

## **Best Friends, Siblings, and Spouses Should Sleep with One Eye Open as They Are the Top Potential Targets for Pranksters This April Fool's Day**

*Over a third of adults will attempt to pull off at least one prank on April 1<sup>st</sup>*

**NEW YORK, N.Y. – March 25, 2015** – Maybe you convinced your husband that you were pregnant, years after that was even an option, just to see the terrified look in his eyes. Or perhaps your parents woke you up on a weekend claiming you were late for school. Then again, it's possible you're one of the 24% of Americans who still think "Kick Me" signs are funny. But whether you're the prank-er, the prank-ee, or just the bystander laughing in the background, April 1<sup>st</sup> marks the height of practical jokes every year as Americans celebrate April Fool's Day.

Nearly two-fifths of Americans anticipate being the target of at least one prank this April Fool's Day (37%), while over a third will attempt to pull off at least one prank of their own (35%). Additionally, 18% of Americans affirm that they have a family tradition of pranking one another on April Fool's Day.

Because 70% of Americans believe men are more likely than women to pull pranks, women pranksters have a greater element of surprise on their side. In reality, men and women are almost equally likely to participate in April foolery (36% men vs. 34% women).

These are some of the results of **The Harris Poll**® of 2,221 U.S. adults surveyed online between February 11 and 17, 2015.

### **Should you be worried?**

Anyone with a best friend, spouse/significant other, or sibling beware: more than seven in ten adults consider these people to be potential targets (76% best friend, 73% spouse/significant other, 72% siblings) and around a quarter consider each a "prime target" (22%, 25%, and 22%, respectively). Teenagers and co-workers should also be on their guard, as 69% and 64% of Americans, respectively, have them on their target lists.

As for parents, it's pretty much a coin toss as to whether they're considered potential targets, as 47% of Americans are open to pranking them, while 53% believe they're off-limits. In addition, the majority of Americans see young children (56%) as off-limits. Bosses and Teachers/Professors are likely to be the safest, as most Americans consider them off-limits as well (64% each).

### **In-person pranks trump digital deeds**

This may be the digital age, but only 19% of Americans prefer digital pranks to pranking someone in person. Still, a majority (56%) of those Americans planning to attempt a prank this year expect to use at least one of the following to aid in their hoax: a phone (37%), a text message (33%), social media (20%), email (18%), voicemail (9%), and video chat (5%).

### **Impressive pranks**

When asked to recount the best April Fool's Day prank they have ever been a part of, some standout responses included:

- "Somehow getting salt into spouse's coffee each year and then not doing it one year and watching her looking for it and never finding it all day."
- "Replacing my kid's computer desktop with a screenshot of their desktop and then hiding their actual files out of sight."
- "My whole class at college in an honors program didn't show up to class. Instead, we left dozens of drop slips on the professor's desk, saying we'd decided to drop the class. Each one was signed with a different name - so Mickey Mouse and Gandalf and God all decided to drop the honors class that day!"
- "I 'baked' a cake for my brother, but in reality it was a balloon covered in frosting, which consequently blew up in his face."
- "I had a friend call my husband, so he would not recognize the number, and told him it was the White House and it was very important he return the call (she left the phone # to the White House). He called the White House and they told him they did not call him. I was in the kitchen laughing."
- "Made my little brother cry (this was YEARS ago) when I called him at home from an outside line, convinced him I was in charge of Santa Claus's travel arrangements, and unfortunately I was taking his house off the itinerary for Christmas Eve that year."

### **Year-round media mayhem**

Unfortunately, pranks don't turn all frowns upside-down: 57% of American adults say they have a lower appreciation for pranks now that they're adults. Still, not all hope for humor is lost since 41% of Americans do think pranks are funny as long as they are not the target.

So it's no big surprise that when it comes to big digital shenanigans, Americans don't always feel the need to pull the prank themselves to reap the enjoyment of seeing others fooled. Forty-seven percent of Americans enjoy at least one type of media prank. Three in ten Americans get a kick out of listening to radio stations helping listeners pull-off prank calls (31%), one-fifth each appreciate television shows encouraging participants to prank each other for reward money (21%) and news outlets posting fake/satirical stories (18%), and 13% like it when celebrities make false announcements via social media.

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**TABLE 1  
PRANK TARGET LIST**

“Please rank where the following people would sit on your target list when preparing April Fool’s Day pranks?”

