



2018

Single-Family Home Trends

REPORT



Table of Contents

2018 REPORT

Single-Family Home Design
& Construction Trends

Key Findings	3
Characteristics of Single-Family Homebuyers	4
Home Designs and Layouts	12
The Layout of the Home	18
Green and Sustainable Design	23
Outdoor Living Spaces	28
Home Safety and Automation	32
Investment in Tiny Houses	36
Using Trends and Data	41
Methodology	42
Survey Contributors	44
References	47
Helpful Resources	51

Each year, Fixr conducts a survey of highly regarded industry professionals to help determine what trends are emerging for the coming year. Paying close attention to these trends helps other professionals make better decisions for themselves, their projects, and their clients. And, homeowners can make better choices about their properties. Many major cities, particularly on the East Coast, are experiencing significant growth in remodeling – up more than 10% from the previous year. Knowing what trends to look for among buyers and those in the remodeling industry itself can help you make the most of this increase in spending.

Key Findings

When it comes to homes being purchased and built in 2018, there are trending key points, including:

- **Placement:** More people will be looking for homes in urban areas than any other sector.
- **Layout:** Most people will be looking for single-story homes with an open floor plan.
- **Smart Homes:** Most respondents think that smart home features and automation will be popular going forward.
- **More Tiny Homes:** While most people will be investing in homes measuring more than 2,000 sq.ft., there will also be an increase in the tiny housing movement.
- **Home Safety:** Following recent natural disasters, there will likely be an increase in backup generator installations in 2018.



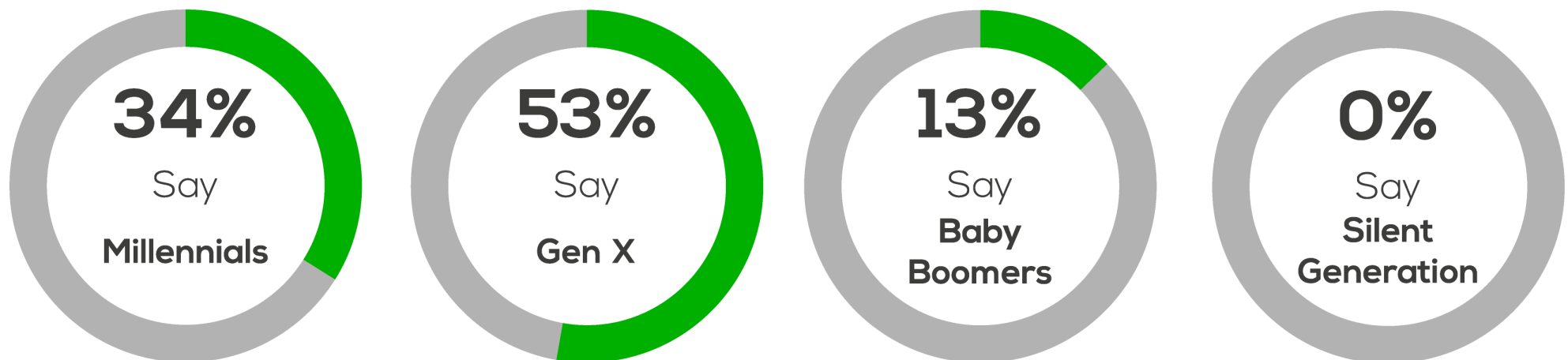
Characteristics of Single-Family Homebuyers

Single-family homebuyers are likely to be made up of the younger populations, specifically Gen X and Millennials. In fact, younger buyers, like Millennials, make up the largest percentage of buyers purchasing new homes at 11%.

Characteristics of Single-Family Homebuyers

– Which age brackets are more likely to buy a single-family home in 2018?

More than a half of the survey respondents answered that Generation Xers are most likely to buy a single-family home. Millennials follow Gen X as the second largest single-family homebuyers in 2018 with 34% of respondents answering. This is in line with many reports about Millennials driving the current market. More than 90% of Millennials have stated that they intend to purchase a home within the next few years.



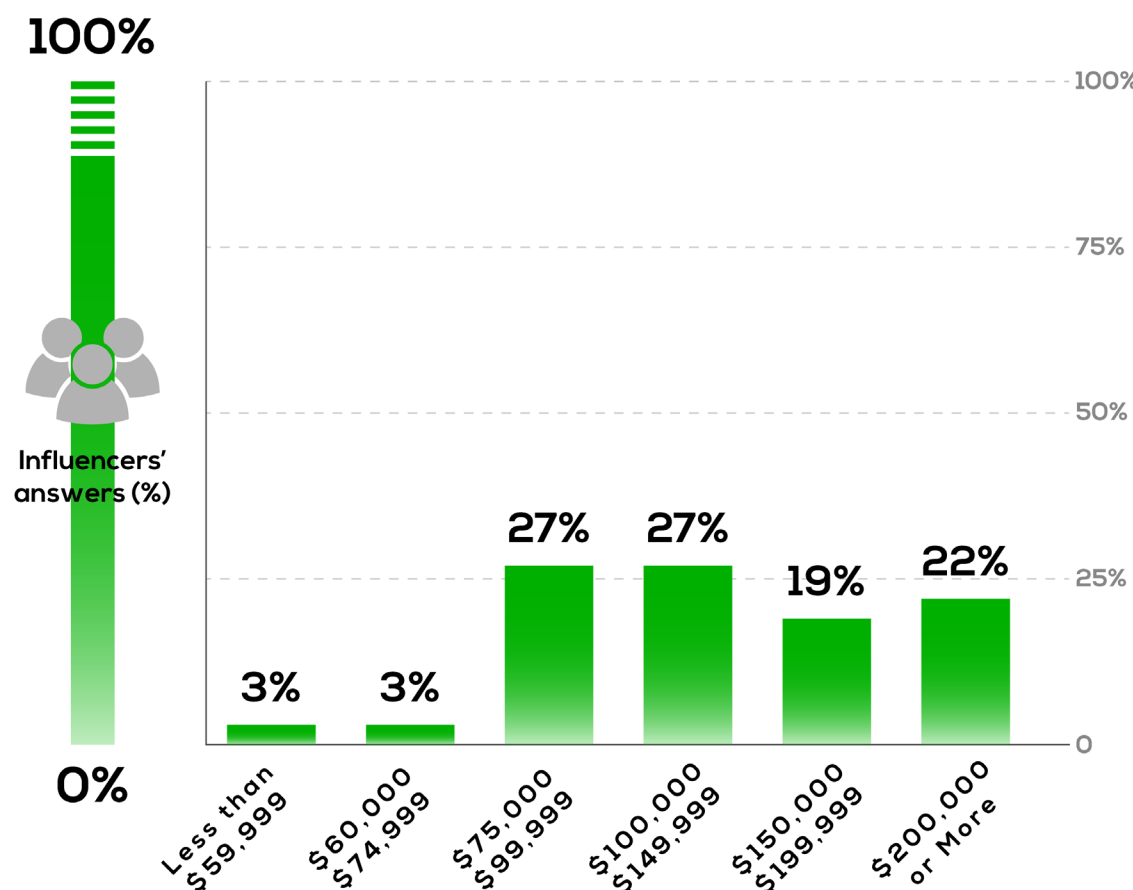
Characteristics of Single-Family Homebuyers

- What will be the most common household income of single-family homebuyers in 2018?

Answers are more wide-ranging in this area - 27% of respondents predict that the most common income of single-family homebuyers will be the \$75,000-\$99,999 bracket.

Coincidentally, the percentage of individuals who believe the \$100,000-\$149,999 range will be the most common is also 27%. Indeed the percentages of people who chose answers of up to \$200,000 or more were not that much lower.

The shift towards the higher income brackets compared to previous years makes sense as Gen Xers are currently one of the largest groups of buyers.



Characteristics of Single-Family Homebuyers

When you focus on the strong drop in an annual income of less than \$75,000, you may ask:

Could \$75,000 be the minimum earnings needed for Americans to afford to buy a single-family home?

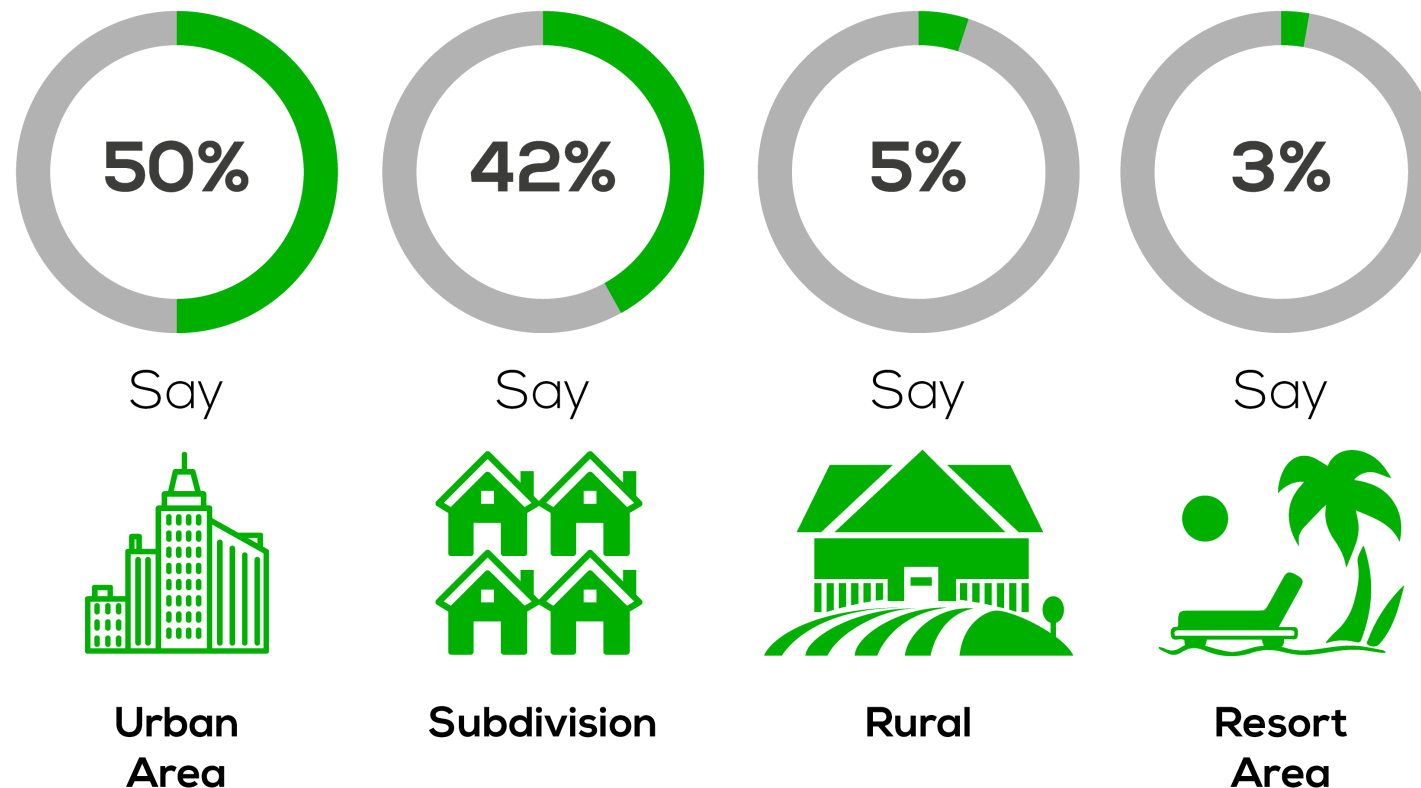
This is nearly \$20,000 higher than the average American income according to the latest [census](#).

