



# Home Focus

living around sofa, balanced neutral design and hardwood flooring most popular



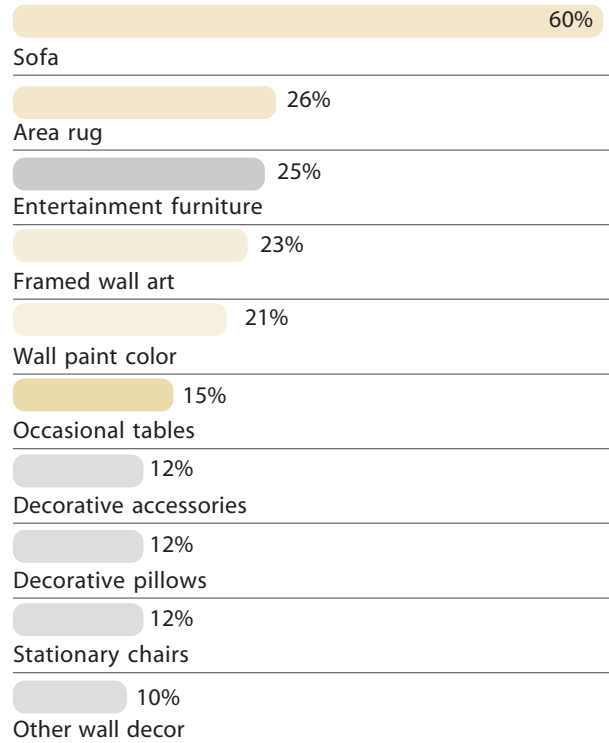
## Consumers design living area around the sofa

The sofa is the focal point for the majority of living spaces. In fact, six out of 10 consumers design their living room or family room around a sofa. The sofa is the key product regardless of age, income or where consumers live. That's one of the key findings from new research conducted by Furniture/Today in partnership with New York-based Apartment Therapy, to ask more than 850 consumers about home decorating.

The area rug is the second-most popular product for room design. Overall, 26% of consumers decorate their living space around a rug and affluent households are even more likely to do so. One-third of consumers earning \$100,000 or more indicate the rug is their design piece. Area rugs are more popular on the East Coast, up and down the Atlantic. One-third of households living in the New England, Middle Atlantic and South Atlantic regions of the country design their living room around the rug.



### Consumers design living spaces around



Area rugs are the least popular, named by 21% of consumers, along the entire West Coast and in the central southern states of Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi and Tennessee. The majority of consumers like to play it safe with sofa and area rug colours, choosing mostly brown and neutral designs. Furniture/Today queried furniture shoppers about colour preferences for both products as part of another survey late last year. Forty-two percent of responding consumers favored brown living room sofas and another 42% preferred a neutral-colored sofa. Blue was chosen by one-fourth of respondents and grays and greens were each named by 19%.

The preferred colour palate for rugs followed the same pattern. Twenty four percent of consumers favored a neutral area rug and 23% preferred a brown one. The colour blue came in third, named by 12% of responding consumers. Grays were the area rug colour preference for 11% and greens were named by 10% of the responding consumer sample.

### Top Design Products

#### Pacific

1. Sofa
2. Entertainment furniture
3. Area rug

#### Mountain

1. Sofa
2. Entertainment furniture
3. Area rug

#### West North Central

1. Sofa
2. Entertainment furniture
3. Area rug

#### East North Central

1. Sofa
2. Entertainment furniture
3. Area rug

#### New England

1. Sofa
2. Entertainment furniture
3. Area rug

#### Middle Atlantic

1. Sofa
2. Entertainment furniture
3. Area rug

#### West South Central

1. Sofa
2. Entertainment furniture
3. Area rug

#### East South Central

1. Sofa
2. Entertainment furniture
3. Area rug

#### South Atlantic

1. Sofa
2. Entertainment furniture
3. Area rug



## A balanced, neutral design is preferred

Shades of gray dominate today's neutral colour scheme. Forty-four percent of consumers responding to Furniture/Today and Apartment Therapy's survey name gray as their favorite colour for neutral tones. Gray is especially popular with Millennials. Fifty-five percent of Millennial households, with adults between ages 18 and 34, indicate gray as their favored neutral shade. Gray is the No. 1 choice for Generation X and Baby Boomers, but by a smaller portion. Thirty-seven percent of Generation X, with members between ages 35 and 50, prefer gray for neutrals; the same is true for 26% of Boomers, currently ages 51 to 69. The exclusive survey also explored the shades consumers like to use as pops of colour when designing rooms. Blue is named as the top choice for Millennials and Generation X and as the second-most popular highlight shade for Baby Boomers.



