

Jamie Ballard - October 31, 2025



A new YouGov survey on protesting finds that large majorities of Americans find it acceptable to protest through methods such as writing letters, signing petitions, and calling representatives. These are also among the forms of protest Americans are most likely to have participated in themselves, out of 24 asked about in the poll. Democrats are more likely than Republicans to find many acts of protest acceptable, and they are also more likely to have engaged in many of these acts themselves.

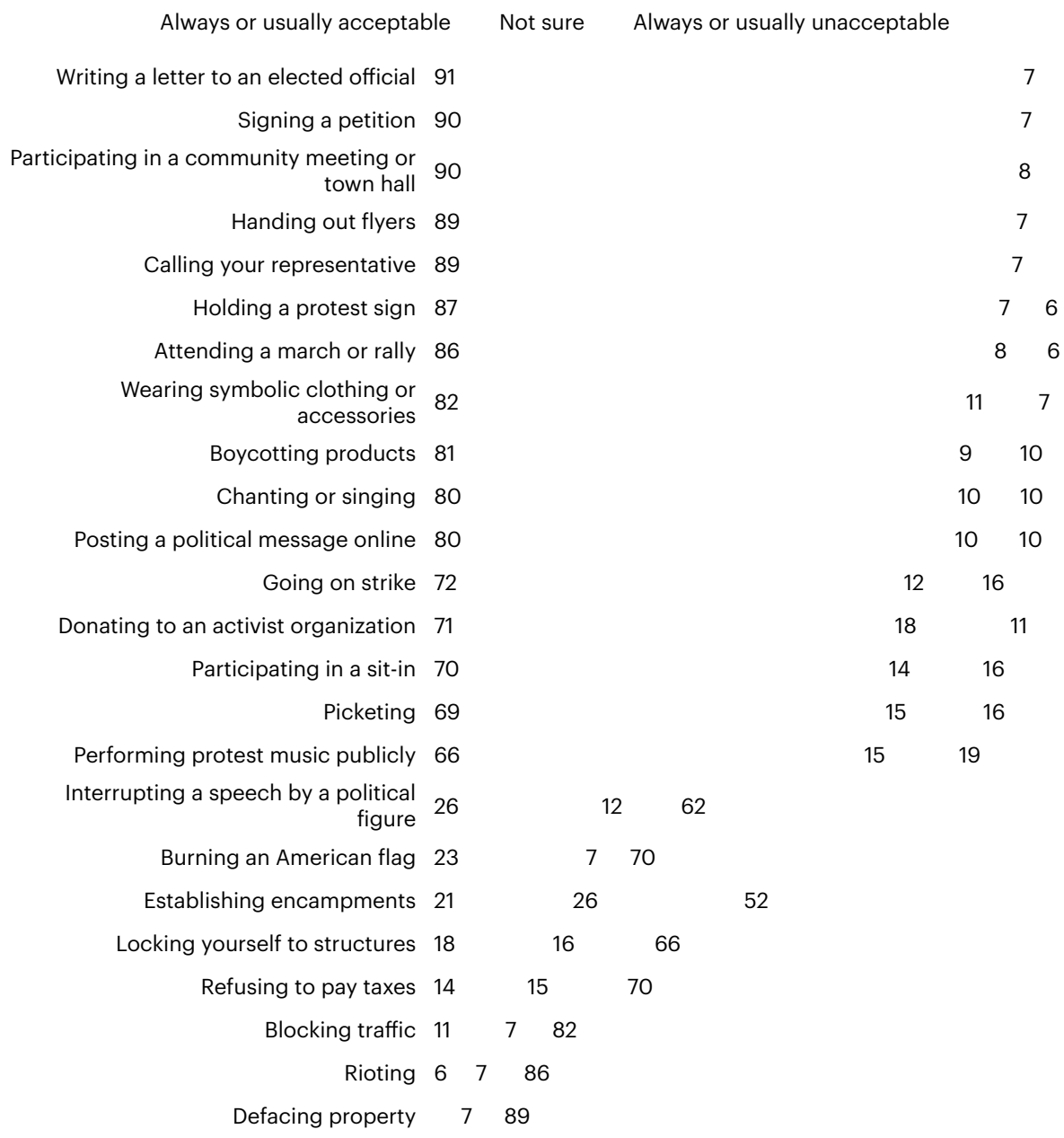
Around nine in 10 Americans find each of the following forms of protest to be