94% think
the most common household income
of single-family homebuyers is
more than \$75,000

Characteristics of Single-Family Homebuyers

– Where are homebuyers most likely to build a single-family home in 2018?

50% of the influencers felt that most homebuyers will look to urban areas in the time ahead. And while some [reports](#) show that more homebuyers, Millennials in particular, are purchasing homes in the suburbs, influencers believe otherwise, saying that subdivisions will only make up 42% of future sales.



Characteristics of Single-Family Homebuyers

– Which characteristics will differentiate 2018 homebuyers from buyers of the past five years?

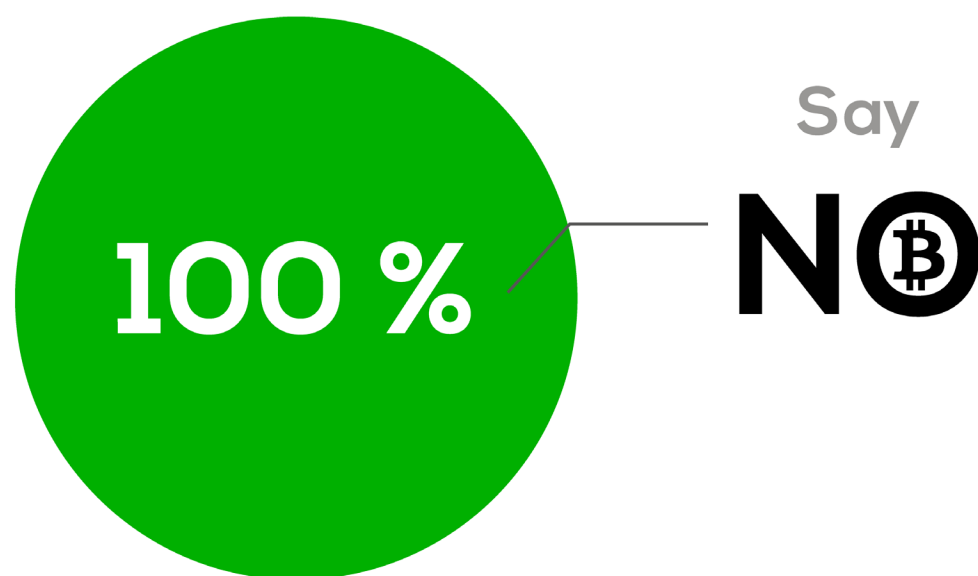
While influencer answers vary, they feel that 2018 homebuyers seem more likely to know what they want. 19% of respondents feel that homebuyers are better educated, while 25% of respondents feel that smart homes are most likely to be what differentiates buyers in 2018 from those of years past. With 60% of those homeowners surveyed by National Association of Realtors claiming that neighborhood quality is the determining factor in where they will buy, it seems that more homeowners are both better informed and that they know what it is they want in their home.



Characteristics of Single-Family Homebuyers

- Have any of your customers purchased or built a house using Bitcoin?

Whether it surprises you or not, 100% of respondents answered...



This may change, however. The first houses purchased with Bitcoin have only come to light as early as [September 2017](#). And with Bitcoin values skyrocketing, more sales could be in the future as well.

Characteristics of Single-Family Homebuyers

- Do you think emerging programs designed to help people pay off a part of their student loan will prompt them to purchase a home?

Student loans and their repayment could be a stumbling block for some potential homebuyers already struggling with finances. Answers are mixed on whether respondents feel that paying off student debt, such as the [Public Service Loan Forgiveness](#) program, [Income-Based Loan Repayment Program](#), and [Loan Discharge Programs](#), will help people purchase a home. These programs are designed to help people in very specific circumstances to pay back or alleviate some or all of their debt, freeing up their income for other things, such as home purchase. Some, like **Lora Teagarden**, think that, **“It might open up fund options that weren’t previously available.”** While others like **Tim Costello** feel that, **“It depends on what the solution looks like.”** Most others agree that it would have no impact on home sales.



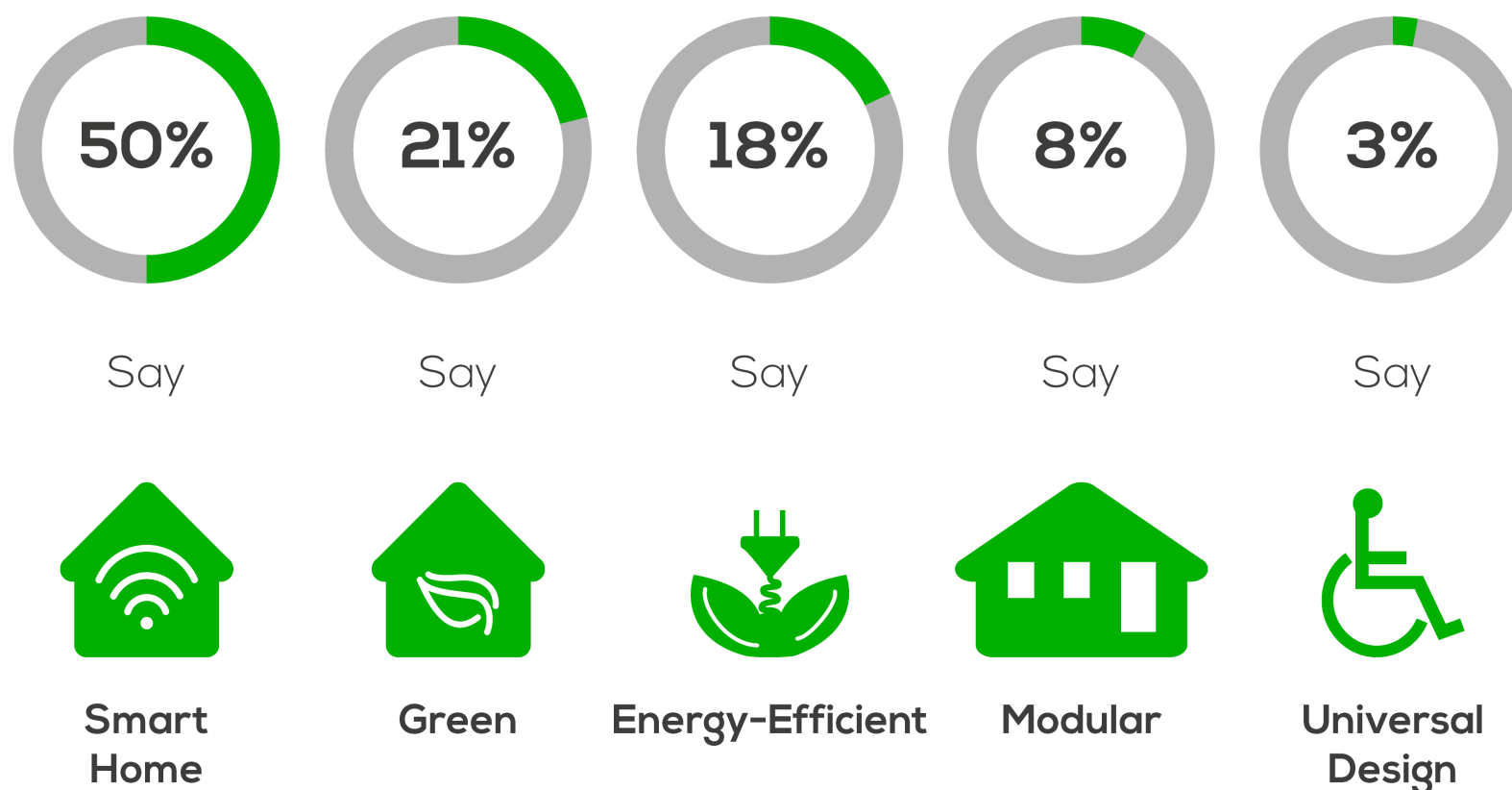
Home Designs and Layouts

Home designs and layouts vary in popularity across the country. However, one trend appears to be gaining traction at an incredible rate – the Smart Home – which may explain why so many respondents picked it to be the number one choice for popular home designs.

