sedan, a pickup, and an SUV. Software has mostly gone the other way, with each major tech company offering one browser and expecting it to suit billions of people. The data shows that consumers are no longer content with a one size fits all browser experience though and to capture more market share companies need to begin curating for different audiences.

People are open to browsers built around a wide range of interests



Q: What kind of browser would you be most interested in?

In context

Think about how differently two people use their browser in a day. One has a playlist going while they hunt for deals between meetings. Another has a design project open next to a pile of reference images, with a live game score tucked in the corner. Most browsers treat them exactly the same, even though their days look nothing alike. A browser shaped around what someone's into can make all of that feel a little more like theirs.

Section 03

Gen Z inherited their first browser, but plans to pick the next one themselves.

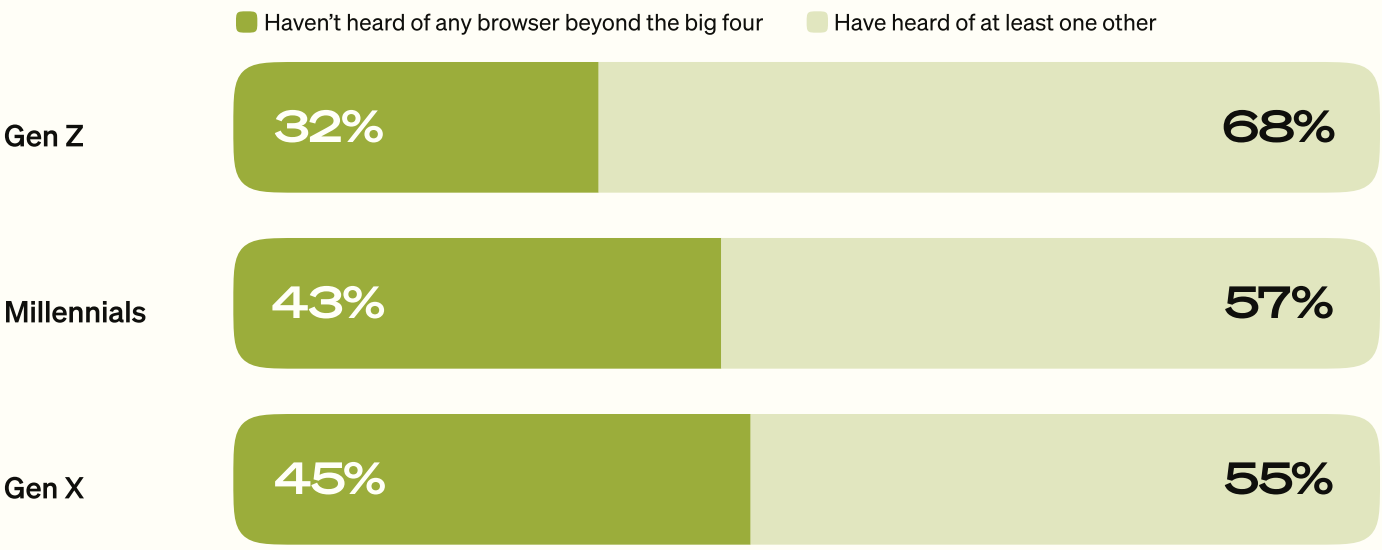
For browser makers, Gen Z is the audience that will shape what comes next. Many first went online on a shared family computer or a school-issued laptop, where the browser was simply whatever came pre-installed. Now, as they choose their own devices and build their own digital routines, they have more reason to question those defaults and look for something that better fits how they use the internet.

Gen Z treats software as something to personalize, the same way they curate playlists, feeds, and setups. They expect the tools they use to reflect their tastes and they move on quickly when something feels generic. That raises the bar for browsers to offer more than a way to load web pages.

Growing up online makes a difference.

Younger adults are the most likely to know of alternative browsers.

68% of Gen Z are aware of alternative browsers



Q: Which of the following browsers have you heard of before?