always or usually acceptable: writing a letter to an elected official (91%), signing a petition (90%), participating in a community meeting or town hall (90%), handing out flyers (89%), and calling your representative (89%).

The forms of protest that the largest shares of Americans find unacceptable are defacing property (89%), rioting (86%), and blocking traffic (82%).

Interrupting a speech by a political figure and burning an American flag are each considered acceptable protest tactics by one-quarter of Americans

Do you consider the following form of protest to be...? (% of U.S. adult citizens)



Democrats are more likely than Republicans to say many of the forms of protest asked about are acceptable. Among the largest differences: 42% of Democrats and 5% of Republicans say burning an American flag is an acceptable form of protest. 83% of Democrats and 53% say performing protest music publicly is an acceptable form of protest; 37% of Democrats and 7% of Republicans say the same about establishing encampments.

Democrats are more likely than Republicans to say it's acceptable to go on strike as a form of protest

Do you consider the following form of protest to be...? (% who say always or usually acceptable)



Note: Responses of "always unacceptable," "usually unacceptable," and "not sure" are not shown.

Democrats are more likely now than they were in September 2023 to say sit-ins are an acceptable way to protest (85% vs. 66%). They are also more likely now than they were in 2023 to say burning the American flag is an acceptable form of protest (42% vs. 26%).

Republicans are less likely now than they were in September 2023 to say chanting or singing is an acceptable form or protest (71% vs. 84%). They are also less likely now than they were in 2023 to say picketing is an acceptable way to protest (63% vs. 73%).

What are the ways Americans have protested? 59% of Americans have participated in at least one of the 24 forms of protest asked about. The most common form of protest Americans have participated in is signing a petition (44%). Many have also protested by boycotting products (30%), writing a letter to an elected official (27%), posting a political message online (26%), or calling their representative (24%).

44% of Americans have protested by signing petitions

Which, if any, of the following forms of protest have you ever participated in? Select all that apply. (% of U.S. adult citizens)

Signing a petition	44
Boycotting products	30
Writing a letter to an elected official	27
Posting a political message online	26
Calling your representative	24
Attending a march or rally	20
Wearing symbolic clothing or accessories	20
Donating to an activist organization	18
Participating in a community meeting or town hall	18
Holding a protest sign	16
Handing out flyers	10
Chanting or singing	10
Picketing	4
Participating in a sit-in	4
Going on strike	3

Note: Responses selected by fewer than 3% of Americans are not shown; these are "performing protest music publicly," "interrupting a speech by a political figure," "blocking traffic," "refusing to pay taxes," "rioting," "burning an American flag," "establishing encampments," "locking yourself to structures," and "defacing property." Responses of "none of the above" also are not shown.

Three-quarters (76%) of Democrats and 57% of Republicans have participated in at least one of the 24 types of protests asked about. Democrats are more likely than Republicans to say they have donated to activist organizations (35% vs. 7%), attended a march or rally (37% vs. 10%), signed a petition (63% vs. 38%), and held a protest sign (30% vs. 6%).

Democrats are more likely than Republicans to have boycotted products and to have donated to activist organizations

Which, if any, of the following forms of protest have you ever participated in? Select all that apply. (%)



Note: Responses of "none of the above" are not shown. Responses selected by fewer than 3% of Americans are also not shown; these are "performing protest music publicly," "interrupting a speech by a political figure," "blocking

Americans 65 and older are more likely than younger adults to say they have participated in many forms of protest, including signing a petition (59% vs. 39%), writing a letter to an elected official (45% vs. 22%), and calling their representative (42% vs. 19%). Half (50%) of adults under 30 have not engaged in any of the forms of protest asked about, compared to only 29% of Americans 65 and older. (The younger the adult, the fewer years of adulthood they've had to engage in protest.)

