

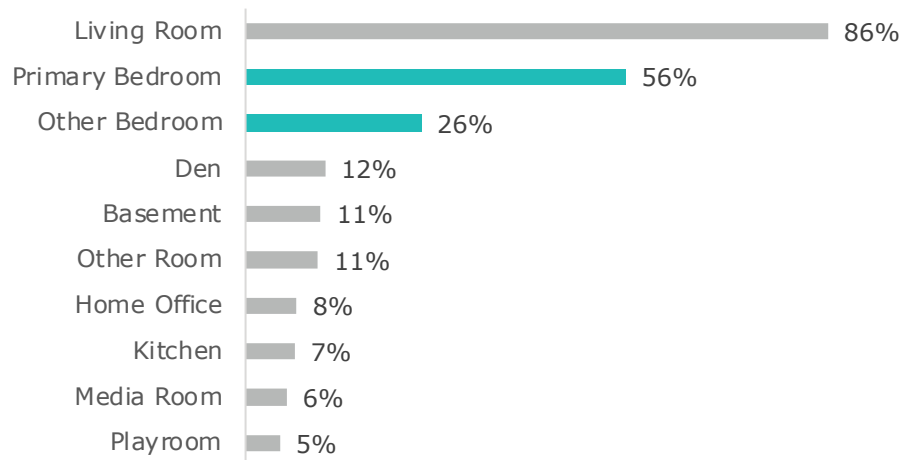
TV DECONSTRUCTED: BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

September 2026

The living room remains the TV industry's default self-image: the big screen in shared household space, the modern "fireplace." The latest DASH Mid-Year 2026 release confirms that this picture is still directionally right. Among U.S. households with at least one TV set, 86% have a set in the living room, and, in 71% of those, the living room TV is the most-watched set in the home.

But the living room does not tell the full story. For measurement providers, media companies and advertisers, opportunity and complication lurk behind closed doors. Bedroom TVs are widespread: nearly two-thirds of U.S. TV (set) households have at least one TV in a bedroom. And in 15% of households with TV sets, or roughly one in seven, a bedroom TV – not the living room set – is the most-watched TV in the home.

% U.S. TV (Set) HHs with a TV in Each Room

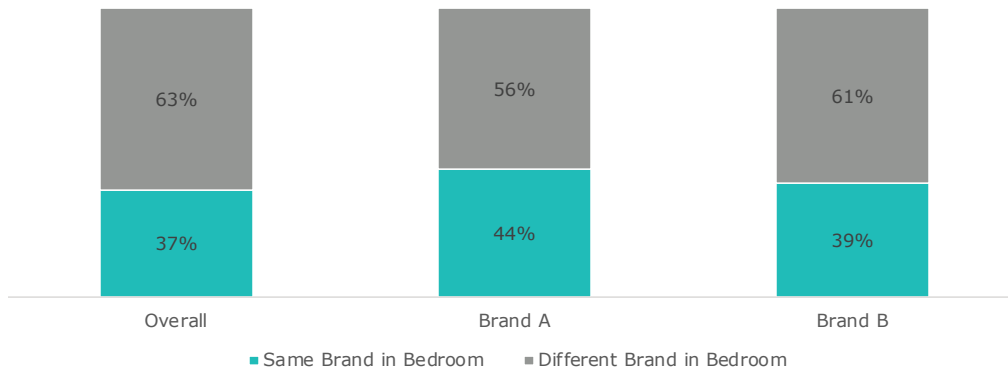


The bedroom creates measurement fragmentation

The bedroom can introduce a different OEM, a different connection path or both. That creates a challenge for measurement approaches that rely on any single smart TV manufacturer, device or service to represent viewing across the household.

Start with the television itself. In 63% of households with both a living room TV and a bedroom TV, the two sets are different brands. That means data generated by the living room TV's OEM will not capture viewing that occurs on the bedroom set. The pattern holds even for the big manufacturers: 56% of households with a Brand A television in the living room have a different brand in the bedroom.

Households with Different OEMs Between Living Room and Bedroom



But having different OEMs is only one way the bedroom can fall outside the living room's measurement footprint. Even when living room viewing is captured through a cable provider or connected-media device, bedroom TVs often use a different connection path.

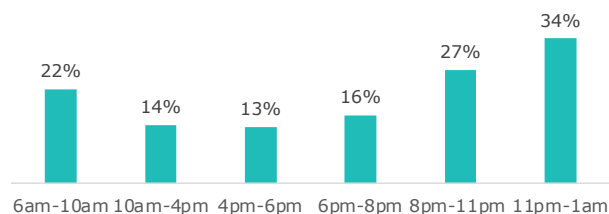
For example, 62% of households that connect their living room TV through Brand X cable service use a different mode of connection on the bedroom TV. Similarly, 60% of households that use TV a Brand Y connected-media device on the living room TV use a different connection method in the bedroom.

Of course, many households have TV sets in dens, gyms, kitchens, and even outside on decks. The broader point is that a household captured through one OEM, device or platform may still have meaningful TV activity occurring elsewhere in the home, outside the main measurement footprint.

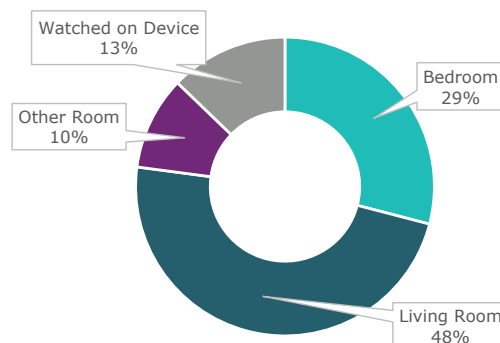
Bedroom viewing follows a different pattern

The gap in household viewership data is further complicated by the nature of bedroom viewing itself. Bedroom viewing is not just living room viewing moved to another screen. It follows a different rhythm, becoming more prominent later in the day and leaning more toward streaming.

Bedroom Viewing Rises Late at Night



Where do viewers stream during Prime Time?



Among people who watched TV from 8 p.m. to 11 p.m., 27% primarily watched on a bedroom TV. From 11 p.m. to 1 a.m., that rises to 34%, matching living room viewing.

Bedroom viewers are also generally more likely than living room viewers to stream across dayparts. During prime time, nearly 30% of those watching streaming video did so on a bedroom TV.

Connection data supports this hybrid picture. Bedroom TVs are more slightly more likely (39%) than living room TVs (34%) to connect through smart TV hardware, such as a Roku or Amazon Fire Stick.

The household is not one screen

The living room may be the front door to TV measurement, but DASH shows that some of the most important complications are waiting down the hall. A household may appear measurable through one platform, OEM or service, while meaningful viewing occurs on another screen, in another room, or through another connection path.

The bedroom is a reminder that TV fragmentation is not only happening across platforms. It is also happening inside the home. The living room remains the anchor of TV viewing, but the bedroom is a large, late-night and more fragmented viewing environment that can affect how audiences are measured, reached and valued.

About DASH

The DASH TV Universe Study produces a comprehensive picture of the US consumer television landscape. Accredited by the Media Rating Council, the ARF DASH TV Universe Study records, in granular detail, how American households connect to and consume TV across platforms, services and devices. A nationally projectable study conducted annually since 2021 in partnership with NORC at the University of Chicago, DASH produces reliable measures and modeling signals with applications in advertising, sales, measurement and strategy. DASH data is released to licensees twice a year in rolling, 12-month waves. Historical data is also available for trending. Visit thearf.org/DASH or contact us at DASH@thearf.org to learn more.