

“Guiding You Home” Survey

Key Findings

March 2020

Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC

Are millennials becoming their parents? When it comes to choosing a home, the similarities are striking

- Almost all baby boomers (ages 56-74 / born approx. 1946-1964) (91%), Generation Xers (ages 40-55 / born approx. 1965-1980) (91%) and millennials (ages 24-39 / born approx. 1981-1996) (92%) say that owning their own home is important and at nearly identical rates
- When it comes to picking a neighborhood, the generations mostly agree:
 - Location, Location, Location: Eight in ten (81%) Americans agree that they value the location of their home over the size, with all generations in agreement: boomers (79%), Gen Xers (79%) and millennials (81%)
 - Safety First: boomers, Gen Xers and millennials overwhelmingly agree on the importance of living in a safe neighborhood: boomers (98%), Gen Xers (98%) and millennials (93%)
 - Keep Your Friends Close, and Your Family Closer: Nearly three out of four boomers (72%), Gen Xers (73%) and millennials (73%) want to live close to their families
 - When family can’t be close to home, the generations agree on how to stay connected
 - Phone calls are the top choice across generations: boomers (77%), Gen Xers (66%) and millennials (64%); calling on the phone beat out texting and social media when it comes to making faraway family members and friends feel closer to home
 - I Love the Nightlife, Sometimes: A majority (54%) of millennials say living close to bars and nightlife is important; those numbers drop slightly for Gen Xers (46%) and boomers (34%)

Myth Busting: Home Ownership + Avocado Toast + Dream Homes

- Paying down debt is the #1 reason some Americans struggle to afford their first home. Among those who have purchased a home, 26% cite this as the main reason they struggled to afford their first home, just 6% say spending on luxury items, just 5% say dining out at restaurants and just 5% say travel
- Spending on avocado toast – and at restaurants in general – is not a barrier to home ownership
 - Sixty-six percent (66%) of millennials spent \$0 on avocado toast in the previous year and only 15% spent more than \$50 in the previous year
 - The average American spends only \$35 per year on avocado toast at restaurants
 - Spending at restaurants and spending on travel were tied for last when respondents were asked if and why they had trouble affording their first home
- Millennials dream of more than just vacations and experiences
 - Millennials are also more likely to say they believe that, in their lifetime, they will live in their dream home: millennials (81%), Gen Xers (75%) and boomers (67%)

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The Home-Buying Process: Real Estate Agents = Trusted Advisors

- The benefits of working with a real estate agent:
 - When Americans who previously worked with a real estate agent were asked why they did so, the most common response was, “I wanted a trusted advisor to help me navigate the buying / selling process”
- How to pick a real estate agent:
 - A majority (56%) of Americans who previously worked with a real estate agent cite “excellent customer service skills” as one of the most important qualities for an agent to possess; excellent customer service skills were defined as: “kept in touch / followed up, explained things well, made themselves readily available”
- Experience wins out:
 - Sixty-four percent (64%) of Americans say they would prefer to work with an agent affiliated with an established national or local real estate company; only 3% would prefer to work with a start-up

What Makes a House a Home?

- The White Picket Fence: millennials are nearly twice as likely as boomers to say they would be more likely to purchase a home with a white picket fence
- Hardwood Floors vs. Carpeting: boomers are more likely than millennials to say hardwood floors would make them more likely to purchase a home (53% vs. 35%). Carpeting is less popular among all three generations, with 20% of millennials, 21% of Gen X and 21% of boomers saying that carpeting would make them more likely to purchase a home
- Americans Love Privacy: the two most desired home features across generations are: a master bedroom with a private master bathroom and a fenced in backyard
- Eighty percent (80%) of Americans say they prefer to buy a move-in ready home over one that requires any updating, but what would they give up? Roughly 7 in 10 millennials (70%) and Gen Xers (71%) say they would be willing to sacrifice home size for a move-in ready home. Boomers agree but at a lower rate (63%)
- What music makes you feel at home? Rock and country top the list for all Americans (37%), pop is a close third (36%), while EDM (5%) and ska (4%) are the least popular.

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Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Coldwell Banker from February 6-10 among 2,002 U.S. adults ages 18 and older, among whom 543 are millennials ages 24-39 (born approx. 1981-1996), 540 are Gen X ages 40-55 (born approx. 1965-1980), and 569 are boomers ages 56-74 (born approx. 1946-1964). This online survey is not based on a probability sample and therefore no estimate of theoretical sampling error can be calculated. For complete survey methodology, including weighting variables and subgroup sample sizes, please contact Anna St. Clair at astclair@gscommunications.com. Overall survey responses fell into five generations: Gen Z, millennials, Gen Xers, boomers, and the silent generation. Only 10% of survey respondents fall into Gen Z and only 6% fall into the silent generation. Our analysis focused on millennials, Gen Xers and boomers because these generations make up the largest home buying demographic. According to the NAR 2019 Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers, the largest home buying cohort falls into the millennial category, and, according to the NAR 2019 Home Buyers and Sellers Generational Trends report, Gen Z made up less than 1% of home buyers in 2019 and the silent generation 7%.