With Millennials, 33% choose blue, 15% prefer yellows and 14% like green. For Gen X, 26% select blues, 23% like reds and 20% favour oranges. Three out of 10 Boomers prefer reds, 28% favor blues and 13% like to use a pop of orange. The prevalence of neutral shades goes hand-in-hand with the way consumers describe their home's design personality. Most indicate their home has a "balanced" feel. Nearly two-thirds of Baby Boomers describe their home as either "balanced" or "rejuvenating."

Four out of 10 Millennials say their style is "balanced" and 21% indicate a "rejuvenating" design within their home. Generation X has a more eclectic taste. One-third of X'ers lean towards "balanced" while one-fourth have a "rejuvenating" home design and 14% describe their home décor as "luxurious."

### Favorite for pops of colour

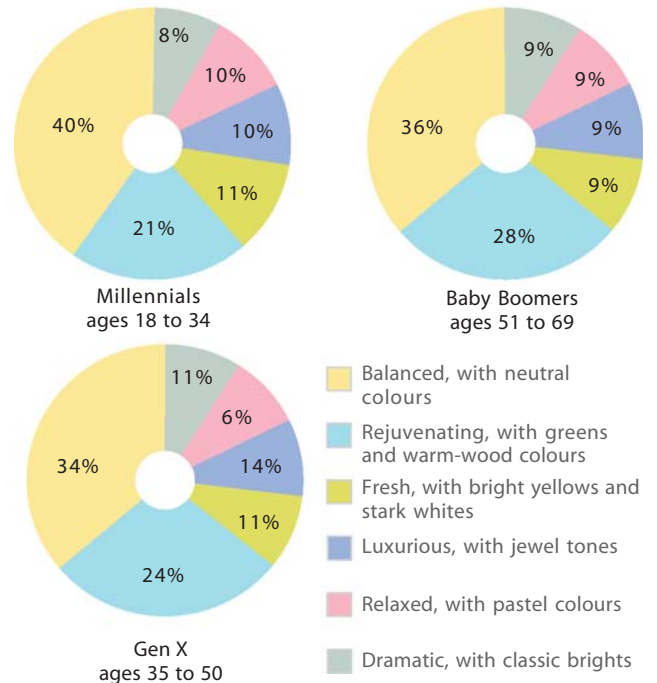
	Millennials	Generation X	Baby Boomers
Blues	33%	26%	28%
Yellows	15%	9%	8%
Greens	14%	9%	12%
Reds	12%	23%	30%
Oranges	10%	20%	13%
Other*	9%	6%	3%
Purples	4%	3%	3%
Pinks	3%	4%	3%

\*Includes metallics, blacks, browns, grays and whites

Source: Furniture/Today and Apartment Therapy 2015 Home Decorating Survey

## The Home's design personality

% of each generation describing



### Favorite for neutral colors

	Millennials	Generation X	Baby Boomers
Grays	55%	37%	26%
Whites	21%	27%	23%
Beiges	8%	14%	19%
Browns	7%	7%	7%
Blues	5%	5%	7%
Blacks	3%	4%	4%
Greens	1%	2%	7%
Other*	<1%	4%	7%

