

The Cost of Fandom: Ally Bank Finds Sports Fans Breaking the Bank for the Love of the Game

Spending fueled by passion, not planning: 57% of sports fans admit to overspending, yet 85% report having no dedicated savings set aside for expressions of fandom

Nearly 7 in 10 fans (67%) say spending on women's sports has increased or stayed the same, with Gen Z and millennials especially viewing their women's sports fandom as a reflection of personal values

CHARLOTTE, N.C., Oct. 15, 2025 /PRNewswire/ -- Sports fans are spending for the love of the game in Ally Bank's newest report, The Cost of Fandom. The report reveals millennials lead the way in spending at \$2,050 per year on fan related activities, compared to \$1,550 for Gen Z. For many Gen Zers, the combination of high costs and low savings also means cutting back on spending in other areas, such as eating out less, to afford supporting their favorite teams.

Ally's findings highlight the strong emotional ROI of being a sports fan, signaling a prioritization of entertainment, community and identity over budgeting for these costs. Roughly 1 in 3 millennials (33%) and Gen Z (31%) said their sports spending makes them feel connected — underscoring the community connection among sports fans. The way men and women are spending their money to support their favorite sports teams differ, with women favoring social fandom and men leaning toward high-spend, experiential fandom.

"It's clear that fandom transcends mere dollars and cents: it's about identity, community and being part of something bigger. You can't put a price tag on that," said Lindsay Sacknoff, head of consumer banking at Ally. "We believe there's no shame in spending — even splurging — on the things that bring you joy. At the same time, fandom should not come at the cost of your financial health and overall wellbeing. Setting aside a realistic budget to support your passions will help ensure the most stressful part of gameday is the number on the scoreboard, not what's in your bank account."

Women's sports are gaining ground — and fans across demographics, from men to Gen Z, are driving the momentum. Roughly 1 in 3 Gen Z fans (31%) say it's important to show up as a women's sports fan, with 40% of Gen Z saying supporting women's sports is a form of supporting equality and empowerment. These insights align with Ally's growth as a leading brand in this space, which has been built through a series of significant investments aimed at making it easier and more rewarding to be a fan of women's sports, including Ally's unprecedented 50/50 pledge to spend equally in men's and women's sports media.

"More and more fans are choosing to spend, save and give with intention, especially in support of women's sports where every dollar helps fuel representation and growth," said Jack Howard, head of money wellness at Ally. "To help fans make the most of their gameday experiences, we recommend creating a values-based spending plan, which aligns your money with what matters to you most. This approach doesn't just strengthen your finances; it strengthens your sense of community and brings joy, and that's what real fandom is all about."

Fandom Isn't Free – And Many Are Going Into Overtime on Spending

- On average, sports fans spend \$1,600 per year to support their teams — and "fanatical" fans* spend nearly \$2,200 annually.
- Tickets (60%) and food & drink (54%) are the top overspending culprits overall, with apparel (47%) and travel (36%) closely following.
- Millennials may spend more overall, but 43% of millennial fans say they don't have a firm sports budget. Gen Z is slightly more responsible, with 37% operating without a budget.
- Gen Z fans overspend the most frequently compared to other generations, with 43% reporting they do so a few months out of the year or more often.

The Sports Fan Playbook: His vs Hers

- Women favor certain social fandom activities more than men. They are more likely to gather at friends' houses (52% vs. 46%) and host watch parties (31% vs. 26%) — embracing fandom as a source of belonging, community and expression.
- Men lean toward more high-spend, experiential fandom. They're more likely to travel long distances for games (31% vs. 25%) and splurge on tickets and VIP packages — signaling a willingness to go all-in on live experiences.
- Overall, sports fans feel the greatest ways they can contribute to the further growth of their favorite sports are: watching games to boost ratings (46%), attending games in-person (40%), and wearing apparel (38%) to represent the teams they support.

Women's Sports: Working to Level the Playing Field

- Nearly 7 in 10 fans (67%) say spending on women's sports has increased (22%) or stayed the same (45%).
- Only 24% say they have not spent any money on women's sports.
- Average spend on men's sports is 90% higher than spend on women's sports – with overall spending on men's sports being \$950 vs. women's sports being \$500.
- Men outspend women on women's sports annually (\$600 vs. \$400).

Aligning your spending with your personal values allows you to spend on what truly matters to you, without the guilt. Last year, Ally introduced [Money Roots™](#), a free financial wellness program to help people uncover how their money mindset impacts their spending, saving and investing decisions – and vice versa. The program offers four free, one-hour workshops for customers and non-customers alike. For more information on how Ally is meeting people where they are to improve money habits and financial futures for all, visit ally.com/moneyroots.

Press Kit: Full survey data from the Cost of Fandom report is available [here](#).

Survey Methodology details available upon request.

**Fanatical fans defined as those who self-identify as being fanatical about at least one sport, spending more on average and participating in more activities compared to general sports fans.*

About Ally Financial

Ally Financial Inc. (NYSE: ALLY) is a financial services company with the nation's largest all-digital bank and an industry-leading auto financing business, driven by a mission to "Do It Right" and be a relentless ally for customers and communities. The company serves customers with deposits and securities brokerage and investment advisory services as well as auto financing and insurance offerings. The company also includes a seasoned corporate finance business that offers capital for equity sponsors and middle-market companies. For more information, please visit www.ally.com.

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