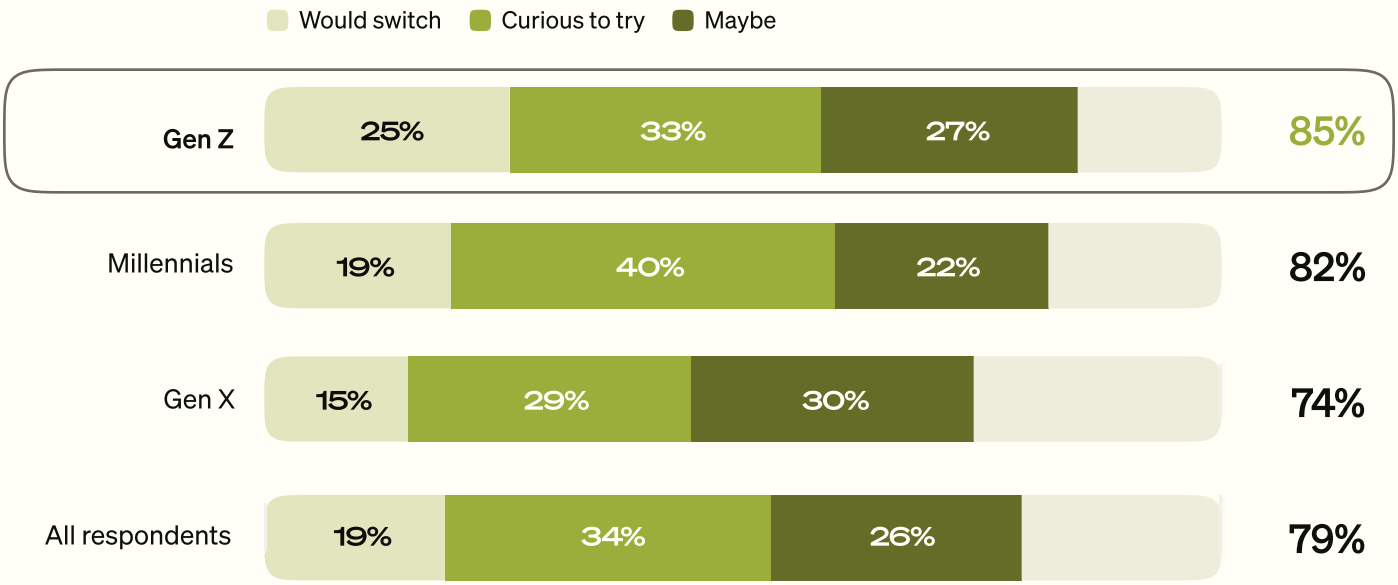
In context

For Gen Z, the internet has always been part of everyday life. Many came online through gaming, streaming, and social platforms, where trying new apps, mods, and extensions is part of the experience and recommendations travel fast through friends and creators.

That habit of exploring carries over to the browser. Gen Z is the generation most likely to know the alternatives, and the most interested in a browser built around how they actually spend their time online.

85% of Gen Z would switch to, try, or consider a browser designed around their interests

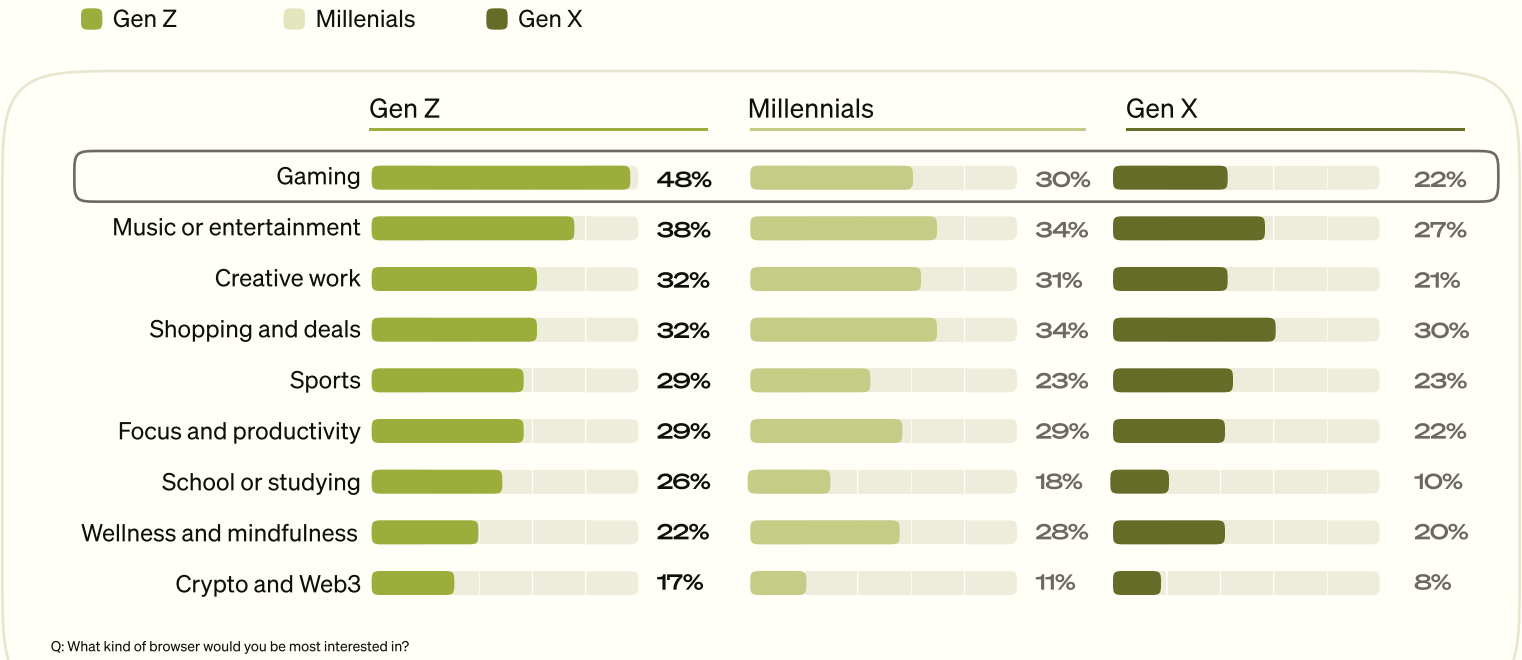
That's the highest of any generation.