Americans 65 and older are more likely than younger Americans to have to have protested by boycotting products and calling representatives

Which, if any, of the following forms of protest have you ever participated in? Select all that apply. (%)

	U.S. adult citizens	18- to 29-year-olds	30- to 44-year-olds	45- to 64-year-olds	65 and older
Signing a petition	44	31	37	46	59
Boycotting products	30	22	29	30	41
Writing a letter to an elected official	27	12	21	30	45
Posting a political message online	26	24	23	26	32
Calling your representative	24	14	14	25	42
Attending a march or rally	20	20	18	20	23
Wearing symbolic clothing or accessories	20	13	18	22	25
Donating to an activist organization	18	11	16	18	26
Participating in a community meeting or town hall	18	11	14	19	27
Holding a protest sign	16	20	16	12	20
Handing out flyers	10	9	5	9	17
Chanting or singing	10	11	7	8	13
Picketing	4	4	2	3	10
Participating in a sit-in	4	4	5	2	4
Going on strike	3	4	4	1	6

Note: Responses selected by fewer than 3% of Americans are not shown; these are "performing protest music publicly," "interrupting a speech by a political figure," "blocking traffic," "refusing to pay taxes," "rioting," "burning an American flag," "establishing encampments," "locking yourself to structures," and "defacing property." Responses of "none of the above" also are not shown.

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See the results for this YouGov survey

— Carl Bialik and Taylor Orth contributed to this article

Methodology: *This article includes results from an online survey conducted on October 16 - 20, 2025 among 1,109 U.S. adult citizens. Respondents were selected from YouGov's opt-in panel to be representative of adult U.S. citizens. The sample was weighted according to gender, age, race, education, 2024 presidential vote, 2020 election turnout and presidential vote, baseline party identification, and current voter registration status. 2024 presidential vote, at time of weighting, was estimated to be 48% Harris and 50% Trump. Demographic weighting targets come from the 2019 American Community Survey. Baseline party identification is the respondent's most recent answer given around November 8, 2024, and is weighted to the estimated distribution at that time (31% Democratic, 32% Republican). The margin of error for the overall sample is approximately 4%.*

