

Central Park Traffic Light Survey

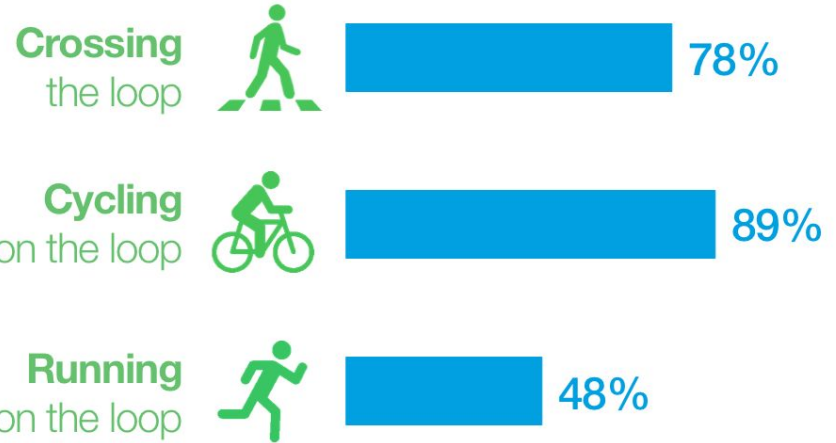


March, 2022

We surveyed people about the traffic lights in Central Park.

To start, we asked respondents to self-identify all the ways they interact with the lights.

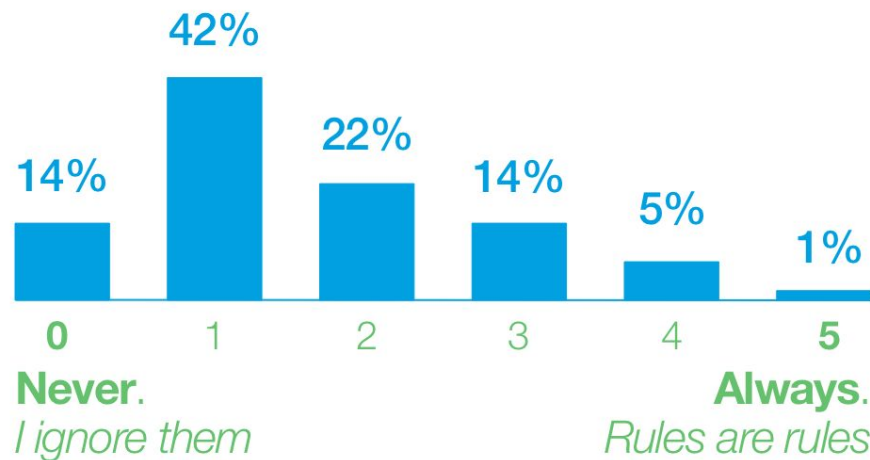
How respondents **interact with the traffic lights** in Central Park



We were primarily interested in people's behavior when they interacted with the traffic lights.

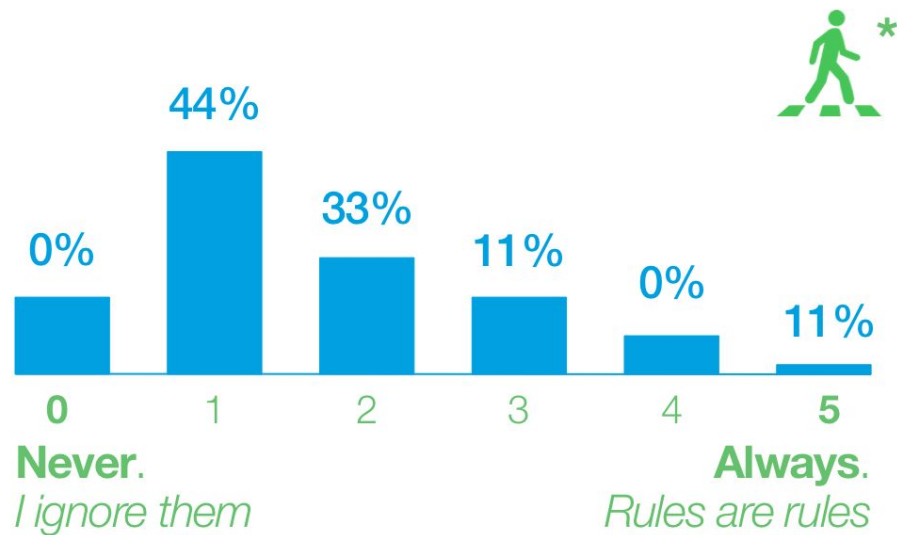
Almost 80% of respondents rarely, or never, obeyed them.

How often respondents **obey the traffic lights** in Central Park



When we disaggregate by those who self-identified as being "mostly a pedestrian", the results are similar.

How often respondents **obey the traffic lights** in Central Park



* **Mostly a pedestrian** respondents only

Respondents said...

“

I obey the lights when pedestrians are present; otherwise I treat them as yield signs and keep going if it is clear.

”



Respondents said...

“

If the light is red and there is a pedestrian crossing, I stop; If I am a pedestrian, I cross when it's all clear, regardless of the signal.

”



Respondents said...

“

I treat them as yields rather than stops, both when biking and walking.

”



Respondents said...

“

As a pedestrian or cyclist
I proceed when it's clear,
regardless of the lights.