	Would switch, try, or consider	Would switch	Curious to try	Maybe
Gen Z (18–29)	**84.8%**	25.0%	33.3%	26.5%
Millennials (30–45)	**81.7%**	19.2%	40.3%	22.3%
Gen X (46–61)	**73.7%**	14.9%	29.1%	29.7%
All respondents	**78.8%**	18.6%	33.9%	26.3%

Q: Would you be interested in a browser designed around your interests or hobbies?

Nearly half of Gen Z want a browser built for gaming



Q: What kind of browser would you be most interested in?

In context

For a lot of Gen Z, gaming is how they hang out. A night of playing usually means a game in one window and a browser in another, with voice chat going, a friend's stream open on the side, and a guide pulled up for the tricky part. The browser ends up being part of the setup, right alongside the headset and controller. So it makes sense that they'd want one built for how they actually play, and that can keep up with everything else running at the same time.

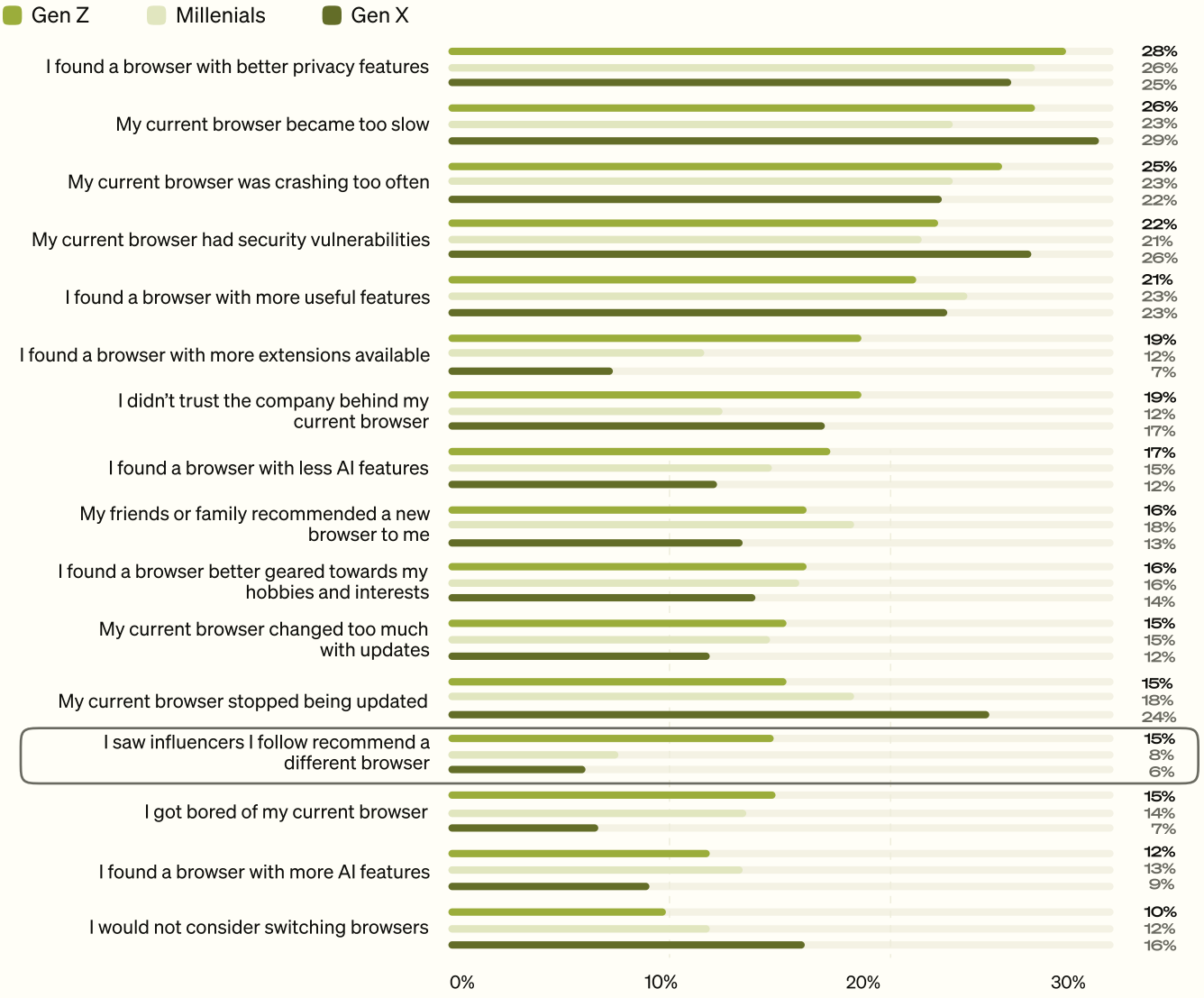
39% of Gen Z multi-browser users keep one for gaming or streaming, compared with 14% of Gen X