Home Designs and Layouts

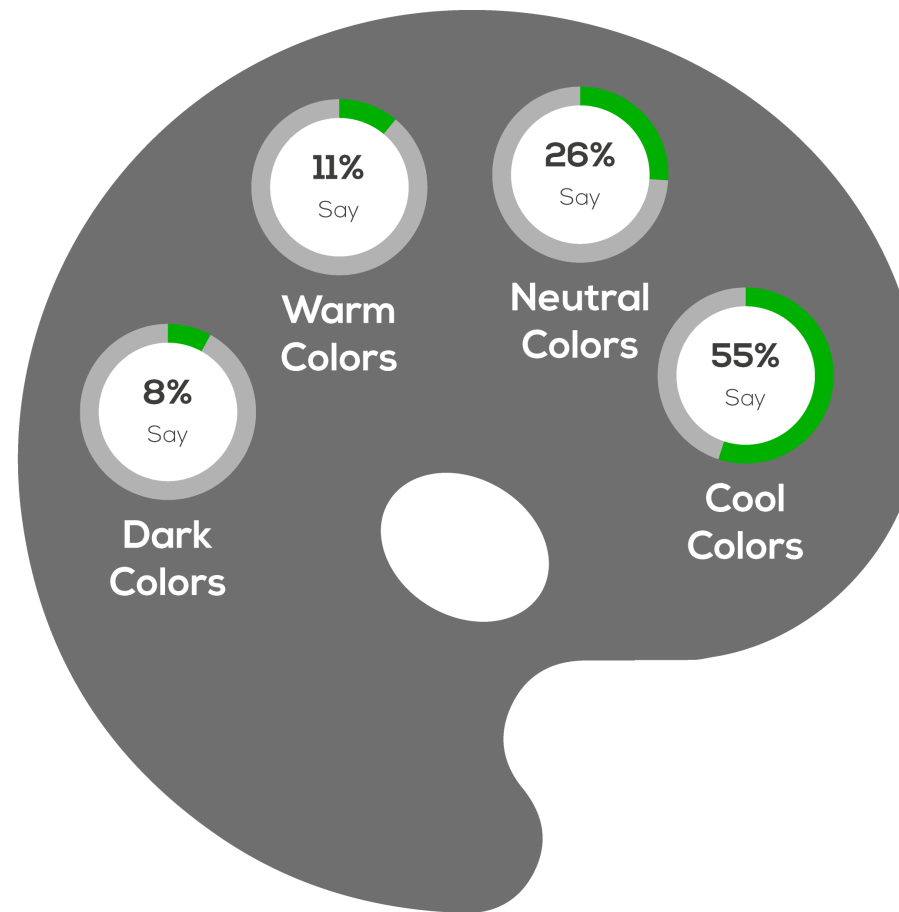
– What design theme will builders most likely apply to single-family homes in 2018?

Again, the Smart Home design ranks number one, with 50% of respondents answering. There is not a big difference between Green and Energy-Efficient designs, which rank second and third respectively at 21% and 18%.



– What will be the most popular exterior color palettes for single-family homes in 2018?

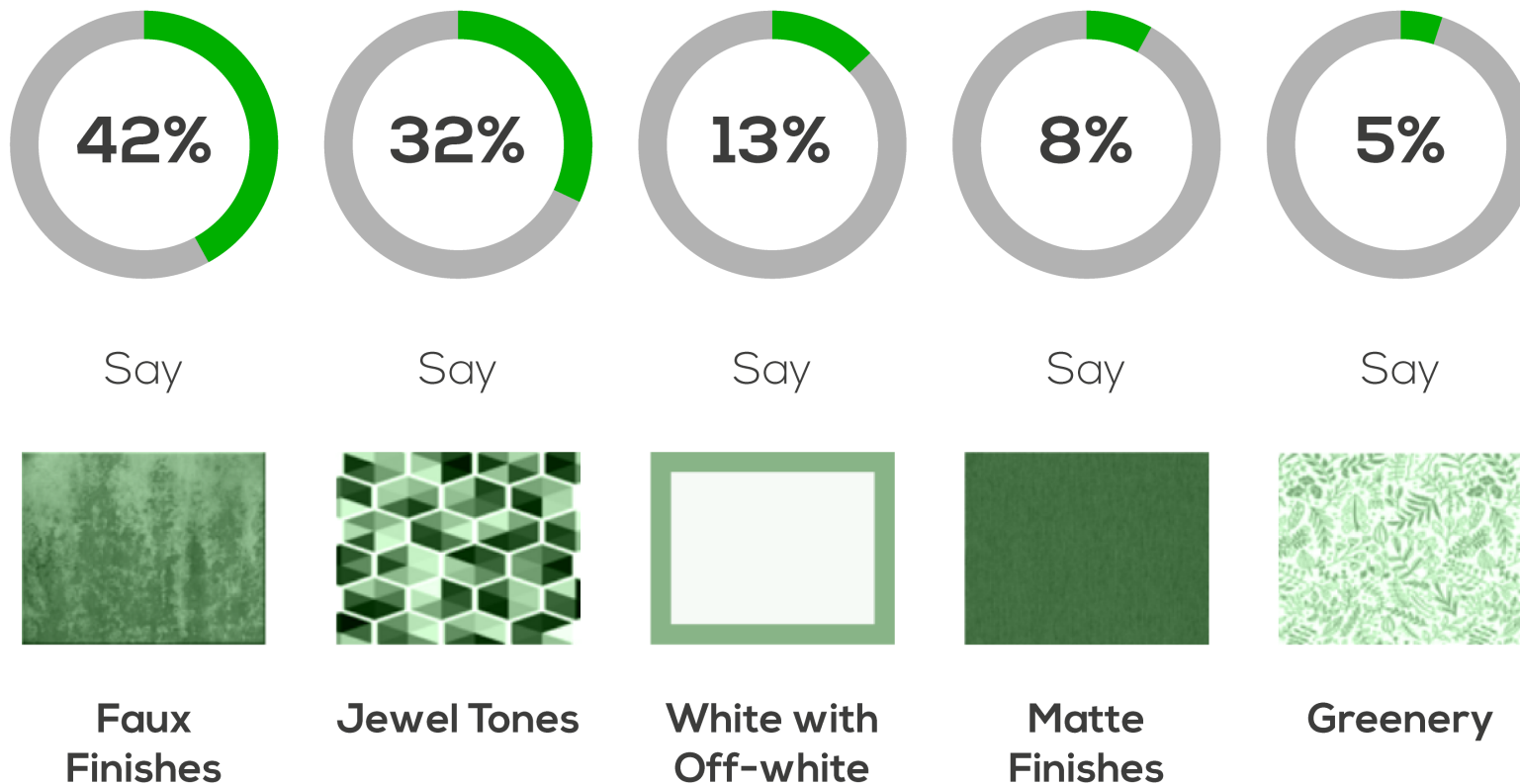
It seems that cool colors will be the most popular palettes in 2018, with 55% of the vote, followed by neutral colors with 26%.



Home Designs and Layouts

– Which 2017 design trend will be out in 2018?

Looking back, we asked what trends from 2017 are likely to disappear, and 42% of respondents agree that faux finishes are on their way out, while 32% feel that jewel tones have had their time as well.



Home Designs and Layouts

– If you could spend only \$1,000, what remodeling projects would you recommend for the living room?

Answers were mixed for affordable remodeling projects, as each respondent had their own ideas of what area could be improved. Some opted for energy-efficient improvements, while others went for style. **Jeremiah Russel of Rogue Architecture** offered, “**Dimmable lighting, wireless hub, concealed components.**”

These types of upgrades enhance the function and livability of the space. Dimmable lighting allows for better control in at all times of day, and allows the user to influence the “mood” of the room. Wireless hubs and concealed components are now considered integral to nearly every home, with personal use being the deciding factor for which to install.

Wireless hubs are most common in the average user’s home. They power the internet, and can allow for printing, sharing, and average gaming without unsightly wires. Concealed components do the same from an aesthetic standpoint; they hide the wires and other parts of a home network, but they allow for greater speeds, as well as many home automation devices that are becoming more popular. While some home automation can be achieved with a wireless hub, many do require cables to run effectively. In that case, a concealed component is best. For homes that are technology based, making these types of improvements make the most sense.

Susan P. Berry, however, felt that, **“New floors, energy-efficient windows, and paint”** were the way to go.

These are the most effective ways of improving not the function, but the aesthetics and comfort of the room. For living rooms that look dated, that are dingy or difficult to keep clean, or that have drafty areas and cold spots, these particular improvements will achieve the most visible results.

Painting is one of the most affordable ways to update any room, and can be done on nearly any budget. Updating flooring, however, may bring more value to a room, particularly if the new flooring is hardwood. While this can be expensive in a large living room, small living rooms can see a big return on investment, while still keeping the overall price tag down.

Energy efficient windows are another good investment, which will not only give a good return, but may also help lower energy costs in the meantime. This can therefore be a strategic way to update a room and have the improvement pay for itself over time.

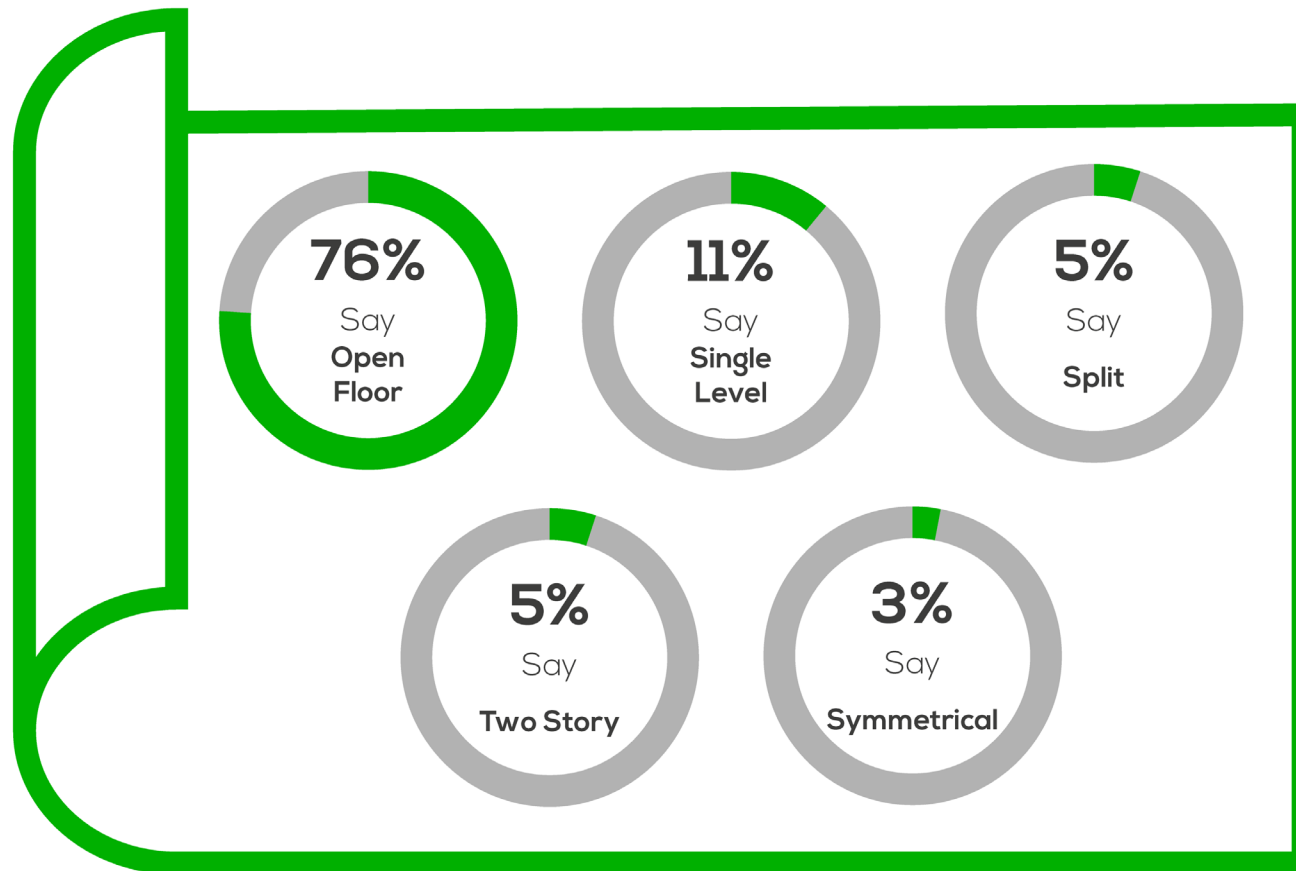


The Layout of the Home

Single-level homes with open floor plans are far and away the most popular layouts for 2018. However, according to economic and building [research](#), more builders are creating open floor plans than what people actually want, with more than 50% of builders constructing and 34% of home purchasers inquiring.