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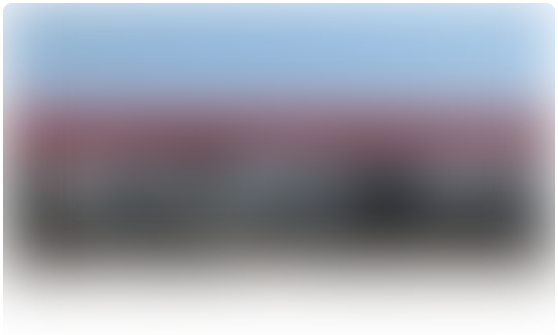
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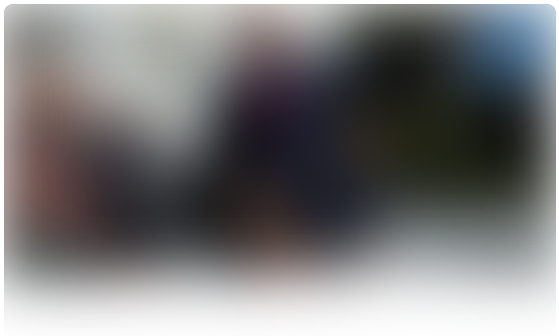
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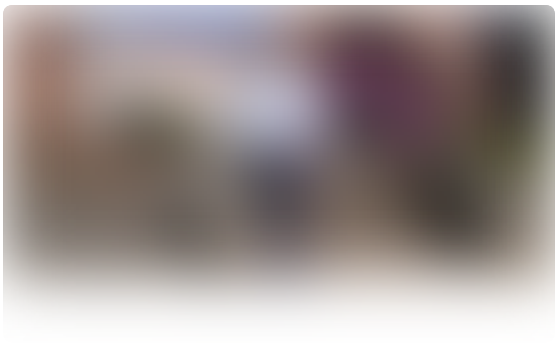
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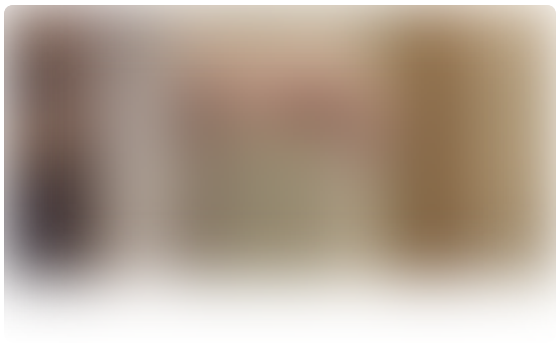
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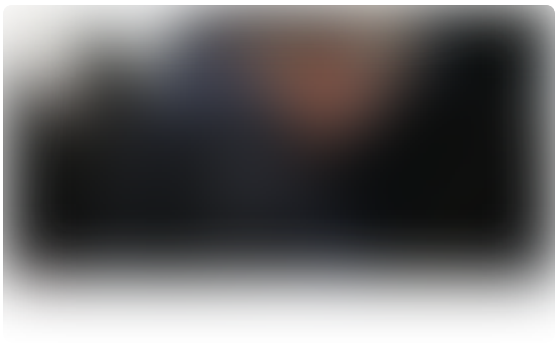
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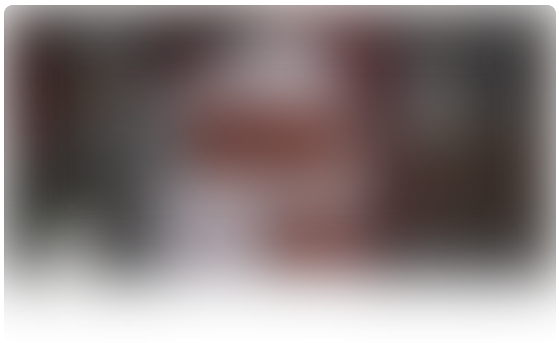
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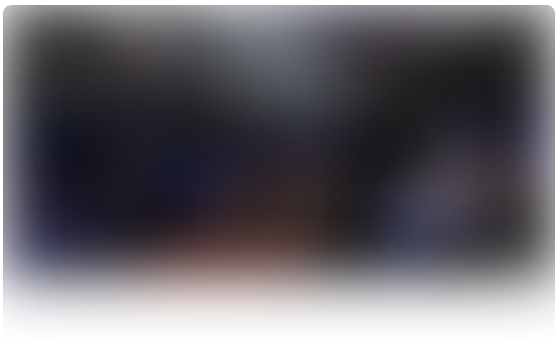
