



What's Really Scaring Americans this Halloween

October is traditionally a time for fiends, fears and frights. But move over Dracula – a new survey shows that more Americans find unanticipated expenses and losing internet access scarier than Halloween monsters.

We conducted an online survey of n=1,000 Americans on October 16th and 17th, 2019. In the survey, we asked Americans how scary they found 30 different items, from everyday scenarios to fantastical events to some of Halloween's most classic creeps and crawlies.

Overall, some of America's biggest fears center around household finances. Over half of Americans find the prospect of losing their job (53%) or a member of their family getting sick (52%) very scary. And about a third found unexpected expenses, like a car breaking down (34%) or a refrigerator breaking (30%) very scary as well.

Q: How scary would each of the following situations be for you or your household?	% Saying "Very scary"
You lose your job	53%
A member of your family unexpectedly gets sick	52%
A major pipe bursts in your home	52%
Your car breaks down and needs a repair	34%
Your refrigerator breaks and needs to be replaced	30%

Unexpected expenses are particularly scary for households who don't have savings or income to spare. According to our research, 52% of Americans currently live paycheck to paycheck, and 58% say that an unexpected expense of \$400 would be stressful for their household.

But it's not just money matters giving Americans goosebumps – many are also terrified of suddenly losing access to technology. Four in ten say it would be very scary to lose all access to the internet for a month (40%), and three in ten would find it very scary to suddenly lose their smartphone (29%). Fewer fear being banned from Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram specifically, though two in ten (22%) find this very scary.

Q: How scary would you find each of the following scenarios?	% Saying "Very scary"
Your internet goes down and you can't get online for a month	40%
You lose your smartphone and can only ever use a 'dumb phone'	29%
You get banned from Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram for life	22%

Compared to surprise expenditures and losing the internet, many traditional Halloween monsters seem downright harmless. While three in ten Americans say that spiders are very scary (30%), fewer say so about classic villains like vampires (24%), ghosts (24%), clowns (21%), or witches (20%). Even Halloween staples like mummies (20%) and graveyards (19%) scored lower than every expenditure or technology scenario we tested.

Q: How scary do you find each of the following?	% Saying "Very scary"
Spiders	30%
Vampires	24%
Ghosts	24%
Bats	23%
Clowns	21%
Witches	20%
Mummies	20%
Graveyards	19%

So remember – if you want to give your neighbors a scare this Halloween, keep the monsters out of your yard, and find an inflatable repair bill or dead Wi-Fi signal instead!

MOVE OVER, DRACULA.

Americans find **unanticipated expenditures** much scarier than Halloween monsters.

Surprise bills are particularly scary for households without sufficient savings.

34% of Americans currently live paycheck to paycheck, and 58% say that an unexpected expense of \$400 would be stressful for their household.

Fear factors

Americans say these are "very scary"...

53% you lose your job	30% SPIDERS
52% a member of your family unexpectedly gets sick	24% VAMPIRES
52% a major pipe bursts in your home	24% GHOSTS
34% Your car breaks down and needs a repair	23% BATS
30% Your refrigerator breaks and needs to be replaced	21% CLOWNS

PSB Research conducted an online survey of n=1,000 Americans on October 16th and 17th, 2019. In the survey, we asked Americans how scary they found 30 different items, from everyday scenarios to fantastical events to some of Halloween's most classic creeps and crawlies. This infographic was designed by PSB, with stock icons sourced from artists at Flaticon.

Questions? Ideas? Learn more about PSB's custom global research & consulting at psbresearch.com

WI-FI OVER WEREWOLVES.

Americans are more scared of losing the internet than of the thought of running into Halloween creeps and crawlies.



40%
are "very" afraid of their internet going down, and not being able to go online for a month.



29%
are "very" afraid of losing their smartphone, and not being able to get another one.



22%
are "very" afraid of getting banned from Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram for life.

Fear

Factors

30%
SPIDERS



24%
VAMPIRES



24%
GHOSTS



Americans say these are "very scary"

If you want to scare someone, leave the monster costume at home, and just hide their smartphone!

Questions? Ideas? Learn more about PSB's custom global research & consulting at psbresearch.com

PSB Research conducted an online survey of n=1,000 Americans on October 16th and 17th, 2019. In the survey, we asked Americans how scary they found 30 different items, from everyday scenarios to fantastical events to some of Halloween's most classic creeps and crawlies. This infographic was designed by PSB, with stock icons sourced from artists at Flaticon.