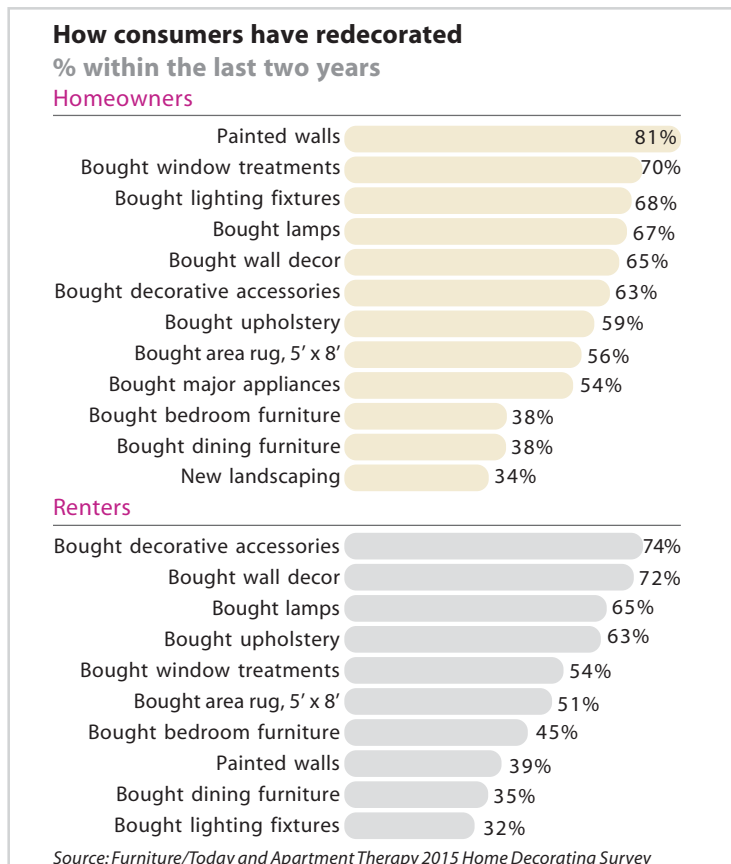
\*Includes metallics, yellows, pinks and oranges



## Hardwood floors top the next home wish list

The must-have specifics for a new home depend upon the age of the buyer, according Furniture/Today's 2015 Home Decorating Survey. Three features make the top five lists of Millennials, Generation X and Baby Boomers alike: hardwood floors, better and bigger outdoor spaces and a home with an open floor plan and larger rooms. Natural light is important to both Millennials and Generation X. Up-to-date major appliances is vital to the younger Millennials and more closet space is essential for X'ers. Baby Boomers want more than anything else a porch, patio or balcony in their next home.

These design wishes have product implications. Hardwood floors are a boon for area rugs and open floor plans are great for sectional sofas. The desire to improve a home's outdoor space is potentially profitable for the outdoor furniture category. However, the additional windows that provide the natural light consumers are seeking reduce wall space. This has an impact for mirrors, framed art, curio cabinets, dressers, china cabinets and servers. Today's homeowners and renters decorate in very different ways. In the last two years, households that own or are buying their home remodeled more often with permanent décor. Eight out of 10 home owners painted walls and 70% bought window treatments. Another 68% bought and installed new lighting fixtures. Understandably, renters chose to buy home accent pieces more



## Must-haves for the next home

Millennials	
1.	Hardwood floors
2.	More light/natural light
3.	Outdoor spaces
4.	Open floor plan and larger rooms
5.	Up-to-date major appliances

Generation X	
1.	Hardwood floors
2.	More light/natural light
3.	Outdoor spaces
4.	Open floor plan and larger rooms
5.	Better closet space and storage

Generation X	
1.	Hardwood floors
2.	More light/natural light
3.	Outdoor spaces
4.	Open floor plan and larger rooms
5.	Better closet space and storage

often than larger furniture pieces or permanent fixtures. Three-fourths of renters purchased decorative accessories, such as figurines, vases and candleholders; 72% bought wall décor; and 65% purchased lamps within the last few years.

There are 116 million occupied housing units in the U.S., per the latest Census Bureau data. Sixty-four percent of total units are owned and 36% are rented. Survey data shows that two-fifths of current renters plan to buy their next home. Seventy-nine percent anticipate purchasing a house and 21% say they'll buy a condominium or townhome.