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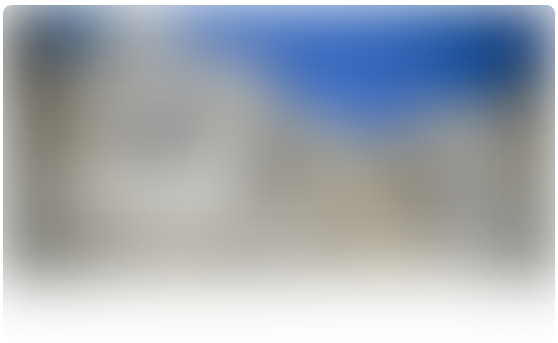
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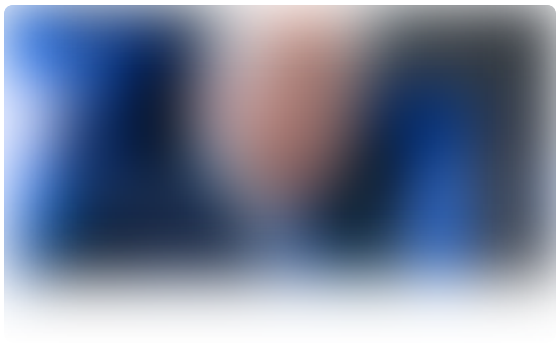
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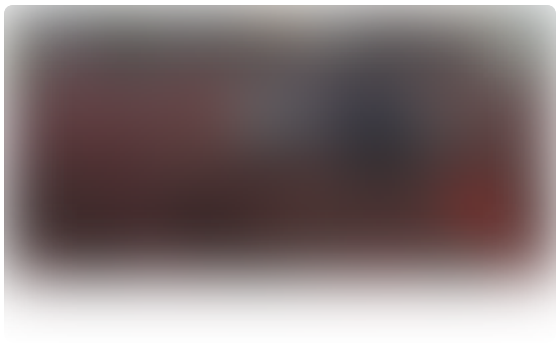
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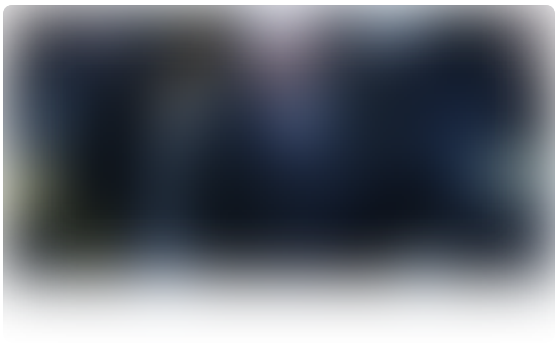
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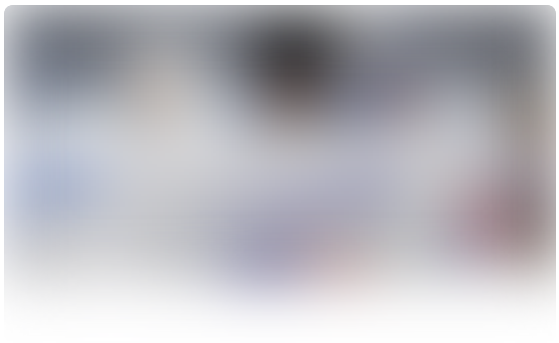
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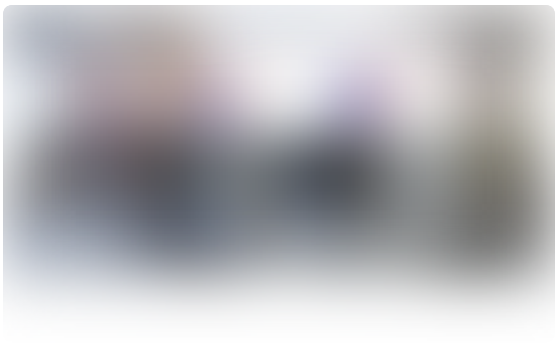