– What will be the most popular floor plan for single-family homes in 2018?

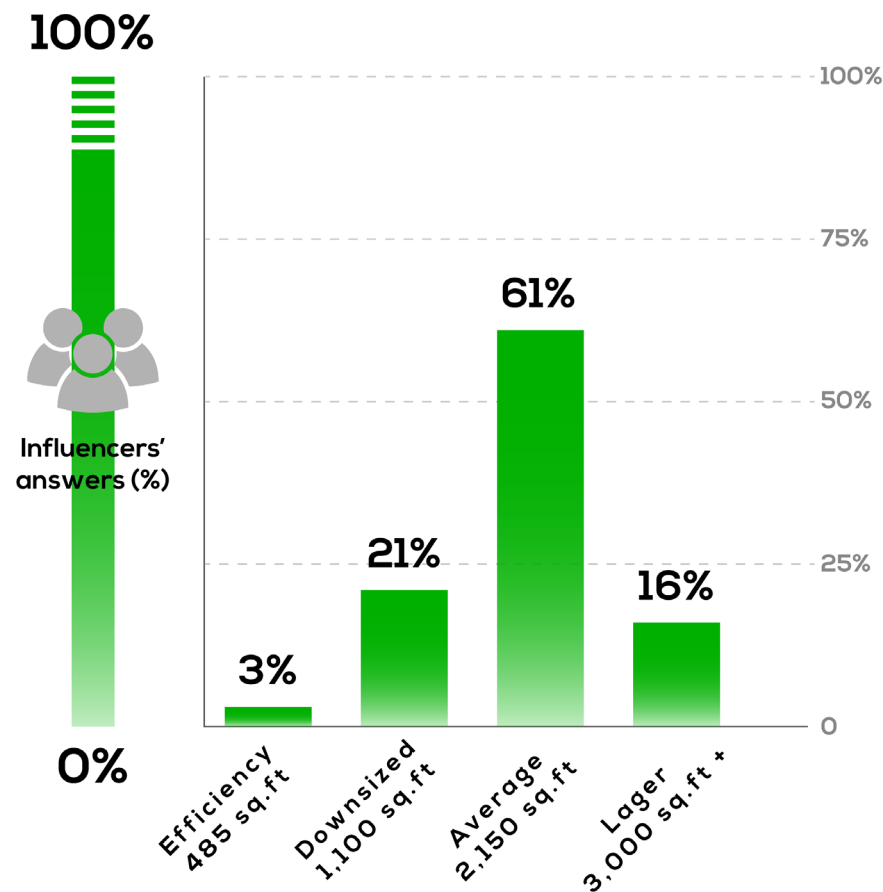
Open Floor Plan has been the most popular house plan since 2013, with 76% of respondents saying that they foresee it continuing to be popular in the year ahead. According to market research, this trend has been seen growing enormously each year.



The Layout of the Home

– What size homes are people most likely to look for or build in 2018?

61% of respondents agree that the most popular size of home that people are looking for is around 2,150 sq.ft. on average with 21% feeling that people may begin downsizing to homes measuring only 1,100 sq.ft. These numbers are well in line with [census](#) numbers detailing the average size of homes being built now at 2,422 sq.ft.



– What is the most important feature/element for handicap-accessible house plans?

Accessibility throughout the design seems to be the most important feature. **Aaron Plewke** says that “**an accessible entrance and bathroom**” were the most important, while **Jeffrey Pelletier**’s opinion is “**enough space to travel easily**”.

Accessibility may mean different things to different people, and that may also influence the areas that need to be modified. In many cases, having an accessible entrance and having enough space to travel easily may be one and the same thing. An accessible entrance to a home may mean a ramp, a wider doorway, which would provide more space to travel, or a lever handle that can be opened without grasping. It may also include a low curb or no curb to make it easier to get in.

Within a bathroom, accessibility may also include grab bars near the toilet and shower, a curb free entrance to the shower, faucets with lever handles, a seat or bench in the shower, a taller toilet or sink, or a shower head on a removable handspray. To move more easily in the bathroom, there may need to be a turning radius of 60-inches or greater for a wheelchair, or grab bars that are positioned so that the user can easily move around the room from toilet to sink to shower without relying on other mobility aids such as walkers.

The Layout of the Home

When creating enough space to travel easily through the rest of the house, the biggest issue is often width. People who use mobility aids often need a wider path to navigate than people who do not rely on aids. In most cases, this involves widening doorways and hallways so that there is enough room for a person to move comfortably with their mobility aid.

Traveling easily through a home may also influence other things, such as furniture placement, throw rugs, and the type of flooring used. It may also influence things such as stairwells where a chairlift may be necessary or simply wider handrails. People who have problems with mobility may need more space to navigate most areas, and they may need to be watchful of things such as throw rugs that could curl or move, and flooring that may be slippery or difficult to navigate with crutches or a cane.

Because not all mobility or disability issues are the same, each home that is being made accessible is generally designed to the user, which makes it difficult to say which components may be the most popular or make the most sense. Even people with similar disabilities may need the space modified in different ways, which makes this type of remodeling unique.

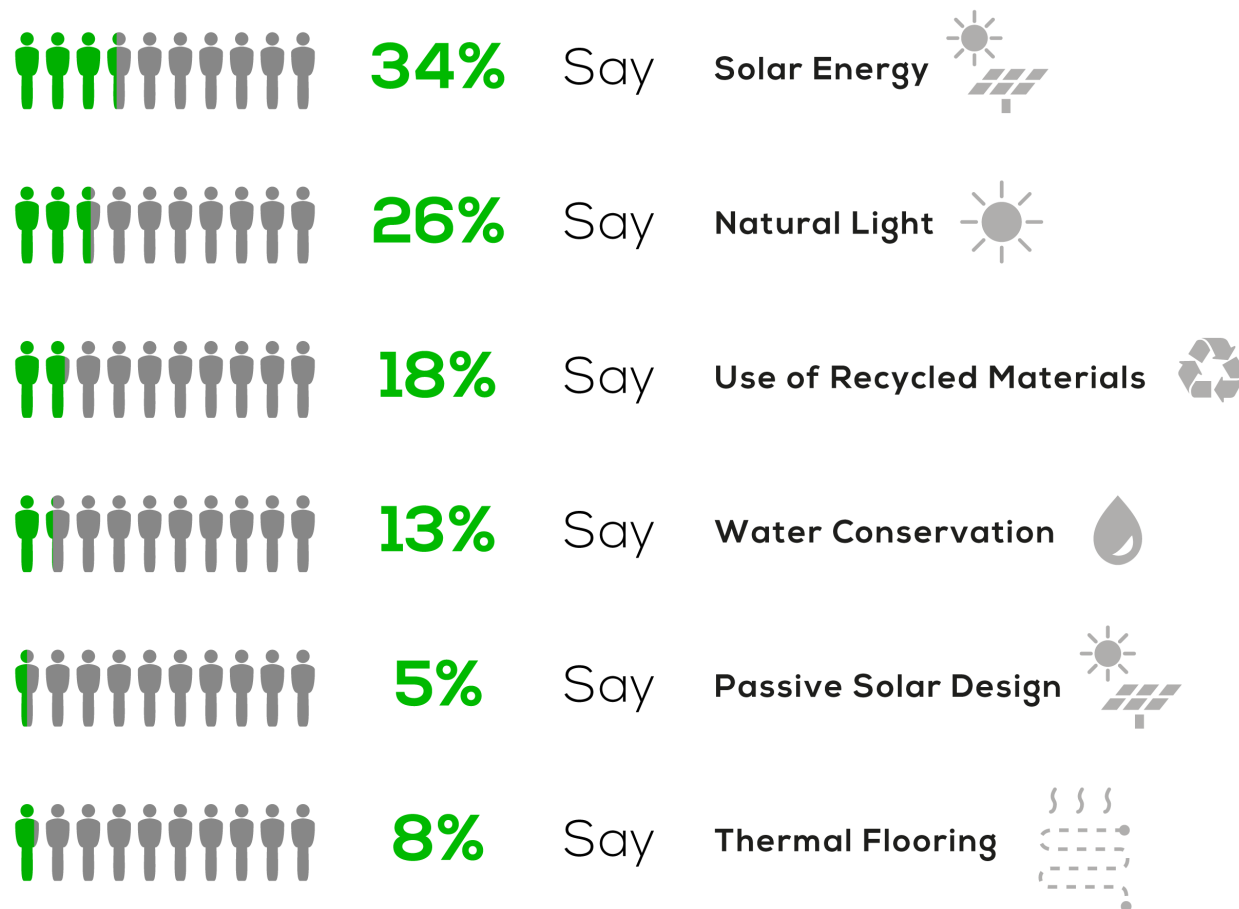


Green and Sustainable Design

For green homes and sustainable energy sources, most respondents feel that solar energy is the way to the future, while homes utilizing natural light fall closely behind.