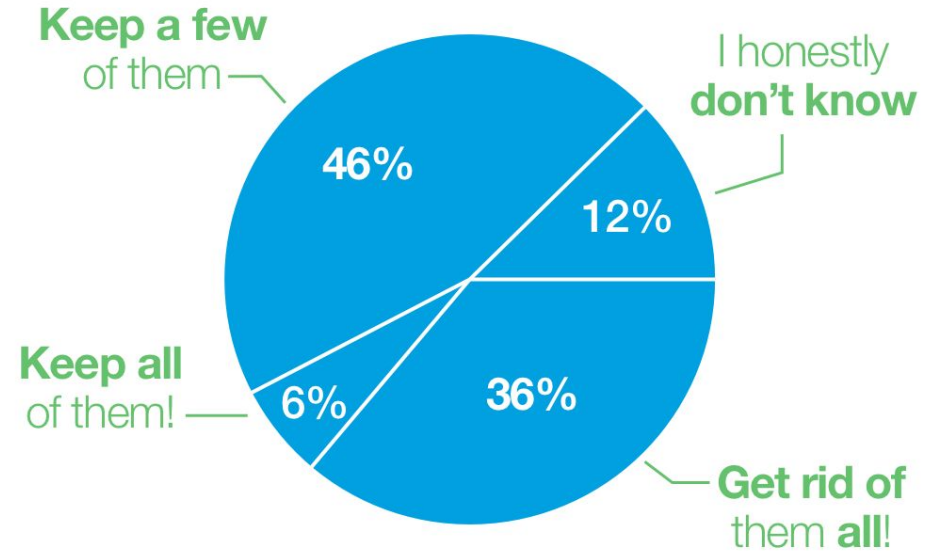
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We also asked respondents what they thought should be done with the traffic lights?

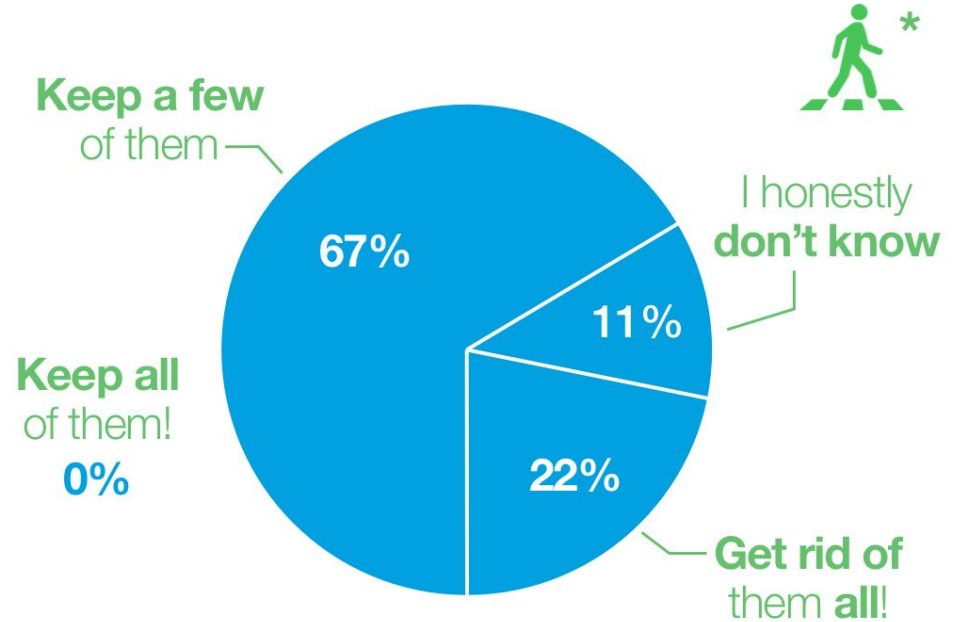
Almost 90% would get rid of all, or most, of them.

What respondents **suggest doing with the traffic lights** in Central Park



Here again the disaggregated data is similar.

What respondents **suggest doing with the traffic lights** in Central Park



* **Mostly a pedestrian** respondents only

Respondents said...

“

Making people stop when
no one is crossing isn't
serving any useful purpose.

”



Respondents said...

“

The lights seem to be timed for when cars could still drive in the park; they should be timed for the current uses.

”



Respondents said...

“

Too many lights in safe locations leads people to ignore all the lights.

”



Respondents said...

“

The traffic lights should have been removed when motor vehicle traffic was prohibited from Central Park.

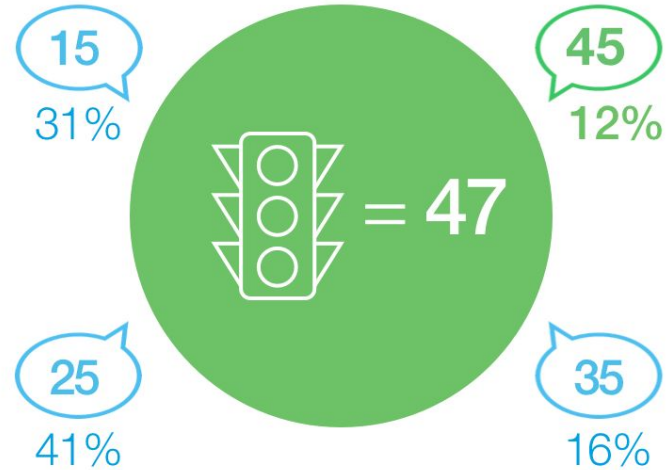
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Finally, we were curious if people knew how many traffic lights were actually operational in the park.

Most respondents were way off.

Only **12%** of respondents named the correct **number of traffic lights** in Central Park



We draw a few **insights** from this survey:

Most users simply ignore the traffic lights, which increases confusion and conflict.

The traffic lights are an anachronism from when automobiles were in the park; they should be **removed or radically retooled** to accommodate current user needs.

It's time for a **comprehensive user study of the loop** that closely examines the needs of all user groups.

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