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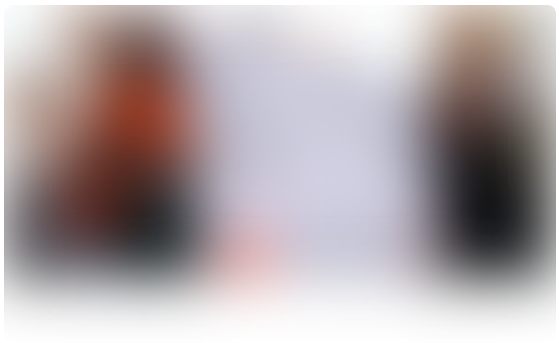
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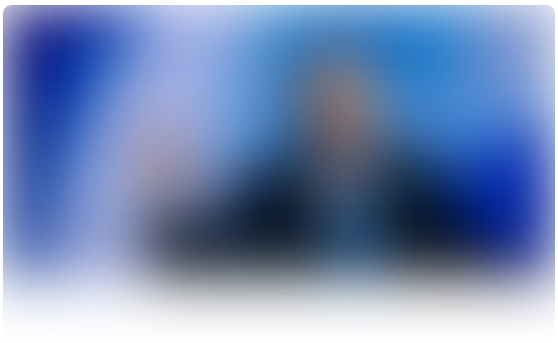
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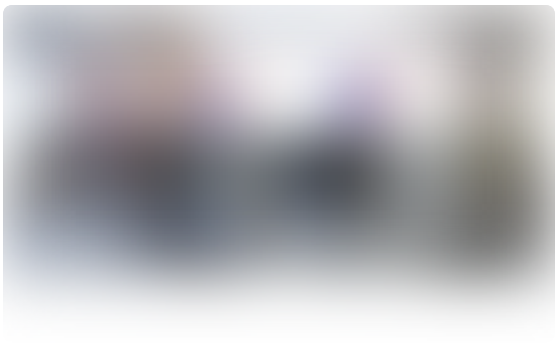
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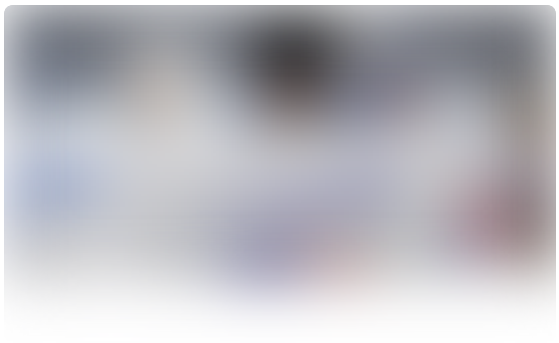
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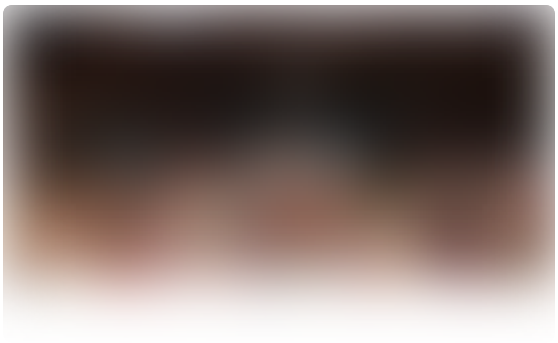
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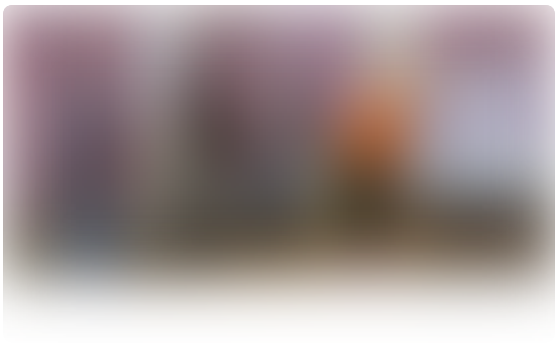
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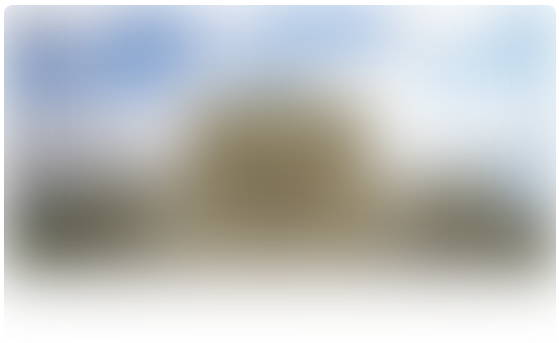