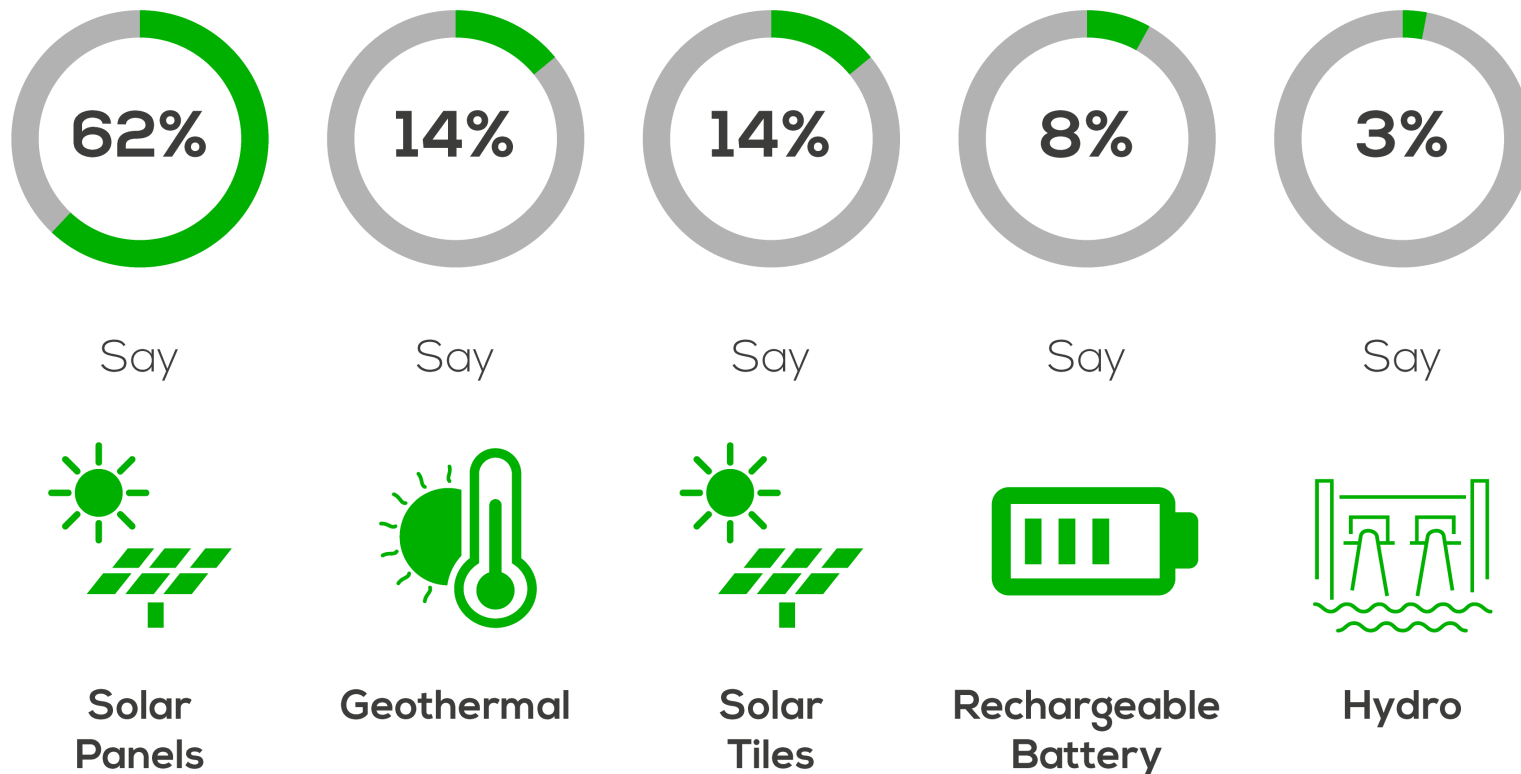
– What green theme will builders most likely to apply to single-family homes in 2018?

Given that solar energy is one of the fastest growing fields, with photovoltaic installation coming in with a whopping 105% growth rate in recent years, it seems natural that solar energy is also the top-rated trend amongst respondents.



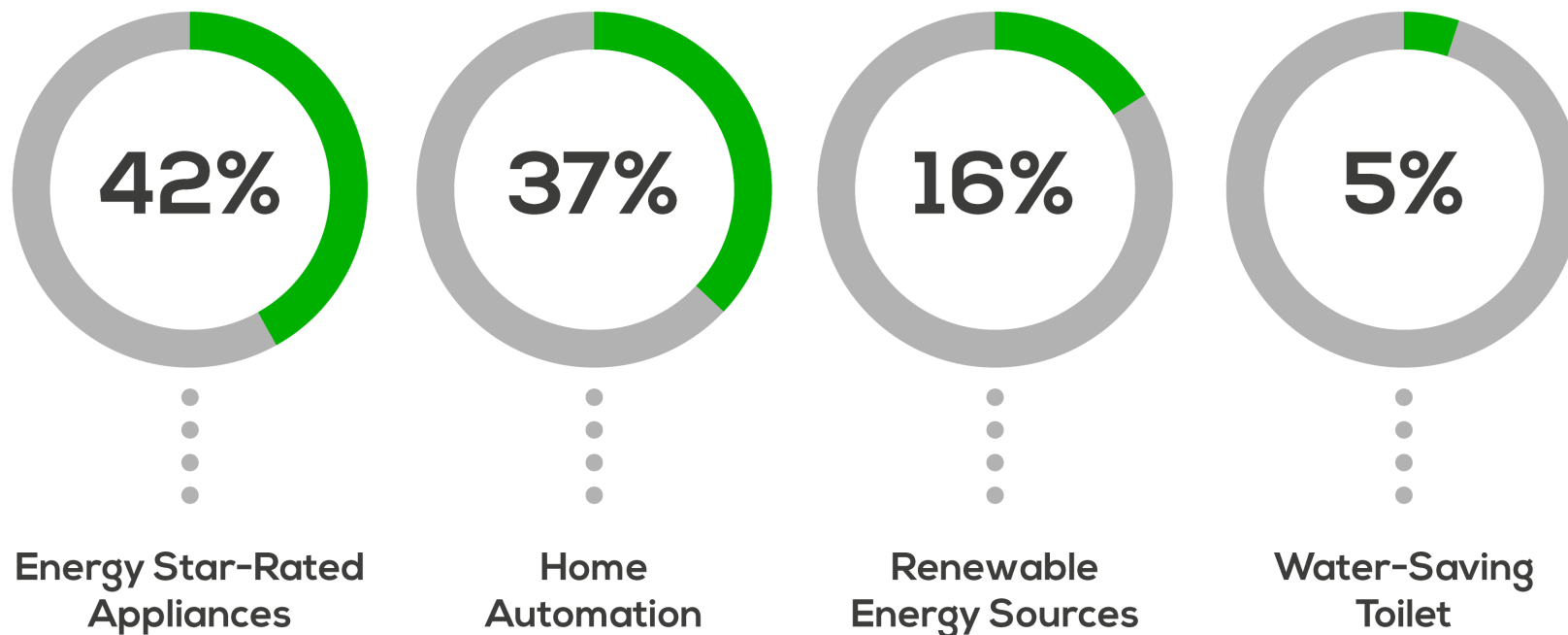
– What will be the most popular way to include renewable energy in single-family homes in 2018?

62% of respondents feel that solar panels will be the most popular way to include renewable energy sources in single-family homes going forward, which lines up well with annual growth rates of 68% for home solar use. Only 14% feel geothermal or solar tiles will be utilized. Only 8% feel rechargeable batteries will be utilized. Only 3% feel hydro will be utilized.



– What ways are homebuyers most likely to invest in to save money and energy?

When it comes to saving money and energy, most respondents feel that Energy Star-rated appliances, or appliances that meet or exceed federal guidelines for energy consumption, followed closely by home automation will be the most popular methods.



– Do homeowners value lower monthly energy bills over style in their home design?

Answers varied among respondents in whether or not homeowners value lower energy bills over design. According to **Lora Teagarden**, “I think homeowners expect both, as is shown with the recent smart home products. They are not sacrificing aesthetics for function.” **Stacy Kunstal**, however, feels this is only true “when it makes an economic difference.”

Homeowners are beginning to expect both function and aesthetics, understanding that while function is the primary goal, aesthetics go a long way toward providing comfort and personal expression. This in turn allows people to claim their space, and feel good about it. When, as Teagarden notes, they expect aesthetics to go along with the function they need, homeowners end up creating a space that is personal, beautiful, and adapted to their needs. This is particularly true in the smart home product field; these products are aesthetically pleasing to the eye because manufacturers understand the importance that homeowners place on this. But the main reason that people purchase a smart home device, is for the function it can bring to a space.

However, problems can arise when homeowners place any emphasis on one area over the other. This may include homes that are aesthetically pleasing to the eye, but which are difficult to navigate, or which cost more to run. Another example may be a home that has lower energy bills, but that feels cold, sterile, or impersonal.

While most designers will agree that form should always follow function, the most successful designs manage to blend the two attributes, choosing items that create a cohesive design, while also enhancing the user’s experience within the space.