Base: All Adults

	<b>Off-limits</b>	<b>Potential Targets (NET)</b>	<b>Only if they’ve really earned it</b>	<b>Fair game</b>	<b>Prime target</b>
	%	%	%	%	%
Boss	<b>64</b>	<b>36</b>	18	14	4
Teacher/Professor	<b>64</b>	<b>36</b>	20	14	2
Young Child	<b>56</b>	<b>44</b>	18	20	6
Parents	<b>53</b>	<b>47</b>	17	24	7
Co-Worker	<b>36</b>	<b>64</b>	25	31	7
Teenager	<b>31</b>	<b>69</b>	21	34	14
Sibling	<b>28</b>	<b>72</b>	17	33	22
Spouse/Significant other	<b>27</b>	<b>73</b>	16	32	25
Best Friend	<b>24</b>	<b>76</b>	18	36	22

Note: Percentages may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

**TABLE 2a  
PRANK RELATED STATEMENTS – Summary Grid**

“How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?”

Base: All Adults

	<b>Somewhat/ Strongly Agree (NET)</b>	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	<b>Somewhat/ Strongly Disagree (NET)</b>	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Men are more likely than women to pull pranks.	<b>70</b>	27	43	<b>30</b>	18	12
Now that I am an adult, I have a lower appreciation for pranks.	<b>57</b>	25	32	<b>43</b>	24	19
I think pranks are funny as long as I am not the target.	<b>41</b>	10	31	<b>59</b>	32	28
I will be a target of at least one prank this April Fool’s Day.	<b>37</b>	9	28	<b>63</b>	30	34
I will attempt to pull off at least one prank this April Fool’s Day.	<b>35</b>	10	25	<b>65</b>	23	42
I still think “Kick Me” signs are funny.	<b>24</b>	6	19	<b>76</b>	25	51
I prefer digital pranks to pranking someone in person.	<b>19</b>	4	16	<b>81</b>	33	48
My family has a tradition of pranking one another on April Fool’s Day.	<b>18</b>	4	14	<b>82</b>	24	59

Note: Percentages may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

**TABLE 2b**  
**PRANK RELATED STATEMENTS**  
**Summary Table of Somewhat/Strongly Agree by Generation, Gender, and Children in household**  
 “How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?”

Base: All Adults

	Total	Generation				Gender		Will Attempt a Prank	
		Millennials (18-37)	Gen X (38-49)	Baby Boomers (50-68)	Matures (69+)	Male	Female	Yes	No
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Men are more likely than women to pull pranks.	<b>70</b>	70	69	71	68	73	67	74	67
Now that I am an adult, I have a lower appreciation for pranks.	<b>57</b>	44	57	63	71	53	61	41	66
I think pranks are funny as long as I am not the target.	<b>41</b>	46	41	37	37	40	41	60	30
I will be a target of at least one prank this April Fool’s Day.	<b>37</b>	42	36	35	31	38	36	77	16
I will attempt to pull off at least one prank this April Fool’s Day.	<b>35</b>	46	34	29	23	36	34	100	-
I still think “Kick Me” signs are funny.	<b>24</b>	28	27	23	13	27	22	41	15
I prefer digital pranks to pranking someone in person.	<b>19</b>	19	17	18	24	22	16	25	16
My family has a tradition of pranking one another on April Fool’s Day.	<b>18</b>	22	19	15	13	17	18	45	3

Note: Percentages may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

**TABLE 3**  
**DIGITAL PRANKS**  
**by Generation and Children in household**

“In the prank or pranks you are planning, which of the following, if any, do you plan to utilize? Please select all that apply.”

Base: Will Attempt An April Fool’s Day Prank

	Total	Generation			
		Millennials (18-37)	Gen X (38-49)	Baby Boomers (50-68)	Matures (69+)
	%	%	%	%	%
Phone call	<b>37</b>	48	25	33	30
Text message	<b>33</b>	44	30	26	6
Social media	<b>20</b>	30	15	13	3
Email	<b>18</b>	15	14	21	32
Voicemail	<b>9</b>	13	6	5	3
Video chat	<b>5</b>	10	2	3	-
None of the above	<b>44</b>	36	49	48	51

Note: Percentages may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

**TABLE 4**  
**MEDIA PRANKS**  
**by Generation, Gender, and Children in household**

“Which of the following media pranks, if any, do you enjoy? Please select all that apply.”

Base: All Adults

	Total	Generation				Gender	
		Millennials (18-37)	Gen X (38-49)	Baby Boomers (50-68)	Matures (69+)	Male	Female
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Radio stations helping listeners pull-off prank calls.	<b>31</b>	42	35	24	11	31	27
Television shows encouraging participants to prank each other for reward money.	<b>21</b>	31	23	16	5	22	17
News outlets posting fake/satirical stories.	<b>18</b>	30	20	10	7	22	16
Celebrities making false announcements via social media.	<b>13</b>	27	13	4	2	15	9
None of the above	<b>53</b>	37	48	62	82	52	58

Note: Percentages may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

## **Methodology**

This **Harris Poll** was conducted online, in English, within the United States between February 11 and 17, 2015 among 2,221 adults (aged 18 and over). Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, The Harris Poll avoids the words "margin of error" as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Poll surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in our panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

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