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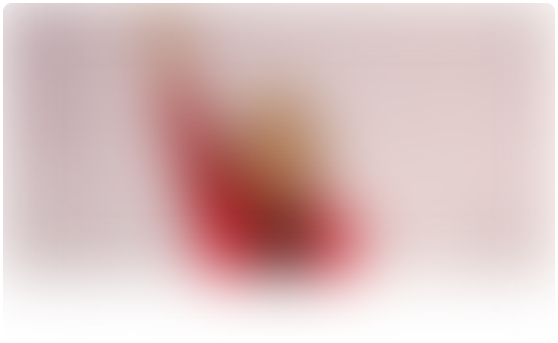
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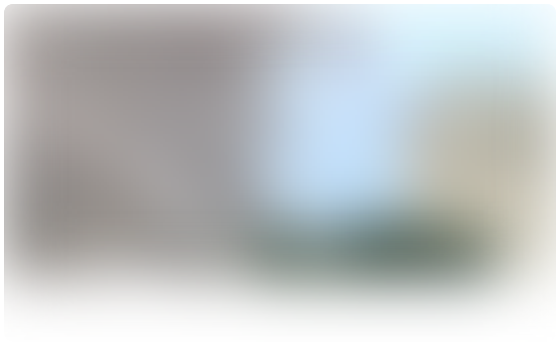
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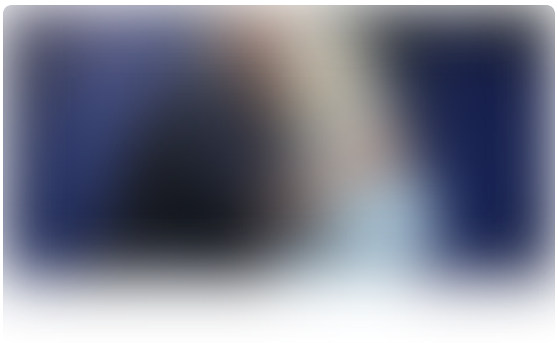
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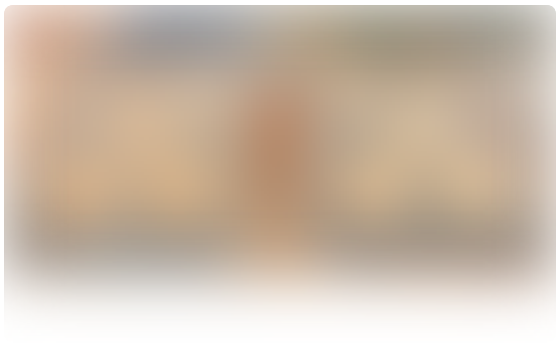
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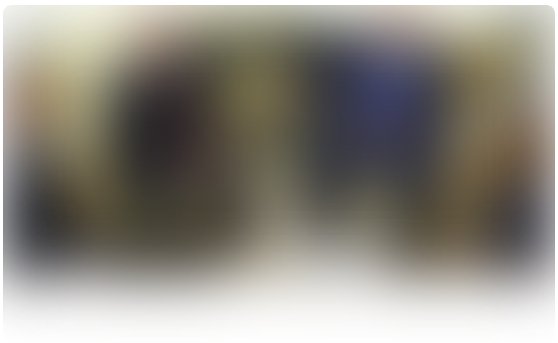
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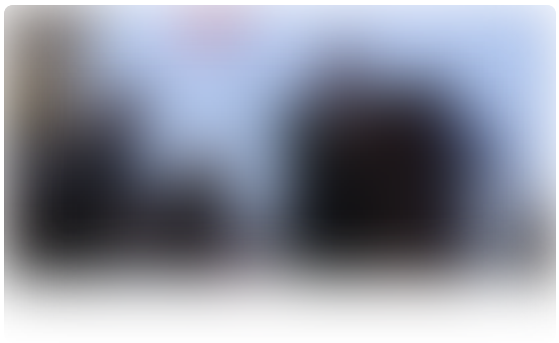
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