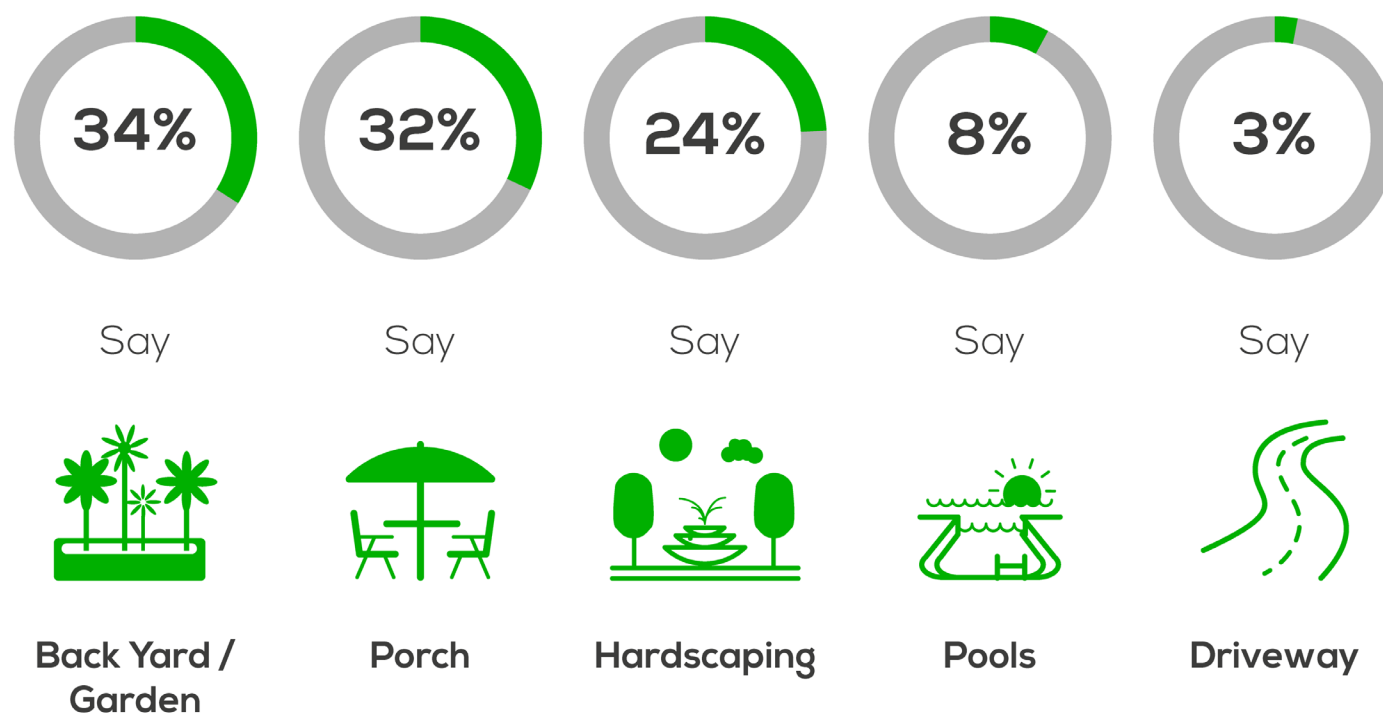
Outdoor Living Spaces

When it comes to the great outdoors, you will find that most respondents feel that back yards, gardens, and porches will be what homebuyers are looking for in 2018, with patios being the most frequently added landscaping design. This is in line with [reports](#) that the biggest increase in spending for outdoor areas is in the design/build field.

Outdoor Living Spaces

– What type of outdoor space will single-family homeowners be most likely to add to their homes in 2018? (Note: Outdoor space in this instance is defined as an outdoor living area or area to be put to some function or use.)

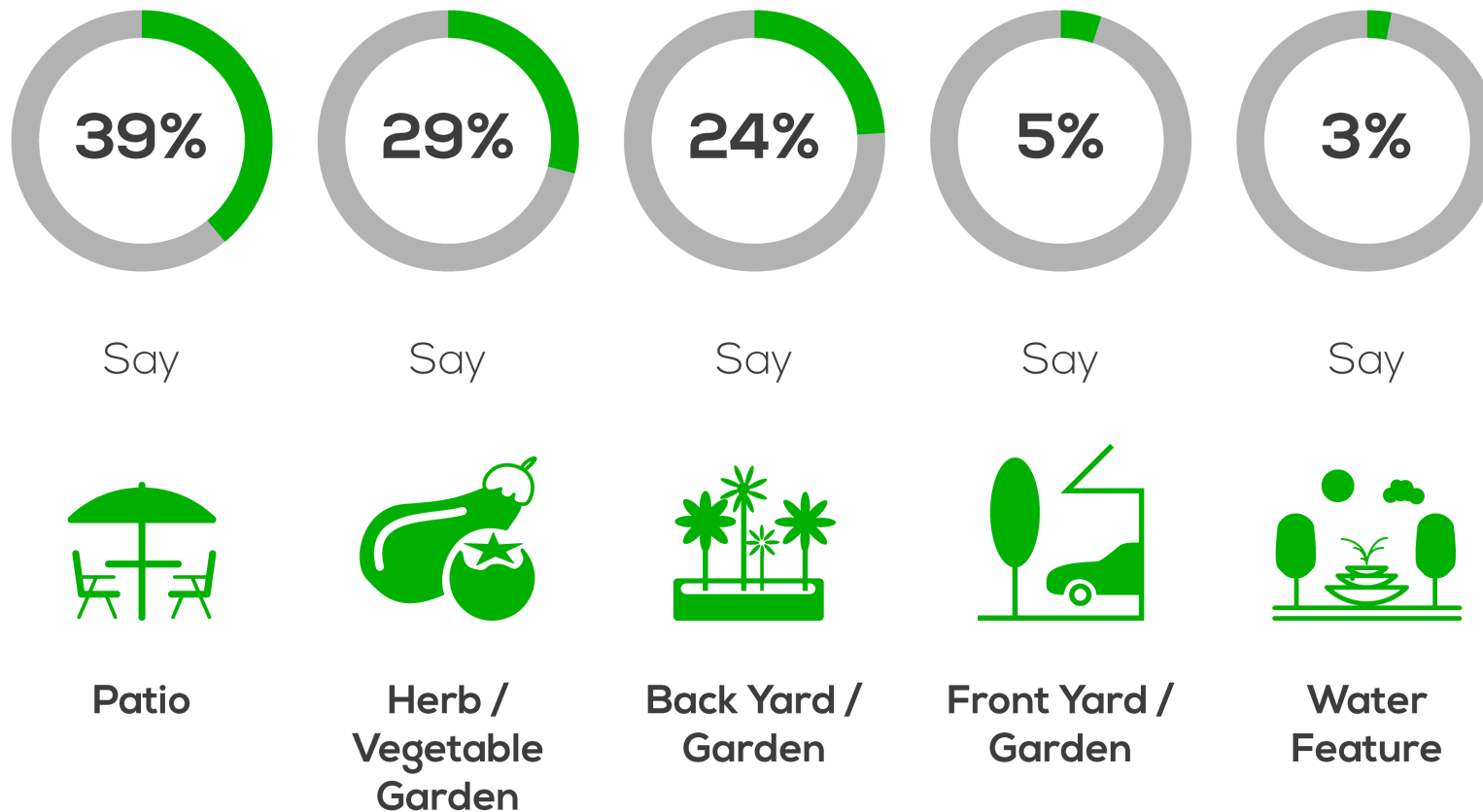
34% of respondents say that a back yard or garden will be the most popular addition, while 32% feel that a porch will be a more popular choice. Millennials, in particular, feel that it is important to spend time outdoors, which makes them more likely to want to add these areas to their properties.



Outdoor Living Spaces

– What will the most popular use of existing outdoor space for single-family homes be in 2018?

The overwhelming majority, at 39% of respondents, feel that a patio will be the most popular way to use this area, followed by gardens at 29% and a back yard at 24%.



– What are some simple landscaping solutions for small yards?

Many influencers recommend potted or raised planters for small yards. **Charles Hendricks** adds, **“Native plantings and cozy spaces.”** **Lee Calisti** agrees, **“Low maintenance and no mowing required.”**

The key to a successful, low maintenance yard is to pay close attention to the climate and needs of the plants being used in the design. For example, in areas with low rainfall, potted succulents may be a nice addition to the yard, as they don’t require a lot of water, come in many colors, and can be arranged in tubs to make beautiful statements that can enhance a porch, front walk, or patio.

In areas that see very cold temperatures, using hardy, evergreen shrubs and plants in planters may be the better choice, as they won’t need to be brought in during the colder months of the year. Boxwood, laurel, or daphne make excellent choices for these types of climates.

Native plantings are always a good choice as well, as Charles Hendricks points out, because using plants that grow naturally in the area being developed often also means less maintenance or care. Using plants not native to the area may involve extra work for the homeowner such as additional watering, fertilization, covering in frosts, or amendment of the soil to help ensure that the plants will survive there. Native plants almost universally thrive in their natural habitats, which makes them a safer choice for most lower-maintenance yards.

For homeowners who want a truly low-maintenance yard, very low-grow or no-mow grass seed is available. These types of grass grow so slowly that they may not need to be mowed at all during a typical growing season, or for warm climates where grass grows year round, they may only need periodic mowing. The seed usually consists of dwarf grass such as Blue Grama or Buffalo Grass, and most companies sell a blend or mixture of seeds for the best results.



Home Safety and Automation

Energy leads the way in home safety and automation, which makes sense as automation is one of the methods recommended by our experts to help save energy and lower energy costs. HVAC systems, smart thermostats, generators, and automated security systems will lead the pack of popular designs in 2018.

Home Safety and Automation

– What will be the most popular smart home feature for 2018?

53% of respondents feel that smart thermostats and HVAC systems will be the most popular smart home additions, while 24% think that an automated home security system will frequently be requested. Smart Thermostats are recommended by [Energy.gov](https://www.energy.gov) as a way to save at least 10% a year on energy costs.

