



**Millennials' Misconceptions about Gap Years Are the Biggest Barrier to Taking One**  
*New Research Finds that 41% of Millennials Think They Can't Afford to Take a Gap Year  
and 1 in 5 Believe It Will Set Them Back in Their Career*

**NEW YORK** — New research from [Topdeck Travel](#), the number one provider of group travel for 18-30 something's, reveals that 1 in 5 (19%) Millennials in the U.S. have never even thought about taking a gap year, even though nearly a quarter (22%) think that a gap year is an experience that everyone should have.

**Where's the Disconnect? Millennial Misconceptions**

For many Millennials around the world, gap years are the norm. They're setting time aside for travel after graduation or between jobs to gain life experience, immerse themselves in new cultures and decide what their next step in life should be. The study, conducted with third party research firm [YouGov](#), found that over 1 in 10 (11%) Millennials think that a gap year will better prepare them for the "real world," so where's the disconnect?

The research found the following misconceptions about the logistics involved in making a gap year happen, as well as the type of person taking a gap year, might actually be to blame:

- 41 percent said they can't afford to take a gap year
- 1 in 5 (20%) believe that gap years are only for those with plenty of free time
- Roughly 1 in 5 (21%) said that gap years are for people that don't know what they want to do for their career
- About 1 in 5 (19%) also think that taking a gap year will set them back in their career – men feel stronger about that with 21 percent fearing that they'll have more trouble in their career compared to just 17 percent of women

Fear could also be one of the driving forces keeping Millennials from taking a gap year, which is clear in Topdeck's findings:

- Nearly a fifth (18%) are nervous about feeling lonely while traveling alone during their gap year
- More than a quarter (26%) of female respondents said they're concerned about their safety while traveling alone
- Just 15 percent of male respondents reported feeling nervous about safety while traveling solo

- 1 in 7 (14%) saying that they are concerned about what their family and friends will think of them taking a gap year

“The research shows that many American Millennials are giving gap years a one-sided look and ignoring the solutions, like group travel, which will give them a built-in community and local trip leader to steer them away from any unfamiliar situations,” said Joe Ponte, General Manager at Topdeck Travel. “Gap years aren’t as black and white as Millennials might assume. By going on a group trip with Topdeck after graduation or between jobs, you can choose the trip length and style that’s best for you, surround yourself with likeminded travelers and have a local trip leader showing you the ropes. Topdeck offers the perfect mix of direction and independence, thanks to itineraries with all of the must-do activities and plenty of free time, so Millennials can still walk away with all the advantages of taking a full gap year without the many unknown factors.”

### **Millennials’ Biggest Concern – Their Career**

The stereotype about Millennials being baristas and living in their parents’ basements is also being disproved by Topdeck’s research, which found that Millennials are making their careers a top priority. Even with a recent [report](#) finding that 82 percent of employers saying that individuals with travel experience are more employable, Millennials don’t quite believe it. In fact, only 14 percent think that employers value someone that is well-traveled and 1 in 5 (21%) think it will be harder to find a job upon returning from a gap year between college and starting a career.

Millennials clearly don’t want anything to deter them from reaching their career goals, but they might be forgetting some important benefits of travel, like being more culturally aware, improving their communication skills and feeling more independent after navigating unfamiliar places. But traveling and pursuing a career don’t have to be mutually exclusive. Gap years can open Millennials up to the many career paths out there that incorporate travel like being a tour guide, working in travel industry jobs, or finding a company that provides their employees with travel opportunities.

So, the mere 13 percent of Millennials that said taking a gap year will help them on a professional level might actually be correct about the correlation between taking a gap year and career success!

For more information or to book your next trip using Topdeck Travel, please visit <https://www.topdeck.travel/>.

## **Research Methodology**

[Topdeck Travel](#) commissioned YouGov PLC—a third party, professional research and consulting organization—to poll the views of a representative sample of 4,515 adults, of which 1,090 were Millennials (aged 18-34). Fieldwork was undertaken between 28th - 30th June 2017. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all US adults (aged 18+). All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc.

## **About Topdeck Travel**

Topdeck is the number one provider of epic, organized group trips for 18-30 somethings. Founded in 1973 by friends with a double decker bus and a passion for adventure, Topdeck has grown to offer the most authentic, planned trips spanning Europe, Asia, Australia & New Zealand, North America, Africa and the Middle East. Topdeckers from around the world enjoy a travel experience led by fun, knowledgeable trip leaders, steeped in history, which retains the company's original sense of adventure combined with authenticity, friendship and great stories to share.

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