Gen Z rarely relies on just one browser. Nearly half (48%) regularly use more than one.

Share of each generation	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X
Gaming or streaming	39%	25%	14%
Work or school	32%	27%	20%
Websites that don't work wel l in my main browser	26%	31%	31%
Online banking or shopping	26%	29%	22%
Private or more secure browsing	25%	25%	25%
It's the default on another device I use	23%	19%	20%
Keeping different accounts logged in at the same time	22%	22%	22%
It's a backup for when my main browser isn't working	21%	25%	21%
Keeping work and persona l browsing separate	20%	31%	19%
Testing or comparing browsers	19%	23%	15%
Using AI features or tools my main browser doesn't have	17%	16%	13%

Q: What do you use the other browsers for?

Gen Z is more than twice as likely as Gen X to consider switching on an influencer's recommendation



Q: What could make you consider switching to a new browser?

In context

Gen Z spends a lot of time online with the people they follow, whether that's scrolling on socials, keeping a streamer on in the background, or catching up on their favorite creator's latest video. Part of what makes those creators influential is how relatable they feel. So when they recommend something they genuinely use, it comes across less like an ad and more like a tip from a friend. That influence extends beyond the products they promote to the tools they use every day. If a streamer has a browser that makes their setup look faster, more customizable, or just more fun, viewers are likely to take notice.

Conclusion

The interest is there. Awareness is the gap.

The findings describe a market that is more open than it looks. Many people are ready to try something new, and what stands in the way is knowing where to start.

Closing that gap starts with the people who have only ever known the big mainstream browsers and have rarely been shown what else is out there. Gen Z is already ahead, discovering software through the games, streams, and creators they follow and expecting it to fit how they spend their time.

Second browsers show where the shift is heading. Many people already split their time across browsers for gaming, work, or privacy, piecing together a setup no single default provides. Browsers built for a specific audience are positioned to turn that workaround into a first choice.

> **Most people would never buy a phone or a laptop without comparing a few options, yet the browser, which holds their passwords, their payment details, and nearly everything they do online, rarely gets that same look. The interest is clearly there. People want stronger privacy built in, they want browsers that reflect what they care about, and most would switch for the right reason. What's missing is awareness, and that's a gap the whole industry should want to close.**
>
> Maciej Wojcik · Senior Marketing Director, Opera GX

About Opera

Opera is a user-centric and innovative software company focused on enabling the best possible internet browsing experience across all devices. Hundreds of millions worldwide use Opera's mobile and desktop browsers for their speed, security, and unique features, enhanced with integrated AI that enables users to navigate and interact with the web in new transformative ways. Founded in 1995 and headquartered in Oslo, Norway, Opera is listed on the Nasdaq stock exchange under the ticker symbol OPRA. Download Opera products from opera.com and learn more about Opera at investor.opera.com.