**53%**

Say

HVAC and Smart Thermostat**24%**

Say

Home Automation Security**16%**

Say

Lighting Control System**5%**

Say

Smart Appliances**8%**

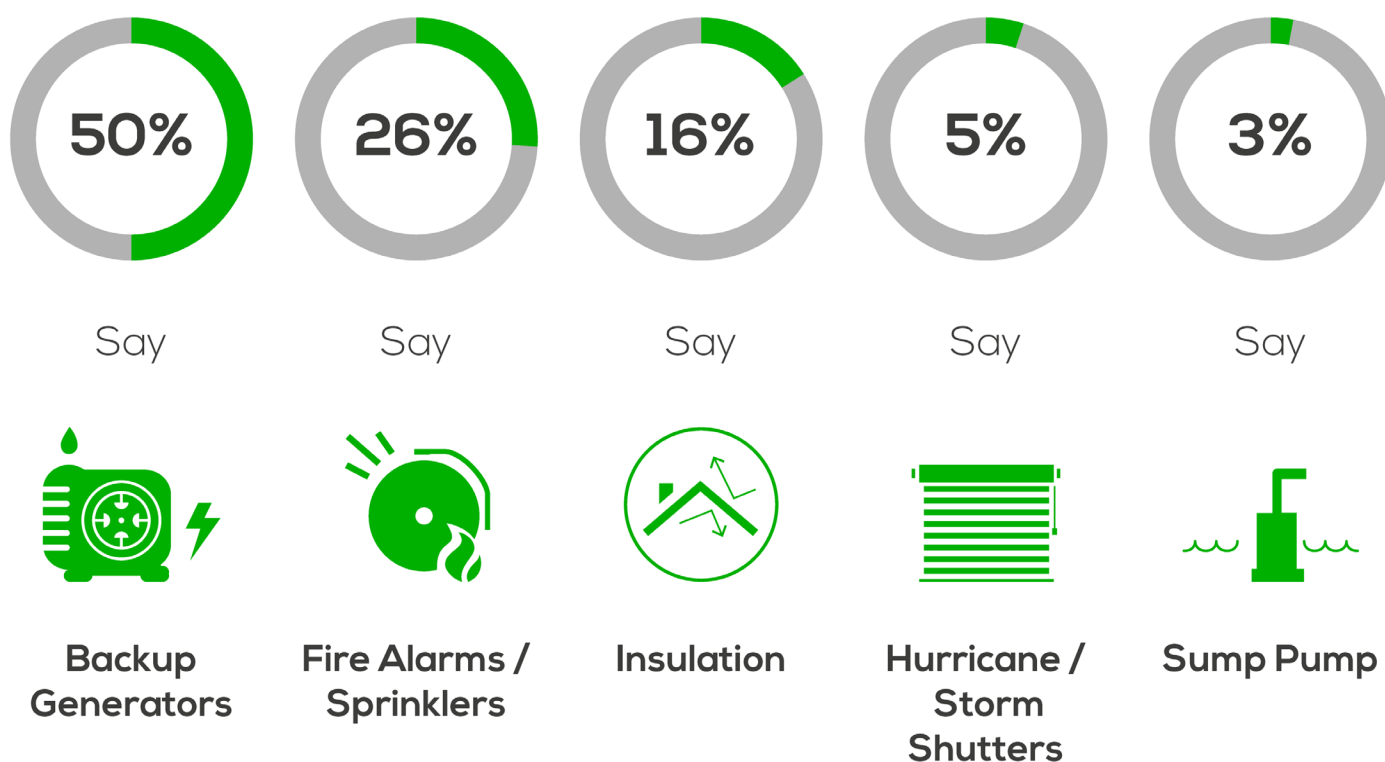
Say

Home Automation for the elderly and disabled

Home Safety and Automation

– What anti-disaster feature will homeowners be most likely to add to single-family homes in 2018?

After several big hurricanes, Backup Generators tops the list at 50% of respondents. It is estimated that for every \$1 spent in preparing a home for disaster it will save \$4 after the fact. This explains not only this answer, but also the trend toward more, stronger home improvements in general. In a distant second place is a fire alarm/sprinkler system at 26%.



Home Safety and Automation

– What kind of Artificial Intelligence (AI) will possibly come into single-family homes in 2018?

Many influencers answered Voice Control Systems, such as those made by Apple Home or Google. **Matt Risinger** adds, “**More home automation via Google, Alexa, etc.**” **John McManus** agrees, feeling that, “**Voice-activated digital personal assistants,**” will be the way of the future.

From 33 answers, 27 respondents (82%) give a favorable answer to some type of home AI system coming in 2018, while 12 respondents (44% of those who gave a positive answer) say Voice Control is possibly coming in 2018.

82 % t h i n k

Some **Artificial Intelligence**
will possibly come into
single - family homes in 2018

44 % t h i n k

Voice Control System
are most like to come in 2018



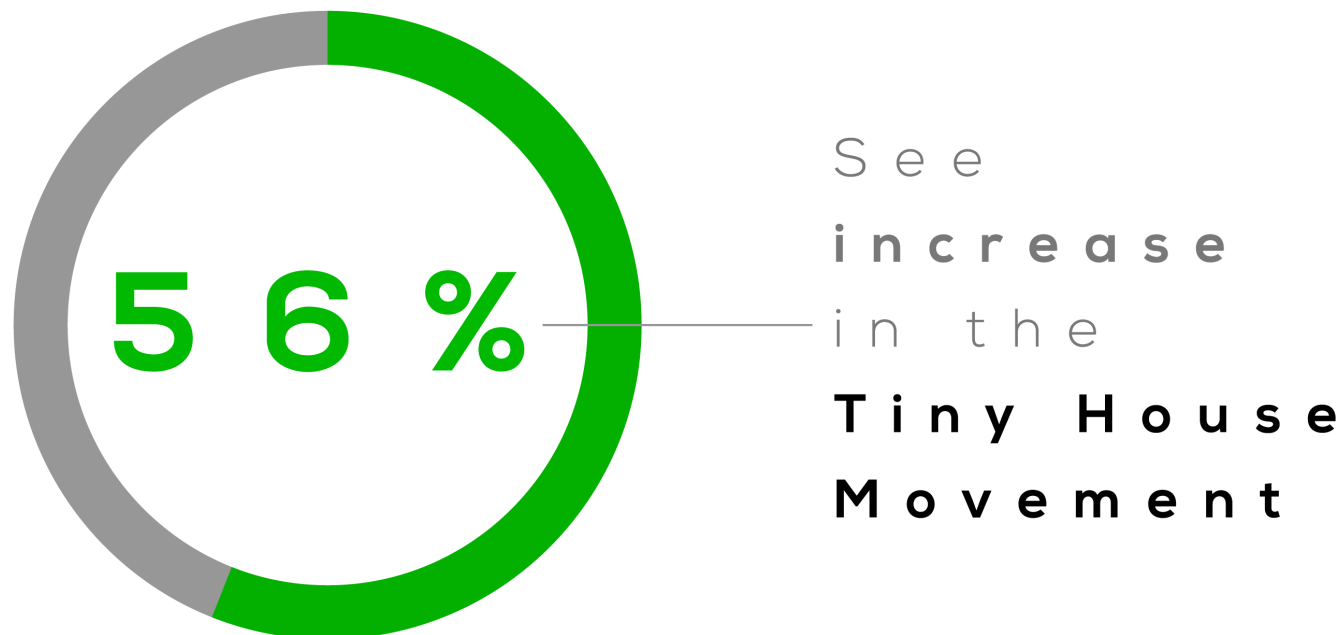
Investment in Tiny Houses

Tiny houses are increasingly popular among certain demographics, such as ages 46 to 65. Many respondents agree that they see an increase in the movement themselves.

Investment in Tiny Houses

– Do you see an increase in the tiny house movement?

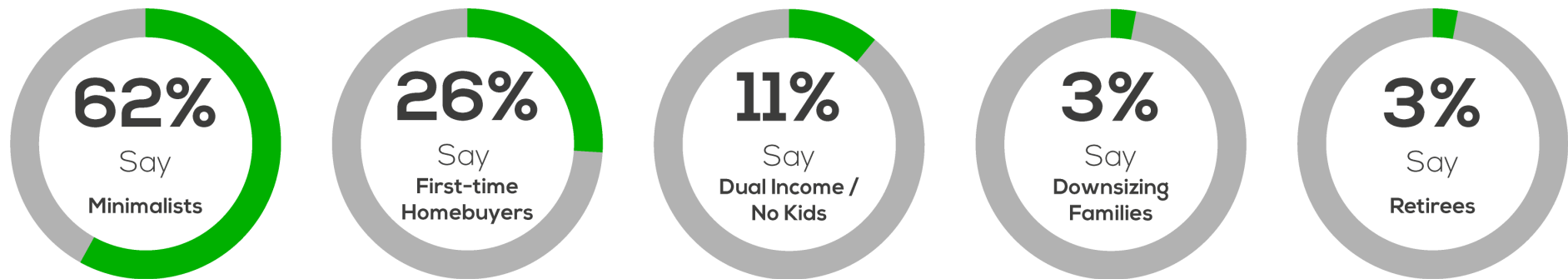
Results were mixed among respondents, but most agreed that we will see an increase in the movement. **Lora Teagarden** believes that, **“It will shift to more of an urban setting, than an individual plot of land.”** Some of them strongly agree, showing a clear number of increases in their actual sales. **Scott Cullens** adds, **“Yes. We have seen a 300% increase in casitas, pool pavilions, and guest houses added to existing homes.”**



Investment in Tiny Houses

– Who is most likely to buy a tiny house in 2018?

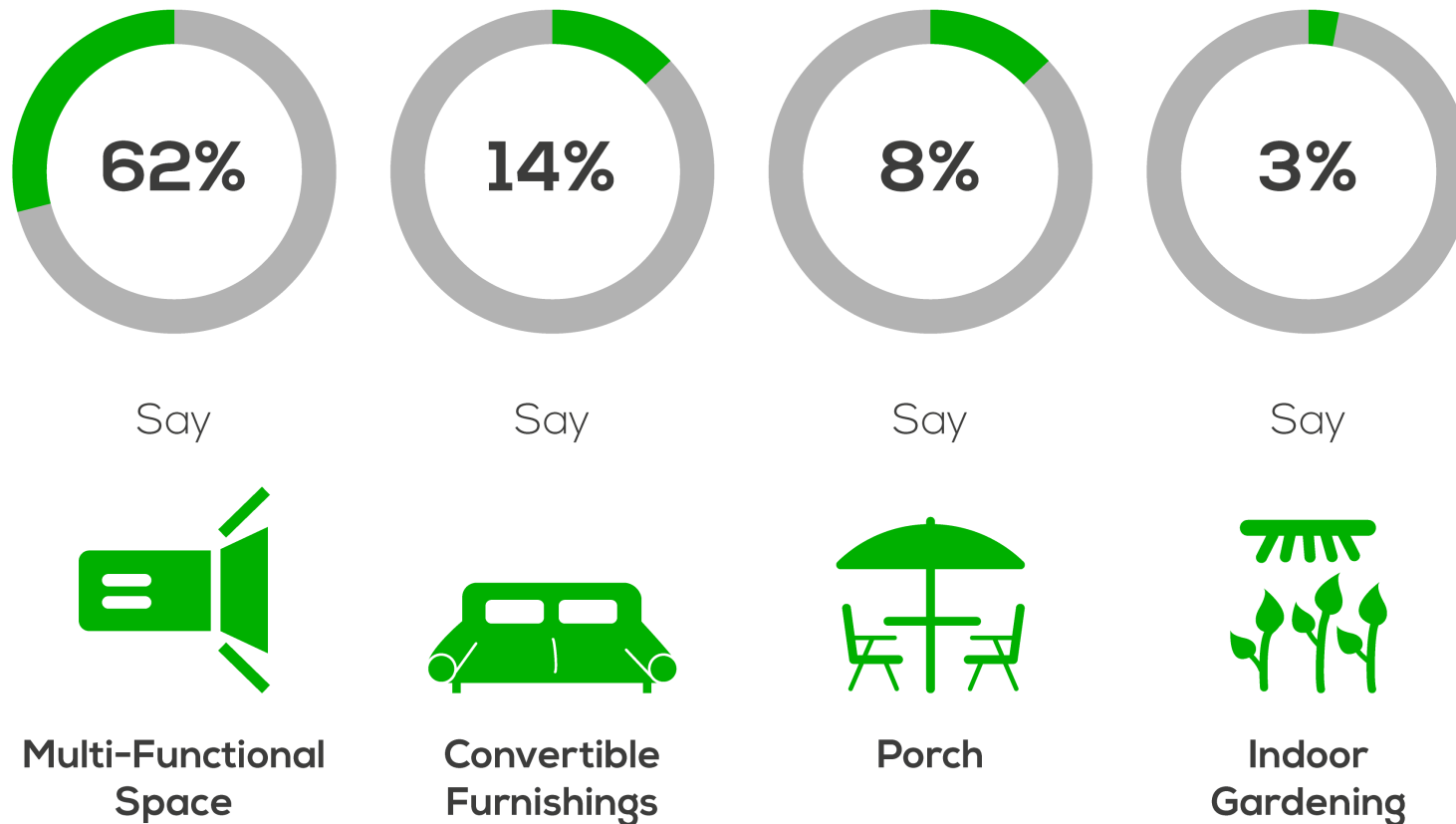
Most respondents answered that minimalists will be the most likely to purchase a tiny house in 2018, while 26% feel that first time homebuyers may do so. Home sizes tend to fall just prior to and immediately after a recession, which means that current housing sizes are going down.



Investment in Tiny Houses

– What will be the most popular feature for a tiny house?

Far and away, most of those asked feel that a multi-functional space will be the most popular feature for a tiny house.



Investment in Tiny Houses

– What is the most common reason people want a tiny house?

Answers vary for why people will want a tiny house. 39% feel that a minimalist lifestyle will play a role, while 32% feel that a focus on travel and other parts of life will be an influencing factor.

**39%**

Say

Minimalist Lifestyle**32%**

Say

Focus on Travel / Other Parts of Life**13%**

Say

Downsizing**11%**

Say

More Flexible Lifestyle**5%**

Say

Better Efficiency



Using Trends and Data

The information gathered in this survey not only helps highlight trends, but also illuminates developing patterns that only industry influencers may be able to see. By paying attention to these answers and to the influencers who provide them, designers, builders, and homeowners are able to make better decisions about the homes they work on. Use the data and trends revealed here to help build better homes going forward, and spend less time wondering about whether your work is hitting the mark and more time influencing consumer habits.



Methodology

Each year, Fixr selects the most influential professionals in the construction industry in the US who are building, designing, manufacturing, and publishing content relevant to the field.

Fixr's list of industry influencers is chosen based on:

- Online presence, including web traffic, and how often their name or business appears online.
- The number of social media followers and the amount of interaction with their audience.
- Contributions to other publications or external organizations.
- Awards they have won and expertise in the field.

We reached out to 38 industry experts from Fixr's 2018 influencer's list to ask them to select one answer to each question that they feel best captures industry trends in each category. They were also asked to answer open-ended questions on each topic to give a more clear picture.

Survey Contributors:

Aaron Plewke – Architect, Deborah Berke Partners <http://www.dberke.com/>

Adam Helfman – Host, HireitDone.com <http://hireitdone.com/>

Bob Borson – Principal, Malone Maxwell Borson Architects <http://www.lifeofanarchitect.com/>

Brinn Miracle – Senior Associate, Kirksey Architecture <http://architangent.com/>

Charles Hendricks – Architect, The Gaines Group, PLC <http://thegainesgroup.com/>

Collier Ward – Architect, Zapata Group <http://www.zapatainc.com/>

Dan Brunn – Founder, Dan Brunn Architecture <http://www.danbrunn.com/>

Eric Freed – Founding Principal, organicARCHITECT <http://organicarchitect.com/>

Jared Banks – Architect & Writer, Shoegnome, LLC <http://www.shoegnome.com/>

Jeff Pelletier – Principal and Owner, Board & Vellum <http://www.boardandvellum.com/>

Jeremiah Russell – Principal/Architect, ROGUE Architecture <http://roguearch.com/>

Joel Shine – Chief Executive Officer, Woodside Homes <https://www.woodsidehomes.com/>

John McManus – Editorial Director, Builder Online <http://www.builderonline.com/>

Survey Contributors:

Lain Chappell – Owner, Solid Rock Custom Homes <http://www.solidrockcustomhomes.com/>

Larry Kush – Senior Vice President, ORION Investment Real Estate <http://www.orionprop.com/>

Lee Calisti – Principal, lee CALISTI architecture+design <http://www.leecalisti.com/>

Lora Teagarden – Project Architect, L² Design, LLC <http://l-2-design.com/>

Mark English – Director, American Institute of Architects California Council <http://www.markenglisharchitects.com/>

Matt Risinger – CEO & Chief Builder, Risinger&Co <http://risinger.co/>

Mikyoung Kim – Design Director, Mikyoung Kim Design <http://myk-d.com/>

Morgan Molitor – Co-Founder, Construction2style <http://construction2style.com/>

Nader Tehrani – Principal, NADAAA <http://www.nadaaaa.com/>

Patrick Brawley – Landscape Architect, SmithGroup JJR <http://www.smithgroupjjr.com/>

Paul Brant Williger – Principal, Paul Brant Williger Architect <http://willigerarchitect.com/>

Rhett Crocker – CEO/Partner, LandDesign <http://www.landdesign.com/>

Richard D. Centolella – Principal, EDSA Landscape Architecture <http://www.edsaplan.com/>

Survey Contributors:

Richard Landry – Owner, Landry Design Group <http://www.landrydesigngroup.com/>

Sabine H. Schoenberg – Founder and Host, Sabine's New House <http://www.sabinesnewhouse.com/>

Scott Cullens – Owner, Palm Pacific Construction <http://palmpacificconstruction.com/>

Stacy Kunstel – Co-Founder, Dunesand Duchess <http://www.dunesandduchess.com/>

Susan P. Berry – Building Designer, Susan Berry Design, Inc. <http://disabilitysmartsolutions.com/>

Susan Cohan – Owner, Susan Cohan Gardens <http://www.susancohangardens.com/>

Susannah C. Drake – Principal, DLANDstudio Architecture + Landscape Architecture pllc <http://www.dlandstudio.com/>

Takashi Yanai – Partner & Residential Studio Director, Ehrlich Yanai Rhee Chaney Architects <http://eyrc.com/>

Thomas C. Donnelly – President, BrightView Group <https://www.brightview.com/>

Tim Costello – President and Chief Executive Officer <https://www.newhomesource.com/>

Toni Lewis – Principal, Lewis / Schoeplein Architects <http://www.lewisschoeplein.com/>

William Guajardo – Owner, J. G. Williams Construction <http://www.jgwilliamsconstruction.com/>



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Helpful Resources

Helpful Resources

Links to Home Improvement Cost Guides Found in the Report

Home Designs and Layouts

- Build a Single-Family House Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/build-single-family-house>

- New Home Design Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/design-new-home>

- Architect Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/architect>

- Plan a Remodel Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/plan-a-remodel>

- Drafting Services Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/draftsman>

- Exterior Painting Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/paint-house-exterior>

- Siding Painting Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/paint-siding>

Helpful Resources

Living Room Design

- Living Area Painting Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/paint-living-room>

- Wireless Computer Network Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/install-wireless-computer-network>

- Hardwood Floor Installation Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/hardwood-floor-installation>

- Window Replacement or Installation Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/window-replacement>

Accessible Home

- Disability Remodeling Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/disability-remodeling>

- Aging in Place Remodeling Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/aging-in-place-remodeling>

- Ramp Installation Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/ramp-installation>

Helpful Resources

- Grab Bars Installation Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/grab-bars-installation>

- Walk-in Tub Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/walk-in-tub-installation>

- Stairlift Installation Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/stairlift-installation>

Green and Sustainable Design

- Solar Panel Installation Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/solar-panel-installation>

- Solar Water Heater Installation Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/solar-water-heater-installation>

- Geothermal Heating Installation Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/geothermal-heat-installation>

Helpful Resources

Outdoor Living Spaces

- Landscaping Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/landscaping>

- Landscape Update Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/new-landscaping-update>

- Build a Patio Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/build-patio>

- Porch Addition Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/porch-addition>

- Backyard Pond Installation Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/backyard-pond>

- Lawn Maintenance and Mowing Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/lawn-maintenance>

- Lawn Seeding Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/lawn-seeding>

- In-ground Swimming Pool Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/in-ground-swimming-pool>

Helpful Resources

- Above Ground Swimming Pool Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/above-ground-swimming-pool>

- Driveway Paving Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/driveway-paving>

- Asphalt Driveway Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/build-asphalt-driveway>

- Concrete Driveway Paving Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/concrete-driveway-paving>

Home Safety and Automation

- Thermostat Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/thermostat-installation>

- Home Automation Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/home-automation>

- Air Conditioning Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/air-conditioner-installation>

- Backup Generator Installation Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/install-backup-generator>

Helpful Resources

- Home Security System Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/home-security-system>

- Fire Protection Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/fire-protection>

- Home Insulation Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/home-insulation>

- Weatherstripping Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/weatherstripping>

- Sump Pump Installation Cost

<https://www.fixr.com/costs/sump-pump-installation>

Remodeling Terms Cheat Sheet

- Blueprint

<https://www.fixr.com/glossary/blueprint>

- HVAC

<https://www.fixr.com/glossary/hvac->

- Handrail

<https://www.fixr.com/glossary/handrail>

Helpful Resources

- Thermostat

<https://www.fixr.com/glossary/thermostat>

- Xeriscape

<https://www.fixr.com/glossary/xeriscape>

- Sump Pump

<https://www.fixr.com/glossary/sump-pump>

The image features a decorative header and footer. The header at the top shows a close-up of a wooden floor with a white rectangular object, possibly a piece of paper or a small box, lying on it. The footer at the bottom shows a close-up of a wooden floor with a white rectangular object, possibly a piece of paper or a small box, lying on it.

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